

"In the Beginning, God...."
A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Genesis
www.kathleendalton.com



Genesis Chapters 12 & 13 - Answers

1. 12:1 Why do you think it was necessary for Abram to leave everything in order to do what God wanted him to do?

Well, for one thing, it looks like God wants Abraham to start something new. It wasn't going to be an extension of what Abraham's father or Abraham's relatives had already done. It was going to be a brand, new thing. The only way to start such a brand, new thing would be to cut ties with the past, with the people of the past, and leave himself open to new ideas, new ways of doing things, and direct communication from God Himself. He probably also was going to be cutting ties with past sins and old, dysfunctional ways of going about life. This was going to be doing things in the ways of God.

The other obvious answer to this question is that God asked Abraham to leave everything behind....so even if he didn't understand it....that is what he must do.

I am reminded of a passage in the New Testament, Luke 14:25-33. In essence, Jesus is telling all of His "followers" that they have to meet the same standard Abraham was told to meet: *"So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple"* (Luke 14:33)

2. 12:2-3 What are the different parts of this covenant God makes with Abram? Does Abram have to do anything to receive these promises?
- A You will be a great nation
 - B I will bless you
 - C I will make your name great
 - D You will be a blessing to others
 - E I will bless those who bless you
 - F I will curse those who curse you
 - G All families of the earth (from that time to as long as the earth lasts) will be blessed in your blessing

"In the Beginning, God...."
A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Genesis
www.kathleendalton.com



Does Abraham have to do anything to receive those blessings? In other words, is there an "if"? Yes. He had to take the step of obedience of leaving all behind and going in the direction God pointed.

Let's look at God's covenants with mankind again, to see what now might be different about this new covenant with Abraham:

1. Covenant with Adam & his descendents

- in the image of God
- rule over animals
- be fruitful & fill the earth
- subdue the earth
- eternal life
- vegetarian
- don't kill

2. Covenant with Noah & his descendents

- meat to eat
- never destroy earth with a flood again/rainbow
- animals fear men
- don't eat blood
- human government
- don't kill: punishment - death

3. Covenant with Abraham & his descendents

- leave your country and your father
- great nation
- blessed
- name great
- those who curse you will be cursed
- all people blessed through them/him
- land to pass on to offspring

"In the Beginning, God...."
A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Genesis
www.kathleendalton.com



Are the Adamic or Noahic covenants set aside because of this new covenant with Abraham? No. They are now all 3 in place. The Abrahamic covenant covers all of Abraham's descendants from this point on....and also, to a certain extent, all people of the world.

What is different about the Abrahamic covenant? It is based on a "nation", not just on the total population of the world. There are nations now, and God has a plan to reach the whole world by blessing and communicating with one nation in particular. Why? What has changed that He must do this?

Remember, at this point the whole world is not speaking the same language any more. They are divided into nations - each nation finding it very difficult to communicate with the other nations.

So God's plan was ingenious (of course). What could not be easily communicated through words would now be communicated through pictures. The Jewish people would be asked to live a certain way and practice certain things so that they could be a non-verbal picture to the rest of the world of what God was like, and what it would take to be in a right relationship with Him. For instance: when animals were offered on the altar of sacrifice the world could see that:

- the result of sin was always death.
- Someone had to die in order to make the results of sin go away,
- The One, True God of the Jews could not be appeased personal acts of righteousness - they would never be enough to get rid of sin forever.
- To be right with the One, True God, a person had to have faith. Faith that the One, True God would somehow provide a way to be perfect enough to know Him and be right with Him forever.

And how could the world see all these "pictures" which the Jewish people would live out with their lives? The One, True God gave a piece of land to the Jewish people - to Abraham - which would turn out to be in the middle of the traffic trading pattern of the world. Nations from the north would have to pass through Israel to go south. Nations from the south would have

"In the Beginning, God...."
A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Genesis
www.kathleendalton.com

