

## Abraham (Part Two)

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Shem lived some 150 years after Abraham's birth, but he was occupied with filling the office that Noah had formerly held. Now Eber, another personality that we are at least somewhat interested in, was apparently doing his thing in the government of God at that time on earth. He was doing his best to contain the expansion of Nimrod's dynasty and his way.

The Bible does not record a great deal about Abraham's life prior to Genesis the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter. However, we do not need to entirely depend on the Bible because there are a few records extant to us, one of which is the Austrian Chronicle, the last entry is dated 1404 AD. Those people undoubtedly had resource material available to them that are either unavailable to us or simply lost from view and nobody knows where it is. But in writing their history of the Danube Valley, it is begun with a man named Abram. Now he is not connected to the Abram of the Bible but the circumstances recorded in the Austrian Chronicle, as well as the dates that are implied there, seem to fit the Abram of the Bible very well.

Austrian history begins with a man of princely birth, with a Hebrew name, and that name is Abram. Now we also found that the Austrian Chronicle said that Abram took a wife by the name of Suzanna, which is another Hebrew name. This Suzanna we find from another historian, Diodorus of Sicily, says that Suzanna was Horus' half-sister. Now Horus was the illegitimate son of Semiramis. They had the same father, a man by the name of Ninus, but different mothers.

Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael, and Isaac are not mentioned in the Austrian Chronicle, and that is understandable, even if they knew of them, they still avoided writing anything about them because they did not have anything to do with Austrian history. When they were writing, they wrote only about the things that were concerned with what they were focusing in on.

Now somewhere around 1902 BC, Suzanna and Abram had a son named Achaim. That is another Hebrew name. It also records that just about the same time that Achaim was born, that a persecution rose against Abram, a persecution coming from the Assyrians from one Count Sattan. In this persecution Abram was defeated and he fled for his life from that area in such a rush that he left his wife, Suzanna, and Achaim behind in Mesopotamia and he fled to the Danube Valley.

You might wonder why he would flee to that area. Well apparently, the reason was there was a fairly large, and when I say fairly large, they are small numbers by comparison to the population of the world today. But in that time, it would have been a fairly large number of Hebrew people who had immigrated into that area.

There are records that some of Eber's children, through Joktan, one of his sons, immigrated from that area, coming out of the area of Greece. Eber is the founder of Greece and Joktan's people came out of that area, and some went into the Danube Valley. Abram, undoubtedly being aware of that, felt he would be well received in that part of the world, so he fled from the area of Mesopotamia and to the area that is know as Austria and Hungary.

Now Count Sattan died somewhere around 1898-1899 BC. Upon hearing that, Abram went back to Mesopotamia to claim his wife and child, undoubtedly with the full intention of returning back to the Danube River Valley and getting himself firmly entrenched in that area.

There is one thing I wanted to inject here and that is that the Austrian Chronicle states that when Abram returned to Mesopotamia, that he took his wife and Achaim to the land of Judisapta, which translates to the Jew's land. Now whether they actually meant Canaan, or whether they meant the Danube River Valley, I do not know that it can be shown either way.

You might wonder why they would even consider the Danube River Valley as being Jew's land. Well, part of that story, at least the beginning, is in the Bible, around II Kings 18, which at least tells part of the story. If you read that you will find that it has contains the story of Sennacherib, the Assyrian king who came down out of Assyria into Samaria and then on into northern Judea, until he came all the way to the gates of Jerusalem. There he was

stopped and laid siege to it, taunting the Jews who were inside the city. This is when Isaiah and Hezekiah were also involved in this. If you know the story, Sennacherib was turned back whenever God struck the Assyrian army with a plague, and Sennacherib had to retire because he lost his whole army in the plague that God visited upon them. So he returned to Assyria, and as the story goes, why he was killed by some of his sons. Now it was the Assyrian habit that when they conquered people that they, as much as possible, emptied the land of the inhabitants and replaced them with others.

