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GENESIS: BLESSING

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¹Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 12:1–3 (ESV)

REMEMBER: THE NATIONS HAVE NEEN DISINHERITED!

⁸When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. ⁹But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 (ESV)

He comes to Abraham with an offer—not an easy offer but a promising one. Abraham’s to leave his land, but God’s going to give him another land. Abraham’s to leave his family and his inheritance. God’s going to give him a big family and a remarkable inheritance. God’s going to use Abram to bring blessing on the entire world,¹

In Mesopotamia, where Abraham came from, people worshiped the gods who inhabited the temples in the town where they lived. Therefore, if you left your town to go to another town, you left those gods behind because you couldn’t be giving gifts to that temple. You couldn’t be supplying the needs of that god. You couldn’t be thinking in those terms. You’d be leaving that god behind, and where you settled, you theoretically would find another god. That tie was cut.

Likewise, in Mesopotamia, people tend to worship gods that are connected to their ancestors. And when Abram cuts the ties to his family, he cuts the ties to that ancestor worship as well. All of the clan deities, whether they were ancestors or not, [he] left behind when he left his family behind.²

We find that there’s blessing that comes to all the world as God reveals Himself to the world through Israel. And so they are a light to the nations. God’s law is given through Israel. God’s revelation of Himself is given in Israel’s history. God is revealing Himself through Abram and his family, and through that revelation all nations of the earth are being blessed.³

⁴So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan,

⁶Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

⁸From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD.

⁹And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

[Genesis 12:4–9 \(ESV\)](#)

Now, as he moves through all those places, he builds altars. It's interesting that it never tells us that he's offering sacrifices on these altars. We would say, "Well, what else would an altar be for?" Well, sometimes altars are simply to mark some land that has particular meaningful purpose, and Abraham might be just invoking God's presence in this land where God has brought him.⁴

¹⁰Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. ¹¹When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, ¹²and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. ¹³Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake."

¹⁴When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. ¹⁵And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. ¹⁶And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

¹⁷But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. ¹⁸So Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? ¹⁹Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go." ²⁰And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.

[Genesis 12:10–20 \(ESV\)](#)

⁸Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you shall inherit all the nations!

[Psalm 82:8 \(ESV\)](#)

¹⁸“For I know their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory,

¹⁹and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations.

[Isaiah 66:18–19 \(ESV\)](#)

¹Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, ³“Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”

⁴He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. ⁵Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, ⁶“As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

⁷I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. ⁸Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

¹⁰Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. ¹¹Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹²Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

[Psalm 2:1–12 \(ESV\)](#)

¹⁵Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

¹⁶And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God,

¹⁷saying, “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

¹⁸The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”

[Revelation 11:15–18 \(ESV\)](#)

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- ¹ Walton, J. H. (2016). [*OT302 Book Study: Genesis*](#). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- ² Walton, J. H. (2016). [*OT302 Book Study: Genesis*](#). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- ³ Walton, J. H. (2016). [*OT302 Book Study: Genesis*](#). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- ⁴ Walton, J. H. (2016). [*OT302 Book Study: Genesis*](#). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.