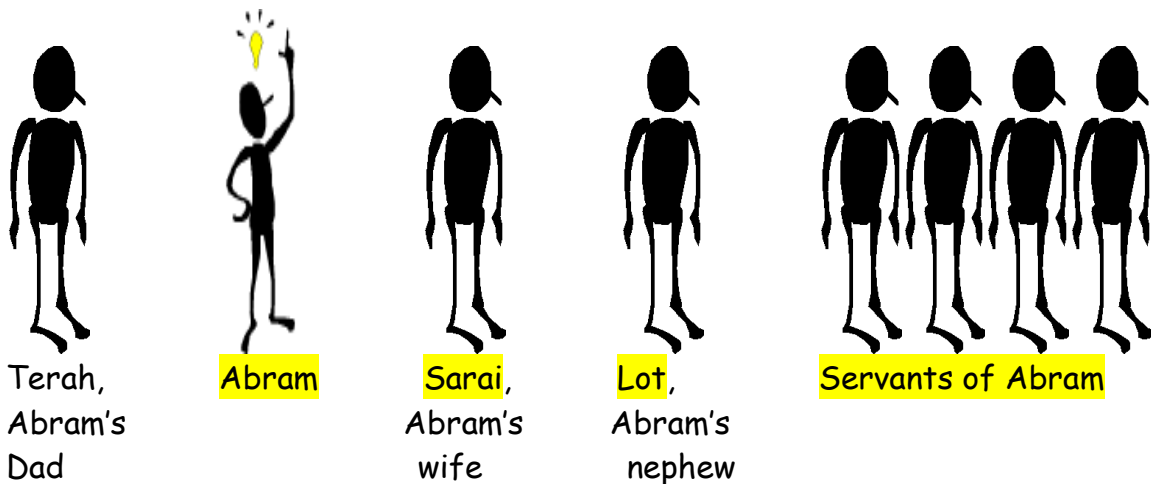


to pass through Israel to go north. Nations from the east would have to pass through Israel to go west. Nations from the west would have to pass through Israel to go east. Ingenious.

And as they passed through, they could see how the Jewish people lived and how they worshipped the One, True God, and they could learn from the pictures they saw what God was all about and how to be right with Him....and they could and would take those stories back to their countries, no matter how far away they were, and no matter what different language they spoke.

3. 12:4-5 Who else went with Abram? Because they went, too, does that indicate faith in God on their part?

Here are the ones who were living in Haran at the time God called Abraham to a new life: (The highlighted ones are the ones who left Haran and followed God's directions)



Because they went with Abram, does that indicate they also had faith in the One, True God? We don't know for sure.

"In the Beginning, God...."
A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Genesis
www.kathleendalton.com



4. 12:6-7 What is one more promise God gives Abram as he arrives at the tree of Moreh?

The One, True God promises that not only will the land be given to Abraham, but it will also be given to his descendants. It will belong to Abraham's descendants whether Abraham is alive or not.

5. 12:8-9 Why does Abram build an altar everywhere he goes? What does this tell us about Abram?

Abraham is constantly reaffirming his faith in the One, True God. He knows that none of this will come to pass without God bringing it about. His sacrifices acknowledge his own need for forgiveness of sins - and that he is looking forward to the One, True God taking care of those sins once and for all someday. Abraham had faith. He believed God would do what He said He would do.

6. 12:10-20 Why did Abram do what he did in Egypt? Why did God protect him?

I think Abraham was trying to survive the best way he knew how. He had a lot to learn about trusting God to take care of him and his family.

7. 13:1-7 What problem did Abram face as he returned to the Negev? He had been blessed already. His flocks and herds and the people necessary to take care of all of it had greatly increased. But also Lot had been blessed, too. There was friction between the people of Abraham and the people of Lot. Friction in the little family group which started out from Haran. Also, I think we might see here that Abraham continued to trust God and offer Him sacrifices, but Lot did not. Abraham was continuing in the way of faith. Lot was not.

"In the Beginning, God...."
A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Genesis
www.kathleendalton.com



8. 13:8-13 Why did Abram let Lot choose? Hadn't the land been given to Abram? Wasn't he a person with more authority and more rights than Lot?

Yes, Abraham was the patriarch - the older, wiser one in charge. He made this decision, I think, because he knew that peace in the family was essential to the future of his little group. And also, he knew that God's promise to bless him was not based on his own ability, but on God's. So he decided to believe God could bless him even if he allowed Lot to choose the best land for himself.

9. 13:14-18 Lot chose the land which held the most promise. It was beautiful, well-watered, like a garden. Abram was left with the hilly land of Canaan which could only prosper if God brought rain and controlled disaster. Why was God pleased with Abram?

God knew that Abraham had made a faith choice. *"Without faith it is impossible to please God."* Hebrews 11:6

10. When you are faced with choices in life, you feel that you have a responsibility to choose the smartest, safest, most promising way - that God expects you to do that. When would that not be the case?