

GENESIS

A STUDY OF THE PATRIARCHS

**“FOR THESE ARE NOT EMPTY WORDS,
THEY ARE YOUR LIFE!”**

DEUTERONOMY 32:47

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*The Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version.
However the author has modernized archaic personal pronouns and
has changed the verbs accordingly.*

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BE WATCHING FOR FUTURE PUBLICATIONS: ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LESSON ONE - THROUGH ONE MAN

GENESIS 12-13

THROUGH ONE MAN

GENESIS 12-13

We are now entering the second section of Genesis. It has been 2000 years since creation. It has been 400 years since the flood. The human race has now been scattered throughout the earth,

speaking a variety of different languages. And yet, it is still a world full of idolatry and wickedness.

Cleaning things up and starting over is not going to solve the world's problems. The condition of man's heart has not changed. The only hope is in that promised Deliverer. (Genesis 3:15)

A SPECIAL CALL

Read Genesis 12-13. *(Remember, pray before you start. Let this not just be an intellectual assignment. Only through God's Spirit can we even begin to understand God and his Word that He chooses to reveal to us. Pray with the Psalmist, "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from your law." Psalm 119:18*

This section begins with God telling Abram to do what? (Genesis 12:1; also read Acts 7:2-4 to help clarify exactly where Abram was when God called him.) Three things, God asked Abram to do:

1. ††
2. ††
3. ††

God calls out a single man and makes a covenant with him.

Genesis 12:1-3. Become thoroughly familiar with it. This is brought out in the "Introduction to Genesis" lesson. But because this covenant is such a huge key to understanding the whole Old Testament, we will visit these verses again. These verses are what the rest of the Bible is about; the unfolding of the promise that was first given back in Genesis 3:15. God promises Abraham that his descendants should be: (Genesis 12:1-3)

††

Through this man, Abraham, God purposes to show the whole

world of Himself and to bless all people through him. This covenant is repeated to only two other people. Who are they? It is repeated to whom? (Genesis 26:1-5)

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It is also repeated to whom? (Genesis 28:13-15)

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These three men are the covenant fathers. That is why it says in the Scriptures, "I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." No one else is ever added. God gave the covenant to these three men.

MAKING A NAME

Compare the phrase, "making a name" in Genesis 11:4 and Genesis 12:2.

Does anyone know who those people were that set out to build that tower?

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They were out to make a name for themselves.

Is there anyone worldwide in all of history that is more well-known than Abraham?

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It is really God's name and God's glory that matters. His purposes are what lasts the test of time. In the end, all is for the name of the LORD to be magnified.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

And now at this time in history, God will choose one man. Through this one man, he will build one nation. This nation will become God's special charge. God will deal with this people like no others. And this one nation will:

1. be a witness of God's grace to all the other nations.

2. give to the world God's personal revelation, his Holy Scriptures.

3. be the family from whom the promised Deliverer will come.

Genesis 12:1-3 is foundational to the whole Bible. This is the beginning of God's chosen people.

Why do you think in Genesis 12:1 that God wanted Abram to forsake all his friends and family and everything that he knew? (Joshua 24:2)

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God is to start again; this time through one family. God has great plans for this family. These plans cannot be done in an ungodly city that worships all sorts of gods. Even Abram's own family worshipped the many gods. Abram needs to come out from among them and separate himself from all the ungodliness. This is the way that God chooses to start again.

Ur is a highly civilized city. History tells us that they even have indoor plumbing, running water, and indoor bathtubs. It is quite comfortable there. Abram and Sarai are not young. Abram is 75 when he leaves Haran. Sarai is 65. They are going to Canaan, a barbaric country. They are to live in tents as nomads. I wonder how excited they are about this.

But Abram does believe. Abram does go. Abram is a great man of faith. But he isn't one of super faith all at once. Faith must be tested to be strengthened.

Does Abram leave his country and get to Canaan directly? (Genesis 11:31)

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Does he leave his kindred and his father's house when he goes? (Genesis 11:31)

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No. Yet we are allowed to witness the real life of this great man of faith. It is an up and down journey of learning to trust God. He does not always get it right the first time. He has to suffer some pretty tough consequences along the way. That is the way of a faith journey. But we will see his heart. We will see what he does after his failures. And through these eternal pages that God has so graciously given to us, I pray that we too will learn this life of faith.

