

7:2 And he said, "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.

- ✓ In Stephen's address, to Israel's religious leaders, let us notice how God reveals Himself, 'the God of glory'. Glory is connected to rulership and to appear as the God of glory, a Messianic title, is to reintroduce at this point in man's history, the glory that had been lost and the redemptive process by which it will be regained. This is seen connected to one man, Abraham, a 3rd son, through whom this redemption would be accomplished in his Seed.

Psalms 24:7 *Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.*

- ✓ Glory is connected to rulership in the coming 7th Day; The Lord's Day; The Messianic Era or the Age to come.
- ✓ In *Acts 7*, we see that God appears to Abraham while he is still in Mesopotamia, before he travels to Haran. And while still in the land of his birth God gives Abraham specific instructions as to what He wants him to do;
 - He is to 'Get out' of his country, to 'Get out' from his relatives and he is 'to come' to a land that God would show him; he is to leave one place to go to another for a purpose.
- ✓ If we can remember from the Biblical Timeline, God's dealings with Abraham begin after 2000 years of human history have passed, or to say this same thing another way in the light of Peter –

2Pet 3:8 *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

- ✓ It is on the 3rd day that Abraham is called to leave the land of his birth to go to the land of his calling and in this Abraham, foreshadows the nation that will come from his loins. Israel, who will be removed from the Gentile nations and brought to the land promised to Abraham on the 3rd/7th Day.
- ✓ Then on another level entirely, all Christians have received the same command given to Abraham so that the Lord may take them to the land of their calling on the 3rd Day.
- ✓ And whether we look at Abraham, Israel or ourselves, there is a journey involved to take us to the fulfillment of God's purpose. Or we could say, there is a process that must be completed as theirs was an earthly real journey to the promised land, picturing for us our spiritual journey to our promised land, 'the heavenly land'.

Gen 11:31 *And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. 32 So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.*

- ✓ Here at the end of Genesis Chapter 11, we are given the initial account of Abram's departure from Ur of the Chaldeans, but it's important to remember when God appeared to Abraham. Stephen in Acts states that Abraham was still in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran when that happened. Very important point to keep in mind.

7:2 And he said, "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.*

- ✓ The beginning of Chapter 12 drops back to give further detail.

Gen 12:1 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.*"

- ✓ It is in these verses that we first see God's purpose in taking Abram to a land that He will show him.
 - For God to make Abram 'a great nation'
 - For God to 'bless him' and make 'his name great'
 - For Abram to 'be a blessing'
 - For God to 'bless those who bless' Abram and 'curse those who curse him'
 - In Abram 'all the families of the earth shall be blessed'
- ✓ These are great and precious promises, but those promises are conditional – 'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house'
 - And the first thing we can note here is that God called Abram alone with respect to His command and the promises.
 - Although still Abraham's family, God did not call Terah and He did not call Lot. It is Abram who is the recipient of the promises not his father nor his nephew – one man, who has a God.
- ✓ In the Book of Hebrews, we can find additional commentary on this –

Heb 11:8 *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.*

 - We can see here that Abraham acted 'by faith' when 'he was called to go out', showing us clearly that he was eternally redeemed prior to leaving Ur of the Chaldeans (How would he have been eternally redeemed?)
 - He acted 'by faith'. He believed that which God had said, but we see from the Genesis account that Abram's faith was not yet complete. He obeyed with respect to leaving Ur but did not come out of his father's house and from his family as we see both Terah and Lot going with him.
 - And as result of this partial obedience Abram, Terah and Lot came to Haran and 'dwelt there'. The journey to the land that God would show him stopped and at this point the promises were out of reach.
- ✓ Now, let's look at some of the symbolism for a moment.
 - Abram was to 'Get out' of Ur of the Chaldeans and we would want to see Ur here in the same way that we see Egypt in Exodus – a type of the world under the god of this world. The name 'Ur'

IN THE BEGINNING – PART 7

literally means ‘flame’ symbolizing judgment and the Chaldeans were a pagan people embroiled in the worship of demonic idols.

