

Genesis - Lesson 12

Genesis Chapter 12:1-20

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Memory verses for this week: *Pro 14:2 He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him.*

Introduction: We continue our study on the book of Genesis this week as we cover Genesis chapter 12 regarding the call of Abram.

I. The Call and Obedience of Abram

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

Gen 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Gen 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Verse 1 gives us a record of God's Call to Abram. God promises to take him to a new land that he knew nothing about, but God promises to make a great nation from Abram.

By the time we get to Gen. 12, even the line of Shem had corrupted itself. Now God in His Sovereign Grace, chose Abram to be the father of a new nation that would honor God and accomplish His will.

Jos 24:2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

Jos 24:3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

Abraham had a lot to do with the New Testament doctrine. Think of how many times the faith and promises made to Abraham were mentioned in the New Testament books.

Jesus told the Jews that Abraham looked forward to the day of Christ and rejoiced in it.

Joh 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Act 7:2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

Act 7:3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

Act 7:4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

Act 7:5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

Act 7:6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.

Act 7:7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

Act 7:8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

Rom 4:1 *What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?*

Rom 4:2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

Rom 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Rom 4:4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

Rom 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Rom 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

Gal 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Gal 3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

Gal 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Gal 3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

...

Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Gal 3:17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

Gal 3:18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing

whither he went.

Heb 11:9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

Heb 11:10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Heb 11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Heb 11:12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

Jas 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

Jas 2:22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

Jas 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Notice the wording in verse 1 where it says in past tense, "the Lord had said,". This indicates that this refers to an earlier call. We see that Abram went to Haran and dwelt there in verse 31 of chapter 11.

Gen 12:1 *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:*

Gen 11:31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

Gen 11:32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

Act 7:2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

Act 7:3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

It was a call to separation. It has always been important for God's people to be separated from the world.

2Co 6:14 *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship*

hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

2Co 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

2Co 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

Abram remained at Haran till the death of his father. At that point, death set him free. Christ's death sets us free also. As we read in II Corinthians, God is still calling His people to separation. Abraham's obedience was by faith, as he had never seen the land. The call contained 7 wonderful promises in verses 2 and 3.

- a. I will make of thee a great nation. v. 2
- b. I will bless thee. v. 2
- c. Make thy name great. v. 2
- d. Thou shalt be a blessing. v. 2
- e. I will bless them that bless thee. v. 3
- f. Curse him that curseth thee. v. 3
- g. In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. v. 3

II. Abram's Obedience To God's Call

Gen 12:4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

Gen 12:5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Gen 12:6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

Abram departed it says when he was 75 years of age. This was based upon faith, but it appears that his faith was somewhat weak. It seems apparent that neither Terah nor Lot went with Abram by God's choice. Abram took his substance with him. All that he owned was to be counted for God. As they traveled, they came into the plain of Moreh and found the Canaanites in the land. The devil stands ready to always contest the promises of God.

John Wesley commented this about Abraham and how Stephen in his last hours recalled his faith.

Gen 12:1 We have here the call by which Abram was removed out of the land of his nativity into the land of promise, which was designed both to try his faith and

obedience, and also to set him apart for God. The circumstances of this call we may be somewhat helped to the knowledge of, from Stephen's speech, [Act 7:2](#), where we are told, That the God of glory appeared to him to give him this call, appeared in such displays of his glory as left Abram no room to doubt.

Act 7:2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

Act 7:3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

God spake to him after in divers manners: but this first time, when the correspondence was to be settled, he appeared to him as the God of glory, and spake to him. That this call was given him in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and in obedience to this call, he came out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran or Haran about five years, and from thence, when his father was dead, by a fresh command, he removed him into the land of Canaan.

III. The Lord Appears to Abram a Second time

Gen 12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Gen 12:8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

Gen 12:9 And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

God appeared and promised to give the land to Abram. There in Canaan, Abram built an altar. The land had already been promised there in verse 1, but God renewed the promise of the land. It is interesting that Abram built an altar. There is no mention of an altar at Haran or in Ur. This is the proper order: obedience and then worship and communion.

