



We Are Abraham's Seed

The Family *of* Promise

We are Abraham's Seed

A Study on the life of Abraham in relation to the contemporary Christian

Class 2 - The Call of Abraham

Genesis 12

Allen Thomas 2026

Goals of the Class

- Understand why the Bible calls us *Abraham's seed* and what that means for identity and belonging in Christ.
- Understand God's nature by watching how He interacts with Abraham.
- Read Abraham's narrative in its Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) and Jewish context instead of through modern assumptions.
- See how the Abraham story frames God's plans of restoration from Genesis to Revelation.

Narrative Questions to Use

Each week, as we read the narrative, ask these kinds of questions:

- Where is trust being tested?
- Where are relationships strained or repaired?
- Who has power, and how is it used?
- Who is protected, restored, or harmed?
- What choices move the story toward life and blessing—and what choices move it toward chaos?

Scripture also asks:

- How does God (Jesus) restore what is broken?
- How does God (Jesus) form a people who reflect His character?
- How does God (Jesus) confront evil and oppression?
- How does God (Jesus) create a community where blessing can spread outward?
- What is one decision I'm delaying out of fear—and what would faithful trust look like if I moved forward?
- Where do I have power or advantage right now, and how will I use it to protect someone instead of serving myself? (*mishpat*)
- Who is one person I can restore, help, or honor — and what is one specific action I will take? (*tzedakah*)
- What habit or pattern in my life is moving things toward chaos, and what is one change I can make that moves my home toward shalom?

Mishpat and Tzedakah

- **Mishpat** - appropriate response, the right, just, fair judgement
 - Judgment that is impartial
 - Upholding what is right in the community
 - Establishing order and protection
- **Tzedakah** - restorative goodness, compassionate action
 - Doing what is needed to restore life, dignity or relationship
 - Generosity, charity, righteousness, mercy, restorative justice
 - Giving what someone needs, not what they earned
 - In modern usage, righteousness often becomes moralistic and rule-oriented
- **Shalom** (peace) is wholeness, flourishing, everything in right relationship.

Chesed

- Chesed - steadfast love, lovingkindness, grace
 - Covenant loyalty
 - Faithful mercy
 - Love that acts to preserve relationship
 - Will I remain faithful even when you are vulnerable and failing

How we see God

- Chesed is the motive - why we act
 - God acts because of his covenant loyalty, not because people deserve it
 - **I will be faithful even when you are not**
- Mishpat is discernment judgement - what must be set right
 - God's faithfulness aims at **restoring order, dignity, and life** — especially for the weak.
 - What destroys life **must be** confronted and removed
- Tzedekah is action - doing what is needed
 - God does **whatever is required** to bring about restoration — mercy, discipline, forgiveness, rescue.
 - I will do what the situation requires for life to flourish
- Shalom is the result - restored wholeness
 - It is **not achieved directly**, It emerges when the other three are rightly held together
 - This the life as God intended, flourishing, all things set in order

The Melody

- Creation that was good (*Tov*)
- Humans placed in a high place with trees
- They were blessed, to be fruitful and multiply
- They were given a vocation
- There is failure that involves:
 - Deception
 - Seeing what is pleasing to look at
 - Taking what is forbidden
 - A recognition of what was done
 - Expulsion

Tonight's Journey

Where We Are in the Story

- Call of Abram
- Abram's movement through the land
- Abram's failure in Egypt
- God's faithfulness despite failure

Blessing versus Curses

12:2 I will make a great nation of you
and I will bless you
and will make your name great.

Be a blessing!

3 I will bless those who bless you,
those who dishonor you, I will curse.
All the clans of the soil will find blessing
through you.

3:14 YHWH, God, said to the snake:
Because you have done this,
More cursed be you from all the herd animals
and from all the beasts of the field;
Upon your belly shall you walk

3:17 To Adam he said:
Because you have hearkened (*shema*) to the voice of your wife
And have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you,
Saying:
You are not to eat from it!
Cursed be the soil on your account,
With pangs (sadness) shall you eat from it, all the days of your life.

