



**Reading:** Genesis chapter 12 verses 1-9

**Key Thought:** *Go in obedience ... and I will bless you.*

**Context:**

At 75 years old, Abraham\* had no children and yet God had called him to leave his home and become the forefather of a new nation. In obedience, he left the family home in Ur (modern day Iraq), travelled north to Haran (in what is now south-east Turkey), and eventually travelled from there to Canaan (now Israel) with his wife and nephew Lot. (*\*Abraham was called Abram until God changed his name – but for ease and clarity I have used the name by which he is best known.*)

**Content:**

Abraham obviously had a significant and amazing encounter with God, in which God gave him a seven-fold promise, recorded in verses 2 and 3:

- I will make you a great nation
- I will make your name great
- I will bless those who bless you
- I will bless you
- You will be a blessing to others
- Whoever curses you, I will curse
- All people on earth will be blessed by you

And, when Abraham reached Canaan, God gave him a further, significant promise (verse 7)

- To your offspring I will give this Land.

Abraham had no son, so I guess he was exceedingly puzzled by that. I am also sure that he was very humbled and in awe of God. Consequently, we see that he built two altars to the Lord (verse 7 and verse 8) so that he could honour and worship Him. This very act shows love, respect and faith.

**Challenge:**

The greatest challenges to Abraham were faith, understanding, and obedience.

**Have you ever had to make a decision to act in faith on hearing God's Word?** To make that step forward requires faith; but it is not faith in yourself, or in the circumstances looking right. It is faith in God's word which has been spoken into your heart. "Trust in the Lord, and he will direct your path" (Proverbs 3v6) – even if, like Abraham, you do not know where it will eventually lead. There was no looking back – Abraham took all he had with him (verse 5).

**Have you ever said – "I don't understand?"** We say things like, "Why me?" or "How can I do it?" If God has called you there, he will lead you. If God has asked you to do something, he will equip you. If God wants to bless you and bless others through you – he will do it. God's promise to Abraham shows that obedience brings blessing. Abraham's task must have seemed impossible, but faith in God's promises kept him going.

**Obedience to God's will brings blessing.** In a way, we are all like Abraham, because God has called us all to follow Him, and he has also called us to be willing to give up all for him. This call is not just to Abraham or to our missionaries – but to all of us. So that, when we "build our altars" and come in submission to Him, He can bless us and use us. Because I believe the central three blessings are for us too:

1/ I will bless those who bless you. 2/ I will bless you. 3/ You will be a blessing to others.

**Communicate:**

Feel free to let us know if you have questions or comments about this study. Perhaps you have a testimony or word of encouragement that might help others. Or maybe you would like prayer as you begin a new thing for God in your life. We will gladly get back to you.