

Genesis 12:1-8

Pentecost 16; September 25/26, 2022

"How do I break this to my wife?" Sometimes a husband can have some difficult news to tell his wife, but this was a doozy. Picture this scene in your mind. Abram comes home after a hard day's work. Perhaps, his wife asked him how his day. Usually, he might have answered that question as a typical husband: *"Fine. Everything was fine."* *"Anything new?"* *"Not really."* But what does he tell her on this day? *"We are going to be on a mission for God. We need to talk. We've been married for a long time now. Business has been pretty good. But we need to move."* *"Why? Our families are nearby. I know the markets around here to get what I need. Besides, I'm happy here. Why do we need to move?"* *"Sarai, I understand your feeling, but this isn't my idea either. God told me today that he wants us to move."* *"God spoke to you?"* *"Yep."* *"What did he say?"* **"Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."** *"Where does he want us to go?"* *"He hasn't told me that yet."* How would you respond?

It took a lot of courage to not only tell his wife, but to go along with God's plan. They both would announce this to their families. They were going, and only God knows where that is. They didn't have a phone to let their families know they got to wherever that might be. They didn't have google to look at what it might be like whenever they get to where they were going. All they had was blind faith. That was what they showed in God's promises. God promised them direction. God promised big things. Yet, at the same time, he gave them very little to hang their hats on. Abram was 75 years old. Sarai was 65 years old. Yet, they trusted those promises. **"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 bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."** So, Abram went, as the Lord had told him." They had no idea how that would happen. But they went anyway. It would be 25 more years before the son was born who was to be Abraham's son.

Yet, Abram was not from a perfect family. We don't know much about Abram's family. Yet, we do know that is father worshiped false gods. Later in Genesis, we see Abram's relatives had household gods that they worshiped. Did Abram earlier worship some of those same gods? We don't have an answer to that question. Here we see Abraham show remarkable faith. But it wouldn't always be that way. Here are some quick examples.

- Only a couple of verses after our text, Moses writes: 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.** ¹¹ **As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are.** ¹² **When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live.** 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."** (Genesis 12:10-13) The man who listens to God blindly is the same one who thinks that he needs to lie in order to be kept safe.
- Ten years later, Sarah and Abraham don't have a child yet. So, they think that they need to help God to keep his promise. Moses writes: ¹ **Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar;** ² **so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."** Abram agreed to what Sarai said. ³ **So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.** ⁴ **He slept with Hagar, and she conceived."** (Genesis 16:1-4)
- **"Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar, 2 and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, "She is my sister."** Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her. (Genesis 20:1-2) They do the same thing that they had done years before in Egypt. You would think that they would have learned their lesson.

Yet, it is truly amazing how God's grace rescues people and fills their lives with multiple blessings. Isn't it amazing how God can use imperfect being to carry out his plans. That certainly was true of Abraham. Abraham spent the first half of his life in Ur of the Chaldees and Haran surrounded by heathen people. Then God's amazing grace called Abraham to move to another country and the Lord God filled his life with all kinds of blessings and multiple promises. Look at the blessings that God gave Abraham. In these few verses, there are 7 blessings that God gives Abraham.

1. **“A great nation”** – When Isaac, his son, would be born, Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90. Yet, within 600 years the nation of Israel would be a nation of over 2 million people, all from Abraham and Sarah.
2. **“Bless you”** – God would bless Abram with success and prosperity. God would make Abram a wealthy man.
3. **“Name great”** – Thousands of years later, people would still know the name of Abraham.
4. **“You will be a blessing”** – He be a blessing to those who were around him in his time. The greatest blessing that Abram would give others is his offspring, Jesus.
5. **“Bless those who bless you”** – Abram would speak God’s Word. People would believe that Word. As a response to that word, they would bless him.
6. **“Whoever curses you I will curse”** – While there would be those who would believe that Word, there would also be those that would reject it. Rejection of God’s Word always brings judgment.
7. **“All people will be blessed”** – All these promises would end with the good news of the Savior. Through that Savior the world would be blessed.

God makes promises to you and me. He promises to supply all our needs. He has called us out of the darkness of sin and brings us into the light of his love. He promises to prosper us. He promises he will strengthen us when we are struggling with temptations. He gives us one promise after another in His Word. We trust those promises.

We live on the same promises that Abram did. We may still ask at times the “*why*” question in our lives. We may not always understand what is going on in our lives. But we also know that we have a God who we can trust. We know that we have a God who strengthens us with his Word. May the Lord help all of us to live on the promises of God. Amen.