

Abram Sets Out in Faith

GENESIS 12:4-9 | JAKE LIEDKIE

02/01/2026

This morning I invite you to take your Bibles, turn with me to Genesis chapter 12. Genesis chapter 12, entitled this morning's message, Abram Sets Out in Faith. He's embarking on a journey here in our text today.

This is not really his odyssey, it's an adventure in faith that he is beginning. And here we see God intervening in creation. As we've watched God intervene, really from Genesis three, he's been dealing with man's sin problem.

We've been utterly convinced through the recent chapters that man is incapable of fixing his moral problems. He can't fix what's broken inside and he can't fix the consequences of the sin he's committed. And so here the grace of God is coming to humanity to intervene.

Praise God that he intervenes in history. And in this intervention, he calls a pagan idolater from Ur of the Chaldeans and says, I'm gonna begin to progress the next stage of my promise plan of salvation through you and your line. And so as we study Abraham, as we said, he's really arguably, certainly one of the most significant, if not the most significant figures in all of the Old Testament, he's the father of our faith.

And what you can expect as we journey along, looking at the man, Abraham, is we understand a great deal about ourselves and the character of God. Both of those things are gonna be on display week by week by week. And so what you can prepare for is for your faith to be strengthened.

It was a number of years ago, Susie and I were sitting under an exposition through the book of Genesis on Sunday nights. And I remember week after week after week, just thinking, man, my soul needed that message again. My soul needed to be reminded.

My faith needed to be strengthened. I needed to be pointed back to the grace of God in Jesus Christ, needed to be corrected where there was unbelief in my heart, reminded of the faithfulness of God. And so God has given us such a wonderful gift in his revelation here.

That he didn't merely say in one paragraph, hey, I called this man out of the year of Chaldeas. I promised a Messiah through him. Let's fast forward to the end of his life.

But rather to show us the victories and the failures of faith. And understand how his plan is being accomplished behind it all. I mean, he could have just said, here's the terms of the covenant arrangement.

It's in one page, signed and sealed, delivered. It's all done. It's dated and ready to go.

But instead he shows us through the life of this man as it's intimated here in Genesis chapter 12. And then it's reviewed and expanded and God's plan continues to unfold. And so we're gonna get really a clear perspective, a realistic perspective, I would say, of the Christian life that shows both the faithfulness that we long for and the failures that we're too familiar with.

And so that being said, I wanna read the text before us this morning and then we'll begin to walk through it together. Genesis chapter 12, we're gonna look this morning at verses four through nine, but we'll begin reading back up in verse one. Yahweh said to Abram, go forth from your land and from your kin and from your father's house to the land which I will show you.

And I will make you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great. And so you shall be a blessing and I will bless those who bless you and the one who curses you I will curse and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed. So Abram went forth as Yahweh had spoken to him and Lot went with him.

Now Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran. So Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son and all their possessions, which they had accumulated and the persons which they had acquired in Haran and they departed to go forth to the land of Canaan. Thus they came to the land of Canaan.

And Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem to the Oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanite was then in the land. Then Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to your seed I will give this land.

So he built an altar there to Yahweh who had appeared to him. Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east and there he built an altar to Yahweh and called upon the name of Yahweh. And Abram journeyed on continuing toward the Negev.

This morning if you're keeping an outline you could capture it in this way. Two displays of faith and worship in Abram's pilgrimage. As we're gonna see Abram is left home at this point.

He's left what is familiar, what is known, what is comfortable. He's been separated from all of the earthly attachments that he had in his upbringing. And yet what he finds replacing that is a new life of newfound faith and worship in the one true God.

And we're gonna watch here today as the Lord strengthens and shepherds Abram as he's beginning to deepen and cultivate his faith. Do you remember we began really looking last week at how this relationship got started and it began with God's call, his effectual call. God spoke to Abram.

We know that he chose Abram, he called him to himself. And he said in verse one, I want you to go forth from your land, from your kin, from your father's house to the land which I will show you. Moses has already made it clear that Abram is from the line of Shem.