Finally, Abram leaves Haran and goes to Canaan. He arrives where and does what? (Genesis 12:6-8)

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And now, what additional promise and encouragement does God give to Abram? (Genesis 12:7-9)

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CRISIS #1

Shortly after Abram arrives in the land of Canaan and has received the wonderful promises from God, what happens? (Genesis 12:10)

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Now how in the world is Abram going to father a great nation if he and Sarai starve to death? Isn't that just like us? When a problem arises, we look to the world for safety and help. Abram probably is thinking, "There's lots of rain and fertile land in Egypt. My sheep are getting skinny. I'll be back when the famine is over." Trusting God is so hard, especially when we think we can figure it all out. But one thing leads to another. Going to Egypt leads to...

CRISIS #2

What crisis develops by going to Egypt? (Genesis 12:11-13)

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Now I ask you, how is he going to father a great nation if Pharaoh kills him? And how is Sarai going to bless the world through her offspring if she is married to the Pharaoh? But God is gracious and patient. These things were not to be. God saves their necks and has Abram and Sarai sent out of Egypt.

Yes, Abram's faith falters. But the key to his faith is what we see that happens next. What does he do? (Genesis 13:1-4)

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CRISIS #3

What happens between Abram and Lot?

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Bringing Lot to Canaan was not what Abram was told to do. (Genesis 12:1) And so we see there are problems. There is strife. Abram is seen as a man that worships the one true God, the Creator of all. This bickering was not a good testimony to the Canaanites and the Perizzites that were living in the land.

Abram chooses to trust God this time. He knows that he and Lot need to separate to end the strife. He could just send him away. After all, the promise is to him. This is his land. But he lets Lot choose which way to go and Lot chooses what? (Genesis 12:10-11)

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Not only does Lot choose the choicest land, but quite possibly in Abram's mind, the only chance of an heir is gone. How is Abram going to have a great nation without an heir?

Right after Lot leaves, God speaks again. He repeats the promise and adds more. What is added? (Genesis 13:14-17)

††

And what is Abram's response? (Genesis 13:18)

††

God has much to teach us through the life of this man Abram. Think of the various "crises" that come your way as you try to flesh out this life of faith in your own day to day experiences. Pray that God can encourage you through the life of his servant, Abram; that you can more fully trust him in those times of crises.

LESSON TWO **COUNTED RIGHTEOUS**

GENESIS 14-15

COUNTED RIGHTEOUS

Genesis 14-15

Read Genesis 14-15. *(Remember, pray before you start. Let this not just be an intellectual assignment. Only through God's Spirit can we even begin to understand God and his Word that He chooses to reveal to us. Pray with the Psalmist, "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from your law." Psalm 119:18*

TROUBLE IN THE PROMISED LAND

Remember Lot leaves Abram for the choicest land in the last chapter. That land is not only attractive to Lot. It catches the eye of many. Who else is interested in this southern Jordan valley? (Genesis 14:1)

††

There are four kings from the north that are interested in it. While normally the conflicts of the southern Jordan valley would be of no real interest to us, why is this conflict recorded? (Genesis 14:11-12)

††

When Abram hears this news, what do we learn of Abram in this account? (Genesis 14:14-16)

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Even though Lot has parted ways, he is still family and Abram responds. We also see that Abram has quite a few servants. And likewise he seems to have good relations with his neighbors in the land in that they are shown helping Abram.

Even yet, Abram does not have what it takes to meet five powerful kings. He has just a small, untrained group of guys probably without many weapons. But Abram goes, trusting God, and there is victory.

Who is Melchizedek and what does he do? (Genesis 14:18-20; also for more insight on Melchizedek, read Psalm 110 and Hebrews 5 and 7)

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The name “Melchizedek” means “king of righteousness”. He is also called the king of Salem, which means “peace”. In addition to being a king, he is called the priest of the Most High God. He is not a priest of the Old Testament Israel that came from Moses’ brother, Aaron’s family. Aaron is not to be born for another 400 years. Melchizedek is a priest of the whole world.

Melchizedek blesses Abram and he blesses the Most High God of Abram for the victory. What is Abram’s response? (Genesis 14:20)

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It is interesting to note that a tithe would be an appropriate response. And it is definitely an act of worship in response to all of God’s blessings!

Just as soon as Abram is blessed, who shows up and what does

he offer? (Genesis 14:21)

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It almost sounds like he wants to make a deal. “You give me the people and you can take all the spoil”. It reminds me a lot of the tempter in the wilderness in Matthew 4. What is Abram’s response? (Genesis 14:22-24)

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Abram’s faith is growing. He is already very blessed. But the tendency of people that have much is generally to want more. Abram does not respond in that way. He can be content in the blessings that God sends his way. He can trust that God will provide. He will not let anyone but his God get credit for his fortunes.

CRISIS #4

What is still Abram’s main problem and what solution does he consider now? (Genesis 15:1-3)

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How does God respond to him? (Genesis 15:4, 5 and also in Genesis 15:13-16)

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ABRAM BELIEVES