After building the altar, Abram the pilgrim moves on. God's people are pilgrims and strangers here on earth.

Heb 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

1Pe 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

1Pe 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1Pe 2:13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

1Pe 2:14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

1Pe 2:15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the

ignorance of foolish men:

1Pe 2:16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

Verse 8 says Abram pitched his tent. This was just a temporary dwelling place. When we see things accurately as Christians, we know this life here is just a temporary dwelling place. We look and haste for the day to go to the home Jesus has gone to prepare for us.

Joh 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Joh 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Joh 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Abram was between Bethel and Hail. Bethel means "the house of God" and Hail means "a heap of ruins." Today we stand between the two, but to which are we closer?

1Ti 3:14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

1Ti 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

When you look at the definitions of the meaning of names, you find that Abram means "high father." Later God changed his name from Abram to Abraham.

Gen 17:5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

Gen 17:6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

Abraham built on the word of Abram and means "the father of a multitude." Just as God promised, Abram became that great father of a number so great that they can not be counted today.

Abram built another altar and called upon the Lord in verse 8. Then he headed toward Egypt the wrong way.

IV. Going Down to Egypt to Sojourn

Gen 12:10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

Abram was driven towards Egypt by a famine. Famines should drive us to God. They should not drive us to the world (Egypt). Abram showed a lack of faith and trust that God would take care of him. When we are in God's will, be certain that every need will be met.

Many times famines are used for discipline and for testing.

Gen 26:1 *And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.*

Gen 26:2 *And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:*

Gen 26:3 *Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father;*

Gen 26:4 *And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;*

Gen 42:3 *And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.*

Gen 42:4 *But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him.*

Gen 42:5 *And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.*

2Sa 24:13 *So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.*

Having experienced some lean years myself, I can testify that these are not always enjoyable, but if we look to God, He will always provide for us. We may not know where it is going to come from, but God provides a way. For Abram to resort to Egypt was to seek the resources of the world, instead of the resources of God. This is typical of much fleshly effort today in the churches.

Adam Clarke said this about the famine Abram faced.

There was a famine in the land - Of Canaan. This is the first famine on record, and it prevailed in the most fertile land then under the sun; and why? God made it desolate for the wickedness of those who dwelt in it.

Went down into Egypt - He felt himself a stranger and a pilgrim, and by his unsettled state was kept in mind of the city that hath foundations that are permanent and stable, whose builder is the living God.

V. Driven To Deception

Gen 12:11 *And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:*

Gen 12:12 *Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.*

Gen 12:13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

Gen 12:14 And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair.

Gen 12:15 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

Gen 12:16 And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

Verse 11 says that Abram failed to walk by faith. . When we turn to the world for help, and fail to walk by faith, this will always lead to deeper sin. He leads his wife to have part in a lie. She was his half sister, but this was no excuse for telling a lie.

Gen 20:12 And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

Pharaoh has no reason to not believe Abram and is deceived.

VI. Driven To Confession

Gen 12:17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife.

Gen 12:18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?

Gen 12:19 Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way.

Gen 12:20 And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

God was very good to Abram and his wife Sarai. Verse 17 says that the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues. God's grace prevents disaster to Abram and his family. We may not always show faith to God, but praise God he is always faithful to us.

2Ti 2:13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

God's providence prevents Pharaoh from taking Sarai. Abram's first mistake, was leaving Bethel (the house of God). It works the same today. Want success in your family? Put God first and be faithful to serve the Lord.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. List the seven wonderful promises made to Abram.

I will make of thee a great nation.
I will bless thee.

I will make thy name great.
Thou shalt be a blessing.

I will bless them that bless thee.
Curse him that curseth thee.
In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

2. What is the meaning of "Bethel?"
House of God.

3. Why did Abram go down into Egypt?
Famine and lack of faith that God would provide

4. How did Abram attempt to deceive the Egyptians about Sarai?

Because she was a beautiful woman, and Abram thought they would take her and kill him. Another example of lacking faith that God could protect them.

I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

Gen 12:12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.