This is the line of blessing. And God calls this man out and when he does, he doesn't tell him where he's going, but Abram is going to respond and it's to leave behind all that he knows. And in that God not only gives him a command to obey, but a promise to be comforted by.

And the promise of course was that Abram would be a great nation, he would have a great name and he would be a great blessing. In fact, that he would be eternally blessed and then a source of eternal blessing to all of the nations. And so the text picks up in verse four, coming on the heels of this instruction.

And we read, so Abram went forth as Yahweh had spoken to him. And so this is our first display this morning of faith and worship in Abram's pilgrimage. Untitled is the radical takeoff.

Okay, the radical takeoff. This is this decisive act of faith and obedience on Abram's part and it was significant. The text just reads, so Abram went forth.

It's paired with verse one, Yahweh said to Abram, go forth from your land. As we looked at last time, this was an intensive command. Get up and go right now, leave.

And the scripture is clear that Abram did exactly as he was told. He went forth as Yahweh had spoken to him. So how did Abram obey? Right away, all the way, with a happy heart.

He obeyed immediately and completely and cheerfully. And the perspective here is that this was a decisive act of faith, he got up and he left. Abram did what he was told.

Let me say, this is biblical obedience. Biblical obedience is uncomfortable because it's full obedience. It's genuine and genuine faith results in genuine obedience.

Said another way, partial, delayed or begrudging obedience is always rooted in unbelief. And it's a lack of submission to God. And Abram is not alone in this as a man of faith.

We've already seen Noah and when we were introduced to Noah as a man of faith, how did Noah obey? Genesis 6, 22, then Noah did according to all that God had commanded him, so he did. What we're learning here from the father of our faith, what does it look like to respond to the voice of God? You obey, you obey in faith. And this is a beautiful thing.

And it was sight unseen, it was the bare command, as we said, no specifics or guarantees or details about what it would look like or what it would cost him. As one commentator said, it is better with closed eyes to follow God as our guide than by relying on our own prudence to wander through those circuitous paths which it devises for us. And this is true proof of our obedience when we are not wise in our own eyes, but commit ourselves entirely unto the Lord.

You understand for Abram here, this is laying down his own wisdom, his own will, his own desires, and preferring rather the word of the Lord. You could say this way, believers are obeyers. Believers are obeyers.

If you remember, Jesus himself said in John 12, 49, that he did what? He did what the father commanded him to. He said what the father told him to say, John 12, 49. And then Jesus had the audacity to tell his disciples that if they loved him, they were to obey him.

John 14, 21. You think, well, how does that work? That sounds a bit burdensome. No, actually, 1 John says that by this we know that we are God's children because his commands are not burdensome.

No, what he's not saying is that obedience is always easier, that you always get there right away, or that you always in the flesh want to do it. But the point is that you affirm that these are not instructions coming to you from an impersonal being. Brother, you love God and you love his law, and so your heart is inclined to affirm and desire what he says is best.

Can I just encourage you this morning, if you're walking in disobedience that you're aware of, to repent. Repent, trust, and obey. Abram here hears the voice of God.

He responds in faith and he is blessed. And Abram here is exemplary. He's gonna be unlike some other people in his family relations.

Soon we're gonna get to Lot's wife and what happens when she's told to go and leave. She turns around. Her husband did a little better.

He didn't turn around, but he was a bit sluggish. According to Genesis 19, 16, Lot hesitates when he's commanded. We call him loitering or lingering Lot.

See, Abram heard the voice of God, and the picture is it's so clear in the language as the Lord spoke, he just got up and he left. Can you just think about what that meant for a minute? Put your house up for sale. Hold an estate sale because you're gonna be on the move and you're not gonna be able to take all your stuff with you.

Say goodbye to relationships, and when you say goodbye, this isn't like, goodbye, I'll see you next summer. It's like, nice knowing you. Abram never makes it back to her again.

And so he doesn't hesitate. He doesn't loiter. He doesn't turn around.

He just obeys. Can I just tell you, this is the heart of worship. This is the heart of worship.

