

In The Beginning: Session 21: Leaving Home

בְּרֵאשִׁית

Get audio files and notes at: www.htchurch.com/genesis.

Note: class will be on break after December 16th and resume on January 20th.

The Call To Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3)

1 Now the LORD had said to Abram:

“Get out of your country,

From your family

And from your father’s house,

To a land that I will show you.

2 I will make you a great nation;

I will bless you

And make your name great;

And you shall be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you,

And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

- Abram’s story begins with God’s call, and so do all our stories.
- His life of faith is a template of faith for you and for me.
- We know that his name meant “exalted father.” Besides that we know almost nothing, except a bit about his family, and that he came from a pagan society.
- The legend of Abraham’s father Terah’s idolmaking shop.

The Threefold Call To Leave

- *Leaving his country.* This is a call to leave *places*. Our attachment to places can be a hindrance to obeying the Lord.
- *Leaving his kindred.* This is a call to leave *people*. This is also difficult. We may need to be willing to leave people behind if we are to obey God.
- What about losing family for the Gospel?
- *Leaving his father's house.* This is a call to leave what is *precious*. In your "father's house" was everything that was familiar to you.
- Remember that in this culture where the clan was so important that people would rather marry a relative than an outsider.

Making A Statement About a Better Country

When you can move out in faith like Abraham did, you're saying that you want God and you want His ways more than you want anything else.

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God....

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16)

The Sevenfold Promise To Abraham

1. *I will make you a great nation.* This means that he will have his own clan or family that will be significant in the region.
2. *I will bless you.* God will give supernatural favor to Abraham.
3. *And make your name great.* This has certainly come to pass; at least half the world knows who this man is, to some degree.
4. *You shall be a blessing.* He will be the cause of other people's blessings.
5. *I will bless those who bless you.* God says that He will advance the fortunes of Abraham by personally giving His blessing to those who bless Abraham.
6. *And I will curse him who curses you.* If you choose to speak evil of God's friend, Abraham, God will supernaturally cause things to work against you, and cause your life to be unproductive.
7. *And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.* The entire human race will be blessed because of this man. What a promise!
 - a. Through the Jewish people the knowledge of God came to the world.
 - b. The Gospel has gone to the nations through the Messiah.
 - c. On the purely material level, the world has also been blessed in every field of life because of the Jewish people. Their influence far exceeds their proportion of the human race.
 - d. At least 20% of Nobel Prize winner them have been Jewish, even though only 0.2% of the human race is Jewish – just 1 out of every 500 people.

When God says He will bless you, He will bless you!

To Leave Or Not To Leave (Genesis 12:4-6)

4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

5 Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.

6 Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land.

- Abraham's family left their ancestral city, called Ur. At the end of chapter 11, Terah, took the whole family from the city of Ur to a place called Haran.
- However, God had previously asked Abraham to leave for points unknown.

Abram's Obedience

Abram did depart, **but...** Lot, his nephew, went with him. This was disobedience, incomplete obedience, to the command of God that he leave his kindred.

There was also an issue of timing. The family had left Ur, and then went on to Haran. But Abram left Haran at age 75, and **only** when his father died. He didn't leave when he was supposed to. Stephen said,

2 ...“Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, 3 and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ 4 Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell.” (Acts 7:2-4)

God called him to come into the Promised Land **before** he moved to Haran, and he did not move to the land of Canaan until **after** Terah died. This will probably explain for us a very familiar passage in the Gospels:

21 Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."
(Matthew 8:21-22)

Taking Lot was partial obedience, but it was really costly disobedience. In the same way, leaving late, not leaving when he should have left, was also partial obedience.

The record of Abraham's life, much like our own, is one of partial obedience. The Lord had said to leave, and yet (a) he waited; (b) he took companions that were forbidden (not just Lot but other people; and, (c) he took everything he had accumulated during the time of disobedience. He was constructing a life for himself in a place he was never supposed to have been in the first place.

The lesson for us?

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Family Line Of Terah