You probably know the story of Samaria very well. They were conquered in 722-718 BC. They too had the land emptied out of the inhabitants by the Assyrians. The people were deported back to Assyria, and then these people became the vanguard of that group of Israelites that were pushed before the Assyrians as they were migrating into the area into the Danube Valley and central Europe and on up into present-day Germany.

These Jews from northern Judea, those who were captured by Sennacherib, were undoubtedly taken back to Assyria and they also then were pushed forward with the Assyrians as they emptied into central Europe.

So there may have been a pretty large contingent of Jews in the area of Austria and Hungary, southern Germany, somewhere around the 700s BC. That may have been why they considered the Danube River Valley as the Jew's land. Now we can understand it though to be Canaan, it was not the Jews at the time, but it became the Jews land like later on.

But at any rate, they do show Abram took Suzanna and Achaim to the Jew's land. It is at that time, his return to Mesopotamia, that Genesis 12 comes into the picture.

**Genesis 12:1-4** Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram

departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

I believe that when God said that to Abram, Abram had every intention of returning to the Danube River Valley with his wife and child, that is, to go to the north and west of Mesopotamia but God had other plans. He instead wanted Abram to go to the south.

We have to remember that Suzanna and Achaim were still with him at this time, so do not lose sight of that, and also there was Lot, and there was Sarai.

**Genesis 12:5** Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.

Now let us jump forward a few years and I guess rehearse something.

**Genesis 25:6** And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east.

Now, Josephus tells us in his recording of the events, that this actually took place in time sequence that agrees with chapter 21.

**Genesis 21:5-8** Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me." She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age." So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.

This probably happened when he was around two years old, maybe just early in his third year. Now that would be around 1870 BC. If you can do a little bit

of subtraction, we have come from the time of Achaim, who was born around 1902 BC. Abraham returned about 3 years later when Count Sattan died. He left the area, and then twenty-five years later in 1872, we find Isaac being born, and then its roughly about two years after that Isaac is weaned and the concubines are sent away.

Remember, Suzanna and Achaim are still with him.

**Genesis 21:9-14** And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, “Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac.” And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham’s sight because of his son. But God said to Abraham, “Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed.” So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba.

Ishmael was around thirteen at this time. This took place in 1870 BC. Suzanna and Achaim were sent to the east, which means that they were sent from Canaan to Assyria, that would have been to the east and north of that area. So they were sent back to their homeland. Then the Austrian Chronicle shows that they were in Austria, in the Danube River Valley and ruling. So they must have been gone from Canaan to Assyria and then to the Danube River Valley.

The Austrian Chronicle assigns Abram a thirty-year reign, then it assigns Suzanna a nineteen year reign, and then it assigns Achaim a forty-five year reign. Now Achaim was still too young at the time that he and Suzanna went back to Austria, he would have only been a young man at that time, maybe 25 or 27 years old. By the time he came into ruling, he was about forty-five

years old, and then he is assigned a forty-five year reign, which brings you down somewhere around 1805 or 1806 or 1807 <sup>BC</sup>, somewhere around that area when Achaim's reign in Austria ended.

He married a Hungarian princess and had four children. So Suzanna and Achaim are going to leave the story here, they are out of the picture and Abraham, in sending them away, has relinquished any claim to the Austrian throne. That is why he just disappears from the scene, he is still alive, but he is in another area all together. We find then that a Semitic culture is established in the Danube River Valley through the Semites who had already immigrated into that area, plus the addition of Abraham and Suzanna.

Now Suzanna was also a Semite. She came from the family of Shem, however she was descended from Shem's son Asshur.

**Genesis 10:22** The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

We find then, in the marriage of Suzanna and Abraham, the uniting of two branches of the Semitic family. The Assyrian branch coming from Shem through Asshur, and then the Hebrew branch coming from Shem through Arphaxad through Eber to Abraham. Then these unite in Achaim. So a Semitic culture was raised up there in the Austrian area, in the Danube River Valley. From them we could say that the Austrian/Hungarian empire developed.

You will recall I mentioned to you last time that the persecution against Abraham, the original persecution that caused him to flee the area, leaving his wife and child behind, was mounted against him by the Assyrians, through Count Sattan.

