

Explore the Bible: February 4

Promised • Genesis 12:1-5a; 13:11-18

By Laura Lee Leathers



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God always keeps His promises! “Today’s session chronicles the opening of Abram’s (Abraham’s) journey that set in motion God’s redemptive plan and culminated in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Without Abram’s first step of faith, this world would probably be a much different place” (Lifeway).

Move (Gen. 12:1-5a) – The genealogy of Noah has taken us to Terah, the father of Abram, and the family’s move from Ur of the Chaldeans toward Canaan (vv. 31-32). They traveled north, along the west bank of the Euphrates River, and settled at Haran. After Terah’s death, God spoke to Abram and directed

him to leave his native land.

Let's look at what God said to Abram. First, notice the progression of what he was leaving behind: the land, then the relatives, and his father's house. It reminds me of missionaries who serve around the globe. Abram, age seventy-five, believed and obeyed God, moving his family towards an undisclosed land God would give him.

Notice the phrase "I will" repeatedly used in verses two and three, and then the seven promises God issued: (1) He would make Abram into a great nation; (2) He would bless Abram; (3) He would make Abram's name great; (4) Abram would be a blessing to others; (5) He would bless those who blessed Abram; (6) He would curse those who cursed Abram; and (7) Through Abram, God would bless all the peoples on earth (12:3; 18:18; 22:18)" (Lifeway), known as the "Abrahamic covenant."

Take a moment to read Galatians 3:6-9; 15-18. Through the seed of Abraham, "all the peoples of the earth will be blessed." The Seed is Jesus Christ. "In this way, those among the nations who come to God in and through Christ by faith are grafted into the promises of Abraham (Rom. 11:13-14) and receive the Holy Spirit as a down payment of our inheritance until the Lord comes— to the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:14).

Abram, his wife Sarai (Sarah), and his nephew Lot began the long, arduous journey to the land of Canaan.

Separate (Gen. 13:11-13) – Time passed, and Abram's wealth grew as they traveled: possessions, servants, livestock, and herds. Nephew Lot had the same situation. It became apparent that the land could no longer provide for animals, and the herdsmen began to argue over grazing rights.

It was time to separate their families and possessions. Abram gave Lot the first option, even though Abram was the patriarch and had the right to make the first choice. Lot decided to

move to the lush green area of Jordan. He left the land of promise to move eastward (separation from God).

He set up his tent near Sodom. Scripture tells us that he had a house in the city. This location was known for “evil, sinning immensely against the LORD.” Five cities: Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar formed a political unit. In Genesis 14:2, Abram rescues Lot from a war with the three opposing kings. Later, in Genesis 19:27-29, we are told that the entire valley would be destroyed with the fire of God’s wrath.

Claim (Gen. 13:14-18) – Once Lot moved, the Lord said to Abram, “Look north and south, east and west.” Next, the Lord tells Abram, “I will give you and your offspring forever all the land you see.” Notice the two words “forever” and “all.” It was a permanent bestowal! The land of promise is God’s home for His chosen people.

The offspring of Abram would be like the dust of the earth, as numerous as the stars in the sky (15:5) and as the sand on the seashore (22:17).

First, he looked. It was time to “get up and walk around the land.” Abram was to survey and claim his inheritance from God. He obeyed, moved his tent, and set up his primary dwelling place “near the oaks of Mamre (19 miles south of Jerusalem) at Hebron.” A cave was purchased by Abram for a family burial site later. It was the only spot he owned.

Worshipping and thanking God, Abram built an altar – a regular part of his life (12:6-7; 8, 22:9). Building an altar was an expression of his gratitude to God for His favor. He celebrated God’s faithfulness to His promises. What about you?

“For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant” (Psalm 105:42, NKJV).

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