Genesis

## **Out into the world (12:2-20)**

*From a study of Luther’s Works: Lectures on Genesis, Paul Kretzmann’s Popular Commentary of the Bible, and the Lutheran Study Bible.*

## **A Call Is Given: Promises, Promises (12:2-3)**

* “I will…”
  + As in v. 1, the LORD is the one making the promise of what He will do for Abram
* A great nation
  + From going to the land the LORD will show Abram…
    - The LORD now ups the game by not just giving him land, but making a nation to come from Abram
      * Not just a nation, but a GREAT nation.
  + Luther calls this “a most outstanding passage and one of the most important in all Holy Scripture.”
    - If one were to follow reason, this is completely impossible.
    - A great working of the Holy Spirit in Abram to believe this promise.
  + How can one whose wife is barren have a GREAT nation come from their marriage?
    - The only thing Abram has to cling to is that it is God who is promising this.
  + By calling them a GREAT nation means…
    - They will be set apart and different from other nations.
      * Physically
      * Spiritually
    - Although God gives kingdoms to all people, many (if not all) are blind to it.
* Bless you
  + “In Scripture the verb “to bless” denotes increase or growth.” – Luther
    - “Increase or grow in what?” – Kufahl
  + This nation will endure
    - Psalm 89:30-33
    - Yet, they were persecuted
    - A nation in terms of a number of people, or something more?
      * Galatians 3:7
* Make your name great
  + Deuteronomy 4:6-7
  + Others will come to recognize this as a blessing or a curse.
  + So that you will be a blessing
    - God’s gifts overflow
    - You can’t keep God’s gifts to yourself
    - Fulfilled in the Seed (Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection)
      * Continues as we share that forgiveness with others.
* Bless those who bless you, and those who dishonor you I will curse
  + The LORD has the back of His people
    - Don’t be a jerk about it.
  + From Scripture and history, we see that the LORD keeps this promise and threat for those outside the church.
    - Blesses
      * Exodus 1:20
      * Joshua 6:25
      * 1 Kings 17:8-24 (widow of Zarephath)
    - Curses
      * Exodus 14:28
      * Babylon
      * Assyria
      * Greece
      * Rome
* And in you all families of the earth will be blessed
  + The Seed!
    - Galatians 3:29
    - 2 Corinthians 5:19
  + John 8:56
  + Because God is good, He uses “blessing” to mean deliverance from the curse and wrath of God, and He promises that this will occur through the seed of Abraham, not only for the descendants of Abraham but for all the families of the earth.[[1]](#footnote-1)

## **There he goes (12:4-9)**

* As the LORD told him…
  + Promise and faith belong together naturally and inseparably[[2]](#footnote-2)
  + Hebrews 11:8
  + Revelation 18:4-5
* Lot too.
  + Abram’s nephew of his deceased brother (11:27-28)
  + Sam to Abram’s Frodo
* 75 years old
  + Age is just a number
* Sarai, and Lot (again), and stuff, and people too.
  + If it was Abram, that is one thing
    - But he takes this whole gang of people along with him!
    - Faith that the Lord is going to take care of them too on this journey!
  + This more than likely included Lot’s family
  + It would not be an easy journey
  + Abram’s servants?
    - Luther gives them a high honor
    - Believes they were invited to believe the promise and go along.
      * “True Church”
  + What comfort this gang would have been for Abram!
* Goes through Canaan
  + The land that the Israelites would eventually be given is the first they go through
* To Shechem
  + Joshua 20:7
* Canaanites were there
  + Those who would oppose the Lord God and His followers
  + It is possible that these Canaanites gave Abram and his crew problems, because…
* A little gospel is given to strengthen the weary.
  + V.7
  + The LORD appeared to Abram
    - Pre-incarnate Christ??
    - Exodus 33:20
  + “One day… this will all be your descendants!”
    - Hope for the future
    - Not yet for Abram
  + Psalm 105:9-12
* Altar building along the way
  + At Shechem
  + At Bethel
  + Where was he commanded to do so?
  + Calls upon the name of the LORD
    - Psalm 116:4
    - Joel 2:32
    - Romans 10:12-14

## **Forced to keep moving (12:10-20)**

* A famine
  + Punishment for sin?
  + Test of faith?
    - Psalm 37:19
    - Psalm 41:1
* Why Egypt?
  + A forerunner of Joseph?
  + *A painting in the tomb of Khnumhotep II (c. 1870 BC) depicts 37 people from the East, who visited Egypt* (LSB)
* And a little lie is sown…
  + Abram is afraid for what the Egyptians could do to *him*
    - Fear of the unknown.
    - Had trusted in the LORD earlier, but why not now?
  + Or, Is it that Abram is looking for every means to protect “the Seed” which is to come through him?
    - And faith that nothing bad or adulterous would happen to Sarai?
  + And then there is Sarai’s role in this.
    - At least 65 at this time (10 years younger than Abram)
    - She could have refused to go along with this plan.
      * Yet she obeys her husband.
* So when they arrive in Egypt…
  + Part of what Abram feared happened.
  + Sarai is found beautiful and taken into Pharaoh’s house.
    - May not be as bad as we think.
    - We read about the Persian king Ahasuerus (Esther 2:2–3) that the maidens whom the king wanted were not brought to the king immediately but were anointed with oil of myrrh for six entire months, then for six more months with other perfumes, and at last were brought to the bed of the king.[[3]](#footnote-3)
  + And Abram is rewarded
    - Through the Egyptians, the Lord blesses Abram
  + And Pharaoh is punished.
    - The Lord protects Sarai
    - Somehow, Pharoah learns she is the reason for these plagues
      * No unintended sin goes unpunished.
        + Job 21:14
      * Pharoah could have brought Abram’s worst fears true.
        + Yet is shown mercy
        + Pharaoh was frightened by God’s power through the plagues

Foreshadowing of what Moses would encounter.

A picture containing text, doll, toy, bedclothes

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1. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 2: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 6-14*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw02?ref=Bible.Ge12.3&off=14164&ctx=e+devil%E2%80%99s+language.%0a~Because+God+is+good%2c), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 2 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 2: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 6-14*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw02?ref=Bible.Ge12.4&off=44&ctx=+Lord+had+told+him.%0a~Promise+and+faith+be), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 2 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 2: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 6-14*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw02?ref=Bible.Ge12.14-15&off=3923&ctx=ard+for+a+time.%EF%BB%BF72%EF%BB%BF+~We+read+about+the+Pe), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 2 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 304–305. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)