

HELLO GOD, WHERE ARE YOU?

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Genesis 11:31-12:9

And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran. Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.

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Most, if not all here, have heard the gospel message. The gospel of Jesus Christ, that is, the good news of Jesus Christ. Hopefully, I hope and pray, all here have not only heard the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ, but that each one here has responded to the call to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as we have heard from what Jesus said and the Apostle John recorded in what is in the book of **John, chapter 3, verses 16 and 17:**

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." By faith we then believe on the Words of Jesus, that all who believe in Him will be saved. The same is said of what the Apostle Peter said in quoting the Prophet Joel, in **Acts 2:17-21**, "'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth

beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" That is where we can say as the Apostle Paul said in **Romans 10:9-10**, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

There are three things that are mentioned by preachers everywhere, near and far, here and over there. I didn't say every preacher. Some preachers are preaching a watered down gospel message that will tickle the ears of the hearers. One is that we are to 1. believe on the Lord Jesus, for dying on the cross for our sins, that he took our sins upon Himself, as He was God incarnate, that is, God in the flesh, that He was our righteousness that was needed to justify us before God, to make us right before God and then the shed blood of Jesus then cleanses us of all unrighteousness. **1 John 1:9** says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." That is, confessing to God our acknowledgment of our sins against God, whether we have been a murderer (maybe even just in our thoughts), a thief, a liar, an adulterer (once again, whether we have had relations with another person's husband or wife or whether we just fantasized about that), or any of the other 10 commandments of God or in what God said to the Israelites He still says to us today, "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them." (**Deuteronomy 30:19-20**) So we are to believe on Jesus, for dying on the cross for our sins and that just as He rose from the dead on the third day, we too will rise from the dead once we pass on from this present life.

The second thing that preachers will say, time and time again, is that God has a plan for you and for your life. What is generally quoted is **Jeremiah 29:11-13**, which was God speaking through the prophet Jeremiah to the Jews who were taken into captivity, "For I know the plans I have for you (or the thoughts that I think toward you), says the Lord, plans (or thoughts) of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart." Yes, God indeed is a "rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (**Hebrews 11:6**) Ah, now we are getting to to the core of Christianity, the key to our faith in

Jesus Christ. We are to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and then believe that God has eternal plans for us, for you, for me, for all who will put their faith in Him. He IS a rewarder to those who diligently seek Him. "You will seek me and find me when you search for Me with all your heart." Why is that? What does it mean in context to this message? "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and **those who dwell therein.**" (**Psalm 24:1**) We were created for HIS purpose and pleasure. **Colossians 1:16** says as much, "For by Him [Jesus] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." We are His! Yes, we can do whatever we want, but in believing on God and His promises, believing in His Word, which is Jesus, we are then to believe, that through Jesus, "you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." We are God's! We belong to Jesus! Therefore we are then choosing life, and we are to "love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for **He is your life.**"

God has most definitely called us to believe on the Lord Jesus for our sins. AND we are also to know that we were bought by the precious blood of Jesus, that we are His! That is where we are children of God. Just as Jesus said that one must be born-again. We are giving up our will for God's will. We are believing on Jesus, from the beginning of when we first believed to the end (of which there will be no end to those who put their trust in God and His promises). We all get sidetracked in our faith in God, in our Lord and Savior Jesus. "For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity." (**Proverbs 24:16**) Have you fallen? Two times, five times, seven times, twenty-seven times? What must one do? "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." When Jesus picks us up, dusts us off, or more appropriately cleanses us of all unrighteousness, what do you suppose He is then saying to us? Just as He did with the woman caught in adultery, just as He said to the blind man, "go and sin no more." "Come on, I have better things for you than anything that you can find in this world. You are mine. You are a child of the most high God. You were bought at a great price. Now let's go!"-That is what I believe Jesus is saying to us. But don't just take my word for it, let's look to His Word.

