



Message 10-28-17
Lech Lecha-Go Forth Yourself
Genesis 12:1-17:27
Isaiah 40:27-41:16
Hebrews 11:8-10

Introduction

Last week we had the story of Noah and the flood and its aftermath. This week we move on to Abraham. Isn't it amazing how the Book of Genesis moves so quickly from one event to another leaving us hanging for more details on some of the things that we are reading? From the beginning of this week's Parashah, we see transitions and new beginnings. God tells our ancestor Abraham to cut off his connection to a past rooted in ways that are not pleasing to the Lord, seek a change, and go to a new place.

Genesis 12:1-7

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." **4** So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. **5** And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, **6** Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time, the Canaanites were in the land. **7** Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So, he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. (ESV)

How many of us would do what Abram did? The Lord speaks to him and tells him to pack up and move to a land, and He will show him the way. It is apparent that as part of doing this, God will bless Abram and make his name great so Abram would become a blessing. All the families of the earth would be blessed through him. This is the interesting part. Why? Because the blessing is not being limited only to the Jewish people who have not even come officially into existence yet. Abram has not yet become the father of a nation. He is a *goy*, which for all intents and purposes means a non-Jew, so the father of the Hebrew people started out as a *goy*. Once he enters into Canaan, he becomes an *Ivri* or Hebrew, which means

boundary crosser. He crossed over the Jordan, and that was a boundary, but in many ways it was the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise of a land that would become an inheritance for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all members of the same family carrying the same promise as servants of the Living God.

It is in this promise we see that God's people would be more than Israel because into Israel would come people from every nation on the face of the earth. It would be in Israel that God's promises would happen, and Jew and Gentile would become one people united in Israel by the power of the Messiah Yeshua. This is far greater than the two houses of Israel, Judah, and Ephraim. The two-house problem, that so many in the Messianic movement want to avoid, is the fear on the part of Judah that Ephraim will come in, do what the church did, overwhelm the Jewish part, and turn the Messianic Jewish movement into another offspring of Christianity. The reality of Judah and Ephraim is not about two houses but one house united through faith in Messiah and educated by Torah, the covenant for all Believers in Messiah.

Genesis 17:1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, ² that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." (ESV)

Abram walked with God a very long time waiting for the promises that were given to him to happen. He longed for a son. He desired an heir who would come from him and not someone from outside his family, no matter how loyal he was. This is the desire of so many people. They want someone who can carry on with their legacy. In Abram's case, it would be the future of the Hebrew nation he would bring forth through a son, a promised son, a picture of the Son who would come from the Holy One of Israel. God would make a covenant between Abram and Himself with the intention of greatly increasing Abram through his descendants. Abram did not see the bigger picture yet because he was so focused on his desire for a son. Had he focused more on God, he would have understood what God was going to do through him.

Isaiah 40:27-31

27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? ²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. ³⁰ Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ³¹ but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (ESV)

Who is Jacob and who is Israel? Why are they mentioned in this passage from Isaiah and in other places in Scripture in the same way? When referring to Jacob, God is talking about them in the flesh, and when He talks about them as Israel, He is referring to them as being spiritual. This does not mean they have attained that goal because many times Israel is referred to as Israel, and they are far from being a spiritual people. Jacob and Israel question God and look only to themselves instead of remembering the covenant. Jacob struggled to be worthy of the covenant. He struggled with God to overcome his doubt. He walked in fear until he encountered his brother and made peace for what had happened so long ago. Once he did this, Esau accepted that his place was not in the land promised to the firstborn. He was the firstborn of Isaac, but Jacob was the firstborn of God.

The Lord carried Jacob and made him into Israel. Israel fluctuated back and forth between the spiritual and the earthly trying to do as God wanted them to by keeping His Torah, which is the embodiment of the Messiah Yeshua. So, to embrace Torah is to embrace Messiah and walk in His ways always.

Hebrews 11:8-10

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (NRS)

Why the reference to tents for the patriarchs? Because it tells us that our fathers were temporary inhabitants of a land that had been promised to their descendants through them. It would be when the nation of Israel rose up that they would dwell in tents for forty years in the wilderness. Once they came into the land of Canaan and conquered what they could, then they could settle the land and build permanent homes to show the land was theirs because God had given it to Abraham, then to Isaac and finally to Jacob and his descendants.

The patriarchs were all heirs to the same promise. They all looked to the day the city that had been shown to them would be built by God. That city would be the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:10 He carried me off in the Spirit to the top of a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city, Yerushalayim, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ It had the *Sh'khinah* of God, so that its brilliance was like that of a priceless jewel, like a crystal-clear diamond. ¹² It had a great, high wall with twelve gates; at the gates were twelve angels; and inscribed on the gates were the names of the twelve tribes of Isra'el. ¹³ There were three gates to the east, three gates to the north, three gates to the south and three gates to the west. ¹⁴ The wall of the city was built on twelve foundation-stones, and on these were the twelve names of the twelve emissaries of the Lamb. ¹⁵ The angel speaking with me had a gold

measuring-rod with which to measure the city, its gates and its wall. ¹⁶ The city is laid out in a square, its length equal to its width. With his rod he measured the city at 1,500 miles, with length, width and height the same. ¹⁷ He measured its wall at 216 feet by human standards of measurement, which the angel was using. ¹⁸ The wall was made of diamond and the city of pure gold resembling pure glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the city wall were decorated with all kinds of precious stones- the first foundation stone was diamond, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh turquoise and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls, with each gate made of a single pearl. The city's main street was pure gold, transparent as glass. ²² I saw no Temple in the city, for *ADONAI*, God of heaven's armies, is its Temple, as is the Lamb. ²³ The city has no need for the sun or the moon to shine on it, because God's *Sh'khinah* gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ Its gates will never close, they stay open all day because night will not exist there, ²⁶ and the honor and splendor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure may enter it, nor anyone who does shameful things or lies; the only ones who may enter are those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (CJB)

The Apostle John was shown this vision of the day the New Jerusalem would come down from Heaven to rest upon the earth. This would-be center of everything. God's very presence and perhaps His glory would reside in it. His *Shekinah* will fill this city and give it light and the lamp will be the lamb, the Son of God – Yeshua.

John describes this city in detail, built with everything precious to man and to God. Finally, man would come into union with his Creator. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit will join with mankind to raise them up higher than the angels finally fulfilling the promise of mankind's place in God's kingdom.

1 Corinthians 6:3 Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! (ESV)

Man has always been destined for something far greater than he realizes or understands. Even those of us who place our faith in Yeshua do not fully comprehend what is coming. If we walk in faith in Messiah, follow Torah, and study it, we can come to understand what the Lord intends for us. Something wonderful is coming, my friends. A blessing that was intended for man from the very beginning. The day is fast approaching when we will finally be ready for it.

Torah Man says, "The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it."

Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,

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