When Abraham got back to Assyria some three years later and Sattan was dead, we find that another persecution was raised up against him. Now it is entirely possible that the original persecution was, at least in part, raised up by the same people who raised up the second one.

Now I am going to be reading something to you here from Josephus, from the *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 1, chapter 7, and paragraph 1:

Now Abram, having no son of his own, adopted Lot, his brother Haran's son, and his wife Sarai's brother; and he left the land of Chaldea when he was seventy-five years old, and at the command of God went into Canaan, and therein he dwelt himself, and left it to his posterity. He was a person of great sagacity, both for understanding all things and persuading his hearers, and not mistaken in his opinions; . . .

I want you to begin to notice what we have developing here. Abraham was a man, apparently an eloquent debater, if we want to call him that, arguer, someone who is able to verbally make his position known in very clear and understandable terms.

. . . for which reason he began to have higher notions of virtue than others had, and he determined to renew and to change the opinion all men happened then to have concerning God; for he was the first that ventured to publish this notion, . . .

Now we have Abraham writing his ideas, his concepts, so that not only those who were in the hearing of his voice, but also to those who were able to read and to those who understand what they were reading, and he was beginning to persuade this people according to his notions about God.

. . . that there was but one God, the Creator of the universe; and that, as to other [gods], if they contributed anything to the happiness of men, that each of them afforded it only according to his appointment, and not by their own power. This his opinion was derived from the irregular phenomena that were visible both at land and sea, . . .

We are beginning to see here that Abraham was a man of some observational powers, and he took note of things and undoubtedly made notations of these things, wrote things down, compared them year after year with the phenomena that continually, secularly came into being.

. . . as well as those that happen to the sun, and moon, and all the heavenly bodies, thus: "If [said he] these bodies had power of their

own, they would certainly take care of their own regular motions; but since they do not preserve such regularity, they make it plain, that in so far as they co-operate to our advantage, they do it not of their own abilities, but as they are subservient to Him that commands them, to whom alone we ought justly to offer our honor and thanksgiving."

For which doctrines, when the Chaldeans, and other people of Mesopotamia, raised a tumult against him, he thought fit to leave that country; and at the command and by the assistance of God, he came and lived in the land of Canaan. And when he was there settled, he built an altar, and performed a sacrifice to God.

Now let me add a little more to this from the next paragraph. Josephus is quoting a man named Berosus who is a Chaldean, a historian, astronomer, who lived in the third century before Christ.

Berosus mentions our father Abram, without naming him, when he says thus: "In the tenth generation after the Flood, there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great, and skillful in the celestial science."

So he was an astronomer and as such you have to know mathematics. Now Josephus is going to quote another historian, a man by the name of Hecatseus.

But Hecatseus does more than barely mention him; for he composed, and left behind him, a book concerning him. And Nicolaus of Damascus, in the fourth book of his History, says thus: "Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, . . .

I want you to notice that; he came out with an army. Now armies did not have to be large by present-day standards then, but I want you to understand that when it says in,

**Genesis 12:5** Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people



whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan.

When they came out of there, it was no small, tiny, little, miniscule group of people who were sneaking out of Haran. It seems to me, at least according to their standards, it was a fairly large group of people that had gathered themselves around Abram, or that Abram had gathered around him, and so that when he left, it was a notable event.

Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldeans: but, after a long time, he got him up, and removed from that country also, with his people, and went into the land then called the land of Canaan, but now the land of Judea, and this when his posterity were become a multitude; as to which posterity of his, we relate their history in another work. Now the name of Abram is even still famous in the country of Damascus; and there is shown a village named from him, The Habitation of Abram.

I had another quote that shows that there are a number of non-Israelite writings that have been unearthed that establishes Abram as being a real historical character who lived before 1500 BC. That is as far as they will go, but that is not bad.

We find then that these records are saying that he was skillful in celestial sciences, which indicates he was an astronomer and a mathematician, that he analyzed the earthly and heavenly phenomena, land, sea, sun, moon, heavenly bodies, and he used his observations to prove the existence of God. And then he must have both published it and preached it about it publicly.

