

# What You Need to Know About ABRAHAM: “God Is Faithful to Keep His Promises”

## Study Number One – Genesis 12:1-20

Father, we thank You for this time of study and we just ask that Your Holy Spirit will use this time and You'll be glorified and honored in the midst of it. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

One of the greatest men in scripture is the man that we're going to study. If there's ever a time in the history of the church and of Christianity, it would be to go back and study and sit at the feet of this incredible person, Abraham.

He is the one who's called **THE FRIEND OF GOD**. His name occurs **SEVENTY-FOUR TIMES** in the New Testament alone.

Whenever it comes to speaking about the subject of faith or eternal salvation, Abraham becomes Paul's very favorite illustration.

Now with the book of Genesis and with Abraham, we will build on the reality of the person and say a few things about him, and then in each study we'll just pick up and progress in the story.

In our study of the book of Genesis, we begin to deal with people beginning at the end of Genesis 11 and then chapter 12 through 50. And there are FOUR MAJOR BIOGRAPHIES in those chapters. We're starting with Abraham.

Romans says:

### Romans 8:30

And whom He predestined, then He also called, and whom He called, then He also justified, and whom He justified then He also glorified.

So with Abraham we would take the word “predestined” because there’s nothing in this man that would qualify him to do what he’s going to do.

Secondly, “those whom He called”—Isaac miraculously called from the womb. And then we have Jacob who had a hard time learning how to do it God’s way.

And we’d use the word “justified.” And then Joseph, we see the glory of what God can do in impossible circumstances.

God has never left any work undone. Secondly, we will not be able to accuse God of any unfulfilled promise when it’s all said and done and we’re home with Him.

And so when we get to Genesis 11 it’s kind of like God says, “I’ve been dealing with you from this point of view, now I’m

going to use people.

Genesis 1 and 2—we have the CREATION.

Genesis 3—we have the FALL.

Genesis 5, 6, 7 and 8—we have the FLOOD.

And then finally:

THE TOWER OF BABEL just before Abraham comes on the scene.

Now there's some words that will describe Abraham that certainly would not qualify him for ministry:

he's ROUGH,

he's a SHEEP HERDER,

he's just a SIMPLE MAN who steps out of nowhere,

he's a very VENERABLE person.

He never wrote a prophecy, he never wrote a book, he never sang a song, he never gave us any laws. The only claim to fame—he is a man from Ur.

Why would God choose Abraham over everybody else?

Only God knows that.

And why would God choose someone for ministry?

Only God knows and understands.

Abraham, when we look at his family, he's just another man who's from an idolatrous family and was probably an idolater himself at the time of his choosing.

God chooses this man and does not give us any reasons. That's the beauty of the story of Abraham, because there's hope for us!

Here's a man with no credentials, nothing in himself personally that would appeal to God. Only God could see what He wanted to do.

A lot of the prophets would pick up little snippets and they would say things that make us understand that they feel just like we do. The miracle of choice, and look at the man and what has happened.

### Isaiah 51:2

Look to Abraham your father, and Sarah who gave birth to you in pain. When he was one I called him, then I blessed him and multiplied him.

Yes, he alone was called.

Now put his family together:

Old Terah had three boys—my three sons. There's Abram, Haran and Nahor. They were a polytheistic family. They're the first "Moonies." They worshiped the moon god—and we'll see why in just a minute.

Many times in the patriarchal period there was idolatrous worship of the celestial bodies—the stars, the sun, the moon and the planets.

And all of it was based and sensual. And if we've read anything about the festivals and the feasts and the sexual orgies that were part of their worship, it was certainly just as much true of this particular time.

Now there are going to be **THREE PARTS** to his life that we'll look at:

1. An **AWAKENING OF FAITH**—and that's where we are in this study. This is a 6-year period.
2. The **DISCIPLING OF FAITH**—how does a person grow and progress in his faith and his walk with God? That'll be a 25-year period and that'll be covered in several of the studies.
3. The **PERFECTING OF HIS FAITH**—in the remainder of the years of his life. That's about 75 more years.

Now how does it relate to us? Well, there comes a time in each of our lives when there's an awakening of faith. That's a miracle every time we hear this story, of somebody else who's opened their lives to Jesus Christ and they understand what they've been missing all these years.

The AWAKENING OF FAITH—that happens during these first 6 years.

