

1. "About" of Grace

1. **Protection of Grace.** "Hast Thou not made an hedge *about him?*" (Job 1:10).
2. **Pathway of Grace.** "God led the people *about*, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea" (Exod. 13:18).
3. **Discipline of Grace.** "He led him *about* and instructed him" (Deut. 32:10).
4. **Diligence of Grace.** "I must be *about* My Father's business" (Luke 2:49).
5. **Direction of Grace.** "Let your loins be girded *about.*" "Girt *about*" (Luke 12:35; Eph. 6:14).
6. **Life of Grace.** "Always bearing *about* in the body," etc. (2 Cor. 4:10).
7. **Aim of Grace.** "Went *about* doing good" (Acts 10:38).

2. "Above"

"Born From Above" (John 3:3)

1. **Christ**, who came "from above" did a work for us which was outside in its merit and worth—John 3:31.
2. **Life**. The life which qualifies us for the Kingdom of God is "from above"—John 3:3, 5. The word "again" should be "above," and is so given in John 3:31.
3. **Love**. The "perfect gift" of God's love and grace is "from above," as well as every good gift of His providence—Jas. 1:17.
4. **Wisdom**. The wisdom which makes us wise is "from above"—Jas. 3:17.
5. **Affection**. To set our affection on "things above" is to evidence we need resources above and beyond us—Col. 3:1, 2.
6. **Protection**. We need "above all" the Shield of Faith (Christ) to shield us from the enemies' attacks—Eph. 6:16.
7. **Satisfaction**. Covering all and in all the Lord Himself, who is above, is the One who can take out of danger and bring us into untold blessing—Psa. 18:16-19.

3. Abram's Journey of Faith

Gen. 12:4-9; 13:1-4, 14, 18

There is a path to be found, and God alone can find it; so if we would find the path we must find God by being found by Him.

1. **The Departure of Faith**—12:4. Abram "departed out of Haran," the half-way place of compromise, and this was "as the Lord had spoken to Him." Faith's authority and action is always based upon what God says—Rom. 10:17. Obedience is the act of faith. When we will what God wills, we show our faith.

2. **The Destination of Faith**—12:5; "This land" (ver. 7). "They went forth" to "Canaan," and "into the land of Canaan they came," and there "Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land." The land was God's gift of earthly possession to Abram and his seed. God has given to faith "all spiritual blessing in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). See how many blessings are mentioned in Ephesians 1, and "name them one by one."

3. **The Worship of Faith.** Three times we read of Abram in connection with an altar, and in three different relations. First, when Jehovah gave Abram the land—12:7; second, when he was restored after his backsliding into Egypt—14:4; and third, as he progressed on his journey—14:18. The altar, in its typical meaning, is worship founded on sacrifice. The Cross of Christ's sacrifice is the basis of God's giving—Rom. 8:32, the plea for restoration—Heb. 9:13, 14, and the spur to progress in Christian life and service—2 Cor. 5:14-16. The only place where we can worship God is in and at the Cross of Christ's atoning sacrifice. We cannot worship Him if we are in the Egypt of the world and lack heart separation to Him. The altar and tent are not mentioned as long as Abram is in Egypt—see Gen. 12:9-13:4.

4. **The Declension of Faith.** Abram "went down into Egypt," and when he had "come into Egypt" he compromised with Sarah, caused Pharaoh pain, told a lie about Sarah, and was sent away by the Egyptians—12:10, 14, 17, 19, 20. When a child of God gets out of communion with the Lord, he will often do what a man of the world would scorn to do. Our faith will wane if we are not watchful, even as a plant will languish for want of attention. A musty room means the exclusion of light, sun, and air, and a declining faith will cause the whole spiritual life to be lacking in the warmth of love, the light of knowledge, and the air of the Spirit's life-imparting grace.

5. **The Vision of Faith**—13:14-16. The Lord told Abram to "look," after he was separated from Lot. Lot was the man who looked on the plains of Jordan—13:10, and soon was in Sodom. He followed the eyes of his inclination, but Abram followed the direction of the Lord. When we see things at the Lord's bidding we always find a blessing; but when we look with the eyes of self-will we are courting a bane. To see the Lord is to see things in their true light—Heb. 11:27. To see things truly there is a need for the heart to be clean, the hands right, the spirit possessed by Christ, and the soul dominated by the Spirit.

6. **The Journey of Faith.** There are seven stages in the journeyings of Abram.

From the Ur of idolatry to the Haran of compromise—11:31.

From the Haran of compromise to the Canaan of blessing—12:4, 5.

From the Canaan of blessing and the "Moreh" of conflict to the Bethel of prayer—12:6-8.

From the Bethel of prayer to the "going and journeying" (margin) to "the south" of bordering on the Egypt of the world, and to the Egypt of straitening—12:9-20.

From the Egypt of backsliding to the Bethel of restoration—13:1-4.

From the Bethel of restoration to the Hebron of fellowship—13:18.

7. **The Advance of Faith.** When the Haran of compromise is left, the Egypt of the world is abandoned, and Lot is cut off; then Abram is able to "look" with God into His purpose for him, and to "walk" through the land, and dwell with the Lord in the Hebron of fellowship—13:14-18. Hindrances gone, faith advances. When faith advances in the ways of God, it enjoys His word and keeps on in fellowship with Him.

