

our love and faith. No one can tell what an untried ship or an untried man can do. It is those who come out of great trials that stand before God.

And I will make thy name great, v. 2. Many seek for the possession of wealth or pleasure or fame, thinking that this is greatness. God has in store for all His children a blessing which will far surpass all that earth can give. To be great in God's way is also to be happy and blessed.

And thou shalt be a blessing. This is the test of real greatness. According as we are a blessing to others, so do we fulfil God's plan. It is of the essence of greatness that it can only come by means of service. "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." (Matt. 20 : 26.) Abram was not called for the selfish purpose of his own salvation, but in order that through him all nations of the earth might be blessed. God's gifts always carry responsibilities, and our best powers are developed only by unselfish exercise. "Even Christ pleased not himself." (Rom. 15 : 3.) "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." (Matt. 20 : 28.) "Your greatness and mine, the Christian ideal of greatness, is attained, not by depressing, but by elevating others, not by rifling them of their freedom and happiness, but by ministering to and promoting it."

So Abram departed, v. 4. One of the great acts of the world. "He went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. 11 : 8.) He left his home, not to seek a fortune, not to escape trouble at home, not to wage conquest.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

"The great part of the history of the Bible is the history of calls." v. 1.

The call of God to each one of us is as direct and personal and urgent as to Abram ; and we shall hear it, if we but have ears to hear. v. 1.

God's great promises seem to have made Abram humble rather than vain. vs. 2-4.

"Lot went with him." Well for Lot if he had always stayed in such company. v. 4.

God and men are co-workers. God calls :

Abraham went out because God had called him ; and by this act of trusting obedience, he earned the magnificent title, "Father of the Faithful." It is what we give up for God's sake that distinguishes us from people of the world. The business man will make sacrifices, will leave home, for the sake of money. When the Christian is willing to make the same sacrifices for the sake of Christ that men make for earthly things, the Kingdom of our Saviour will soon come.

And he builded an altar, v. 7. How frequently we see these altars on the way of the aged patriarchs ! Do they mark our road ? It is vain to attempt to get on in our religion without prayer and communion with God.

And Abram journeyed, going on still, v. 9. This journey of Abram's has become the type of the Christian's pilgrimage. He walked by faith and not by sight. (2 Cor. 5 : 7.) He did not see the actual abode of God ; but his imagination realized that the battlements of the eternal city were not far away ; and then he beheld by the eye of faith. (Heb. 11 : 10.) We require to use our spiritual imagination in order that we may see the blessedness of the city of God ; for when our journey is over we shall be admitted into the Palace of the King, if we walk in His path. Would that we all were more concerned about our safe arrival in the future world.

"Oh give me grace in every place
In all things good and ill,
To see the city far away,
To see the lovely hill."

Abram goes. God appears to Abram : Abram builds an altar to the Lord. v. 7.

"The world can get along without great men, but it does not get along well."

History is to a large extent the history of great men. Abraham is one of the greatest. He was recognized by many outside of the Jews. Pagan and Mussulman writers speak of him as the great man of the earth. "When the Emperor Alexander Severus placed in the chapel of his palace the statues of the choice spirits of all times, Abraham was selected."