Then God expects us to grow and to mature in our faith, so we're calling it the DISCIPLING OF FAITH—the next 25 years. We are going to have some rollercoaster rides through that with our hero.

Then the PERFECTING OF THE FAITH is extended after the birth of Isaac until his physical death.

So for us it would be:

SALVATION,

GROWTH, and

CHRISTLIKENESS.

We are daily being made more like Christ as we cooperate fully with His plan.

Let's look at Genesis 11, just preceding our first verse:

## Genesis 11:26-32

And Terah [that's his daddy] lived 70 years and became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran [three boys]. Now these are the records of the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nabor and Haran and Haran became the father of Lot [just kind of hang onto that]. And Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth in Ur of Chaldeans. [So Haran dies and Lot begins to adopt his uncle as his father image. That's why we have this relationship that's going to be very complicated and has to be dealt with.] And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. And Sarai was barren [hang onto that because of the promises that are being made here], she had no children. And Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran his grandson and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife and they went out together from the Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan. They went as far as Haran and settled there. And the days of Terah were 205 years and Terah died in Haran.

Isn't that just like us? We make a commitment, we get really excited and we get on the journey and we have a hard time and we just stop. And we settle down where we are and end up dying there in that place.

That's the tragic picture of these first six years that happen preceding what we're looking at in the text. Evidently father

Terah was impressed by the faith of Abram to trust the living God, the fact that he would take his family and all of his possessions and they'd start on this journey.

Now watch what idolatry and religion will do. When he got to Haran, the center of moon god worship, old daddy Terah is so happy to be in the citadel of it all that he even dreamed of probably dying in that place. And he wasn't disappointed—he did.

But for those 6 years, just think of the damage that had to take place every day as Abram realized he was not fulfilling what God wanted him to do.

Remember when STEPHEN gave that message before the Sanhedrin in Acts 7 and then he was stoned to death for his message? He said:

Acts 7:2ff

Hear me my brothers and fathers, the God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran. And said to him depart from your country and your relatives and come into the land I will show you. Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran and from there after his father died, God removed him into this country in which you are now living.

There come times when we shut it down and we get at a distance with God, and we get into a negotiating mode. We get

into a joint-venture kind of thing. We get into assumptions that we're pleasing Him and we're glorifying Him. And we're farther than we could ever believe from really what God wants with His intended purpose in our life.

If this study does nothing else, may it drive us freshly to the foot of the Savior. And be certain in our own heart that we're exactly where we need to be and we're doing exactly what we need to be doing for the glory of God, because the time is short.

Here 6 years, then they're gone. What happens during those 6 years? There are no altars, no revelations, no prophecy, no appearance from the Lord, no victory, no progress, no growth. It just shut down and stopped.

### Galatians 5:7

You were running well, who cut in on you that you should not obey the truth.

Understand that once we become a Christian, God is in the business of progressively separating us from the world, the flesh and the devil as much as He possibly can. Because once that separation is intact and it's working and we are being separated from things, it's like a spaceship getting ready to go out into orbit. All of the scaffolding falls away and we're off and it's kind of the way God works with us. There's so much that ties us down, there's so much which holds us back, and God has to touch that.

There are verses of scripture that verify this.

### 2 Timothy 4:10

Demas hath forsaken me because he loved this present world,  
...

### 2 Corinthians 6:17-18

Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate,” saith the Lord. “And do not touch the unclean thing; And I will be a father unto you. You shall be my sons and daughters,” saith the Lord Almighty.

### 2 Corinthians 7:1

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Could we be honest enough that maybe we’re guilty of holding onto some stuff we ought to be letting go?

There are things we all have to let go. There are things that have got to go because we’re coming down the home stretch and we can’t afford to be detained in accomplishing His full purpose.

Jesus felt that with great intensity when he said, “I have

worked the works of Him that sent me while it is day, for the night is coming when no man can work.” (ref. John 9:4)

Here we are—we’re in Haran. Just half way to the place we need to be. Six years in the desert, filled with cluttered obedience. And then now we prepare ourselves for the exposition of the text that is before us.

Remember now two things, when we get to the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 15, there are two things involved in that covenant that are very significant:

1. There is a LAND—and that’s where they’re going. There’s a promise of this land.
2. There is the promise of a SEED through whom the Messiah is going to come. And of course, that’s the seed of the Jewish race and the nation Israel.

Coupled with that, we have to understand that because God has entered into this unconditional covenant with them, in regard to these two very significant things, that the world is going to hate Israel.