Now, if I can just encourage you for a minute, because we struggle as believers in our obedience, and as we're gonna see, Abram struggles in his obedience later in other arenas. If your obedience is lackluster right now, if in the Christian life you find I'm just unmotivated to obey, how do you troubleshoot? They need to recognize it's always a relationship and a worship problem. Okay, loveless submission to the commands of God is not biblical obedience.

Fearful submission is not biblical obedience, but true obedience is an inclination of the will. And so Abram is going forth exactly as God said right now, not because he studied the analytics. It's not out of emotionalism.

It's not self-righteousness or mere discipline. He's not motivated by the opinions of others and what they're gonna think of him and his reputation. He's not even afraid of consequences from God.

Rather, he heard the voice of the Lord and he became a worshiper. See, what is to drive obedience, what's to fuel the tank is love and adoration for God. And so in your obedience, my obedience is lacking.

We need to be invigorated by the glory and the goodness of the God who calls us. And it's not a matter of just trying to struggle through doing things that we don't want to do, but to realize I've forgotten the God behind the instructions. And to receive the word implanted that changes our wills.

And so Abram hears this call of God. He does exactly as said. He gets up, he goes exactly as Yahweh had said to him.

And we read, and Lot went with him. And Abraham was 75 years old, according to verse four, when he departed from Haran. So Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son

and all their possessions, which they had accumulated and the persons which they had acquired in Haran.

And they departed to go forth to the land of Canaan. Thus they came to the land of Canaan. Now there's a little bit of a question here regarding kind of the timing and sequence.

Who went where, why, when? The issue is, or the confusion, because in Genesis chapter 11, we read that Terah took his family and he left Ur and he went to Haran. And then after that, we read chapter 12, where we hear God call Abram. And then we have Abram departing in verse four from Haran.

And so the question is kind of like, when did God speak to Abram? Is it possible that maybe his father Terah took them from Ur of the Chaldeans to Haran, and then Haran was where Abram first heard the voice of God? I don't think that's actually what's happening for a couple of reasons. Let me just jot down some cross references. Genesis 15, seven, Yahweh says, I am Yahweh who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess it.

It's God speaking to Abram. I was the one who called you out of Ur. Nehemiah 9, seven, in the prayer of Israel, you are Yahweh God who chose Abram and brought him out from Ur of the Chaldeans.

And you say, well, it's still a little bit ambiguous there. Maybe God called him out of Ur by just following his father Terah. Well, Stephen in Acts chapter seven, verse two says this, the God of glory appeared to our father Abram when he was in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran.

So what Moses is doing is this, he's starting the story there. He's connecting us to Terah in chapter 11, that Abram and Terah and Lot all left from Ur of the Chaldeans to go up to Haran. And then he's giving us exactly what Yahweh came and said to Abram when he was in Ur.

So when you read in verses one through three of chapter 12, that's what Abram heard while he was still living in Ur of the Chaldeans. Then he goes up and he goes with his father and he goes with his nephew. Now, some have said, well, hold on, how is it that he's obeying if he's going from his father's house and from his kin in verse one? Well, just think about your own extended family relationships.

And in particular, maybe when you were a child, if you still had great aunts and great uncles alive, great grandparents alive, I mean, people are living a long time in Abram's day. So in Ur of the Chaldeans, Abram would have had his dad's relatives, his grandparents' relatives, there would have been cousins upon cousins, there would have been an entire

brood. The perspective here is that he leaves his family there in Ur, all of those connections, all of those relationships, and the only people that go with him are his dad and his nephew.

That's it. He leaves behind the rest of the family. How long were they in Haran? Well, we don't know.

We know that they were long enough to accumulate some things. Something about that we moved three and a half years ago. We just went through a closet the other day.

You can accumulate stuff pretty quick sometimes. So we don't know how long they were in Haran, but they were long enough to accumulate some things. And as we're gonna find Abram and Abraham, he was a very wealthy man.

He had lots of livestock and servants and people. So while he was there, some form of commerce, the Lord's blessing in his hand, he's accumulating while he's there. But he's been through a lot so far.

