

## The Call of Abraham

**Gen. 12:1-10**

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### I. Introduction

### II. Text, Genesis 12:1-10

*1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. 3 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." 4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. 6 Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. 7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. 8 And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. 9 So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South. 10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land.*

### III. Genesis: A Book of Beginnings

The book of Genesis is a book full of \_\_\_\_\_.

- **Gen. 4-6: The Divided Race.** In Gen. 4, we have the beginning of mankind exiled from the Garden. It begins with Cain and culminates with God's decision to destroy mankind with a flood in Gen. 6. It is the story of mankind turning away from God and giving himself over to his \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord calls Cain to master the envy and anger that lurk in his heart. But Cain rejects God's counsel, and gives himself over to his hatred of his brother. He slaughters Abel. Cain becomes a fugitive and a wanderer, and that whole race of men follow in his footsteps. By Noah's day—some seven or eight generations down from Cain & Abel—the whole earth is filled with \_\_\_\_\_. Mankind was split against itself. "The earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. . . . all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth" (Gen. 6:11-12). Only one faithful household remained.
- **Gen. 11: The United, But Godless Race.** In the period after the flood, we have another beginning. The flood waters subside, and the Lord promises never again to curse the ground because of man. God blesses Noah and his sons. He repeats to them the commission given originally to Adam and Eve; they are charged, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen. 9:1). From this household, mankind has another beginning. But this new beginning would also end in \_\_\_\_\_. They did not give themselves over to their passions, to the violence and envy that marked Cain and the pre-flood humanity. It was not a mankind divided against itself. Rather, it was a mankind \_\_\_\_\_, but united in their \_\_\_\_\_ against God.

## IV. The Call of Abraham

In Gen. 12, with the call of Abram, we see the beginning of God's \_\_\_\_\_ *unveiled*. Despite all of mankind's waywardness, the Lord has not given up on us. He intends to bless us. He intends to unite mankind back to Himself and to one another, so that we might be His people and He our God. With this chapter, He shows His hand. He begins to reveal us how He's going to accomplish this. The rest of the Bible—the rest of *history*—grows out of this. The Lord God makes four promises to Abraham: first, to make of Him a great nation; second, to give him the land as his inheritance; third, to give him a great name so that all the nations will bless themselves by him; and fourth, the Lord promises to make him a blessing so that all the families of the earth will be blessed in him.

### Lesson #1: The Importance of Individual Faithfulness

From God's call of Abraham, we learn of the importance of \_\_\_\_\_ faithfulness. The Lord God called to Abram. He spoke to an individual. He called him to come out to a foreign land, for He wanted to not only bless him, but *bless all the families of the earth through him*. God unveils His masterplan of redemption to some \_\_\_\_\_. God hangs His whole plan on the faithfulness of this one man. And this is how God delights to work.

### Lesson #2: The Demand for Patience

We learn from this call of Abraham that obedience to the promise does not meet with its \_\_\_\_\_ fulfillment. The promise demands \_\_\_\_\_. The promise made to Abraham was not fulfilled right away. In fact, it wouldn't be fulfilled even in his \_\_\_\_\_, or in the lifetime of his immediate descendants.

### Lesson #3: Abraham Faithfully Invested in the Land

While Abraham and his family lived in the land as sojourners and exiles, they were not aimless. Abraham didn't go about twiddling his thumbs, waiting to die, waiting to be taken to his true home. This is because he wasn't a gnostic. He didn't think the earth was something to be escaped—quite the opposite, in fact. He lived in the land as one who would come back to possess it forever. This led Abraham to \_\_\_\_\_ in the land. He worshipped the Lord in that land and served Him faithfully, trusting that he would come back to live in it by some inexplicable way.

### Lesson #3: Abraham Faithfully Invested in the Land

The way of the promise is not \_\_\_\_\_. The promise is glorious, but it does not pave our way with golden bricks. Traditionally, commentators have found roughly ten trials that Abraham faced in his sojourning.

- He must leave his homeland.
- He suffers the affliction of famine.
- Two times his wife is taken by powerful men.
- He endures the burdens and temptations of wealth.
- He faced years and years of childlessness.
- He had to undergo circumcision at an old age.
- He dealt with the family strife between Hagar and Sarah.
- He has to cast out his son, Ishmael.
- He has to ready himself to sacrifice his son, Isaac.
- He mourns the death of his wife, Sarah.

## V. Conclusion