Joel Rosenberg has the following to say:

(Epicenter: Why the Current Rumbings in the Middle East Will Change Your Future by Joel C. Rosenberg)

“Hitler hated Christianity with a passion ... [then he goes

on to say:]

Driven by this hatred of God and his chosen people, Hitler went on to murder 6 million Jews ... The Final Solution that was designed to wipe out all Jews.  
pp. 160-61

U.S. and allied forces had something to say with that:

(Epicenter: Why the Current Rumbblings in the Middle East Will Change Your Future by Joel C. Rosenberg)

Today the murderous anti-Semitic and anti-Christian spirit of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin is being carried on by Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. As we have seen, he has called for the complete destruction of the Jewish state, echoing the words of the Ayatollah Khomeini: “Israel must be wiped off the map.”<sup>4</sup>

4. Aljazeera, “Ahmadinejad: Wipe Israel off map,” October 26, 2005.  
p. 161

Mark Hitchcock wrote a book called *The Apocalypse of Ahmadinejad*. Listen to what he says:

(The Apocalypse of Ahmadinejad: The Revelation of Iran’s Nuclear Prophet by Mark Hitchcock)

Ahmadinejad’s fervent belief in the mystical elements of Shiite Twelver Islam suggests that he believes in the

imminent return of the Disappeared Twelfth Imam (the Mahdi). Based on an analysis of his statements, one hypothesis is that he believes his role demands contributing to the outbreak of chaos in the Middle East to usher in Armageddon and the Day of Judgment.

*WHAT MAKES TEHRAN TICK*, IRAN POLICY COMMITTEE  
p. 33

In other words, he is this person who's going to do that.

Now when we look at the history of the world, we not only stop and look at Hitler and Germany, but go back and talk to Pharaoh and ask how much it costs when he changes his mind about letting the people go—he and the whole army were buried in the Red Sea.

We see the same thing with Greece when Antiochus Epiphanes offered that sow in the Holy of Holies. Greece was gone, 70 A.D. Jerusalem was destroyed, Rome falls.

Over and over again God lets us know that when He makes a covenant, when He makes a promise, He means to keep it. And there's a price to be paid when we don't cooperate fully with His plan.

Alright, let's get into the study.

**v. 1 The Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to**

**the land I will show you.**

“The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land that I will show you.’”

So right away we have God separating him from his family, from his land, and taking him to a destination where He can work in his life.

Where do we get that with us personally?

Hebrews 12:1, 2

... wherefore, let us lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us ...

In other words, it’s a “give me” in the book of Hebrews that progressively we’re being stripped down. Stuff is falling away and we’re laying aside these things so we can be more effective and make a greater impact.

The first command is “leave your country.” In other words, he’s going to get a new address.

But then leave “your father’s household.” What does that mean?

“Your father is now dead. Leave that household because I am

the new Father in this relationship. You're going to be pursuing My path. There will be a new sphere of authority. You're going to be depending upon Me yourself."

And then the command:

"go to the land I will show you."

Isn't that interesting that he doesn't have a map? He doesn't have a GPS to help get to the final destination. He doesn't know where he's going.

That's pretty exciting. Every day lets us know, if we're walking with Him and we're close to Him, that we're on track to get home on schedule. And when we get there, it's going to be wonderful. And that's the way God does things. That's why we know so little about heaven. That's why we look forward with such joy to that.

Alright, thinking what it would be like for brother Nahor who probably asked, "Why are you leaving?" Now he's the only other living brother. Haran's dead and now there's just the two boys. And here's his brother getting out of here.

And the first question he would ask, "What do you lack more than you could have right here?" And Abraham would say, "I want nothing but to do the will of God in wherever He may lead me."

Nahor would say, "But look at the danger! The desert, the

jealousy, the anger, the looters, the robbers, all of that!”

Abram would say, “But he who bids me go, must take all the responsibility of that upon himself. He will care for us!”

Nahor would say, “Well tell me where you’re going and where you’re planning on settling.”

This is so good. Ready?

“That’s a question I cannot answer for indeed you know as much about it as I do myself.”

But listen to this:

“I am sure if I take one day’s march at a time that will be made clear, and the next and the next until at last I am able to settle in the country God has selected for me somewhere.”

What he’s saying is, God designed it to be a daily relationship. So every time we have our devotional time in the morning, the first thing that ought to fill our heart is the joy of knowing we’re right where we need to be. And that God is blessing our socks off, because we’re right there.