So what do we find Abraham doing? In modern day language, he was teaching the people of Mesopotamia the truth that creation is a proof of a Creator God. He must have been arguing that, since we live in a creation that is obviously designed and subject to law, that there must be a Designer and a Lawgiver.

Why did the Chaldean priesthood focus so much attention on him? Well, because the Chaldean priests, who controlled the education, had long been teaching that the sun and the moon and other heavenly bodies were gods.

Abraham's argument was, if they were gods, why can they not regulate their own motions? So his conclusion was that, therefore, something, someone greater had set their motions and was ruler over them, and those heavenly bodies were nothing more than inanimate matter.

Now you might then be able to reflect on Romans the first chapter where the apostle Paul mentions this principle, still extant today to a very large extent.

**Romans 1:18-19** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

God has either shown it through His preachers, through the prophets, through the apostles, through the patriarchs as with Abraham, or God has revealed it to them through their own observations.

Now the Chaldean priests were not dummies. They understood that all the heavenly bodies operated according to well-defined and well-regulated motions, that they did not vary in their motions. They were able to predict eclipses many, many years before they occurred, because they knew at times the sun and moon would be in such a conjunction to be able to block one another out, either partial or fully.

So they were aware of those things. But do you know what they did? They put a twist on it. What they would do in their teaching to the common people who were not well educated, they would predict when certain heavenly bodies would appear in exact spots in the sky, and explain the reason that they knew that these heavenly bodies would appear in those areas was because they were in communication with the gods, and the gods had told them it would appear in a certain part of the sky. So that gave them a power over the people because the people would interpret that as being in communication with a god.

Now along comes the competition, and the competition is Abraham, and Abraham is telling the truth, and so the Chaldean priesthood had two

alternatives. They could either accept what Abraham was saying as truth and repent and say, yes, this is the truth, or they could reject it, and they could persecute Abraham and try to get rid of him.

There is a very interesting comment in the book of Jeremiah, not in regard to the Chaldean priesthood in any way, but actual false prophets had risen up in Israel. There is just a principle that I want here.

**Jeremiah 14:13-14** Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, the prophets say to them, ‘You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.’ ” And the Lord said to me, “The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart.

In principle, that is what the Chaldean priests did. They were prophesying a deceit of their own heart. So, they suppressed the truth, either for a personal gain, or for political or social advantage. But Abraham’s truth was spreading so they had to do something.

Let us digress just a little bit and consider again the times that Abraham was living in.

**Joshua 24:2** And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.

Abraham’s own father and his brother Nahor served other gods. Now consider that. Noah is dead. Shem is occupied, very likely in Italy, carrying on the work that Noah had after the Flood. Eber, occupied somewhere else, beginning to get old. Terah, Abraham’s own father, had drifted into idolatry. The people of Chaldea and Mesopotamia were completely deceived. So Abraham stands out as the man that God was going to use to rekindle the flame of truth and the first thing that he does is publish on the existence of God. Almost you might say, his own version of “Does God Exist.”

Now it appears that Abraham had to start pretty much from scratch. There is no indication that he had a lot of contact with either Eber or Shem, even though both were still alive, and both apparently carrying on the flickering flame of truth. But many, many miles away, and not having a lot of contact with them, it appears as though Abraham had to pretty much start from scratch and grow in truth. The biblical record shows that he did not learn everything at once. He had to grow one point at a time, and we can see that he was guilty of sins, that he repents, and that he goes on. That he grows in faith, that he grows in understanding, that he grows in wisdom, that his character develops, and he becomes the father of the faithful.

Now that is not too unusual because God said through Christ that the gates of the grave would never prevail against the church. There have been times when the light of truth pretty much almost flickered out. But it never went all the way out because God would raise someone up. There was Peter Waldo, I can think of at this time. How about Mr. Armstrong, in our own life times?

