

# God's grace exemplified in Abraham and his seed

## (Quality: Very good)

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Date: 30 March 2008

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[ 0 : 00 ] This evening I will ask your attention to the chapter that we've read together this evening. That is the 41st chapter in Isaiah's prophecy.

I want to speak from verse 2 down to the 4th verse, 2, 3 and 4.

Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him and made him to rule over kings.

He gave them as the dust to his sword and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them and passed safely, even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.

The question follows, who hath wrought and done it? Calling the generations from the beginning, I the Lord the first and with the last, I am he.

[ 1 : 20 ] I believe that the righteous man here particularly is Abram.

And when we think of who Abram was, where he was, the condition in which he was found by nature, we have some idea of the application of the Lord's intervention in his life's experience to make him the man that he was made.

To make him the person who has been set before us throughout scripture as a most eminent leader and father of the spiritual Israel.

And although we know that Jews in nature boast very personally about being children of Abraham, we have Abram to our father, they said in answer to a question by the Lord, and they boasted an advantage that by natural generation they could trace back their forebears and arrive at Abraham.

Now who was Abraham? Where was Abraham? Who was Abraham? Well, he was from Ur of the Chaldees.

[ 3 : 07 ] He was, as it were, completely immersed in idolatrous worship. He was a man that we might say, surely, circumstantially, was imprisoned to the darkness of deception, as idolatry is essentially in that category.

It's a terrible deception to have any inclination to give credence and worship to idols.

Now Abraham, and some have given figures with regard to the number of idols that existed in Ur of the Chaldees when Abraham was born into that situation.

But whatever the strength and whatever the numerity of idols existed, God had a purpose through this man to execute.

And we might venture to say, is still executing to this present moment of time. Blessed be his holy name.

[ 4 : 37 ] Because Abraham's fatherhood doesn't exist only to identify those descendants of his in the flesh.

More particularly, does the fatherhood of Abraham in Israel associate with his position as the father of the faithful, that is, those that are chosen and become the children of the living God.

Now, listen, who raised up the righteous man from the east? Who but God could make Abraham to be what the whole history from that early time when God began to call him out and to separate him as a most remarkable character whose fame, if I may use that expression humbly and with reference to a fellow sinner because we must acknowledge that Abraham had his weaknesses as well as great strength through faith in the Lord his God.

Nevertheless, the one that ordained Abraham to be what he was and what he is and what he will be till the last chosen child and seed of Abraham according to the Spirit will be perfectly prepared of God and taken to glory to be with Abraham on high forevermore.

Now, wonderful things are contained in the early part of the Bible relative to Abraham's experience early experience called out called out with an effectual call made willing in the purposes of God to do this and apply this to your own circumstance and possible future.

[ 7 : 11 ] He went out not knowing whether he went. The future was completely outside of his comprehension.

He had a call from God he knew the power of God in that call and he responded and he responded in one exercise he knew he was doing God's will in what he was doing.

He went out not knowing whither he went. Now, that's a tremendous challenge as it were to all the resources of our nature to be persuaded in the will of God not having as it were any qualification naturally speaking or disposition to meet the unknown.

You and I have had certain phases in our life when perhaps we've been caught upon to do something and we didn't fully appreciate what was entailed in doing it.

Now, that was Abraham's position and he gathered up as it were his belongings and he took Lot with him and into the unknown he followed the Lord and proved the faithfulness of his God who raised up the righteous man from the east called him to his foot all my friends he was as I might say under the leading and control of omnipotency as he ventured forward and he was blessed with that measure of faith to believe that under God all will be well.

[ 9 : 27 ] Now, I could dwell upon this principle at some length being called out by God to some particular exercise some particular calling some particular responsibility.

It's a wonderful thing to get this clear in one's mind what I am doing is according to the will of God and one prays that the Lord will make his way plain before his face.

It's a good exercise to desire to be regulated and overruled by the good will of God because God knows the end from the beginning.

Abraham didn't know where it was going to lead him when he responded to God's call but God foreknew God had got the whole plan clearly before his mind before ever he communicated that to his servant Abraham but the response of faith to the will of God oh my friends it's a supernatural reaction there is that that wants things clear before we move but there is such a thing in the life of faith to be constrained as to the righteousness of the way and the need to cast one's care upon the Lord and venture amidst all your imperfections all your hindrances in your own heart and in your own mind and sometimes great difficulties circumstantially are imagined to deter that willing response to the sovereign call of

God Abraham was blessed with a single eye a humble spirit he was a wealthy man he went out blessed with great riches but nevertheless he was doing the will of God now who raised up the righteous man from the east called him to his foot gave the nations before him you know when we look at the proposal as we would view it from that situation God told him he said look come out as we mentioned this morning come out and look out to the heaven so shall thy seed be as many as the stars in the sky that Abraham could see

[ 12 : 52 ] God says this this is your portion as I've appointed it and God being faithful to his promise exercise no deceit in conveying that will to his servant's mind and spirit and Abraham could look to heaven and see the stars and realize that God had made him a simple person to be a follower in the will and purpose of the eternal God now what a small beginning in a sense what a small beginning and what incomprehensible issue and you know so much in life we have to venture and leave the issue in the hand of God but ever remember this that out of something very small