In essence he’s saying:

“Leave your PROVISION,”

“leave your PROTECTION,”

“leave your PLAN,”

“leave your PLACE in the Father’s hands.”

“Now you’re ready for Me to use you in a significant way.”

We have three “leaves:”:

“Leave your country, your people, your father’s house.”

And one “go”:

“go to the land that I will show you.”

In other words:

“Let Me be the one who is leading you.”

Now here comes some of the promises.

**v. 2 I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.**

“I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.”

It’s interesting here that what he’s saying is, on the basis of his obedience “I will do this”:

“I am going to make you a great nation.”

What's the principle?

As we start to progressively take the steps of separation in our personal life, that the Spirit of God speaks to us about, and as we make any one of those, the blessing that comes from it is going to be far greater than the separation that we have just taken. And to stand before God knowing it's the right choice.

And so “do what I say and I will bless you” in essence is what He's saying here.

God's **COMMAND** in verse 1 is followed by a **PROMISE** in verse 2. He doesn't give any reasons, he just gives promises.

Question: “Are you willing to trust God?”

No explanations, just trust Him. Okay, let's talk about that.

1. “I will make you a great nation.” Did He do that?

Yes.

Now that great nation is not just Israel, okay? We, as believers, are the spiritual seed of Abraham.

Want a verse on that?

## Galatians 3:29

And if you belong to Christ then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Yes, God did it!

2. "and I will bless you."

Materially, spiritually, in every way "I am going to bless you. You're going to be singing, 'Showers of Blessing' every time you turn around, to the place you can't take it anymore."

3. "I will make your name great."

Now is there any other person who's the founder of three of the world's religions? Abraham is it—Judaism, Muhammadism and Christianity all claim him as a patriarch as part of their religion. So his name has been made great.

**v. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."**

"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

So now the promise that "if anybody messes with you, I'm going to take care of it. I'm going to help."

With just those promises, can God raise up a seed from a barren woman? Can He give land where there isn't any real estate? Yes. Can He put a simple nobody from Ur of the Chaldees in "Who's Who"? Absolutely.

We have that statement that the Lord made to Mary when she was so concerned about how the baby Jesus was going to be born:

### Luke 1:37

For nothing is impossible with God.

We can say, "God, You keep Your promises. You indeed are faithful."

One of the commentators took these "I will's"—and there's seven of them. Seven is the number of completeness. Let's just reflect on them now one at a time:

1. "I will make you into a great nation,"
2. "I will bless you,"
3. "I will make your name great,"
4. "You will be a blessing,"
5. "I will bless those who bless you,"

6. “whoever curses you I will curse,”

The biggest one of all—in the seventh position:

7. “all peoples on the earth will be blessed through you.”

What’s that? That’s the promise of the coming of the Messiah. “All of the earth will be blessed through you.”

It’s kind of like saving the Messianic prophecy for the last of the seven. God does that all the time. He saves the best for the last.

At the wedding of Canaan, it’s the best wine. The Lord always does it.

**v. 4 So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.**

What a key to blessing.

“So Abram left,”—no questions, no condition, he just left.

Obedience is the safest place to be.

LEAVE and GO—Abraham left in verse 4.

He OBEYED and he immediately WENT FORTH—Wow!

“as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.”

**v. 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, and they arrived there.**

“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, and they arrived there.”

So far it’s “go to the land that I will show you.” Now we don’t see any of the details of the journey. But we do see some disturbing things that are in verse 5 that were very, very clear in verse 1.

Back there it was to leave and go. Now he left. He set out and then he arrived—yes. But notice what he took—**FOUR THINGS:**

1. “his wife Sarai”—naturally she’d go because she’s part of the promise,
2. “his nephew Lot”—nope,
3. “all the possessions they had accumulated”—nope, they didn’t need those, and

4. “and the people they had acquired in Haran”—they don’t need those.

Alexander MacLaren said the following:

How slowly the divine purpose was revealed—the trial before the promise—did not know where, nor that Canaan was land, but only told enough for his first march.

So with us—our ignorance of future is meant to have the effect of keeping us near God and training us to live a day at a time.

(source unknown)

The reason we know so little is so we’ll stay near to God. And that in the process. We will live one day at a time.

God’s finger on the page points to a word at the time. Each day’s route is given morning by morning in the order for the day.

