

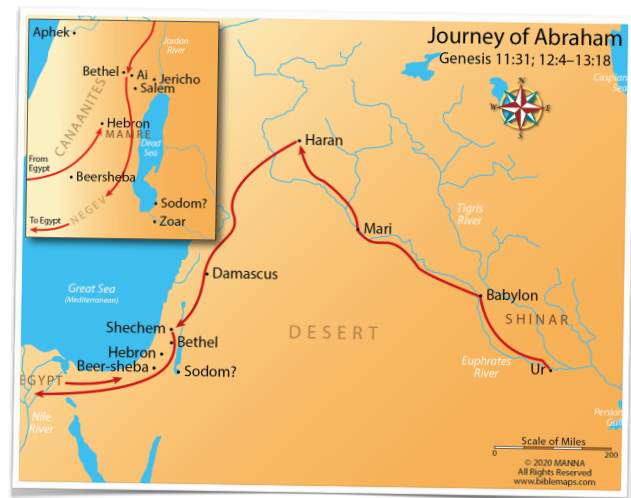
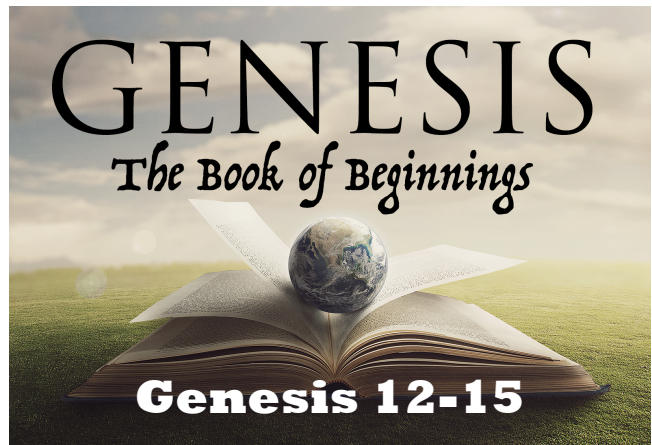
5 • The Beginning of God's Covenant with Abraham

Let's revisit the conclusion of [Genesis 11](#) to refresh ourselves on the backstory of a man named Abram:

Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from _____ of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to _____, they settled there. (11:31)

It's here, in Haran, that God makes some of the most important promises in all of the Bible:

Now the LORD said to Abram, “_____ from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great _____, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a _____. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you _____ the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (12:1-3)



So Abram, at the age of _____, went. Even though the Canaanites were already in the land (12:6), Canaan is where Abram settled. He built altars (12:7, 8) and called upon the name of the LORD. But we don't read very far before coming across some very real challenges in Abram's life:

- [12:10-20](#) - the land experiences a severe _____; Abram goes down to Egypt and encourages Sarai his wife to say that she is his sister; after Pharaoh takes Sarai, the LORD afflicts Pharaoh and his house with great plagues; when Pharaoh discovers what Abram has done, he sends him away from Egypt.
- [13:1-18](#) - the land can't support Abram and _____ (his nephew) dwelling together and strife develops between Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen; Abram offers Lot the choice of where he would like to settle; Lot opts for the fertile Jordan Valley, and Abram settles in Canaan.
- [14:1-24](#) - an alliance of four kings invade the Jordan Valley and defeat a local confederation of five kings, taking Lot captive in the process; Abram and 318 of his trained men rescue Lot and all that had been taken; two kings meet Abram on his way back home; one, named Melchizedek—king of Salem and _____ of God Most High—blesses Abram.

After these challenging events, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “_____ not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great” (15:1). When Abram expresses concern that he and Sarai continue to be childless, the LORD brings him outside and tells him, “Look toward heaven, and number the _____... So shall your offspring be” (15:5). As a deep sleep falls on Abram, the LORD foretells a time of great affliction that will come on his descendants (15:12-16), but he also makes a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I _____ this land” (15:17-21).

For Class & Family Discussion:

- Looking back at the first few verses of [Genesis 12](#), what did the LORD want Abram to do? Why?

- What compelled Abram to go? [Hebrews 11:8-10](#) might be helpful here...

- Why would Abram encourage his wife Sarai to lie about her full identity? Is there anything we can learn from this misstep?

- What does the encounter between Abram and Lot in [13:8-13](#) reveal about both of them?

- It's fascinating to realize that references to Melchizedek ([14:17-24](#)) will show up long after the days of Abram ([Psa 110:1-4](#); [Heb 5:1-10](#); [6:19-20](#); [7:1-22](#)). Who was this man and why is he referenced in such profoundly important terms in connection with Jesus?

- "I am your shield" ([15:1](#)). Think about that promise of the LORD to Abram. What does it mean? What did Abram need to understand?

- [Genesis 15:6](#) summarizes, "And [Abram] believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness." Paul will reference that statement in [Romans 4:3](#). What does it mean?

- [Genesis 15:7-20](#) isn't the easiest section to understand. What was the point of cutting the animals in half? What did it symbolize?
 - What was the LORD foretelling in [15:13-16](#)?

 - What's the significance of the smoking fire pot and flaming torch? What is the LORD doing?