If you just stop and think, Abram so far has buried a brother. Okay, he left a brother back in Ur. He left all of his extended family.

He's now buried his father. And he's leaving Haran and all he has is Lot. And I was thinking, man, I like my nephews.

I like my nephews a lot. But if I was moving, I don't know that my nephew's the first guy on the list to take with me. I'm thinking I want a savvy uncle or something.

Somebody that's gonna provide some help. I'm digging a nephew. So Abram leaves.

He has his wife, Sarai. He has his brother's son, Lot. The idea there is probably that Abram is leaving Ur of the Chaldees and he's leaving his family and he's leaving all of the false gods.

Lot is saying, I'm ready to follow Yahweh with you. And that's what we're gonna see. So Abram and Lot leave behind Ur.

Now they're leaving Haran. With it, it's interesting. There's a little detail in the text.

You read the persons which they had acquired. Normally we think, okay, so they bought some slaves while they were there. They acquired some servants.

But Cassido draws out that there's a different word in the Hebrew language for the acquisition of slaves. This would seem that actually what happened was while Abram was in Haran, he was proselytizing. He was making converts.

There were some people that heard about Yahweh and decided we'd like to come too. And so he was there in Haran. We don't know what the conversation would have looked like.

And say, hey, why are you here? Well, you ever heard of Yahweh? About 400-ish years ago, he destroyed the whole earth with a flood. Well, he came, he spoke to me. He actually called me out of my background.

I now worship him. I mean, in somehow in that conversation of life, there were people who were acquired with them. And so this entourage has grown.

The blessing of God is already starting to seep out. Now that Abram has buried his father, we don't know whether he was waiting for his dad to die, whether it was health reasons, whether maybe Terah was not quite ready to go to Canaan, whatever the issue might be, Terah's passed on. And so now they depart and they go forth to the land of Canaan.

And thus they came, Moses writes, to the land of Canaan. This is the first evidence of Abram's faith. He's had a decisive act of obedience.

It's faith in action. This is the first display of his faith and his worship. The second now that we come to is the refining travel.

The refining travel. Point number one, the radical takeoff. Point number two, the refining travel.

So now what we move from is this decisive act where God calls him to do this big obedience. It's challenging in the flesh, but he trusts God and he does the thing. Well, now what we begin to see is faith lived out really against opposition.

This is the growing faith, the preserving faith, the faith that overcomes obstacles. And what I want you to see as we work through this is this is the Lord caring for and preserving and strengthening Abram's faith. He's training him.

Verse six, and Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem to the Oak of Moreh. Now, Shechem will become a point of decision later throughout Genesis. It's gonna have great significance through the future generations and then even into the monarchy of Israel.

So it doesn't really mean a whole lot now, but Moses is highlighting it. It will later, and he knows that. When you read the reference to the Oak of Moreh, it might be a single tree, but quite possibly it's a grove.

And the title relates to some kind of teaching. And so most likely what's being conveyed here in your mind's eye would be to picture a region there in the land of Canaan that is dedicated to false worship. It's a grove, some form of altar or temple worship to the false gods of the Canaanites.

Judges 9, verse 37, it was called the Soothsayers Oak. And Moses just slips in what seems to us like a very small detail and yet is very significant when he says, now the Canaanite was then in the land. Now the Canaanite was then in the land.

This is the cursed descendants of Noah. This is an immoral people. This is a godless people, pagan.

And so just to kind of get our minds around this for a moment, okay, of what Abram is experiencing and what it means for him. Imagine I say to you, hey, listen, here's the deal. I've got this phenomenal property for you, okay? It's yours, here's the deal.

What you need to do is first sell your house and downsize into an RV, okay? And I want you to say goodbye to everyone forever and get in the RV, and then I'll give you the address once you're on the road. Sound like a good deal? Get on the road, I give you the address. I'm not trying to play God here, just the analogy, hang with me.

You're in the RV, you show up at the property and it's filled with people, beautiful property. And it's not like, I mean, we've had this happen before where you know you're supposed to close on the 1st, they're supposed to be out on the 30th, you think we'll just kind of drive by and take a look and the 30th, they're like getting all the boxes still and they're just behind in their planning. And this is like, people are just vegging on the property.