(source unknown)

**v. 6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. The Canaanites were then in the land,**

“Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. The Canaanites were then in the land,”

We know that the word “Moreh” is a word which means “instruction.” And “Shechem” means “strength.”

The Hebrew meaning of the words are the two things he really needs now that he has arrived at the place God had asked him to go.

But isn't it interesting that when they arrive at the place God wants them to go, this special land that's going to be theirs, there's somebody already living there? There are Canaanites in the land.

Is that disturbing? One of the things that'll help us more as believers to negotiate the landscape of difficult circumstances in our lives is to realize that God doesn't tell us everything.

God will give a promise. And if we're faithful to walk with Him, that promise is going to be fulfilled—if it's a conditional promise. God will indeed do that. But He will not tell us about the rocks in the road, the blowout on the tire, the hip replacement that didn't work.

Remember that great passage where we have Paul telling all the people on the ship, “Look it's going to be alright. We're going to get the storm. We'll all be saved, all 275, because the Lord told me so.”

The Lord told him so, but the Lord didn't tell him there's going to be a shipwreck, they're going to survive by swimming to shore, and then he was going to be bitten by a snake while

trying to put some wood on the fire. All of those things are just part and parcel of what it takes to get us separated unto God Himself.

And God just uses it all. And if we learn that out of this, it's going to help us not to take it personally when we get nailed to the wall. And when we face something that we never plan and we get surprised by something like Canaanites who are in the land and God promised it.

Now maybe just maybe right now God is starting a separating process in the life of Abraham that's going to lead to the blessing that's coming.

And the very first thing is "I'm going to test you to see whether you believe Me, even though there are Canaanites living in the land, that the land is going to be yours. I'm going to see if you trust Me on that."

Now maybe for us it's a habit. Maybe it's a desire, maybe it's a worldly practice, maybe it's pride, dishonesty, gossip, unforgiving spirit, all the things the Lord has to cut out of our lives.

Obedience will issue a greater knowledge so we are willing to trust Him to help us and to be victorious in these things leaving our life.

John 7:17

If any man will do His will he shall know.

“The Canaanites were in the land,”

Did Mary and Joseph have some feeling like that when they got to Bethlehem at the time of the birth of Savior with no vacancy signs all over the place?

Get this:

(The Daily Walk Bible by Paula Kirk, John Hoover, etc.)

Understanding can wait, obedience can't.  
p. 252

We may not ever understand because we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Understanding can wait, but obedience can't. There's no excuse for us to delay in our obedience.

Now Abraham could say, “This is not what I expected.”

Welcome to the club!

And how would the Lord answer that?

Isaiah 55:8, 9

“Well my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither your ways My ways,” saith the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than

the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, my thoughts than your thoughts.”

“What’d you expect? What I’m providing for you is literally far better! It’s going to be wonderful when it all falls together.”

Can we trust God in unexplainable circumstances?

Right at the time that there’s Canaanites in the land, the Lord turns right around and gives an answer. The answer in verse 7 exactly meets the dilemma of verse 6.

**v. 7 but 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.**

“but the Lord appeared to Abram and said,”

What’s the issue? The land!

“To your offspring I will give this land.”

Abram has enough sense now to build an altar and a tent and start fellowship with God.

Whenever we see him build an altar it’s good.? We’re going to see this over and over again and it’s good.

“So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.”

How timely this is to hear from God that they are going to have a place, and eventually it's going to happen.

Now we go into another area. It's going to create some real havoc. Welcome to the real world.

**v. 8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.**

“From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel”

“Bethel” means “house of God.”

“and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east.”

Now at the end of verse 8—how wonderful.

“There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.”

Now when he built an altar he began to “call on the name of the Lord.”

Wonderful blessing.

Andrew Murray put it this way:

(God's Best Secrets: Daily Devotional Meditations by Andrew Murray)

I will learn the lesson, to *spend time each day*—without exception—*in fellowship with my Lord*.

(January 1)

Psalm 73:25

Whom have I in heaven but You,  
I desire You more than anything on earth.

Just strip the garbage away. “You’re everything to me.”

We need to realize that there’s a process going on.

Colossians 3:2

Let heaven fill your thoughts; do not think only about things down here on earth.

He’s getting perspective. But he’s going to make the biggest mistake—one of the biggest mistakes in his life—right after this.

**v. 9 Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.**

“Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.”

What happened?

First of all, there's no place to live because there are people in the land, right?

