

Genesis
Genesis 12:1-9 Stand in the Door

Jeff Reichanadter
October 12, 2025

Good morning! My name is Jeff Reichanadter. I am one of the pastors here. Pastor Dan Hamel is on vacation with his family, so I am charged with the blessing of preaching Genesis 12 today.

Two weeks ago, I was in Colorado Springs with some friends, one of whom is a former Air Force fighter pilot. He was able to get us a tour of the Air Force Academy. While we were there, I got to see our own Tucker Hutchinson, who is a cadet. When I asked him what he missed most, he said, “I really miss our church.”



We also got to go into the center where they train cadets to jump out of airplanes. When you walk into the training center you see the American flag, a huge parachute, and these iconic words behind it: “Stand in the Door.”



“Stand in the Door.” When the para jumpers head up in the plane, they have their gear on and they sit in the plane in order of when they will be jumping. When it’s your turn, the jump master will point at you and say, “Stand in the door!”

Then you come to the side of the plane. The door is wide open, and you stand in the door, ready to jump. At this point you can’t hear anything, so you stand and wait. Then the jump master places two fingers over your eyes. When he removes them, that’s your signal. You let go of the plane and jump into thin air. It’s a moment of courage. It’s a moment of faith.

Our text for today is Genesis 12. This was Abram’s “stand in the door” moment when God asked him to step out in faith.

Let’s open the Bible. This is God’s Word. This is light that shines in the darkness. This Word has resurrection power and it can change a lives!

In honor of God’s Word, would you please stand with me, if you are able, as I read the Scriptures.

The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you;

I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”
(Genesis 12:1-3)

Fundamental to God’s call on our lives are a leaving and a going.

- God called Israel to leave the land of Egypt and go to the land of milk & honey.
- Jesus called fishermen to leave their nets behind and follow him.
- Jesus called a tax collector to leave his collection booth and follow him.

This was God’s call on Abram: leave the land of your people and go to a land that I will show you.

To understand what is happening in this passage, I want to remind us where we have been so far in our study of Genesis.

God’s plan to welcome a family into relationship with him (Genesis 1-2).

God enjoyed friendship in the Garden with Adam and Eve and everything is good and right and beautiful, but God’s plan got hijacked.

Humanity’s problems caused by sin.

Genesis 3-11 could be summed up like this:

Eve takes the fruit.
Adam follows suit.
It results in a curse
And things get worse.
Cain sheds blood.
God sends a flood.
Friendship is fractured.
A tower gets manufactured.
Shalom is shattered.
The people get scattered.

Genesis 6:5 captured this reality with these sobering words: “Every intention of the thoughts of the heart of man was only evil all the time.”

Last week Gary Johnson taught on the Tower of Babel, where God scattered the nations all over the face of the earth because man was trying to make himself great (Genesis 11:9). God humbled the people and changed their languages, resulting in confusion. But out of that confusion, God offered a call to Abram.

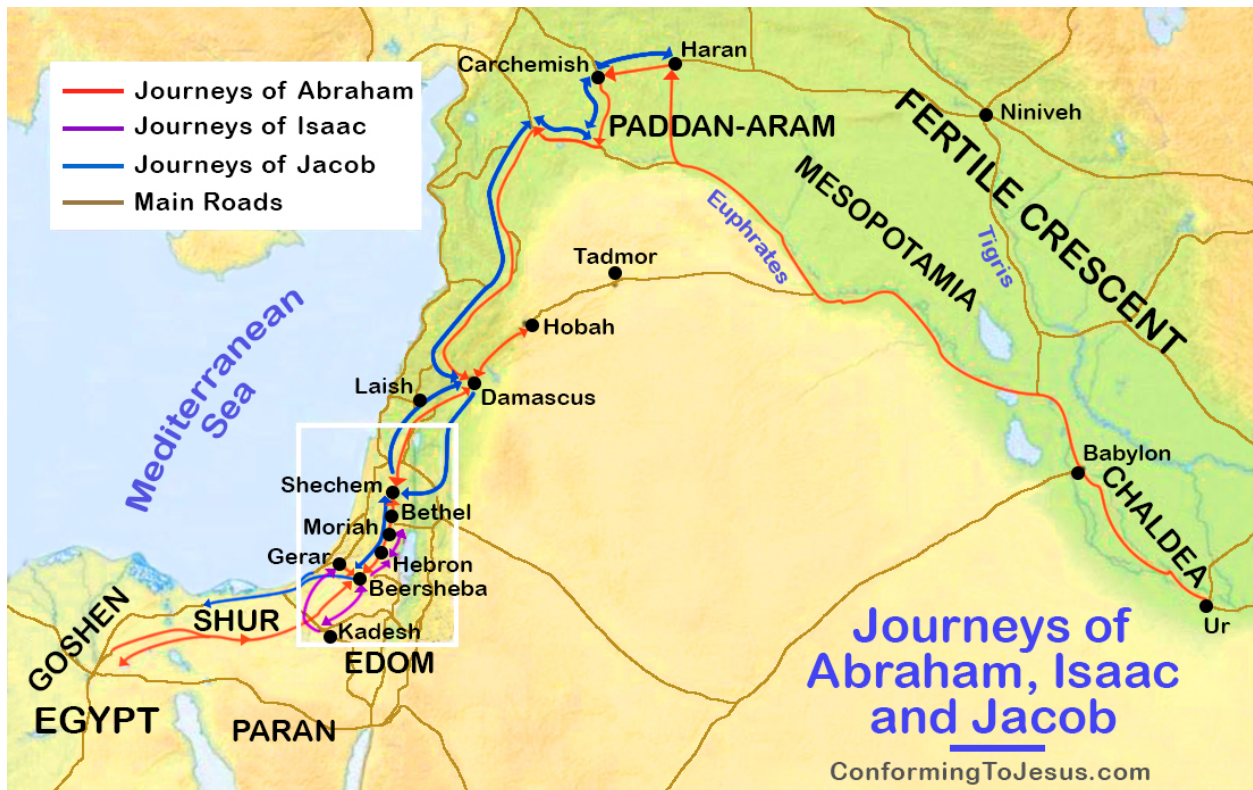
The first man, Adam, produced the problem, but this man, Abram, pursued the promise, and that promise, this covenant, would begin a massive shift on which the entire narrative of the Bible pivots. People had been living under the curse and now God begins making a way for people to live under the promise of blessing.