4. Abraham's Intercession

Genesis 18:18-33

Dr. Joseph Parker, in referring to Sodom, and Abraham's prayer for it, and God's knowledge of its sin, said: "There are four great facts to consider. 1, That God holds inquest upon the moral condition of cities. 2, That God is accessible to earnest human appeal. 3, That the few can serve the many. 4, That human prayer falls below Divine resources." There are several traits in Abraham's intercession.

1. He was **confident in spirit**, for he stood before the Lord—v. 22.
2. He was **definite in his plea**, for he prayed that Sodom might be spared for the sake of the righteous in it—v. 23-25.
3. He **pleaded what the Lord was**, and His righteousness, as arguments for his prayer to be answered, for he confessed the Judge of all the earth would do right—v. 25, 26.
4. His intercession was **humble in tone**, for he confessed he was but dust and ashes—v. 27.
5. And his **petition was persistent in spirit**—28. And yet it failed in its continuance, for he left off in his intercession before the Lord left off in His giving—v. 32, 33.

5. Abraham's Vision

Genesis 18:1, 2

FELLOWSHIP is the soul of friendship, or the common interest that the one has with the other.

The Lord appeared to him—1, 2. If the different occasions when God appeared to Abraham are looked up, it will be found they were crisis points in his history. On this occasion God promised a son to him. Every true Christian experience begins with a vision of Christ, and we fail to see anything that is worth seeing till we have seen Him. Recall how this fact is illustrated in the lives of—

1. **Moses, the Leader**—Exod. 3:2.
2. **Isaiah, the Prophet**—Isa. 6:1.
3. **Paul, the Apostle**—Acts 9:3-5.
4. **Peter, the Fisherman**—Luke 5:8.
5. **John, the Disciple**—Rev. 1:17.
6. **Gideon, the Warrior**—Judges 6:12.
7. **Jacob, the Prince**—Gen. 32:24-30.

6. "Agree"

The Greek word for "agree" in Matthew 18:19, means to symphonise and suggests a musical harmony, where chords are tuned to the same key, and struck by a master hand.

1. There is a symphonising which we should **avoid**, that is, a concert for the furtherance of evil, like Ananias and Sapphira, when they "agreed together" to tempt the Holy Spirit—Acts 5:9.
2. There is a symphonisation which we should **recognise**, namely, when the working of God's providence agrees with the fulfilment of God's Word (see the word "agree" in Acts 15:15).
3. But the symphony which is **specially pleasing to the Lord** is when His people agree in a concert of prayer, as Judah did—2 Chron. 20:4, as the disciples did in the upper room—Acts 1:14, as the Church did for Peter—Acts 12:12, and as Nehemiah and his workers did—Neh. 4:9.

7. Abundant Supply

"Able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

"The principal and most valuable characteristic of the cod is its amazing fecundity. It has been calculated that a single fish will deposit nine millions of eggs, a number which in its vastness simply bewilders us, for we cannot at all realise what such a mighty host means." What is true in this realm of Nature is true in every other, and especially in the realm of grace, for the Lord provides—

1. **Abundant Grace** to save us—Rom. 5:20.
2. **Abundant Pardon** to forgive us—Isa. 55:7.
3. **Abundant Satisfaction** to fill us—Psa. 36:8.
4. **Abundant Peace** to quieten us—Phil. 4:7.
5. **Abundant Life** to equip us—John 10:10.
6. **Abundant Joy** to gladden us—Phil. 1:26.
7. **Abundant Power** to energise us—Col. 1:11.

8. "According To"

In Ephesians 1

1. **Predestination.** "According to the good pleasure of His will," He hath predestinated us to the place of children (v. 5).
2. **Benediction.** "According to the riches of His grace," He has blessed us in Christ (v. 7).
3. **Revelation.** "According to His good pleasure," He hath made known to us the secret of His will (v. 9, 10).
4. **Inheritance.** "According to the purpose" of His counsel, He hath given us an inheritance in Christ (v. 11).
5. **Power.** "According to the working of His mighty power," He energizes us for life and labor (v. 19).

9. A Group of Glad Ones

The words "Glad," "Rejoice," etc., are one and the same in the Greek.

1. A Glad **Savior**—Luke 15:5.
2. A Glad **Sinner**—Luke 19:6; Acts 8:39.
3. A Glad **Servant**—Acts 11:23.
4. A Glad **Sufferer**—Col. 1:24.
5. A Glad **Saint**—2 John 4.
6. A Glad **Surveyor**—Col. 2:5.
7. A Glad **Scoffer**—Luke 23:8.

10. Activities of God

Among the activities of God on behalf of His people, we have—

1. **Hurrying Feet** in Grace for our blessing—Luke 15:20.
2. **Holding Hands** in Power for our security—John 10:29.
3. **A Loving Heart** in Sympathy for our encouragement—John 16:27.
4. **Listening Ears** in Attention for our prayers—Psa. 34:15.
5. **Watching Eyes** in Outlook for our enablement—2 Chron. 16:9.
6. **Gracious Lips** in Promise for our faith—Song of Solomon 5:13.
7. **Everlasting Arms** in Upholding for our sustainment—Deut. 33:27.