

Community Bible Church

The Book of Genesis

Chapter 12

This week's lesson will begin the second main section of the **book of Genesis**. This portion of the book is found in **chapter 12-50** and can be titled the **Patriarchal** or **Biographical** section of **Genesis**. While there were **four events** (Creation, Fall, Flood, and Dispersion) in **chapters 1-11**, there are four men (patriarchs) highlighted in **chapters 12-50**. These four are **Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph**.

The first of these patriarchs, **Abraham**, is featured in **chapters 12-25**, and this will be the focus of our study for the next several weeks.

Before we study the biblical text, here is some background information to set **chapter 12** in context. Abraham and his wife Sarah were originally named **Abram** and **Sarai** until God changed their names. Abraham was born just after 2000 AD, around 500 years following Noah and the great flood. Abraham was called by God when he was seventy years of age. ***“Go forth from your country and your relatives to the land which I will show you, and I will make you a great nation” (12:1-2).***

His hometown of **Ur** was located in the southern region of modern Iraq, on the Euphrates River, near the Persian Gulf. **Haran** was 600 miles northwest of **Ur**, in the southern part of modern-day Turkey. The land of **Canaan** was 400 miles further south west of **Haran**, near the Mediterranean Sea. Abraham remained in **Haran** for five years before he departed for **Canaan**. Thus, God called Abraham at age 70 to travel over 1000 miles from his home, with his family, to found a new nation! What a BIG ask! What a BIG God! **Chapter 12 has three main sections:**

God's Call (Calling) Faith	12:1-5
God's Conversation (Continuance) Faith	12:6-10
Abraham's Carnality (Compromise) Fear	12:11-20

1. The story of Abram (Abraham) begins in **Genesis 11:27-32** which we studied briefly in last week's lesson. This passage gives a brief summary of Abram's family and his call to Canaan. These events will be described in **chapter 12**. Write a summary of this passage in a single sentence.
2. The passage in **12:1-3** is profound and dramatic. This sets the stage for much of the rest of the Biblical narrative. These three verses are to be considered carefully as they record God's words directly to Abram. They contain both commands (imperatives) as well as promises. From this passage describe God's direct "call" to Abram, as well as the anticipated results and blessings.

3. How might you respond if you receive a similar call today? How might God “call” a person to a specific “assignment” for Him today? Are there any examples from your life experience where you have had a sense of God’s direction for you or your family? Are you open and prepared to recognize God’s desire for a change of direction in your life? How would one evaluate a response to a sense of God’s calling today?

4. From **12:4**, how did Abram respond? How was faith involved in his actions? What did he have to “give up” in making his decision? Was he given sufficient information by God regarding his journey to “a new land?”

5. Recall that Abram and Sarai spent five years in Haran before leaving for Canaan. By that time, he had reached age 75. Read **12:5** and describe his activity.

6. Read **12:6-10** and describe briefly the events following Abram’s arrival in Canaan. What personal applications do you find in this passage?

7. The third man section of **chapter 12** is found in **12:11-20**. Read this entire passage. After Abram’s great steps of faith and obedience, what was your reaction and response to this passage? What went wrong? In **Genesis 20:12** Abram later reveals that his wife actually was his step-sister, or half-sister. Does this excuse his dishonesty? What act of divine intervention led to Abram’s dishonorable departure from Egypt? Is there an application for your life from this passage?

8. What are some key life applications for you from **chapter 12**?