4:11 And now
Cursed be you from the soil
Which gaped with its mouth to
receive your brother's blood from
your hand

5:29 he called his name: Noah (Rest)! Saying
May this one comfort our sorrow
From our toil
From the pangs (sadness) of our hands
Coming from the soil
Which the Lord has cursed

9:25 He said:
Cursed be Canaan,
Servant of servants may he be
to his brothers!

Go Forth

Gen 12:1 YHWH said to Avram,

Go you forth

from your land (Economic Security)

from your family (Social security)

from your father's house (Identity security)

to the land that I will let you see.

The Call

- Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place he would later receive as an inheritance, and he went out without understanding where he was going.
- He leaves the tangible, the seen and receives only a promise...
- Mark 10:28 Peter began to speak to him, “Look, we have left everything to **follow you!**”
²⁹Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, there is no one who has left **home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields** for my sake and for the sake of the gospel ³⁰who will not receive in this age a hundred times as much – homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, fields, all with persecutions – and in the age to come, eternal life. ³¹But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

God's Promise

² I will make a great nation of you
and I will bless you
and will make your name great.

Be a blessing!

³ I will bless those who bless you,
those who damn you, I will curse.

All the clans of the soil will find blessing through you!

This is still conditional, IF Abram leaves land, family, home, THEN God will...

It is NOT merit based, but relationship based

There was a threefold leaving, followed by a threefold blessing

Babel - make their name great -Abram God will make his name great

In Babel, the Nations (clans of the soil) were abandoned by God

Through Abraham they will be restored

The restoration of the Nations is the great theme throughout Scripture

Gal 3:8 The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and foretold the gospel to Abraham:
"All nations will be blessed through you." ⁹ So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

Abram's Journey

^{12:4} Avram went, as YHWH had spoken to him
and Lot went with him.

And Avram was five years and seventy years old when
he went out of Haran.

⁵ Avram took Sarai his wife

Lot his brother's son,

All their property that they had gained,
And the folk whom they had made-their-own in Haran.

And they went out to go to the land of Canaan.

When they came to the land of Canaan,

⁶ Avram passed through the land

As far as the place of Shekhem,
As far as the Oak of Moreh.

(Now the Canaanite was then in the land.)

Acts 7:1 The God of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he settled in Haran, ³and said to him, 'Go out from your country and from your relatives, and come to the land I will show you.' ⁴Then he went out from the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God made him move to this country where you now live.

Why take Lot

- Is this not Obeying - leave kindred - leave home?
- The promise was to build a nation...
- Sara is barren...
- Need children to build a nation...
- Maybe it is through Lot???

Sacred Space versus Disordered Space

6 Avram passed through the land
As far as the place of **Shekhem**,
As far as the Oak of Moreh (Teacher).
(Now the Canaanite was then in the land.)
7 YHWH was seen by Avram and said;
I give this land to your seed!
He built a slaughter-site (alter) there
to YHWH who had been seen by him.

8 And he pulled up his stakes from there for the high country,
East of Bet-El (House of God),
And spread his tent,
Bet-El toward the sea
And Ai (Heap of ruins) toward the east.

There he built a slaughter-site to YHWH
And called out the name of YHWH.

9 Then Avram journeyed on,
Continually journeying to the Negev.



Jesus Declares His Authority

Mat 16:13 When Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14They answered, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17And Jesus answered him, “You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven! 18And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Shechem and Caesarea Philippi were places marked by competing claims of worship, yet God chose precisely such settings to establish His presence and reveal His authority.

The promise that began with Abraham reaches its decisive unveiling when Jesus is recognized as the Messiah

Journey to Egypt

¹⁰ Now there was a **famine** in the land,

And Avram went down to Egypt, to sojourn there,
For the famine was heavy in the land.

¹¹ It was when he came near to Egypt that he said to Sarai his wife:

Now here,
I know well that you are a woman fair to look at.

¹² It will be,
When the Egyptians see you and say:
She is his wife,
That they will kill me,
But you they will allow to live.