**Revelation 3:1** And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead."

See the name was alive, the church of God, and God's promise was alive, but they were dead. The flame of truth had just about gone out when God raised up Mr. Herbert Armstrong and began a resurgence of God's truth that has led in this present time of the preaching of the gospel to the world. But Mr. Armstrong, just like Abraham, had to learn truth one doctrine, one piece, one segment at a time, adding a little here and a little there. It took many, many years to get to the place of understanding that we now have. We are all benefiting from the many years of labor that Mr. Armstrong put into God's work, trying to understand God's Word, trying to obey His word, preaching the gospel, and little by little we have what we have. Well, Abraham had to go through pretty much the same thing.

Now I have no doubt, from some of the pattern I see set in other leaders that God has raised up at other times—we look at Mr. Armstrong, we look at Peter Waldo—that Abraham was undoubtedly a very competent man. I am talking about materially, physically, carnally, that he was a competent man,

intelligent, at one time fairly prosperous, that he had a reputation as an astronomer and a scholar. I am sure he wanted to be successful in this world, but God channeled him into another direction, because God had the Kingdom of Heaven in mind.

From what I see at this time, when God tells us in Genesis 12:1, “the Lord had said to Abram,” I do not believe that at this time that what God said to him about getting out was all that much of a surprise. By this time, at age 75, Abram was becoming fairly familiar with God. Let us turn to Acts 7.

**Acts 7:2** And he said, “Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran.

Did you notice the sequence? God appeared *before* he dwelt in Haran. Let’s go back and to Genesis 12.

**Genesis 12:1** Now the Lord had said to Abram:

In is stated in such a way that the command to leave had occurred prior to Genesis 12:1, some time in the indefinite past.

**Acts 7:3-4** and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell.

So Abraham’s movement was from Ur, to Haran, to Canaan.

**Genesis 11:31-32** And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram’s wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. <sup>32</sup> So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

To me that indicates, since the Bible does not say how long it took, but I would guess somewhere around several months.

**Genesis 12:5** the people whom they had acquired . . .

The King James version says, “the souls that they had gotten.” Now undoubtedly these were servants, and it might also have included what we might call converted people. Now I don’t mean that they were converted in a way that we are converted, maybe they were. But they were at least persuaded by Abraham’s arguments. And if there were persecutions against Abraham, I think there were also persecutions directed at those followers of Abraham.

It is interesting that Terah was moving with Abram. We also read there in Joshua 24:2 that Terah worshipped other gods. Now perhaps what we are seeing here is at least the beginning of the conversion of Terah, that Terah was either being converted or maybe he repented. I do not know because he was beginning to move with Abraham from the land of Ur to Haran, but he died before they could actually leave.

Now I do not think that I am going too far in saying that, as we would look at it today, what Abraham had gathered around him was what we would call the church on earth at that time and that they were beginning a period of pilgrimage, a wandering. There was a forerunner of the children of Israel wandering in the wilderness, and even today is a forerunner of our spiritual wandering in this world that is opposed to God.

Before we finish tonight, I want to consider Abraham’s sacrifice here. When we think of Abraham sacrificing, we think of Abraham sacrificing Isaac. But I think that there is enough evidence to indicate that Abraham was sacrificing a considerable amount of prestige, honor, power, material glory, wealth, that would go with his position with the line that had descended from Noah, through Shem, through Eber.

Recall that after the Flood when there were very few people, Noah I think could be considered as the patriarch of all the earth. As people began to expand, as populations grew, Noah’s family grew, and Shem, Ham, and Japheth’s families began to spread over the earth again and re-populate it.

Noah lived a long, long time after the Flood, some 450 years, and then he died.

Now it was common in those days for the patriarch, the head man, to be passed from father to eldest son. If things would have worked normally, then we would have found that Noah would have passed on that title to Shem, and Shem would have passed it on to Arphaxad, and Arphaxad would have passed it on to Selah, and Selah would have passed it on to Eber, and Eber would pass it to Peleg, and right on down to Abraham. However, it did not work that way. Because Noah did not die, and he did not die, and he did not die, and finally he died. Then he passed on the headship of the family to Shem. Then Shem lived on and on.

