

GENESIS 12:1-4 THE REMNANT OF WITNESS

¹ The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you." ² "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." ⁴ So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

If one were to categorize the occupants of the ark in Noah's time as a remnant of survival, then it would be reasonable to label Abram and his descendents as a remnant of witness. Although we can assume that the world had reverted to idolatry, for that is fallen man's inclination, no mention of the spiritual condition of humankind after the Tower of Babel is noted in the call of Abram. The Scriptural context of this passage is God's interaction with his creation through a call and a promise. Like with Noah, it is a personal call. Unlike with Noah, the call is for the purpose of establishing the revelation of God's nature in the world. Abram's obedience to God's call will result in a physical sign of God's kingdom in the world, which will be blessed by God and through which the rest of the world will be blessed. Here we have the echo of God's blessing of humankind in the garden. God's order is to be spread over the disorder of the world, as the inhabitants of the garden were charged with cultivating the wilderness (world) and expanding the garden (kingdom).

In Galatians 3:9, St. Paul writes that *...those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.* If we have faith and are therefore blessed, then it follows that like Abraham we have been blessed to be a blessing. As God once established a nation through Abram in order to be a witness to the world, he has engrafted us into the family of faith so that we might also be a witness to the world in our time. The ultimate blessing for any creature is the revelation of the nature of its Creator. As people of faith, as we live our faith publically and in obedience to God, our lives become a testimony to the Truth and a blessing to all who recognize and respond to that witness.

We must remember that just as the purpose of a seed is not to be a seed, the purpose of the remnant is not to be an exclusive enclave, but rather to grow into a world-sized bush. We are not blessed to be the "blessed ones," but so that the world might be blessed through us.

Father, you have created, called and commissioned me through your grace to fulfill your purpose in the world. Empower me through your Holy Spirit to live out my faith in accordance with your will, and thereby, be a part of the revelation of your nature in the world in which I dwell. Amen.