

The Long Journey of Faith!

By Cere Muscarella

Genesis 12.1-4 “Come out of your country and from all your family and friends and head to a land that I will show you... and if you will come I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great and you will be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you and in you will all the families of the earth be blessed! And Abram departed as the Lord had spoken...”

Genesis 12.1-4 God’s promise... Follow Me to a ‘place’ and I will make you... A people! (great nation) A prosperous people! (blessing) A people of prominence! (great name) A people who provide! (a blessing) A protected people! (like kind response) A purposeful people! (blessing the earth) ***The promise spoken to Abram contains everything we need in life!***

Abram/Abraham... Is the connection between the original enterprise with Adam... “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and have dominion...” **Genesis 1.28 The re-enterprise with Noah and Sons...** “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the whole earth... **Genesis 9.1** And of them was the whole earth overspread...” **Genesis 9.19 And the New Testament Believer engaging the Great Commission!** ‘The redeemed sons of Adam, the offspring of Noah’s Son’s, *the children of Abraham*, whose sons we are if we believe... and follow Him!’

Abram/Abraham... “If we are Christ’s then we are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise...” **Galatians 3.29** The promise/covenant made to Adam, Noah, Noah’s sons, Abraham, again in Isaac, and again in Jacob and to all who believe... A destination, a gathering, prosperity, prominence, a source of provision, protection and purpose!

6,000 years of God’s journey to find and deal with people who will believe and follow Him!

Question... What would have happened if Abram wouldn’t have “come out from among his place and people” to follow God? “We wouldn’t be here?” YES we would! But Abram’s name wouldn’t have been changed from ABRAM: high father to ABRAHAM: “Father of a great multitude!” **Warning: YOU can be called w/promise to greatness and never get there!** Are we willing? What are we willing to do? How far are we willing to ‘go?’ How long will you follow?

“Follow Me...” Is included in the earliest records of Jesus message to us! First, “Turn around, for the kingdom of God is at hand!” **Matthew 4.17** Appropriate warning to all those who are engaged in ‘business-as-usual’ lives! “FOLLOW ME, and I will make you fishers of men!” **Matthew 4.19** Interesting use of relevant language! I will use what you know to engage you! I will use what you have done!

“Follow Me...” Here’s some relevant/truthful language regarding following Jesus into promises! It’s not always easy! If we go back and look at Abraham, the father of simple belief... He failed at listening to God! He faltered through fear of men! He stumbled at obstacles of enemies! He snared himself thru self-reliance! [And his “sons” all followed!] But God kept restating His promises!

“Follow Me...” If we go back and look at the early disciples, coached by Jesus, we see... Slow to hear what God was saying! Fell for fear of their peers! Stumbled by their unbelief! Often took things in to their own hands! [Then Jesus gave us the Holy Spirit!] And God kept restating His promises!

“Follow Me...” God’s promises are good for a lifetime... But we can die without entering in! “The words preached do not profit us if they are not being mixed with faith!” **Hebrews 4.2** Faith... that overcomes our blindness and deafness and slowness of heart! That overcomes our fears! That overcomes our interventions and interruptions to ‘save ourselves!’ That overcomes all our failures!

“Follow Me...” Tommy’s story... “Can we find anyone better than this, the one whom the Spirit of God is (burning in)? **Genesis 41.38** “You can make life a whole lot less miserable by just saying yes now... I resisted for four years!” “Father Abraham had many sons...” Many of them had a calling “to follow” Him that they “lost!” But His gifts/calling are w/o repentance! And no excuses will work!

God has been on a long journey to find you... He’s asking you to come out, to follow Him, to be fully blessed, and to be a blessing!

Today, let’s end His search and begin our discovery of what He can do with us!