And secondly, now there's an economic collapse and there's no food in the land.

So God helps those who help themselves. "Negev" means Egypt. That's 250 miles away. So he's leaving the land and he's heading, without any instructions, no altar, no tent—he's moving around in the land and he is neglecting the Word of God and he's going.

And sometimes the toughest things that we have to learn is to let God stop us as well as to get us started. And He's constantly at work at that.

And here's Abram, like a young Christian, moving all over the place, scattering a little shot wherever he goes.

But he "set out and continued toward the Negev."

When we're most eager to act is when we make the most pitiful mistake. Watch out, here it comes.

An explanation for him going to the Negev is in verse 10.

**v. 10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram**

**went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.**

“Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was so severe.”

“There’s no room, there’s no food, so the proper thing to do is to head south to make my own provision. No tent, no altar, no fellowship, no fruit, just a lot of stuff that’s really going to clutter things up and make a mess.

He could have stayed put and God would have taken care of him as Jehovah Jireh, making provision for him in the land. Because God had promised to do that, but not now.

One writer said:

A crust of bread with God is better than a feast without Him.  
(source unknown)

Proverbs 28:26

He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.

This is not where God wanted to be. He wanted him to stay in the land.

Who’s responsible for this? Satan is responsible for so many of

these big mistakes in our lives, of going and getting involved in things we shouldn't have gotten involved in, doing things we shouldn't have been doing.

### Luke 22:31

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan desires to have you, that he may sift you like wheat; I prayed for you, that when you're converted, strengthen your brethren; get back on track.

Here's another good verse:

### Romans 12:12

Be glad for all God has planned for you. Be patient in trouble and always be prayerful.

Talk about a mouthful with a three-point landing. That'll nail it every time, won't it?

What's he saying?

1. "Be glad for all God is planning for you. Just hang on! It's going to be okay!"
2. "Be patient in trouble. You need to learn that!"
3. "Always be prayerful."

"Yes Lord, I am. And I'm talking to You right now and I

realize You're talking to me too. And thank You, thank You, thank You."

Going south—"the famine was severe."

Here's a great statement from *Our Daily Bread*:

God will never lead you where His grace cannot keep you.  
(source unknown)

Now the tragedy that happens is when we take matters into our own hands and we start doing it on our own, we get into all kinds of messes and fixes that disturb us greatly.

Oh, get this. Is this embarrassing?

**v. 11 As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are.**

"As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai,"

Look at him. What is he doing? He's getting ready to put the seed in jeopardy by what he's doing.

"I know what a beautiful woman you are."

Now that's a great thing to say guys, to score points? Definitely.

**v. 12 When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is**

**his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live.**

“When the Egyptians see you, they will say, “This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live.”

**v. 13 Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.”**

“Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.”

When we’re out of the will of God we always anticipate the worst and it’s always “I, me and my.” It all centers around “me” and what’s going to happen to “me.” No altar, no fellowship, no promises. All fear and insecurity and selfishness. That’s the picture that we have here.

“I will be treated well for your sake,”

“my life will be spared because of you.”

**v. 14 When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman.**

“When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman.”

**v. 15 And when Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his**

**palace.**

“And when Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace.”

Great, now his wife is part of Pharaoh’s harem.

What’s going on in those chambers? What’s happening?

Sarai is so beautiful. Where’s she going to end up? What’s about to happen? Probably a smiling mummy in a British museum as an heiress in the land of Egypt. Good job Abram. He really blew it big time.

Well, the scenario played out, didn’t it?

**v. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels.**

“He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels.”

There are two things that come out of this Egypt trip that’s going to be big trouble for the rest of the trip. First of all, a whole lot of wealth. Secondly, a little maid by the name of Hagar that will fit into the story.

Six things:

1. “sheep,”
2. “cattle,”
3. “male and female donkeys,”
4. “menservants,”
5. “maidservants,” and
6. “camels.”

God always comes through.

**v. 17 But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram’s wife Sarai.**

“But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh”

It’s hard to believe the covenant that God blesses those and curses those? Here it is big time.

“[He] inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram’s wife Sarai.”

So God takes action.

**v. 18 So Pharaoh summoned Abram. “What have you**

**done to me?” he said. “Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife?”**

“So Pharaoh summoned Abram. ‘What have you done to me?’ he said. ‘Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife?’”

“What have you done to me?”

“Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife?”

How did he know?

