

**Peace** be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In past lessons, we have been learning about God and His way of righteousness. We have seen Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Seth and Enoch, Noah and the people of his generation, and Nimrod and the tower of Babel. Only a few of our ancestors followed **God and His way of righteousness**; most followed **Satan and his way of unrighteousness**.

Today we have come to the story of a man whose name is well known in the Word of God, and who had an important place in God's plan to redeem the children of Adam. The Scripture refers to this man as "*the friend of God*" and "*the father of all who believe*." Do you know who it is? It is the prophet of God, **Abraham** or *Ibrahim* in Arabic. The Holy Scriptures speak a great deal about Abraham. His name appears in the Writings of the Prophets more than three hundred times. Therefore, God willing, today and in coming lessons, we will search the Scriptures to discover what they teach concerning this man who was called *the friend of God*. Today we intend to look into the beginning of the story of Abraham, to see **how God called him** to follow Him, and **why He called him**.

Before we begin, you should know that, at first, Abraham's name was not *Abraham*, but *Abram*. Two lessons from now we will see why God changed Abram's name to Abraham. Today, however, let us keep in mind that Abraham was first called *Abram*. In chapter eleven of the book of Genesis, we learn that Abram belonged to the **descendants of Shem**. Do you remember Shem, Ham and Japheth? They were the three sons of Noah. Between Shem and Abram, there were ten generations, just as there were ten generations between Adam and Noah. Abram's father's name was Terah. The Scripture says: "*Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot.*" Lot

was the son of Abram's older brother. Lot's Father had died. In some African cultures, that would make Abram Lot's functional father. Abram's wife's name was Sarai. *"Now Sarai was barren; she had no children."* Abram and Sarai had the same father, but not the same mother.

Abram lived in a city named Ur, which was located in the country of Chaldea, known today as Iraq. This city was not far from where Nimrod tried to build the city of Babel with its tall tower. The people of the land worshiped idols. Like all of Adam's offspring, **Abram was born in the darkness of sin.** Abram's father did not know the true God and neither did Abram.

However the Scriptures tell us that one day **the Lord God revealed Himself to Abram** and spoke with him. You need to know that in early times, God occasionally spoke directly with people, because they did not yet have the Writings of the Prophets. Today God speaks to people through **the Holy Scriptures.** That is why we no longer need words, which resound from the sky, or visions, or angels in order to know God's way of righteousness. When we meditate upon the Holy Scriptures, we are listening to **the voice of God.**

Let us listen now to what God said to Abram. In chapter twelve, verse one, we read: *"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.'"* Did you hear what God commanded Abram? He told Abram to leave his father's house, bid farewell to his relatives, leave his country, and move to a country to which God would lead him. To man's way of thinking, what God asked Abram to do was extremely difficult, but God had plans to greatly bless him.

Let us now reread this verse and the two verses that follow, to know **why** God called Abram to leave his home and go to another country.

*"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's*

*household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

Why did God command Abram to move to another country? This is why: **God planned to make of Abram a new nation from which the prophets of God and the Savior of the world would arise.** That is why God promised Abram saying, "*I will make you into a great nation...and you will be a blessing...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*"

Here is a **great truth**. Do you understand it? God chose Abram to become the father of the ancestors through which the promised Redeemer would come into the world. This Redeemer was destined to be the Savior for all the peoples of the world, so that whoever believes in Him, might be saved from the dominion of sin and Satan, and from the eternal fire. Thus, we see that when God called Abram, He was moving forward with His plan to send the Savior of sinners into the world. Abram himself was not the Savior of the world, but **he was to become the father of a nation from which the promised Savior would come.**

That is the promise {or *covenant*} God made to Abram-on the condition that he leave his country and go to the place that God would show him. Did Abram obey God? What do you think? The Word of God tells us:

*"So Abram left, as the Lord had told him...Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there."*

Why did Abram obey God, turning his back on his father's home and religion? There is only one reason. **Abram had confidence in God.** Abram did not know where he was

going, but he believed the word of the Lord which said, "Move out! If you move, I will greatly bless you!" Abram had confidence in God and left his country as the Lord God had told him. And God, in His faithfulness, led Abram to the land of **Canaan**, which today is called *Palestine* or *Israel*.

