

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 the last lesson, we began to look into what God's Word says about the prophet Abraham. We learned that, at first, Abraham was not called Abraham, but **Abram**. We saw that Abram was born in the country of Chaldea, which today is called Iraq. The people of that land were idol worshipers. However, the Scriptures say that, one day, the Lord God appeared to Abram and told him to leave his father's house and move to a country that He would show him.

Do you remember **why** God called Abram to move to another country? It was because God planned to make of Abram **a new nation** from which the prophets of God would arise, and ultimately, the Savior of the world Himself. Thus, we discovered that when God called Abram, He was moving forward with **His plan** to bring the Redeemer into the world. That is why God said to Abram, *"You will be a blessing...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

Thus, we read how Abram obeyed God and left his city, not knowing where God would lead him. When Abram left his father's house, he was seventy-five years old. Abram took with him Sarai, his wife, and Lot, the son of his older brother, and all his accumulated wealth and his servants, and headed in the

direction of Canaan. Canaan is the land that today is known as Palestine or Israel.

When Abram arrived in the land of Canaan, the Lord appeared to him again and said, *"To your offspring I will give this land."* Thus we saw how God, who promised to make Abram the father of a new nation, also promised to give him a new land for his offspring to dwell in. Incredible! Abram and his wife were elderly and did not have any children. How then could they have descendants who would fill the land? We will soon see God's answer to this.

Now, let us continue in the story of Abram. We are studying in the Torah, in the book of Genesis, chapter thirteen. In this chapter we will see **what happened between Abram and his nephew Lot**. The Scriptures say:

*Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold. ...He went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the Lord. Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarreling arose between Abram's herdsmen and the herdsmen of Lot... So Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are brothers. Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. **If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left.**"*

*^oLot looked up and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, toward Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: **Abram** lived in the land of Canaan, while **Lot** lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.*

Thus we see how Lot chose the more verdant fields, and left his uncle Abram with the drier ones. However the portion that Lot chose was in the region of Sodom—a city that was filled with great wickedness!

Lot chose **his own will**, while Abram chose **God's will**. Two studies from now, Lord willing, we will see what happened to Lot who followed his own desires. In the end, Lot lost everything: his riches, his wife, his family, his happiness, and his testimony! As for Abram, who left everything in the hands of God, he was greatly blessed by God.

How can we profit from the story of Lot and Abram? Perhaps by asking ourselves a simple question. Which of the two am I most like? **Lot** or **Abram**? Am I seeking after **the things of the world**, like Lot? Or **the things of Eternity**, like Abram? Like the two of them, each of us must choose between our own will and God's will. The one who is wise will choose God's will. The Scriptures say: *"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" "Do not love the world or anything in the world...[Because] the world and its desires pass away, **but the man who does the will of God lives forever.**"* What is it that you want more than anything else? The things of the earth that are passing away or things of God, which last forever?

Now, let's continue with the story of Abram. The Scriptures say:

*The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. **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." So Abram moved his tents and went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he built an altar to the Lord. After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward." But Abram said, "O Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir." Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir." He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars, if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." **Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.***

Incredible! Abram and his wife were elderly and had no child. Yet God continued to make promises to Abram concerning a great people that would issue from him. How could this be? How could Abram become the father of a great nation? There is only one answer: The Lord God is the God who can do

all things! God is great! Nothing is impossible for Him! What God promises God performs.

What about Abram? Did he believe the Lord, who had promised an "impossible" thing? Listen to what the Scripture says: "**Abram believed the Lord, and He credited it to him as righteousness!**" What a wonderful thing! God had promised Abram something that, humanly speaking, could not happen. Yet how did Abram respond? He **believed** what God had promised him! And what did God do? **God judged Abram as one who is righteous, because of his faith!**

This truth ought to thrill the hearts of those who want to be counted as righteous before God. Why did God judge Abram as one who is righteous? Was Abram a righteous person in himself? No! In our next lesson we will see how Abram had a sinner's nature, like every descendant of Adam. Why then did God count Abram as righteous? **God counted Abram as one who is righteous, because Abram believed what God said!**

What does it mean to believe God? As you may know, the Scriptures of the Prophets were written in the Hebrew language. In Hebrew, the word for "believe" is "**AMAN**" from which we get our word **Amen**. When you say "Amen" you are simply saying, "Yes! It is true!" or "Yes, I agree!" This is what it means to believe. When God made a promise to Abram, Abram's heart response was: "Amen! Yes! It is true! I believe your words!" **Based on that simple "Amen" to the word of God, God counted Abram as righteous.**

How about you? Do you want God to count you as one who is righteous, as He counted Abram righteous? Then you must believe God as Abram believed

God. **You must believe what God says, even if it is not easy.** You must accept the true Word of God, even if your relatives or your friends do not believe it. God wants to clothe you in His righteousness and give you the right to live in His holy presence forever, but **you must believe His Word!** The Holy Scriptures say:

*"...without faith it is **impossible** to please God!" and that "it is by grace that you are saved, **through faith**-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-**not by works**, so that no one can boast."*

*"What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about-but not before God. What does the Scripture say? '**Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.**'"*

Abram believed what God said. That is the reason that God imparted to him His perfect righteousness. And the most wonderful thing in all of this is that the words *"Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness"* are not just for Abram. We too can have a share in these words. **God will impart to us His perfect righteousness-if we believe the Good News of God** concerning the Redeemer who later came into the world through the lineage of Abraham.

How about you? **Do you really believe God?** We are not asking if you believe that **God exists**, or if you believe that **God is one**. The Scriptures speak of that kind of "faith," saying: *"You believe that there is one God. Good! **Even the demons believe that-and shudder!**"* Satan himself knows that there

is only one God. Believing that there is one God, will **not** cause God to forgive your sins and count you as one who is righteous! What God wants is for you to **believe His Word and receive it**. God wants to speak to you through the Writings of the Prophets. He wants you to know and to believe the news of salvation that shows how you can be made forever righteous before God, the Holy One!

Dear friend, has God clothed you with **His righteousness**? Or are you merely wearing the clothes of religion? Are you listening to the trustworthy **Word of God**? Or to the passing words of men? Do you **know** what the Holy Scriptures declare concerning the righteous way of salvation that God has established? Have you **believed** it?

As for Abram, he believed the word of God, although it meant bidding farewell to his relatives and his father's religion. And that is precisely why he was called ***the friend of God***. That is what the Scriptures say: ***"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend."*** How about you? Are you a friend of God?

This is where we must stop today. We thank you for listening and invite you to join us next time as we look at the story of Abram and Ishmael....

God bless you as you think about this great verse from His Book:

"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend."

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

That website again is: one-god-one-message.com