

“In You, Abram, All the Families of the Earth Will Be Blessed”

Small Group Follow-up Study for Genesis 12:1-7

RE-READ

[1] Now 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. [2] And 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. [3] I 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.”

[4] So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. [5] And 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, [6] Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. [7] Then 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.

RECAP

There are two Messianic notes sounded in this text:

First, there is this idea that “in Abram all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (v. 3).

As the Apostle Paul notes, in Galatians 3:8, “the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘In you shall all the nations be blessed.’” It’s no wonder, then, that the New Testament begins with “the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1), for it is through faith in Christ *alone* that men and women are made right with God. As Revelation 5 verses 9 and 10 say, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

All the families of the earth are blessed in Christ and Christ is the son of Abraham.

Second, God says to Abram, “To your offspring I will give this land” (v. 7).

Paul picks up on this language as well in Galatians saying, “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ referring to many, but referring to one, ‘And to your offspring,’ who is Christ” (Galatians 3:16). Here Paul speaks of promises (plural) being made to Abraham and to his offspring who is Christ. That means that, even though the offspring is only mentioned explicitly in verse 7, he is in view with each and every one of the promises made here, meaning that we can insert Christ’s name wherever we see the word “you,” again, because these promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring who is Christ. Let’s give it a try. God says,

- I will make of Christ a great nation (the church).
- I will bless Christ and I will make his name great so that he might be a blessing. Think Eph. 1:3-14.
- I will bless those who bless Christ and whoever dishonours Christ I will curse.
- And in Christ all the families of the earth shall be blessed (as we’ve talked about already).

RESPOND

1. What caught your attention from Sunday’s sermon? What are you still thinking about/mulling over? What questions did Sunday’s sermon raise that remain unanswered in your mind?
2. To whom were the promises of the Abrahamic covenant given? What were these promises? Given those named in the Abrahamic covenant, was it still in effect when the law was introduced 430 years later? How and why is this significant?
3. How do the details of God’s covenant making ceremony with Abram encourage you?
4. What does it mean to you for you too to be a child of Abraham by faith (cf. Galatians 3:7, 29)?
5. Consider, again, the blessings that are your in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3-14). What stands out to you in this list of blessings and why? What blessings could be added to this list that you experience in Abraham’s offspring?