Next, the Scriptures say: "*Abram traveled through the land...At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The Lord appeared to Abram and said, **To your offspring I will give this land.***" Thus we learn that God, who promised to make Abram the father of a new nation, also promised him a new country as well. That is what God meant when He appeared to Abram and promised him, "*To your offspring I will give this land.*"

Again, we see something which surpasses human wisdom. The land of Canaan had people living throughout it. How could Abram and his descendants possess it? **Abram was seventy-five years old. His wife was sixty-five and childless.** Could two elderly people have enough children and descendants to fill the land? How could this happen?

Let us try to illustrate what God promised Abram. It is like an elderly man who has no children and comes from a far off land to visit South Africa. He comes with his elderly wife, who has never been able to conceive. When they arrive, someone says to them, "One day you and your descendants will possess the whole of South Africa!" The old man laughs and says, "You are very funny! My descendants are going to possess the land? I do not even have any descendants! I am an old man; I have no children, and my wife is unable to conceive--and you say to me that my descendants are going to multiply and possess South Africa? Are you ill?"

Perhaps this illustration seems a little absurd; never-the-less, this is the kind of promise God made to Abram--to a man who was old and childless, with a wife who could not conceive. Listen to what God promised Abram in chapter thirteen. He said,

*"All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your*

*offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."*

**Did God do what He promised?** Did He make of Abram a great nation? Did He give the land of Palestine to Abram's descendants? He surely did! In future lessons we will see that Abram became the father of the Hebrew nation to which God gave the land that, today, is called *Israel*.

Next, the Scriptures say: *"So [Abram] built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him. From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent.... There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord."* What was the first thing that Abram did, upon arriving in the new country that God had promised to give him? He slaughtered an animal and burned it on an altar he constructed. Just as Abel, Seth, Enoch and Noah did, Abram, in the same way, offered up animal sacrifices to God. Why did Abram do this? He did it because God had not done away with His law that states: *"Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin!"* **Abram, like all of Adam's offspring, was a sinner.** The only reason God could overlook Abram's sins was because Abram believed God and brought to Him **the blood of a sacrifice**, which was an illustration of **the holy Redeemer** who was to come into the world to die in the place of sinners.

Our time is about up. What we have studied today is very important and must not be forgotten. Do you understand now **why** God called Abram to turn his back on his father's house and move to another country? Yes, God intended to make of Abram **a new nation**, which would be a *"door of blessing"* for all peoples of the earth. What God planned to do with Abram was **part of the wonderful plan** that He announced in the Garden of Paradise on the day that our ancestors, Adam and Eve, sinned. Do you remember how God had promised One who would come into the world to deliver the children of Adam from the

power of Satan? Two thousand years later, in the time of Abram, **God had not forgotten His promise.**

Today we have seen how God, in His faithfulness, called Abram so that he might become the father of a nation through which the promised Savior would come into the world. That was why God promised Abram saying, *"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

Have you grasped today's lesson? Allow us to ask you a couple of questions which summarize what we have studied today. **First: Why did God call Abram to leave home and go to another country?** Because God planned to make of Abram a new nation. **Second: Why did God want to make of Abram a new nation?** Because it was through this nation that God planned to give us the prophets, the Scriptures and at last, the holy Redeemer Himself. Thus, in summary, we see that when God called Abram, **God was moving forward with His plan to bring into the world the Savior of sinners.**

Friends, we must stop here today. In our next lesson, God willing, we will learn why Abram was called "the friend of God."...God bless you as you meditate on His promise to Abram:

*"I will make you into a great nation. You will be a blessing...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

If you would like more information about *The Way of Righteousness*, please visit the website: [one-god-one-message.com](http://one-god-one-message.com)

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