

Abraham: The Father of the Faithful

Lesson 1: The Call: Leaving It All Behind -- Genesis 12:1–9

Imagine a man well past seventy, settled into the long, comfortable rhythm of a life that is nearly finished. His name is Abram. He lives in Haran, a prosperous trading town, surrounded by relatives, flocks, servants, and the graves of his ancestors. He knows every face in the marketplace. He knows which gods his neighbors serve, because his own family has served them too. There is nothing left to prove and nothing left to build. A man his age does not start over. A man his age waits quietly for the end. And then, into that settled life, a voice breaks in that he has never heard before.

“Go,” the LORD says. Go from your country. Go from your kindred. Go from your father’s house. Leave the familiar streets and the family tombs and the safety of everything you have ever known, and go to a land that I will show you. Notice what God does not say. He does not hand Abram a map. He does not name the destination. He does not explain the route or the timeline or what waits at the other end. He simply says go, and trust Me to show you the rest along the way. The whole journey hangs on whether this old man will believe a promise from a God he is only beginning to know.

But the call is not only a command to leave. It is wrapped in a staggering promise. I will make of you a great nation. I will bless you. I will make your name great. And then God says something that reaches far past Abram, past his children, past his nation, all the way down to you and me: in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The God who calls is the God who promises, and the promise is bigger than Abram could possibly imagine. Standing in it, though he cannot see it yet, is a coming Child through whom the whole world will be blessed.

And here is the wonder of it: “So Abram went.” No debate is recorded. No bargaining, no list of conditions, no request for proof. An old man packs up his entire life, says goodbye to everything safe and known, and walks out the door toward a country he has never seen, because God told him to. This is where the story of the father of the faithful begins, and it begins with the same question it will press on you before this study is over. When God calls you to leave something behind and follow Him into the unknown, will you go?

Group Discussion: God told Abram to leave his country, his relatives, and his father’s house, and to go to a land He would only reveal along the way. Why do you think God so often calls people to step out in obedience before He shows them the full picture? What does it cost a person to follow a God who gives a promise but not a map?

Personal Reflection: Think honestly about the things in your life that make you feel safe: the familiar routines, the relationships, the place you live, the plans you have made. If God asked you, as He asked Abram, to hold those things loosely and follow Him somewhere you could not

see, which one would be the hardest to release, and what does that reveal about where your security truly rests?

Read Genesis 12:1–9

Study Questions

1. The LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you” (v. 1). What exactly did God ask Abram to leave, and what did He promise in return (vv. 1–3)? What does this opening call reveal about how God works and about the kind of faith He is asking Abram to have?
2. God called Abram to leave the familiar and the secure for a destination he could not yet see. What is the “country and kindred and father’s house” in your own life, the comfort or security you cling to most tightly, that God may be calling you to hold loosely in order to follow Him? Name it as specifically as you can.
3. Trace the threefold promise God made: a great nation, a great name, and blessing to all the families of the earth (vv. 2–3). How do these promises reach far beyond Abram to people like us, and how does the New Testament show them coming true in Christ (Galatians 3:8)?
4. God promised to make Abram’s name great, yet the world constantly urges us to make our own names great by our own efforts. In what area of life are you most tempted to build your own reputation and standing rather than trusting God to bless you in His way and His time?
5. “So Abram went, as the LORD had told him” (v. 4). Scripture records no debate and no delay. What does this simple phrase, “so Abram went,” teach us about the nature of real, saving faith, and how does it fit the way Scripture everywhere joins genuine faith to obedience?
6. Abram obeyed at seventy-five, an age when most people are settling down rather than setting out. What excuse have you used (your age, your season of life, your comfort, your fear) to tell yourself it is too late or too costly to obey God in some specific area? What would obedience look like instead?
7. Twice in this passage Abram built an altar and “called upon the name of the LORD” (vv. 7–8). Why is it significant that worship marked his journey from the very beginning, even in a strange land surrounded by Canaanites? What does altar-building teach about the place of worship in a life of faith?
8. Abram pitched a tent, not a fortress, and lived as a sojourner trusting a promise he could not yet hold in his hands (Hebrews 11:8–10). In what ways are you living for permanence and security here, as though this world were your final home, rather than as a pilgrim whose deepest hope is set on God’s promise?
9. God’s call of Abram was pure grace; Abram had done nothing to earn it, and his own ancestors had served other gods (Joshua 24:2). Yet this call was not an unconditional, irresistible selection of one individual for salvation apart from any response; it was a call to a covenant purpose that required Abram’s obedient, walking faith. How does this passage

hold together God's gracious initiative and Abram's real, responsible obedience? And how does the promise that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" point forward to the gospel and to Christ Himself?

10. Look back across the whole passage. You have watched God call an old man to leave everything, wrap the call in an enormous promise, and lead him out by faith one step at a time. Name one specific way you sense Jesus calling you to step out in obedient faith right now, leaving something behind and trusting a promise you cannot yet fully see. What is the single step you most need to take this week?

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: Hebrews 11:8–10, Abraham obeyed and went out not knowing where he was going, looking for the city whose builder is God; Acts 7:2–5, Stephen recounts the God of glory appearing to Abraham and calling him out; Joshua 24:2–3, a reminder that Abraham's family served other gods before the LORD called him; Galatians 3:6–9, the gospel announced beforehand to Abraham that all nations would be blessed in him; Genesis 15:1–6, the promise reaffirmed and Abram's faith counted to him as righteousness