- To put these 2 together we can see that Abram was to get out from a place picturing the world under Satan that could ultimately only bring judgment, resulting in destruction as we see with the cities of the plain.
- ✓ To bring this into our own experience.
 - We all received spiritual birth while residing in a **world under judgment, under the sway of the wicked one, typified in Ur of the Chaldeans.**
 - And in this respect, we have received the same calling as Abram, ‘**Get out**’, so that God can take us **to a heavenly land** that He will show us.
 - In that which happens after Abram left Ur we will also find spiritual truth for ourselves. ‘**Haran**’ literally means ‘**parched**’, a **dry place with an absence of water**. Symbolically then a place **devoid of the Word so that we may be neither washed nor sustained.**
 - And it is in this place that Abram dwelt for several years and where he had to **stay until the death of his father Terah.**
- ✓ Why was it that Abram was only partially obedient when it came to leaving Ur?
Prov. 3:7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
 - Simply, because he was wise in his own eyes. He did not sufficiently fear the Lord and he thought he knew better than the God who had given him spiritual life.
 - And so, **he is delayed** [**the meaning of the name Terah**] in a place symbolizing spiritual drought, a place **where fruit cannot be produced – Until.**
 - Until there is a death – **the death of Terah**, who **symbolizes the old man, the sin nature, the first birth.**
- ✓ And the lesson to be learned from this is not hard to see – to trust God completely necessitates the death of self and until and unless we are prepared to do this there can be no progress towards the land of our calling, we will find ourselves dwelling in ‘Haran’.

Gen. 12:4 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.

- ✓ When **Abram finally left Haran**, ‘as the Lord had spoken to him’, **after the death of his father we see that Lot went with him.** The complete detachment that God asked for is still not there. However, Lot accompanying Abram provides another facet of the overall picture allowing for the Lord to use the interaction of the lives of these 2 men to teach us great spiritual truths.
- ✓ To begin with let's look at the other facet of the overall picture.
 - Terah's death as we saw is a type of the death of self which is to be our continual practice, but we know that dying to self does not eradicate our sin nature.
 - The old man continues with us on our journey whether we like it or not and this is what Lot symbolizes as he continues with Abram.

IN THE BEGINNING – PART 7

- It is the same picture we saw earlier with the darkness existing alongside the light in Genesis Chapter 1 and Cain with Abel in Genesis Chapter 4 – and we might note that even after the birth of Seth, Cain continues to live.
- ✓ But let's also remember that although Lot accompanied Abram, it is Abram alone who had been called and Abram alone who would be given an inheritance, not Lot.
- ✓ The very same truth we see taught later through Isaac and Ishmael
Gal. 4:30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."
- ✓ There is no inheritance for the old man only for the new man.
- ✓ As we reflect on what we have learned today let's remember we are dealing with the process. The account of Abraham not only reveals his own process to spiritual maturity, but also typifies the process to Israel's restoration and our own process to maturity.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

We will continue with the journey of Abraham next time God willing. Let us remain diligent!
1Tim.2:15-19

Questions

1. Read Acts 7:2-3 – What title is given to God in these verses and what is significant about that?

2. Where is Abram when God appears to him?

a. How do we know that he is eternally saved at this point?

b. What instructions is Abram given?

3. Where on the Biblical Timeline do we find Abraham and what do the instructions we have just seen given to him foreshadow?

4. Read Genesis 11:31-12:3 – What information is given to us in these verses concerning Abram?

5. What is typified through Ur of the Chaldeans and what is pictured through Abram being commanded to leave there?
6. What were the promises given to Abram at the beginning of Genesis Chapter 12 conditioned upon and did Abram obey the commands he was given?
7. Because of only being partially obedient, where does Abram end up? What do we learn from this? How long does he have to stay there and what do we learn from this?
8. When Abram finally leaves Haran he takes Lot with him – how should we understand what this teaches us?
9. Where else in Genesis do we see this same truth taught? Which scripture did we look at connected with this and what does that scripture teach us?