They don't look like they're going anywhere. And then what you hear is, by the way, we're just gonna hang out in the RV indefinitely. This is your new home.

See, Abram comes into this land and what he's finding there is people hostile to the worship of Yahweh. Embedded cultures of people. The land that he is supposed to possess right now, I can't see it, it's filled with people.

People who hate God, I don't see how this is going to work. And you think, why would the Lord do this to Abram? I mean, he said, I'm gonna make you a nation, I'm gonna make your name great, I'm gonna bless the earth throughout you or throughout the earth through your line. And now you're gonna spend the rest of your life centrally living out of an ancient Near Eastern RV.

You're gonna be in tents. What is the Lord doing? This is the Lord caring for Abram's faith. So one commentator writes, it was profitable for him to be accustomed by such discipline to cherish a better hope.

For if he had been kindly and courteously received in the land of Canaan, he would have hoped for nothing better than to spend his life there as a guest. I mean, these are not Abram's people. And so he's in the land and he's immediately finding as it's occupied by other people that he is to simply hang out and wait.

So the Lord is teaching Abram a very valuable lesson. He's living in a tent and a tent is not a permanent dwelling structure. Abram is sojourning.

And so although Abram can't see it yet, this is not getting in the way of the plan, this is the plan. The plan to shepherd him and to strengthen his faith. And so those tents are actually working something in his heart that he needs.

Being in a land that he's uncomfortable around all these idolaters is working something that he needs. The writer of Hebrews says that Abram sojourned by faith in the land of promise as though it was a foreign land dwelling in tents. That's the plan.

What is that doing? Well, it is working and forming character as his faith is tested. So when pastor writes, he is admonished by the continual want of repose to look upward towards heaven. So he gets to this promised land that God is gonna show him and he realizes, man, maybe this isn't right here right now, but I'm looking to something beyond this land.

Isn't that what happens when the Lord puts you in a situation where you have to wait upon him in faith? That he's accomplishing a good purpose for your spiritual benefit? I mean, you know the verse as well. Well, James one, consider it all joy, my brothers. Consider it all joy, my brothers, and you encounter various trials knowing what? Knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance.

And you're saying, if Abram said, all right, I'm gonna have this decisive act of obedience. I'm gonna step out in faith. I'm gonna trust God that he's gonna provide me the land that he shows me.

And two days into the journey, there it is, paradise. And it says Abraham's future land, and there's no one occupying it. That his faith would not have had a chance to persevere and mature and strengthen and hope against hope, as the scriptures would say, brings about perseverance.

And Paul would say in Romans five, perseverance brings about proven character and proven character hope. And so too often we're scheming to pin our hopes or achieving

something right here and now, a little slice of heaven on earth. And yet what Abram is learning is to depend upon God and to look for something beyond his immediate circumstances.

Ultimately, he was looking to a heavenly city. And the Lord, the Lord is so gracious. The Lord is so kind to us the way that he tends our faith.

He knows, he knows exactly what your faith needs. So he, he tailor makes the circumstances, he tailor makes the tests, and he's not gonna allow your faith to fail. Okay, he's always gonna be there to provide.

And that's exactly what he does to Abram. So Abram sitting there looking at the Canaanites, probably tempted, the text doesn't say, to at least just doubt a little bit, right? He's a man, he's gonna fail right here in these next verses. So he's looking out, he's seeing the Canaanites.

In verse seven, what happens? Then Yahweh appeared to Abram and said, to your seed, I will give this land. God appears. This is a theophany, and it's an appearance of God in the Old Testament.

This would be the pre-incarnate son of God, the angel of the Lord. Why is this so important? Well, just put yourself in Abram's sandals right now. It's pretty tough to see how it's all gonna work out.

And so the Lord does what? He comes and personally appears to Abram to strengthen his faith. How many times has the Lord done that for you? He gives him a word, a word from the Lord to strengthen and bolster his faith, to remind him of the promise. And so Abram may not be able to see how it all comes together.

