

Where on earth am I going

Abraham - A journey of FAITH

Talk given by Andy Coomar at Bridge Lane on Sunday 12 October 2008.

EGYPT, to a bible believer, epitomises two things. SLAVERY and the WORLD SYSTEM (EGYPT/MIZRAIM actually means The Limit)

The limit or the very extremity of where man can go or be taken.

Abraham needn't have travelled so far south. GOD's promised land was where he had been. Israel, in later years have proved this to be true. CANAAN is where they are now. What's happening in Israel now is the fulfilment of GOD's promise to Abraham...it's a living miracle!

A land that was totally barren and desolate - now springs into life (Mark Twain....)

Abraham had actually missed what GOD had promised originally (a place of blessing and a land of promise).

It came in a different package. It was not what he expected.

Jesus came in exactly the same way and the world mistook him. He was not packaged in a GODlike wrapper!

Quite often we can miss what GOD is saying or what HE's doing in our lives and in our church. He's there...and we don't even see HIM! WHY?...because it didn't look like GOD!

It may not be what you were expecting or not necessarily what you were praying about, but nevertheless, it's the LORD.

When you 'go to EGYPT', you have to conform with the city. You need to adapt and adopt it's own unique culture and lifestyle. Many Jews were assimilated into the lifestyle of Egypt and became Egyptians in their ways and thinking.

The sad truth is once GOD took Israel out of Egypt.... now HE has to take Egypt out of Israel.

Abraham discovered the implications of his wrong turn:

He now found himself taking the easy route down to Egypt

He was forced to act on his wits

He started to employ cunning and subterfuge

He began to rely on his own means of strength and sustenance

He was for a season, lulled into a sense of false security

He began to enjoy his own little comfort zone

The direct outcome was:

He had to lie about his wife Sarai (she's my sister)

He brought shame upon his own head and that of his wife's

Judgement is released on the house of Pharaoh

Sarah chooses HAGAR* and Egyptian woman as the surrogate

Began to use human direction instead of divine appointment, no covering for Abraham's family and his wife is exposed

* Satan wanted to infiltrate the seed of woman - from the garden. He knew the promise and was determined to act against it. Sarah was nearly compromised & Satan would have won

We have a choice of either allowing the WORD to influence the WORLD or allow the WORLD to influence the WORD.

That will often be born out in hollow worship and unimpactful ministry resulting in a compromised church.

So often, it's not a complete change of scenery or a complete rewrite of your life...it's having the humility to RETURN to where you began or where you ran away from.

As we leave Egypt, the sad truth is that we cannot undo the consequences of a bad decision. Have you ever experienced that in your life and walk?

Not only was it a really bad move to go to Egypt, Abraham picked up 'baggage' which he has never been able to shake off!

The consequences of Abraham's wrong turn are with the Jews today and all the tension and strife in the middle east stems from an age old rivalry centred around the covenants of GOD.

READ GENESIS 16:11 (About Ishmael and his character)

Abraham travelled from Bethel - Negev - Egypt
Now he has to reverse the journey from Egypt - Negev - Bethel

He ends up coming back to BETHEL (the House of GOD), where he will once again begin to find some closure and make sense in all his troubles. He comes back to where his tents had been previously.

Now, it took 11 years of wandering from Haran to Egypt and another 13 years of Abraham's life before the promised ISAAC would be born (and Abraham would have turned 99)

We can also end up losing an awful lot of time and energy when we take a wrong turn. You just can't undo bad stuff.

Interesting to note that there was no altar raised between the NEGEV and EGYPT, nor was there any visitation from the LORD. The only visitation was GOD's anger with the plagues!

He then moves up to HEBRON which means 'fellowship' and conveys the idea of 'bricks cemented together'

Abraham builds an altar to GOD in HEBRON.

There is always a place of FELLOWSHIP with GOD when a humble and penitent heart returns to the LORD. HE has demonstrated time and time again that HIS anger is but for a moment. GOD seeks fellowship with HIS creation. It is HIS ancient will and deep hearted need to love you. HE literally died to have it!

