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## Genesis 12:1-7    Abram out of his comfort zone    Hebrews 11:8-10

This sermon begins a series on the life of Abraham.

The big picture

We first watched some slides which show that at the time of Abram Ur was already a highly civilised city; so for God to ask Abram to leave it was quite a sacrifice.

Abram's call by God and his journey to the promised land are a major moment in history. After things had gone wrong in the garden of Eden, humans had only made things worse. Now God makes a new beginning with one person and creates a new people out of him, a people that will bless the world. In this way God shows his faithfulness to humankind.

But for Abram this leaving behind of everything is not easy! The keyword here is 'go' and three times God uses 'from' to emphasise what he gives up. Abram has to travel to a country he does not know; God only calls it the land that 'I will make you see'.

There is also the promise to 'make your name great' – but not at the expense of other people! Abram and his descendants can be important without oppressing others. Not Abram will be in the centre, but God.

Note also the repeated word 'bless', echoing Genesis 1: Israel will be a blessing to the nations; likewise the Church must be a blessing to the nations.

The author of Hebrews is excited about this. He praises Abram's obedience as faith seen in actions.

The personal level

We too are called to be a blessing to the world. We too have gone on a journey in obedience to God's voice. We are glad that we have each other as company. In this world we are resident aliens. We're on the road with God. We're travelling through a mad world.

To travel well, some of us may need to make a clean break with our roots, our past. We can trust God's promise that he will always provide the strength for what he asks us to do. But we need to leave our comfort zone.

Are you already on this journey with God? Or are you merely watching the others? A Dutch saying goes: 'I love working – I can watch it for hours.' That's not how the church should be.

A church fellowship can be a nice thing to watch – but God is calling you to play your part as well. Leave your comfort zone please!

Our destination is the new heavens and new earth, the city God is preparing for us, as in Hebrews 11. We celebrate this in Communion. But we have a task here below as well!

At Communion we are blessed by one another so we can be a blessing to the world.

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