I mean, right here, the promise to his seed, Abram is barren right now, remember? Him and Sarai, no kids, past the point of childbirth. And yet he's saying, I don't see how it's all gonna come together, but in faith, I believe. How do you know he believed? Into verse seven, so he built an altar there to Yahweh who had appeared to him.

So Abram gets up, he goes, he shows up in Canaan. He realizes the land is filled with Canaanites. He realizes he's probably gonna need to settle into tent life for a while.

And the Lord graciously comes and says, I'm gonna affirm the promise, and I'm gonna promise that your seed gets this land. You understand, even that was not an accident that the Lord was setting this whole thing up. Why was Sarai barren? What's the ultimate purpose in that? As one commentator stated, a natural obstacle existed in the genealogical sources of the promised seed so that fulfillment of the promise would demand the Lord's supernatural intervention.

Why is Sarai barren? So that there's no earthly hope. So that there's no earthly hope for a seed or an offspring. So that they must rely simply upon the faithfulness of God.

I mean, you just picture it. You have no kid, you have no place to live. There are squatters living in the land that you're supposed to get.

I mean, if I'm Abram, I'm saying, I don't really see how this whole thing is gonna come together. And God in his grace comes and he assures Abram. Listen, you understand that the author of your faith, the author of your faith does not merely start that work in your life, but he nurtures it and cultivates it and protects it.

And if you've been in Christ any length of time, you know when there's the doubts that assail your soul and you know how many times the Lord has come to your rescue. He's come to your aid. He's brought a truth to your heart.

Or you've opened up the word and it's come alive to you. Or a friend has brought an encouraging word from scripture. That is God's grace to you.

That even when you're faint hearted or weary or discouraged or despondent or unbelieving, the Lord will come to your aid and strengthen you with his mighty word. How is it that Abram's faith is strengthened? It's by focusing on the object of faith, God himself. You know, our faith gets weak is when we look outside of the character of God for strength.

And so Abram here is not looking for immediate payoff, but he trusts that the promise will be fulfilled and he builds an altar to Yahweh who'd appeared to him. Now, a couple of things I just want you to think about here for a minute. Building an altar is gonna make you stand out a little bit.

Is it not? I mean, this is the public worship of God. Couldn't Abram just bow in his knee right there? He just bowed in the sand. No one would know who he was worshipping.

He could worship the Lord privately. But here he is in the midst of a pluralistic, polytheistic society building an altar to Yahweh. He's beginning to mark out the land and lay claim to it.

See the inward worship of the heart came out in an external profession. Started in the heart and yet he begins to publicly worship God. Visible worship, external worship.

Abram sure had no doubt opportunities to explain himself. People asked him what he was doing. But there is a testing out of a heart of worship that he's finding his ultimate love and trust and significance and security and safety in the Lord himself.

I don't know what the conversations were, that Abram had while he was in the land, but I think it probably took him a couple times to figure out like how's the best way to get into this conversation. Can you imagine someone saying, so what brings you to town? Well, okay, let's see here. So basically, I don't know how to say this, but basically I'm gonna get your land someday, I guess.

Well, not me, my kids. I mean, I don't have kids. Now, yes, I understand we're old enough to be on Medicaid.

Okay, like this just, it's not an easy situation to explain to other people, but here he is. He's building testaments to worship. He's making his way throughout the land.

Although he's there in that place at the site of Shechem to the Oaks of Moray, that's not a stopping point. He has to keep going. Verse eight, then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east, and there he built an altar to Yahweh and called upon the name of Yahweh.

Here he is worshiping again. And I get to the next spot, I stop, and what's in my heart? I wanna set up a little worship center to the Lord. You're saying this is him expressing love and dependence upon his God.

And Bethel doesn't have this name yet. It doesn't exist named as such, but this will be where Jacob, Abraham's grandson, wrestles with God and it will be named at that point. And yet just look at the irony here that Abram will spend the rest of his existence living in tents.