God can bring forth something very great small beginnings can lead to a voluminous issue well so we view the situation with Abraham don't we there he is with his few belongings and that sort of thing and his wife and Lot his brother's son and he goes off into a place foreknown by none short of his God in his positive leadings and dealings with his servant but just to carry on for a few moments who raised up a righteous man from the east called him to his foot gave nations before him made him rule over kings he gave them as the dust to the sword and as the driven stubble to his bow and look at the prosperity look at the ultimate issue that is presented to our minds that

Abraham a poor weak insufficient personality in himself God bestowed upon him the grace and prosperity to the fulfillment of those wonderful things in his experience and subsequently in the experience of his family and when I talk about the family of Abraham in that context I talk about the church of God through all generations those that are possessed of like precious faith with Abraham the point I wish to make particularly this evening is the essential trust in the leadings of our

God and my friends faith brings into captivity every alternative motion and notion of the flesh faith in the 11th chapter of the Hebrews is very clearly identified as a conquering grace conquering grace it has all sorts of oppositions all sorts of enemies it has personal objections as well as external influences positively suggesting a detrimental issue but when

God gives to us a clear direction in a certain way it is our wisdom to I was going to say be deaf to all other suggestions and to follow humbly the leadings of the Lord was Abraham in the flesh sufficient in and of himself to live out the life that he was called upon ultimately to expend of course he wasn't Abraham couldn't have been the man he was without the Lord God being with him the Lord God going before him the Lord God being his refuge and his everlasting all he was a man under sovereign influence to the accomplishment of God's sovereign and gracious purposes through his instrumentality

[ 19 : 10 ] I'm sure that anyone that may come into that category of exercise under the good hand of God will realize the mountain too high the difficulties too many and accept faith in God the future looks absolutely destructive when you think of Abraham going out not knowing whether he went he was just blessed with faith to believe that he that had given him the call would not leave him to perish in the outworking of the principle and my friends this is common to the seed of

Abraham this is in harmony with the way of God in the concerns of his if you want if you wait till everything is absolutely clear and without any alternatives militating against your obedience of faith in the will of God my friends you can be sure that you're not on a good foundation when we are brought to trust in the Lord leaving the consequences absolutely knowing that this God is so great that all the detail is subject to his will and to his power even the very hairs of your head are all numbers look how simple is the teaching of that consideration the

Lord that has the number of the hairs on your head in his control I say what else do you need to worry about when he looks at the minutest detail of our very being well now Abraham he had this confidence in his God and the Lord stood by him and the seed of Abraham are not called to walk in a unique and personal sameness the Lord has his will to perform not only to the detailed significance of every member of the body of

Christ each has his part each has his responsibility each shall I say has a function to maintain the good wisdom and purpose of God in the way that they walk the things that they do the positive side and the negative leading of God in the experiences of his people are not all yay they're yay and nay so did not I because of the fear of the Lord that there's a restraint even in the way of obedience as we may be led by the sovereign will and goodness of God we we

may consider the consequence of Abraham as it has materialized in subsequent history because God set him up as a pattern as a standard as it were upon which faith can meditate and faith can be strengthened and adventuring faith may operate in what I might term the way of a replication of the life that God ordained Abraham to pursue he made him rule over kings earthly prosperity relative strengths of the situation were lost in the sea of the divine will and purpose and you and

[ 27 : 59 ] I in the church of God especially in these days we may say our relative strength is very small comparatively look at the world look at the riches of the world look at the influence of those in high places look at those that are ready as it were to sell our national heritage into the hands of those that will not tolerate the very practice of the faith that we hold dear my friends yes we say well we're a dwindling minority ah if Abraham's God is our God we're in a stronger position than any enemy can boast of one praying man and the Lord is on his side is stronger than a thousand enemies I think has been said in years past that I've gathered up at some point of my reading you know if God be for us who then can be against us my concern at the present moment and I'm going to introduce just a remark built on our national circumstances at the present moment the loosening of some precious ties in our national life that made us appreciated in the world as a most blessed community a

Christian country but we're just throwing it away with one thing after the other and it seems as though the enemy is doing his utmost to humiliate us if not annihilate us ultimately but we're in a strong position if God is with us we have nothing to fear if the Lord is on our side Abraham went out all the weakness of his position the insufficiency of the supply to meet his future requirements and maintain his status as a responsible leader of the little band that went with him but my friends he was in such a strong position nations became subject to the overruling influence of those seed of

Abraham the church of the living God and you know this I felt sometimes very much lately the church has been the subject of Satan's malicious purposes to extinction right through right through history all the people of God have been a suffering remnant upon the face of the earth somewhat defended in our own national life by the former principles of Christianity which gave us a freedom which we're cherishing and guarding with all our power praying to God that he will preserve these liberties to us and to our children and grandchildren as the Lord may maintain the universe but my friends what are the nations of the earth before our

