

# PROMISED

## GENESIS 12:1-5A; 13:11-18

(Prepared by Gene Thompson using LifeWay's ETB materials.)

1. What is something you did that, in hindsight, you would have done differently now that you have more life experience?

There are likely some things that we wish we had some "do-overs" in life. Our study today explores choices made by both Abram and Lot, as well as the huge impact of those choices.

(Enlist someone to read the opening paragraph on page 91 of the PSG.)

Our passage today is grounded in some promises God made to Abram.

2. What are promises God has kept that are expressions of His blessings? (Sending His Son as our Savior! Protecting Israel through the ages. His indwelling Holy Spirit.)

The Bible is divided into two distinct parts, but not what you are thinking. Genesis 1-11 shows the downward spiral on mankind into sin, culminating at the Tower of Babel. Beginning with Genesis 12-Revelations 22 we see God working to redeem mankind and provide eternal salvation. Through His chosen people, who would eventually become the nation of Israel, God sent His ultimate solution for sin, Jesus, the promised Messiah.

This session represents a transition in the Genesis narrative. It moves us from the history of the world in general to the history of one particular family. God placed His call on Abram, and Abram obeyed even when it didn't make sense. That kind of obedience is our challenge as children of God, as well.

### **MOVE! Read Genesis 12:1-5a**

God's first call to Abram was while they were living in Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram, his father, Terah and Lot took all of their possessions and set out for Canaan but stopped in Haran where Terah died. Then the Lord spoke to Abram again and told him to move on to Canaan.

1. What seven promises did God make in the "Abrahamic covenant"?

- He would lead Abram to a new land.
- He would make Abram a great nation.
- He would bless Abram.
- He would make Abram's name great.
- He would make Abram a blessing to others.
- He would bless or curse others based on how they treated Abram.
- He would bless all people on earth through Abram.

2. What did God ask Abram to give up to follow Him? (His country, his relatives and his father's house.)

Make no mistake: when God calls us, He calls us to leave some things. Someone once said, "You don't have to leave anything to follow the Lord." That is NOT Biblical!

3. What did Jesus tell His disciples it would cost them to follow Him? (Everything! Father, mother, brother, sister, home, Etc.)

Leaving a self-centered life to follow Him, whatever that means for each of us. Don't ever say you don't have to leave anything to follow the Lord.

4. How old was Abram? (75)

Put yourself in Abram's place for a moment. You're 75 years old, with a wife in her mid-sixties. You've lived in one place your whole life. Now you are going to move and have a baby!

5. Why was God going to bless Abram and why does He bless us? (So, we can be a blessing to others!)

6. Are we to pursue holiness or happiness? (Josh Hunt— "I read this in a commentary last night: if people serve God only for what they get out of it, then they are not serving God at all, they are only serving themselves by making God their servant...Holiness and happiness come together. The happiest people on the planet are people who live holy lives.")

**We must love the Christian life, or we will never come to live the Christian life.**

7. How easy would it be for Abram to make excuses not to go?

Listen to this list of people God used despite their difficulties:

Moses stuttered; David's armor didn't fit; John Mark was rejected by Paul; Timothy was young and had ulcers; Hosea's wife was a prostitute; Amos' only training was pruning fig trees; Jacob was a liar; David had an affair; Solomon was too rich; David was too young; John was self-righteous; Paul was a murderer; so was Moses; Jonah ran from God; Gideon and Thomas both doubted; Jeremiah was depressed and suicidal; Elijah was burned out; Noah got drunk... and the list could go on! And yet God used all of these people to work in His kingdom. Just yield to Him and He will use you.

8. What role did Abram's trust in God play in his response to the blessing? (Abram obeyed without question—Heb. 11:8. Even though he was 75 years old, he left his comfort zone to follow God's plan. He moved 450 miles to Canaan.)

Once they got to Canaan there was a famine in the land, so they went down to Egypt. Abram convinced Sarai to tell the people there that she was his sister. She did and Pharaoh took her into his house. But God struck Pharaoh's household with severe plagues. So, Pharaoh sent her back to Abram and they left for Canaan.

Once they returned Lot and Abram's herdsmen began to quarrel with each other because there was not enough grazing land to support all of them. So, Abram told Lot "you choose to go right or left and I'll go the other way."

**SEPARATE! Read Genesis 13:10-13**

1. Where did Lot choose to live and why? (He took the fertile Jordan valley. It is a sad situation that Lot cast his tents toward Sodom.)
2. What is remarkable about this passage? (As the head of the clan, Abram had the right to choose first. Graciously, he allowed Lot to pick which region he wanted. Lot moved to the fertile plain of the Jordan Valley. Abram settled in Canaan; the region God had promised him.)
3. What role did Abram's faith in God's promises play in the way he treated Lot? (Abram was confident that God was going to bless him either way.)

Believers must seek God when making decisions, especially decisions that will affect their future and the future of their descendants.

**CLAIM! Read Genesis 13:14-18**

1. What was God's covenant promise to Abram in these verses? (Notice this is a unilateral contract. It did not depend on Abram only on God. He gave Abram and his descendants all the land of Canaan.)
2. How long is the covenant good for? (Forever!)
3. Why was it important for God to remind Abram of His promises after he had separated from Lot? (The promises were made to Abram, and they still were in effect.)

The Lord instructed Abram to look out over the expanse of Canaan because He wanted Abram to see the land that he and his offspring were promised.

4. How numerous would Abram's offspring be? (Like the dust of the earth. Later God tells Abram it would be like the stars and the sand on the seashore.)
5. Why did Abram set up an altar once he settled in the land? (Abram chose to worship God for His promises even as he waited for those promises to be fulfilled.)

It would be about 500 years before Abram's offspring would take possession of the land.

6. Why is it important to remember significant milestones and events? (We remember how God worked in the past and His faithfulness to His promises. That gives us faith for the future.)
- God's blessing is seen in the promises He keeps—not just for Abram but also for us.

## **CHALLENGE!**

- We demonstrate our trust in God through obedience.
  - We must seek God when making decisions.
  - We should celebrate God's faithfulness to His promises.
1. What are some ways we can celebrate God's faithfulness to His promises? (Recall how He has worked in the past to bless us. Worship Him on certain days to remember what He has done.)
  2. What are some ways you can seek God's counsel when making decisions? (Scripture, prayer, visit with a trusted Christian.)