I mean, can you imagine that? The rest of your life in an RV, but here's the deal. You can't just park it. You're gonna be on the move the rest of your life.

You're not gonna have a place to put down roots, to call home. Just reminding him that he's a sojourner and a traveler. And yet Abram is building altars to the Lord.

So when he is moving throughout the land, all that's left are buildings and structures that he's made to attest to Yahweh and holes in the ground from his tent pegs, nothing of his own remains. So I don't know about you, but I start thinking about Abram and I'm thinking, man, this guy has been through a lot already. Like this is just kind of the front end of the journey.

All of those decisions and the conversations and the acts of faith already just to get into where he's gone. Seems like a good time for a little bit of relief. Maybe a time to shift into cruise control for a bit.

And we read in verse nine, and Abram journeyed on continuing toward the Negev. And this is like the song that doesn't ever end. This is another removal in a short period of time.

And so the new lot in life, the new norm for Abram is to not become overly attached to a geographical location or a friend group or a community or a family heritage. He's not able to stay in one spot long enough to amass those luxuries or comforts. Why? So that he learns to be a sojourner.

Here's I read the commentary from the New Testament on Abram. Hebrews 11, eight, by faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance. And he went out not knowing where he was going.

By faith, he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise. Why? For he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. And later that same author would say in verse 13, all these died in faith without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on earth.

He said, this is not a purposeless wilderness wandering in Abram's life. And in case you're wondering what the Negev looks like, it's like a barren desert, okay? That's where he's ending up next. This is all part of God graciously disentangling Abram's heart from attachment and over attachment to this earth.

They teach him to fix his eyes on that which is coming. And of course this happens then with eyes of faith, meaning Abram doesn't get the full picture all at once. He doesn't get to see the full story.

Rather, he simply has to look to faith and trust and rely in the promise of God. So I was thinking about this. I just summarized it in this way.

What is injurious to his comfortable existence on earth is advantageous to the strengthening of his faith. And Abram is learning to rely upon the Lord to provide for everything that he needs in life. When you look at Abram, it's easy to see him here as the example for our faith.

Is it not? Let me see how he's trusting the Lord. It's refreshing even the way that he obeys. Doesn't have a lot of excuses or resistance.

There's a boldness associated with that. He's not afraid to be public with his worship there, even in the midst of idolaters. He sees past his circumstances.

But right after this high point in the providence of God, God's going to intervene in the circumstances of Abram and Sarai's life, and it's gonna expose Abram's frailty. And so here today, we're looking at a man with sincere, genuine, authentic faith, saving faith, the real deal. Starting in verse 10, he's gonna be in a scary situation.

Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. See, Abram is gonna keep getting tested over and over and over.

If you ever feel like the Christian life is a series of repeated and enduring tests, it is. And sometimes we rejoice in our faithful response, and other times it happens. We deal with the fallout of failure.

And so as we're gonna see next time, the father of our faith doesn't always weather temptation faithfully, but sometimes he falters and fails. And yet in all of this, God's providential plan is accomplishing exactly what he wants. Will you pray with me? Father in heaven, thank you for Abram.

Thank you for the example that he is to us. Thank you that you did not give us examples of perfect individuals other than the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet at the same time, Lord, you show us examples of real faith so that we're spurred on and yet not overly discouraged.

Lord, we confess that so often our hearts are filled with unbelief. I cannot imagine all of the temptations that the father of our faith experienced when he couldn't see the bigger picture of what you were doing in his life, what you would do through him, why all of the lessons and all of the trials and all the deprivation, yet Lord, you were making him a worshiper through all of it. So thank you for your providence in our lives.

Thank you, Lord, for the things that you've given us spiritually. And thank you for the things that you've not given us physically and materially, or the areas of our lives that we have to wait upon you, knowing that it is in that waiting and deprivation that very often we find you. Lord, forgive us for so often turning to other resources and looking to other promises.

Father, I pray that you'd refine and deepen our love and our trust in you. Thank you so much that even our sin, even our failure cannot stop you accomplishing your plan to bring all things ultimately to fulfillment under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. We love you, we praise you, amen.