

## Answering God's Call

(Genesis 12:1-20)

### Abram's Journeys<sup>1</sup>

1. Called by God to leave his native Ur, Abram moved to Haran, sacred to the same moon-god worshiped at Ur.
2. At Terah's death Abram moved to Canaan, in response to God's call (**Gen. 12: 1-4**).
3. Stopping first at Shechem and Bethel, he moved on to the Negeb, or south country.
4. Because of famine, Abram then visited Pharaoh in Egypt.
5. Later Abram returned with Lot to the district around Hebron. **The distance traveled, from Ur to Egypt and back to Hebron, was some 1,500 miles.**



### I. The Call (12:1-3)

**Genesis 12:1 - 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. (see also Joshua 24:2)**

Calvin comments that God said in effect, "I command you to go forth with closed eyes and forbid you to inquire where I am about to lead you, until, having renounced your country, you shall have given yourself wholly to me."<sup>2</sup>

Calvin summarizes God's interaction with Abraham this way, "**Just close your eyes and take my hand.**"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D. Thaine Norris, *Logos Deluxe Map Set* (Oak Harbor, WA: Lexham Press, 1997), map included.

<sup>2</sup> John Calvin, *Genesis*, trans. and ed. John King (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), p. 344, as quoted by R. Kent Hughes (who changed "thee" to "you"), *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 182.

<sup>3</sup> As quoted by J. D. Greear, "Treasure and Trust: Genesis 12," (Durham, NC: The Summit Church, 2017).

## II. The **Courage** (12:4-8)

*Hebrews 11:8 - By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.*

F.F. Bosworth once said, "Faith begins where the will of God is known." (see [Romans 10:17](#))

When Abram arrives in Canaan, builds an altar and a tent (12:7-8). The altar symbolizes our relation to God. The tent symbolizes our relation to this world. In relation to God, we sacrifice ourselves ([Romans 12:1](#)). In relation to this world, which is temporary, we are pilgrims and strangers. The altar and the tent summarize the life of the Christian devoted to the Lord and separated from the world.

## III. The **Compromise** (12:9-19)

#1 – **Staying in Haran** - 12:1 – "The Lord HAD said" (past tense). He had already said. The call was to Abram, not Terah. [Acts 7:2-3](#) - And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was **in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, <sup>3</sup> and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.'**

Abram let his family, especially his father, hold him in Haran. ([Matthew 10:37](#), "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." See also [Mark 8:35](#)). Delayed obedience is disobedience.

#2 – **Going to Egypt** – God had taken care of Abram during the journey. He could have taken care of him in Canaan. Where God guides, God provides.

#3 - **Lying about Sarai** – She WAS his half-sister ([Genesis 20:12](#)), but this was a half-truth.

## IV. The **Comeback** (12:20)

Pharaoh tells Abram, "Get out of my country!" Abram brings Hagar from Egypt.

Abram returns to Bethel. He does not build an altar in Egypt.

[Proverbs 24:16](#) - For a righteous *man* may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity.

### **Applications for Today:**

1. When Jesus calls us to follow Him, He usually does not tell us where that will take us.
2. If God calls you to Canaan, you will not be happy, though prosperous, in Haran. It is better to be in Canaan in your obedience than in Haran in your disobedience.
3. Difficult circumstances do not mean that one is out of the will of God.
4. Failure is not final.