

TEXT SUMMARY

In our text (Gen 12:1-3), God calls Abram (later "Abraham") to leave everything he knows to go to a place he knows nothing about. But God promises him that in going, Abram will play a crucial role in God's blessing to the nations.

INTRODUCTION (OBSETVATION):

- 1. This text marks a **turning point** in the narrative. From the Fall (Adam and Eve's rebellion in ch. 3) until the end of ch. 11, what were relations like between God and humans, the creatures made in His image? What are the main characters and events of ch. 3-11?
- **2.** Abram is instructed to go from **three key institutions** that provided people of that day with their identity and security. What are those three institutions?
- **3.** What key word of God's promise is **repeated** throughout our text? (The word appears four times in v. 2-3, three times as a verb, once in noun form.)

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

- 1. Some scholars have pointed out a **parallel** between the promises and mandates God made to Abram and the three-fold promises and mandates He made to Adam and Eve: He gave them a fruitful land (Eden), bid them multiply, and gave them dominion over nature. Some scholars see a sort of **reboot** in this call to Abram: how are those themes echoed in God's promises and mandates to Abram?
- **2.** The so-called prosperity "gospel" (which is no gospel at all) **misreads** texts like these to say that God's sole intention is to make His people prosperous. What is wrong with reading this text that way?

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DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE



SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

- **1.** Abram's name means "father of many," but as he hears these promises from God, his wife Sarai is barren, and they are well past child-bearing years.
 - How can we know if we are reading God's Word rightly in claiming His promises? Have you ever trusted God for something He never promised?
 - Have you ever laid hold of one of God's promises while all the evidence before you denied that His promise could ever come true?
 - What was the outcome of that trusting faith in God?
 Have you seen His promise fulfilled, or are you still waiting and trusting?
- 2. Paul will later cite Abraham as the spiritual father of all who put their faith in Christ (Gal 3:7-9), and the Scripture will further stipulate that Abraham's right standing before God lay in his trust in the promises of God: "Abraham believed God, and it [that is, his trust in God] was credited to him for righteousness" (Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3). But if you read Abraham's story, it is full of spiritual setbacks, moments when he panicked and resorted to his own devices rather than trusting in God's promises. Many Christians can see their own spiritual journey mirrored in Abraham's.
 - How has God called you to take great risks of obedience?
 - How have you faltered in your trusting obedience, sometimes trusting and obeying and other times failing to trust and obey?
 - How has God as He did with Abraham proven Himself faithful even when you were unfaithful?