

Genesis: Chapter 12

Opening Question: What does Pharaoh think it means to “bless” Abram and how does this scene show that he has the wrong understanding of blessing?

Key Takeaways:

1. In this scene, the LORD chooses one man and his Genesis 2:24 one flesh wife to be the carriers of the Promised Genesis 3:15 Seed of the Woman to bless all the nations of the earth.
2. How Genesis 12:1–3 comes to pass is the rest of the story, fulfilled in Revelation 21–22.
3. The language of blessing goes back to Genesis 1:22 and the language of cursing goes back to Genesis 3:14,17. The LORD’s definition of blessing is resurrection from the dead, eternal life, and the restoration of all that was lost in the Garden which is coming at the end of the story through the one promised in Genesis 3:15–16.
4. The serpent alters the meaning of blessing to be temporal health, wealth, and fame and cursing to be the removal of these things.
5. In this scene Abram fears Pharaoh, looks to Sarai to make things go well for him and looks to Pharaoh to give him life (vs. 13–14) instead of fearing the LORD and trusting the LORD for these things.
6. To bless Abram means to align with the desire of the woman in Genesis 3:16 and with the Promised One who is coming through Abram and Sarai while cursing Abram is to treat as insignificant the promise coming through him and be cursed with no resurrection to eternal life.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read aloud together Genesis 12 and track the language of the story including “walking, journeying, bless, curse.”
2. What new information does the reader learn from this scene and why would Israel need to know these things as the original audience?

Practical Application:

1. Reread Genesis 12. What is the meaning of Genesis 12:2–4. What are the correct definitions of “bless” and “curse” and why does defining these terms correctly matter?
2. List the things that the LORD told Abram in this scene and Abram’s response to what he has been told.
3. What does the reader learn about Abram through his actions in this scene? What responses are being contrasted and why did Israel need to know these things?

Closing Prayer:

Father, Thank You for Your Word. May we understand and live by the correct definitions of blessing that You have set forth in Your story and not be deceived to seek temporal blessings that do not lead to eternal life. Amen.