Now, let's get to our passage of Scripture for today in **Genesis 11:31-12:9**. The story begins saying that Terah, the patriarch of the family, took Abram and Sarai and Lot to the town of Haran, presumably named after Abram's now dead brother. The distance from Ur to Haran, the distance they traveled, was around 600 miles. Perhaps there was a moment where Abram said or thought, ok now what do I do. They had traveled all that way and now Terah his father was dead. Then God said to Abram, "Get out of your country, from your family and from

your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." We find that all families of the earth are blessed by the Seed of Abraham, in Jesus Christ our Lord-to all who will believe. We could very well equate that to our moment of coming to that call to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Where God makes known to us that He is calling us to believe on Jesus for dying on a cross for our sins. The next phase was for Abram to walk in what God was calling him to. So he, Sarai, and Lot packed their bags and away they went. "So they came to the land of Canaan. Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him." God didn't just call Abram to believe that He existed. He called him to follow Him, to obey Him, to be led to where God was calling him. By faith, Abram obeyed. Likewise with us, once we believe on the Lord Jesus, we are called to be children of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (**Romans 8:14**) That is the the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ (**Romans 8:9, 1 Peter 1:11**), that is the Holy Spirit that God gives to all who will obey Him (**Acts 5:32**) and are born-again. God reveals to us that "you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." (**1 Peter 2:9-10**) We are bought by the blood of Jesus, to become children of God, to be led by His Spirit to be His light to this dark and dying world (" **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.-Matthew 5:16**), to this generation, to those who are around us, and to those who God puts in our path.

Yet look at what comes next with Abram. "[H]e pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord." And then, cue the sound of crickets. "[T]here he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord." Where was the response from God? There doesn't seem to have been one. God already gave Abram the call and the promise. Then, just past our passage of Scripture we've read for today, there became a famine in the land and so Abram and company went to Egypt so as to not starve to death. There he gets into some difficulty with the Pharaoh who had taken Sarai to be his potential wife, since Abram said she was his sister (out of fear that they would kill him for his wife). But in all that Pharaoh ended up giving riches to Abram and sent him away. That wasn't the blessing God spoke of but God blessed him with riches anyways. From there Abram and

company went back to their old stomping grounds and it says once again, " And there Abram called on the name of the Lord." Perhaps our sound guy missed his cue. That is where we could hear again the sound of crickets. Abram called on the name of the Lord, but there is no recorded response from God.

You ever sometimes feel like your doing all the talking in your "relationship with God"? That is number three in those things that most preachers get around to telling God's people. 1. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, 2. God has great plans for you and your life, and then 3. God want's to have a relationship with you. After all, the price that Jesus paid in His suffering and dying on the cross for our sins not only grants eternal life to all who will believe but it also reconciles us to God so that we can have a "relationship with Him." Just as it says in **1 Corinthians 1:9**, "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." But Paul said later in 1 Corinthians, "I do not want to have fellowship with demons." Yes, they will come along from time to time, on their own or in other people, to try and get us away from the promises of God. "I rebuke you in the name of Jesus, go away demon." Of course we have to be careful in speaking that so that others don't think we are rebuking them as a demon as Jesus said in Peter's presence, "get thee behind me Satan." The apostle John spoke of the fellowship of the Father and the Son saying, " that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full." (**1 John 1:3-4**)

We are called to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, it is true that God has great plans for us (including being joint-heirs with Jesus and we will reign with Him), and that God wants to have fellowship with us. But He is God and we are not. He does things in His time and according to His perfect ways. Regardless of the situation and circumstances that comes our way we are to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (**Proverbs 3:5-6**) Sometimes we may hear from Him and many times we will not. Sometimes He speaks to us while reading His Word. Sometimes He ministers to us while fellowshiping with other brothers and sisters in Christ. Sometimes He just gives us that assurance in our Spirit that He is there, comforting us, guarding our hearts and minds, changing our hearts, renewing our minds. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." That's right. That IS the perfect will of God. Surrendering ourselves to the will of God. That

is not just for the great men or women of faith. But surrendering to the will of God will be leading one to be a great man or woman of faith. But to God be the glory! Amen? But Jesus is our "wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord." (**1 Corinthians 1:30-31**)

Abram certainly didn't have it all figured out when God called him out to go to the land of Canaan to where God said to him, "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Abram "believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness." We too are called to that same faith in the promises of God. We may not always hear from Him, we are not always going to understand what is going on, but we are called to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, believe that God has the perfect plan for our lives, and that He IS making us into the very image of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (**1 John 3:2**). Then also God wants us to continue to call on Him, depend on Him, trust in Him and to have fellowship with Him. Just because He chooses not to sit in a seat next to us in a physical form does not mean He is not there. God IS everywhere, do you know that? He makes it personal as He "has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee" (**2 Corinthians 1:22**) and His "Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." (**Romans 8:16**) He has given us the faith to believe on Him!

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses [including Abram], let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (**Hebrews 12:1-2**)

1. Believe on Jesus 2. God does have great plans for you 3. God indeed want to have a personal relationship with you

To all who will believe! Thank You Jesus!