

Genesis 12

Abram: When God Calls

Preparing Your Heart to Follow God

Section 1: 1-3 – The Call and Promise

The Lord said to Abram: Go from your land, your relatives, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Abram is the next major character in the redemption story. God has chosen to give us Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah and then Abraham. Why these particular people? Because they are leading us to the main character of Scripture...Jesus. The OT focuses on the lineage of Jesus.

We saw earlier that Enoch (Gen. 5:22) and Noah (Gen. 6:9) walked with God...now we see Abram calling out to God by name (Gen. 12:8).

What is the promise of God to Abram? To make him into a great nation. As we know, from Abram will come the nation of Israel. God isn't doing random. God is designing the nation of Israel to point His people to Jesus and the Kingdom to come.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Why is it significant that believers can call out to God by name?
- ❖ God made Abram a promise. Why does God always keep His promises?
- ❖ How does it comfort you to know that God's promises can't be broken?

Section 2: 4-6 – The Response

⁴So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated, and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶Abram passed through the land to the site of Shechem, at the oak of Moreh. (At that time the Canaanites were in the land.)

Abram immediately responded to the call of God by faith. Abram was unaware of where God was leading him. But that didn't seem to matter. What mattered was obedience to the call of God. We get a little more insight into what was happening at this very moment from Hebrews 11.

Hebrews 11:8-10 (CSB) - *⁸By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and set out for a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance. He went out, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹By faith he stayed as a foreigner in the land of promise, living in tents as did Isaac and Jacob, coheirs of the same promise. ¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

Abram wasn't simply looking for a place to dwell on earth...He was looking forward to the new city that God had promised. Abram was eternally minded. Even Abram understood that everything in this life is temporary and earth is ultimately not our home.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Why should we respond to the call of God immediately?
- ❖ Why should we long for the new earth and the new city Jerusalem?
- ❖ Why should we keep in mind that all that the world offers is temporary?

Section 3: 7-9 – Worship

⁷The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him. ⁸From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. He built an altar to the Lord there, and he called on the name of the Lord. ⁹Then Abram journeyed by stages to the Negev.

Abram worshiped. But not just any type of worship...it was personal worship. The phrase "he called on the name of the Lord" implies a personal relationship. Abram knew the Lord. Not simply about Him but knew Him intimately.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ How well do you truly know your heavenly Father?
- ❖ What steps are you taking to know Him more?

Section 4: 10-20 – Abram's Failure to Trust

¹⁰There was a famine in the land, so Abram went down to Egypt to stay there for a while because the famine in the land was severe. ¹¹When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife, Sarai, "Look, I know what a beautiful woman you are. ¹²When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' They will kill me but let you live. ¹³Please say you're my sister so it will go well for me because of you, and my life will be spared on your account." ¹⁴When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. ¹⁵Pharaoh's officials saw her and praised her to Pharaoh, so the woman was taken to Pharaoh's household. ¹⁶He treated Abram well because of her, and Abram acquired flocks and herds, male and female donkeys, male and female slaves, and camels.

¹⁷But the Lord struck Pharaoh and his household with severe plagues because of Abram's wife, Sarai. ¹⁸So Pharaoh sent for Abram and said, "What have you done to me? Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? ¹⁹Why did you say, 'She's my sister,' so that I took her as my wife? Now, here is your wife. Take her and go!" ²⁰Then Pharaoh gave his men orders about him, and they sent him away with his wife and all he had.

Abram is just a man that falls short. At the first sign of difficulty, he questioned the promise of God. Abram still had the promise that God was going to make him a great nation but he's afraid that He's about to be killed. Ultimately, Abram questioned the certainty of God's Word. This is the pattern we will find throughout human history dating back to the garden. Every time we abandon the Word of God and take matters into our own hands...we sin. No exception.

Just like Noah (righteous, walked with God...God calls...Noah responds...God promises Noah...Noah gets drunk) Abram sins (righteous, walks with God...God calls...Abram responds...God promises Abram...Abram lies).

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Distractions and temptations will be a constant in your live. How are you preparing yourself today to face the temptations that will come tomorrow?

- ❖ God desires to rescue His children from temptation. How does it strengthen your faith to know that God desires to deliver you from the bondage of sin?