I just did some quick calculations of my own, just setting an arbitrary date for the Flood, and I subtracted all of the births and the deaths of all of the patriarchs, and I found that every single one of them except Shem and Eber were dead by the time that Abraham left Haran, by the time he was 75. Then shortly after that, Shem died.

What that means is, that if that procedure had been followed, it meant then that Abraham was directly in line to be the patriarch over at least all of the Semitic peoples on earth. That is no small responsibility, as the Semitic peoples grew into a very large multitude of people. Included among them were some of the most vigorous of all the families on earth, and especially when we consider that this was the family of people that through whom God had chosen to be the models and the revelators of His truth, and also the families through whom the Messiah would ultimately come. This does not mean they are better than others, it only means that God choose them, and God chose them for a great responsibility and that responsibility would have devolved if that system had continued right on down to the patriarch, and that would have come then to Abraham.

This is my own personal feeling, that in a material sense, of all the people who have ever been called of God to become a part of His work, Abraham gave up more than anybody. When it comes to position and authority and material wealth, He was called upon to give up more than anybody. More than Moses. If Moses was indeed in line to become a Pharaoh, he would have been Pharaoh over one nation. Granted, a very powerful nation, but

only one nation. But Abraham, technically would have been over what amounted to many, many nations.

I do not know if Abraham had all these things figured out. We can look back on it because we have a record God left us and we can understand the kind of position Abraham was in. But still what he did understand I am sure was very great and I am sure there must have been tugs in his mind, pulls to go in a different direction than the one God wanted him to go. The lesson that is here is that Abraham submitted. Abraham obeyed and he renounced his right which would have come to him by birth as his right to those positions.

**Hebrews 11:8** By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance.

Did you hear that? He obeyed when he was called to go *out*. We are not talking about Canaan now; we are talking about Mesopotamia. We are talking about that area of the Chaldeans, and I have just extended it all the way up to the area many of the Hebrews had already migrated into, the Danube River Valley, into what is today Austria, Hungary. Of course, that would have included other Semitic people, the Assyrians and Germans.

**Hebrews 11:8-10** By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

That involved a great deal of trust. Mankind has basically ignored the lessons that are written in this book. We have determined, it seems, to learn it on our own experiences. It seems as though God in affect said to Abraham, “Don’t worry, I’ll give it back to you. But first of all, you have got to go through this training that I want you to go through.”



**Romans 4:13** For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Before we get done with this series on Abraham, we are going to go through the promises, and I will show you how that God gradually expanded them. First it was just the land of Canaan, as far as the eye could see. Then it was to the river Euphrates, and here we find that he is to be heir of the world.

**Galatians 3:26-29** For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

That puts you and me right in the picture. Because the Son of God came, and He lived and He died and He confirmed the promises that were made to Abraham, thus, ensuring that they will be fulfilled. Abraham is going to inherit the world and we are co-heirs with him and with Jesus Christ. We will inherit the earth!

Abraham made no small sacrifice. As I said in the biblical narrative, I do not know that anybody, not even Moses, made as potentially as great a sacrifice as Abraham did.

Now what are you willing to sacrifice in order to succeed as Abraham succeeded? Not just willing to sacrifice it, to give it up as lost, to turn your back and walk away from it, but to do it in a good attitude. Not grudgingly, not wishing you had not done it, but the willing attitude of one who will sacrifice all because one sees the great purpose that is being worked out, and because you are submissive to God.

I think that is what we are here to learn. To do whatever has to be done to glorify God in our life. It is going to be a life of sacrifice, of turning away from this world, turning away from things that might satisfy the things of the

flesh, but destroy character. That might satisfy the flesh, but just give us a momentary deliverance that is going to slow down the purpose of God and certainly is not going to glorify Him or do anything toward ensuring that we have the mind, the heart, the character to be in the Kingdom of God.

Abraham's story is in here for us to learn, and there are a great many lessons. He was a great man and God made him into someone really great. We are going to learn some of those lessons, and we are going to find that Abraham contributed a great deal to the history of this world, and maybe indeed, we might go so far as to say, that he *altered* the history of the world, made it different in a way, and enabled you and me to have a better life.