Evidently her number came up, just like it was Esther’s number to come up in Xerxes’ court on a given night. And Sarah crumbled and said, “I am already married to Abram! I’m sorry.” And in the process that stopped and protected and provided the grace of God needed to continue on for the pure seed of a Messiah, coming at a very critical time. But Abram almost blew it.

**v. 19 Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!”**

“Why did you say, “She is my sister,” so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!””

Notice what he fouls up. Talk about embarrassing.

**v. 20 Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his**

**men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.**

“Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.”

Three things:

1. “they sent him on his way,”
2. “with his wife,” and
3. “everything he had.”

Deportation big time.

Without God and without honor, those are things that happen. And the tragedy is that Abram took these things into his own hands. And he brings back Hagara maid, and much earthly wealth. And it’s going to create some further humiliation in the ongoing story.

There are ten lessons that come out of this passage.

Lesson #1: You can trust the God who promises to perform.

Lesson #2: God is ever calling us to a greater and greater separation unto Himself (2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

Lesson #3: Our resistance to the separation is hindering God’s

blessing.

Lesson #4: Keep our eyes on the Lord and not on our circumstances.

Lesson #5: God will supply all our needs when we are in the center of His will.

Lesson #6: We are going to be tested in the pursuit of His will, even as Abram experienced through the Canaanites in the land and also the famine.

Lesson #7: Listen for instructions!

Lesson #8: The altar and tent ought to characterize our lives.

Lesson #9: God, in love, has chosen us.

Lesson #10: God also knows how to discipline and chasten His erring children.

Let's conclude our study with a beautiful prayer by A. W. Tozer. It says everything we've been trying to say about this passage.

(The Pursuit of God by A. W. Tozer)

*Lord, I would trust Thee completely; I would be altogether Thine; I would exalt Thee above all. I desire that I may feel no sense of possessing anything outside of Thee. I want constantly*

*to be aware of Thy overshadowing presence and to hear Thy speaking voice. I long to live in restful sincerity of heart. I want to live so fully in the Spirit that all my thoughts may be a sweet incense ascending to Thee and every act of my life may be an act of worship. Therefore I pray in the words of Thy great servant of old, "I beseech Thee so for to cleanse the intent of mine heart with the unspeakable gift of Thy grace, that I may perfectly love Thee and worthily praise Thee." And all this I confidently believe Thou wilt grant me through the merits of Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen.*

pp. 127-28

(The Daily Walk Bible)

Only when the job was done; "Just as the Lord had commanded Moses" did the glory of God fill the temple.

p. 141

As we progressively separate ourselves unto God and we do it His way, more and more the brightness of His glory is going to shine on each face and in each life. And people are going to be amazed and want to be with us because they sense the presence of the Lord as we gather together.

Lord, we love You and thank You for our friends. What a great encouragement at this time in our lives when things are difficult, that they would encourage us, being taught in Your Word. And we pray Your Holy Spirit will bless each of us and that the lessons from the Word of God will be helpful. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

# What You Need to Know About ABRAHAM: “God Is Faithful to Keep His Promises”

## Study Number One – Genesis 12:1-20

### NOTES

v. 1 The Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.

v. 2 I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

v. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

v. 4 So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

v. 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, and they arrived there.

v. 6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. The Canaanites were then in the land,

v. 7 but 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.

v. 8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.

v. 9 Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

v. 10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.

v. 11 As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, “I know what a beautiful woman you are.

v. 12 When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live.

v. 13 Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.”

v. 14 When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman.

## NOTES

v. 15 And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace.

v. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels.

v. 17 But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai.

v. 18 So Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What have you done to me?" he said. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife?"

v. 19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!"

v. 20 Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Read Genesis 12:1-20 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. What promises does the Lord make to Abram in verses 2 & 3?

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3. What did Abram do in response to the Lord's command and promises in verses 4-6?

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4. What did Abram do in verse 8?

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5. What did Abram ask Sarai, his wife, to do in verses 11-13?

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6. Do you think that Sarai his wife had the right not to be submissive to Abram on this occasion?

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7. What did Pharaoh's officials do for Abram in verse 16?

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8. How did the Lord respond to Pharaoh in this situation?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

**LESSON #1:** You can trust the God who promises to perform.

**LESSON #2:** God is ever calling us to a greater and greater separation unto Himself (2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

**LESSON #3:** Our resistance to the separation is hindering God's blessing.

LESSON #4: Keep our eyes on the Lord and not on our circumstances.

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