



Genesis 12:1-20

# BLESSING ACCORDING TO GOD

*The transition between Genesis 11 and 12 is the Continental Divide of Scripture... In the first eleven chapters of the Bible, God dealt with the world en masse; but in Genesis 12, He launched a far-reaching plan of redemption by choosing a man whose descendants would become a mighty nation. From that nation would come the Messiah... **There are seven promises in Genesis 12:1-3; and the seventh promise is repeated seven times in Scripture** (Gen. 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14; Acts 3:25-26; Gal. 3:8, 16). The seventh occurrence cuts straight to Calvary and is actually called "the gospel in advance" (Gal. 3:8)... Whenever tempted to doubt the gospel, I just go back to the Old Testament and notice how the unfolding plan of God was revealed in advance—pre-planned, foreordained, and consistent from beginning to end.*

—Robert J. Morgan

The call of Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 marks a major transition in the book of Genesis...and in the Bible as a whole! In Genesis 1-11, we see the beginning of the world. In Genesis 12-50, we see the beginning of the nation of Israel. It is through Israel, the seed of Abraham, that God would bring blessing to all the families of the earth.

## THE COMMAND (12:1)

- It is a call \_\_\_\_\_ his place of identity, security, and significance.
- It is a call \_\_\_\_ God’s place of identity, security, and significance.

## THE PROMISES (12:2-3, 7a)

*I will make you a great nation;  
I will bless you  
And make your name great;  
And you shall be a blessing.  
I will bless those who bless you,  
And I will curse him who curses you;  
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*

*To your descendants I will give this land.*

These promises can be summarized into three themes:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*The call of Abraham is the sneak preview for the rest of the Bible.*

—Bruce K. Waltke

*Genesis 12:1-3 consists of a command followed by seven clauses that entail the promises of the divine oath. The second imperative, "you shall be a blessing," which is itself a promise, transitions the passage from Abram as recipient of blessing to his mediation of blessing. —Kenneth A. Mathews*

*God’s blessing is his formative, empowering word, often with overtones of appointing destiny. The blessing of God has content; it actualizes and enables. That which is blessed functions and produces at the optimum level, fulfilling its divinely designated purpose.*

—Dictionary of OT Theology & Exegesis

*At Babel, men said, "Let us!" but to Abraham, God said, "I will." At Babel, men wanted to make a name for themselves; but it was God who made Abraham’s name great. At Babel, the workers tried to unite men, only to divide them; but through Abraham, a whole world has been blessed and all believers are united in Jesus Christ.*

—Warren Wiersbe

## THE OBEDIENCE (12:4-5)

## THE WORSHIP (12:6-9)

- He offered \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
- He offered \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

## THE CHALLENGES (12:4-10)

## THE FAILURE (12:11-16)

- Sarai's exceptional \_\_\_\_\_
- Abram's exceeding \_\_\_\_\_
- Pharaoh's unexpected \_\_\_\_\_

## THE BLESSING (12:17-20)

- God intervenes when Abram is powerless.
- God blesses even when Abram is faithless.

God's love and blessing are consistent, abundant, and ever-present. These things do not change. What changes is our experience of His love and blessing. Abram's failure did not change God's love for him or nullify His promise. Indeed, Abram came out of this situation with more wealth! But the repercussions of this event will be felt later on.

*Whether or not God would institute a covenant program with Abram depended on Abram's act of obedience in leaving the land. Once this act was accomplished, however, and Abram obeyed God, God instituted an irrevocable, unconditional program.*

—Dwight J. Pentecost

*Abram is dependent on the Lord to achieve the promises; he only has the divine word to rely on.*

—Kenneth A. Mathews

*The Canaanites had shrines in groves of oak trees, and Moreh may have been one of their cult centers.*

—Allen Ross

*The Canaanites were a godless people, trapped in a system of religion that involved the worship of many gods. They practiced human sacrifice, various fertility rites, and had no regard for morality and decency. Abram was headed into hostile territory, where no one would be sympathetic to his lifestyle or to his God.*

—Alan Carr

*The integrity and honesty of a child of God are among his most potent weapons in spreading the gospel.*

—John J. Davis

*There is no mention of altars or God's presence [in Gen. 12:1-20]. Whereas God had specially favored Abraham with his voice, Abraham must now receive his rebuke from a pagan king.*

—Bruce K. Waltke

*Abram's failure in the face of hostility, like Israel's sinfulness in the wilderness, is surely recorded as a warning for later generations and as an illustration of the invincibility of the divine promises (Rom 11:29)*

—Gordon Wenham