

Abram trusts in God and he and his family move from their own country to a strange land, where he is to become the father of many nations.

A reading from the Book of Genesis: (12:1-4a)

The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

PSALM 121 (8am spoken, 10am sung)

¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills; *

from where is my help to come?

² My help comes from the LORD, *

the maker of heaven and earth.

³ He will not let your foot be moved *

and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

⁴ Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *

shall neither slumber nor sleep;

⁵ The LORD himself watches over you; *

the LORD is your shade at your right hand,

⁶ So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *

nor the moon by night.

⁷ The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; *

it is he who shall keep you safe.

⁸ The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in, *

from this time forth for evermore.

Paul presents an example of how we are justified before God. He uses Abraham as an example of how righteousness comes through faith and not by works of the law.

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans: (4:1-5, 13-17)

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of

Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”) —in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.