¹³ Pray say that you are my sister
So that it may go well with me
On your account,
That I myself may live,
Thanks to you

•

¹⁴ It was when Avram came to Egypt,

That the Egyptians saw how exceedingly fair the woman was

¹⁵ when Pharaoh's courtiers saw her,

They praised her to Pharaoh,
And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

¹⁶ It went well with Avram on her account,

Sheep and oxen, donkeys,
Servants and maids, she-asses and camels became his.

¹⁷ But YHWH plagued Pharaoh with great plagues,
And also his household,
Because of Sarai, Avram's wife.

¹⁸ Pharaoh had Avram called and said:

What is this you have done to me!
Why did you not tell me that she is your wife?
¹⁹ Why did you say: She is my sister?

So I took her for myself as a wife.
But now, here is your wife,
Take her and go!

²⁰ So Pharaoh put men in charge of him
Who escorted him and his wife and all that was his

Was Abram Right to go to Egypt?

- Is Abram going to Egypt a lack of trust?
- Is this a test for Abram from God?
- Does trusting God mean staying put?
- What options did he have?
- Was it ok for Abram to lie about Sara?

Journey to Egypt - Echoes of Eden

¹⁰ Now there was a famine in the land,

And Avram went down to Egypt, to sojourn there,
For the famine was heavy in the land.

¹¹ It was when he came near to Egypt that he said to Sarai his wife:

Now here,
I know well that you are a woman fair to look at.

¹² It will be,
When the Egyptians see you and say:
She is his wife,
That they will kill me,
But you they will allow to live.

¹³ **Pray say that you are my sister**
So that it may go well with me
On your account,
That I myself may live,
Thanks to you

¹⁴ It was when Avram came to Egypt,

That the Egyptians **saw how exceedingly fair** the woman was

¹⁵ when Pharaoh's courtiers saw her,
They praised her to Pharaoh,
And the woman **was taken** into Pharaoh's house.

¹⁶ It went well with Avram on her account,
Sheep and oxen, donkeys,
Servants and maids, she-asses and camels became his.

¹⁷ But YHWH plagued Pharaoh with great plagues,
And also his household,
Because of Sarai, Avram's wife.

¹⁸ Pharaoh had Avram called and said:
What is this you have done to me!
Why did you not tell me that she is your wife?

¹⁹ Why did you say: She is my sister?
So I took her for myself as a wife.
But now, here is your wife,
Take her and get out!

²⁰ So Pharaoh put men in charge of him
Who escorted him and his wife and all that was his.

Egypt = Eden Again

- The Serpent said “You shall not surely die...”
- Eve saw the fruit was good
- She Took the fruit
- God said “What have you done?”
- Abraham says “Say you are my sister...”
- Pharaoh’s court saw she was fair
- They took her
- Pharaoh said “What have you done?”

Fear versus Trust

God Promised	Abram Feared
I will bless you	They will kill me
I will make your name great (Protection)	I must protect myself
I will make you a nation	I will die and lose everything

God intervenes in Egypt not because Abraham behaves righteously (*tzedakah*), but because God is faithful (*chesed*) to the promise that depends on Sarah. The promise stands because of God's faithfulness (*chesed*), not Abraham's flawlessness.

Be a Blessing

- The tension in the story is this very promise
- Abram was called to be a blessing
- Instead his actions brought a plague
- When we fail to live in faith, we no longer can be a blessing and others can suffer
- When fear drives us, we step outside the life of mishpat and tzedakah, and shalom breaks down.

Lack of Faith or Prudence

Should Abram have stayed in Canaan?

- It was the land promised to him
- Wouldn't God have seen him through the famine
- Abram just needed to trust God

Should he have gone to Egypt?

- That is where there was food
- It was the prudent thing to do to care for his family
- Just responding to the life situation

We are faced with same decision

- Church budget
- Church savings

God's Will

God's will is not always revealed as a clear right or wrong option. Sometimes a decision must be made. In those moments, Scripture invites us not to obsess over the choice, but to focus on the walk — to move forward in tzedakah, trust, and humility, confident that God remains faithful to His promise.

