

## Lent Reflections 12 March 2017

### "All My Hope Is Firmly Grounded"

words by Joachim Neander in the United Methodist Hymnal 132vs. 1

*All my hope is firmly grounded  
in the great and living Lord;  
who, whenever I most need him,  
never fails to keep his word.  
God I must wholly trust,  
God the ever good and just.*



The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "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. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will

curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:1-3

**As a divine act of Grace**, God chose Abraham to live as a man of faith. God called him out of his family and clan so that in him all the nations would be blessed. As Christians, our testimony is in Jesus that we find our satisfaction and fulfillment. "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." (Romans 4: 2). This faith and belief Abraham had, led him to respond in obedience to God's call; and this meant sacrifice for him. He sacrificed his land, people, nation and all his belongings to follow God's greatest purpose for his life. He started his journey towards the unknown but followed the Lord with all the faith His mind and heart could muster.

Following God's call on our lives comes at a cost as well; living in the Holy Land today we know that

all too well. It requires faith in God and how God can transform our lives as we work for the Kingdom. We may not know where God's call could lead us, but we have confidence in the One who called us; and confidence that where God leads; God will guide and provide. Without faith, we cannot please God (Hebrews 11: 6).

Yet after this initial call to go to a different place to serve the Kingdom or to remain in our own physical localities, there remains a greater testimony that we need to demonstrate for everyone; to walk faithfully with the Lord and humbly before those we meet day to day. Life's many challenges lure us away from our goal, but as Jesus obeyed the God, we should do our best to do so as well!

For me one of the most moving parts of the scriptures is found in Hebrews 12:2, "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him

he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

As a follower and a servant of Jesus here in Bethlehem, the life of ministry requires that I keep my eyes focused on Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, without whom I can never accomplish anything good. Jesus is my goal! Witnessing to people who live in a broken land, where injustices are so clear around me, I have to remember the example of Abraham: faith, obedience and sacrifice which will lead to God’s abundant blessings. Jesus endured the cross and all its shame for us; he knew however, that he could trust his Father. I pray that the precious people living in this land will experience a great resurrection on every aspect of their lives as they learn to listen to God’s voice day by day!

***Lord, help us listen*** to your voice; give us the courage to respond to your call. May our hearts be willing to always say, “here I am Lord”, and our mouths ready to speak of your amazing love demonstrated to us on the cross. Amen.

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Picture of the wilderness taken by Rev. Kristen L. Brown.