And yet, fellowship with GOD is the one thing we fail to give HIM. We have time for everything

else - everything is so legitimate and needful - but we end up short changing GOD - and HE still continues to LOVE us and pour GRACE over our heads! You know what we do...we like to get away from it all and take long break and hope we can recover and 'recharge our batteries, so to speak...what we need is fellowship with GOD!

The saint that has had a visitation from GOD (in the heart) and remained in fellowship with GOD will be ready and strong for the next phase.

Abraham then moves on to SIDDIM (The salt pits/ Slime pits) where the battle takes place.

As a Christian, you're not exempt from battle - it's a fact of christian experience that every believer will inevitably be drawn into warfare and depending on your armour and faith you will have to face a calculating tyrant who will show you no mercy in dealing with you.

"The weapons of our warfare" the Bible says, "are not carnal, but are mighty in GOD for pulling down strongholds".

Abraham, a city slicker turned tent dweller now takes on the out of character role of warrior!

He's driven by a passion to defend the life and honour of his family (Lot).

He comes against the Kings of the Valley and rescues Lot with a handfull of his own armed servants (318 trained servants).

Abraham demonstrates to us 6 warfare principles:

1. Driven by a passion for the family (family of GOD)
2. There's not a hint of hesitation and doubt (no debate)
3. Had a strategy (divided the armed servants into 2 groups)
4. Used the element of surprise (night time attack)
5. Did not give up till he had the victory
6. Only took what belonged to him (no personal gain or glory)

We are then introduced to this mysterious character called

MELCHIZEDEK King of SALEM (Peace)

This King comes to meet Abraham after the battle and refreshes him with bread and wine and attributes the victory to GOD MOST HIGH (EL ELYON)

It reminds me of Jesus after the resuurrection, when He appeared to the disciples on the seashore, very early in the morning and cooked breakfast for them

This Melchizedek is the King of SALEM (Peace) which is exactly where Jerusalem is now (Yerushalayim).

Abraham actually gets to be where the most Holy City to GOD is to be located in years to come, where GOD's Own Prince of Peace would be crucified and offered up for the sins of the world.

Abraham offers Melchizedek a tithe of all that was taken but kept nothing for himself. It's an overflow of gratitude to GOD.

In the battles of the world, the end result is spoil.
With GOD there may not be spoils to take but we win over and win back huge swathes of enemy territory for the kingdom everytime we win through for GOD.

After the battle, Abraham discovers a new depth in GOD, he now begins to understand the name and character of GOD.. El Elyon...The Most High GOD.

We will discover new depths in GOD after we've been through our own battles and wars. The warfare experience is always tough, it's always painful and you will always discover more of GOD in and through the experience...believe me!

Our final stop on this journey is MORIAH.

MORIAH was the ultimate place of WORSHIP.

Site of first Temple (Solomon's) - 2 Chon 3:12

Worship is the supreme act of service any believer can offer GOD. It involves all your senses (your whole body), your emotions, your motives and your conscience.

Abraham..."the lad and I will go yonder and worship.."

MORIAH was the ultimate call to OBEDIENCE.

No terms were offered to Abraham...he simply obeyed!

He must have had a clear understanding in his heart that GOD would raise Isaac from the ashes (HEB 11:17-20)

MORIAH was the ultimate covenant of TRUST.

Abraham clearly trusted GOD. Isaac was a miracle child, Sarah's was a miracle birth, Lot's rescue from S & G was a miracle...why should he not continue to trust his miracle working GOD?

When you're on a roll with GOD you really grow in your faith.

Many of us have experienced real high's with GOD and then mostly lows.

GOD is a miracle working GOD and none of you are exempt from experiencing His miracles (big and small!).

For many christians, their faith is mostly based on 'experiential faith' - ie the GOD they know is based solely on their experience of Him in their lives.

We need to understand the character of GOD, HIS declared will and His express promises and covenants to have a faith that will last.

Through Isaac a "great nation was to be born" - covenant

MORIAH was the ultimate place of TESTING.

"GOD tested Abraham..." GOD will test you...why? because He mistrusts you, does He doubt your integrity? NO!!

Testing is part of the growing process... GENESIS 22:16 "By Myself....not withheld...your only son..."

God's heartbeat for mankind...Abraham let off...Jesus took fall

Every one of us will be taken to Moriah at some point in our lives. When you're on the altar...living sacrifice.