

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

# UNIT 02

# GOD'S PROMISES



GENESIS 12–25



MEMORY VERSE

“The promise to Abraham or to his descendants  
that he would inherit the world  
was not through the law, but  
through the righteousness that comes by faith.”

—Romans 4:13



# ABRAM OBEYED GOD'S CALL

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 12:1-9

## CONTEXT

Genesis 12 opens a new era of God's revelation. For eleven chapters, God revealed the beginning of the world at a macro level. In chapter 12, God begins to reveal the beginning of His covenant at a micro level, from many generations down to one man. Abram is the beginning of the story in so many ways. Our understanding of the grace of God revealed ultimately in Jesus Christ is strengthened by our understanding of the story of Abram way back in Genesis.

## KEY CONCEPT

**Faith is obeying and following God no matter the circumstances that come with it.**

As you examine Genesis 12:1-9:

- Identify the sacrifices Abram made to step out in faithful obedience.
- Consider how knowing the love God has for us encourages us to obey and follow His call.



## TIMELINE

God Scatters Humanity at the Tower of Babylon, Creating Nations (Genesis 10–11)

God Makes a Covenant with Abraham to Bless His Family (Genesis 15–18)

**SESSION STUDY: God Calls Abram to Make of Him a Nation to Bless the World (Genesis 12–14)**

### Daily Readings

- Day 1:** Genesis 11:27-32
- Day 2:** Genesis 12:1-9
- Day 3:** Genesis 12:10-20
- Day 4:** Genesis 13:1-18
- Day 5:** Genesis 14:1-24
- Day 6:** Psalm 128



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

GENESIS 12:1-4

### FAITH LEADS TO OBEYING AND FOLLOWING GOD'S CALL AND COMMANDS.

*Underline what God told Abram to leave behind and circle God's promises to Abram.*

**1** The LORD said to Abram: Go from your land, your relatives, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. **3** I 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. **4** So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

#### • GOSPEL CONNECTION •

Abram showed faith in obeying God when the Lord called him to leave his family and land and go to a new land. In doing so, God blessed him by making his name great and making him into a great nation where all people will be blessed through him. This blessing comes ultimately in his descendant Jesus, who brought salvation to all people through His death and resurrection.

**Key Concept:** Faith is obeying and following God no matter the circumstances that come with it.

Genesis 12 presents a profound biblical truth. To start a new life with God requires following His call wherever that might lead. Abram is the perfect example of such obedient faith.

Abram was a pagan man in the land of Ur (Genesis 15:7). He was not the obvious choice for a new life with God, but in grace, God called him. The call wasn't an easy one. It included a life of sacrifice and faith. It required leaving the country he could see with his eyes to go to a place for which he didn't even have directions. It required him to leave his family who loved him to live among strangers. It required leaving his father's house and the blessing that entailed to seek a better blessing ahead. In short, all that Abram knew, loved, and hoped for, God called him to leave behind.

**What obstacles do you think Abram faced when he considered the call of God?**

Of course, God's call was not negative. Verses 2-3 show us the sacrificial call also included promises. In leaving his country, Abram was leaving part of his identity, but God promised to make a great nation from him for God's glory. In leaving his kindred, Abram was leaving his name behind, but God promised to give him a great name, leading ultimately to the greatest name—

Jesus. In leaving his father's house, Abram was leaving the blessing he could have received, but God promised he would become the one through whom the world would be blessed. God's call was from the lesser to the greater. That's the way God always works. He calls us away from some things only to give us abundantly more in Himself and His gospel.

To his great credit, verse 4 says Abram went as the Lord had told him. At the ripe age of 75, Abram put all his eggs in God's basket and trusted His word above all else. Abram acted in faith. He didn't merely think about obeying, trying to muster up the courage. He obeyed, and he went. He forsook his own plans for his life and accepted God's plan for his life. He stepped across the line from unbelief to belief and into a hope that extended beyond anything he could have ever imagined.

**When you hear God's call, how can Abram's bold faith inspire you to obey and follow God?**

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

GENESIS 12:5-9

### FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISES LEADS TO WORSHIP OF GOD, NO MATTER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

*Underline the movement of Abram: Who went with him, and where did they journey?*

**5** He 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, **6** Abram passed through the land to the site of Shechem, at the oak of Moreh. (At that time the Canaanites were in the land.) **7** The 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. **8** From 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. **9** Then Abram journeyed by stages to the Negev.

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**GOD IS FAITHFUL:** God's faithfulness means He keeps His word and always fulfills His promises (1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:13; 1 Peter 4:19). God's faithfulness is demonstrated in His fulfillment of the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The apostle Paul linked the attribute of "faithful" to God's coming through on His word in 1 Thessalonians 5:24. We reflect God by keeping the promises we make to Him and to others.

**Key Concept:** Faith is obeying and following God no matter the circumstances that come with it.

Uprooting your life and traveling to new places is a young man's game. Yet at the age of 75, Abram traveled a route of four hundred miles to follow God's call and set up a new life in a new land. And the journey was neither short, direct, nor ending. Verses 5-9 tell us about Abram's first three moves: from Haran to Canaan, from Shechem to Bethel, and from there to the Negev.

The first move was from Haran, the place of his father, to Canaan, where he passed through to Shechem, a regular crossroads for God's people in the Bible. Located in central Canaan, Shechem often served as the place of decision for God's people (Deuteronomy 11:29-30; Joshua 24; 1 Kings 12). Abram came there to the oak of Moreh, where pagan prophets would listen to their gods' oracles. In a pagan place, Abram listened for the true Word. He knew already the emptiness of pagan worship and was not eager to listen for their voices anymore. He had heard the voice of the one true God, and he would worship Him alone.

**What voices and temptations must you ignore or flee to worship God alone?**

Abram, a former pagan, had followed God this far. Now at this place of pagan worship, he faced a choice to keep going with the God who spoke to him or to find a home in that unfamiliar place. We all have the same choice. In pagan places, whom will we worship? Whom will we follow?

In the middle of Canaan, Abram heard God's voice again: "To your offspring I will give this land" (Genesis 12:7)—confirmation of the promise, another detail that added color to Abram's new life with God. Just as God chose to show favor to a pagan and bring him into covenant, God would redeem a pagan land to be the land of promise for Abram and his descendants.

In response, Abram built an altar. When he left and went to Bethel, he built an altar there too. As Abram journeyed from place to place living in tents, "the only architecture that remained from Abram's life were altars."<sup>1</sup>

**What reasons do you have to worship God, both for His past faithfulness and the hope of His future faithfulness?**







## **ABRAM'S CHALLENGES**

*Record some challenges of faith Abram may have faced in hearing God's plan, in believing what God said, and in obeying God's call. Include Scripture references to support your responses.*

**HEAR**

**BELIEVE**

**GO**

In light of God's call of Abram and Abram's subsequent obedience, how do you see faith and obedience relating to one another?



**Key Concept:** Faith is obeying and following God no matter the circumstances that come with it.



## HEAD

How could your life be different tomorrow if you trusted in God's Word today?

### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read Psalm 128 and notice the promise of joy for a life of obedient faith in God. Ask God for the faith to trust His goodness in your life. Ask Him to help you follow Him wherever He leads.

### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



## HEART

How does knowing the love God has for us encourage us to obey and follow His call?



## HANDS

What do you need to do in faith to actively follow and obey God's call on your life?