God what small things before God are big things to us and that 40th chapter of Isaiah and the principle seems to run into this 41st brings focuses our attention upon the wisdom of childlike confidence in the sufficiency of a heavenly father to do more for us than we can contemplate do you know what faith is do you know what faith does it brings things into perspective unbelief distorts our vision lose sight of God and we're in a mess because we've got no standard oh my friends the invaluable blessing of that which

Abraham was possessed he got a single eye to the sufficiency and glory of his maker and he could go not knowing what was ahead but believing all must be well say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him say to the wicked the person that is seeking as it were to do his own will to make his own way to feather his own nest say to the wicked it shall be ill with him but say to those that are on the Lord's side those that are simple and yet powerfully believing looking to the Lord praying to the Lord trusting in those precious promises of his word that a yea and amen in Christ Jesus heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall not pass away these are the conquerors these are those who ultimately will live and live forever more now yes we can talk about national contact we can talk about relative but two things are on my mind and one is once o'clock one is a call to the ministry if I say well of course it's natural that you should bring that forward it's very seldom that I preach on this subject not that I feel the churches are so well placed ministerially there's not room for much prayer the Lord will raise up and thrust out ministers to preach the gospel

[ 35 : 10 ] I feel that is a void that we need to continually pray for especially as the next generation comes along because a generation doesn't serve for very long a generation of preachers doesn't serve for very long it's a continual recurring necessity that the Lord will provide preachers upon the walls of Zion anointed by his servant prepared by anointed by him by his spirit and prepared of God in that necessary personal authority which is worked into the day-to-day experiences of those who have to come before the congregations with us thus saith the Lord the things that we've tasted handled and felt of the word of life not things that we've imagined but things that we know are true now there comes a time in the experience of those that receive the call to the ministry when they launch out into the deep no one will ever convey to another those special exercises which associate with gospel preaching a total and abiding sense of inadequacy for the task feeling such a fool so ignorant and yet committed and yet committed yet committed having as it were to go forward believing this is the will of

God I'm here today because I thought just like this yesterday but now my dear brother phone to say that you were without a preacher and could I possibly come well it didn't make me feel oh here's another opportunity for me to go over to Attleboro and show forth my friends I feel it's a mercy if the Lord spares me ever to come and when he puts words into my mouth that may under his blessing be useful then to him be the glory to him be the glory now I don't want to enlarge on that point but I want you to appreciate that one of the heaviest burdens and occupations that exist under the sun are a call to preach because it's mortification it's mortification it's mortification the Lord won't have his servants boast in themselves their accomplishments he brings them to realize their total dependence upon the

Holy Spirit and they're only adequate for the task as the Lord enables them to venture in faith believing that their mouth is God's instrument and their hearts are subject to his leading and his teaching as to what must be spoken now there's another thing if you wait till you feel you're just right to join the fellowship of the Lord's people I venture to recommend to you that you despair of ever being sufficient Abraham went out not knowing whither he went it was a venturing faith it's a venturing faith if you wait till you acquire a certain standard or embrace a certain testimony that you think will impress the whole fellowship and make them really surprised at the way the

Lord my friends the flesh is hungry for praise and God doesn't feed it God doesn't feed it he starves it but when the Lord makes his will and way known as he has in Holy Scripture relative to this particular matter he says simply follow me follow me and when he blesses you with faith to do that to respond to that call realizing you're nothing you don't think it will be any advantage to the fellowship for you to join it my friends you're looking in the wrong direction you're trusting in the wrong consideration the Lord has said he said to Abraham go out go out and

Abraham went out and God stood by Abraham God gave him prosperity God gave him a wonderful experience of the sufficiency of grace to uphold maintain and prosper and what do you want better than that what can you envisage better than that the Lord gives faith and honors the faith that he gives it's a wonderful thing when we find the Lord has done so much for me what can I do for him he says them that honor me I will honor I will honor adventuring faith God gives God honors the subject receiving the blessing and let me say this there's no more prosperous experience than to realize the blessing of God in the way that you may be led to take the blessing of the Lord it maketh rich and it addeth no sorrow with it

[ 42 : 35 ] I can look back this evening to May to July the 19th 1948 when I went through the waters of baptism at Rehoboth Chapel Coventry I can't tell you how the many multitudes of steps I've regretted having taken when I've done this and done that and done the other and I ought not to have done it I feel so often to have stumbled along in a profession but nevertheless I look back upon that privilege that was given to me on that particular evening and the blessing of God the approbation of God the wonderful sense of having done what the

Lord commanded obedience is indeed a grace of God that brings much favour in its wake I don't often speak like this but I don't know I can't tell you why I have except I hope the Lord has been present look at Abraham consider his simple reaction within the measure of his ability he followed the Lord the Lord blessed him and the Lord has given him a name among us that will remain among the church of God as long as time lasts and I do hope that many of you here this evening will know the faith of Abraham in your heart and in your life that will bring glory he will give grace and glory no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly amen and

A moment of her eyes and other bye and again and and outside and and and