God is looking for partners, not puppets—partners who walk in His way and live within the triangle, not people whose every decision must be micromanaged. God trusts His partners to make real choices, and He promises to walk the journey with them.

Takeaway

God calls us out of:

- What defines us
- What secures us
- What we can control

God calls us into:

- Trust rather than fear
- Identity shaped by His promise
- Living as a blessing

Abram's story reveals:

- The promise stands because God is faithful
- Our failures do not break God's plan
- Blessing flows when we trust, not when we grasp
- God begins His plan to restore the nations through ordinary, imperfect people

Questions to Reflect on how to Be a Blessing

- **Hesed (steadfast love):** Who needs to experience God's loyal care through me—and what would “staying with them” look like?
- **Mishpat (justice / wise restraint):** Where do I have power or advantage here, and what would it look like to use it fairly—to protect rather than control?
- **Tzedakah (restorative righteousness):** Whose dignity or voice is diminished, and what action would actually restore them (not just “help” them)?
- **Shalom (wholeness / peace):** If blessing truly flowed in this situation, what would wholeness look like for all—especially the vulnerable—and what's one next step toward that?



We Are Abraham's Seed

The Family *of* Promise

We Are Abraham's Seed

Class 2 — The Call of Abram (Genesis 12)

Where We Are in the Story

Genesis 1–11 tells the story of a world unraveling. From Eden to Babel, humanity repeatedly grasps for control rather than trusting God. Yet God does not abandon the nations. Instead, He begins His work of restoration through one family.

Genesis 12 marks a turning point — promise enters a fractured world.

The Call

“Go from your land, your relatives, and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.”

God does not give Abram a map, a timeline, or an explanation. He gives him a promise.

To follow this call, Abram must release the things that once defined his security — land, family, and identity — and step into a future shaped by trust.

From the very beginning, Abram’s calling is larger than his own story:

“Be a blessing... and all the families of the earth will be blessed through you.”

God’s plan has always been outward-facing.

Faith Begins with Movement

Abram goes.

He does not yet know where the road leads, but he trusts the One who called him.

Scripture consistently portrays faith not as certainty, but as walking with God into the unknown.

Worship Before Possession

When Abram arrives in the land, he builds an altar — even though he owns none of it.

The altar quietly declares:

God is present.

God is trustworthy.

God will keep His promise.

Faith learns to worship before the promise becomes visible.

When Fear Enters the Story

A famine drives Abram toward Egypt. The text does not call this a test; it simply presents a decision in the midst of uncertainty — the kind of decision every life eventually requires.

But as fear grows, trust gives way to self-protection. The one called to be a blessing becomes a source of harm.

Yet even here, God intervenes.

Not because Abram is flawless,

but because the promise rests on God’s faithfulness.

One of the quiet assurances of this story is that God’s purposes are not undone by human weakness.

What God Is Doing

As this journey begins, we see God:

- Calling a people into existence
- Making promises before they are visible
- Preserving the covenant despite human fear
- Working through ordinary decisions
- Beginning a rescue that will ultimately bless the nations

God is the primary actor in this story.

What God Is Forming in Abraham

God is shaping a life marked by:

- Trust instead of grasping
- Worship before ownership
- Dependence rather than control
- Courage in uncertainty

God is not searching for perfect people — He is forming faithful partners.

Reading the Story Together

As we continue through Abraham's life, learn to notice the movement within the narrative:

- Where is trust growing?
- Where is fear influencing decisions?
- Who is vulnerable, and who is protected?
- How is God working to bring life rather than chaos?

These stories are not given merely to inform us — they are given to form us.

For Our Own Walk

Consider this week:

- Where might God be inviting me to trust Him without having the full picture?
- When uncertainty rises, do I move toward trust — or toward control?
- How might I become a source of blessing in the places God has led me?
- Where might God be calling me to return and re-center my life?

Key Takeaway

God is not looking for perfect people —He is forming faithful partners who learn to trust Him over a lifetime.

Like Abraham, we step forward without knowing every detail — confident not in our certainty, but in God's faithfulness.