God's promise to set everything right again and renew the relationship that had been broken.

Humanity's problem incited by lack of trust is met by God's promise inspired by love. The relationship begins with Abram, who would be called "a friend of God" (James 2:23). This is the background for where we find ourselves in the book of Genesis this morning. This was Abram's stand in the door moment:

God called Abram to leave his homeland and go to a place God would show him.

Where was Abram and where was God going to take him? And why?



Abram grew up in a place called Ur. You can see this city on the bottom right hand corner of the map. This ancient city was in modern day Iraq, just north of the Persian Gulf. This had become a place filled with idolatry so God was moving Abram to a new land. You can see his journey by following the red line north to Haran and then all the way down into Egypt and eventually back up into Bethel, right in the center of the land that is modern-day Israel.

The pilgrimage for Abram was partly about getting Abram out of the wrong place and into the right place. It was more about Abram's formation into a man of God who would be used to shape a nation.

Sometimes we can get caught up thinking that if our circumstances would change, then everything would be better. But I can guarantee that Abram's life got harder, less convenient, and more risky

the further he got into his journey. It was fraught with unsafe people, famine, conflict, sadness, and waiting. But this was the raw material God was using to transform him.

Gwyn Thomas says, “The beauty is in the walking. We are betrayed by destinations.” It was on the walk, on the journey, that Abram became God’s friend.

The journey you are on today is not to ultimately get you to a better job or better health or a better house or a more secure 401K. The journey is designed to transform you into a person that God will use to bless the world.

Let’s see how this played out for Abram. “The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you’” (Genesis 12:1).

Why did God take Abram to a new land?

To restore what’s been wrong.

God promised to take Abram to a land He would show him. The land is significant because when God created Eden, He designed it as a garden where His presence would dwell among His people. Then, when Adam sinned, he was *driven out of the land*.

Because of the curse, things got worse and worse. After Babel, the nations were dispersed. But God’s design is not for division, but for devotion. Not for hostility, but harmony. Not for godlessness, but goodness. So from the chaos of the curse, God called Abram to enter a land where redemption would happen.

Have you ever been in a setting where evil seemed to pervade every fabric of the environment? Several years ago, our family lived in a neighborhood near the urban core of Indianapolis. It was not uncommon to hear gunshots and to see drug deals happening on the street. One summer the drug lords in the neighborhood were fighting back and forth, trying to establish dominance. The gunshots were getting more intense and closer to our house. Even children were being shot and killed. I did a funeral for a gang member who was a friend of our neighbor. A dear friend of ours was a homicide victim. People were afraid. The land, the neighborhood, was just a broken mess. It felt like we were living in a Genesis 3 world.

In this promise God made to Abram, the land was a picture that God would restore what had been wrong. He was going to redeem the place and return it to an environment of shalom.

To reconcile relationships with God and with others.

“‘I will make you into a great nation...’” (Genesis 12:2).

The greatest problems caused by sin were that it separated man from God and created hostility between one man and another, like in the neighborhood I just talked about. God’s promise to make Abram into a great nation was so that “... all the peoples on earth would be blessed through (*him*)” (Genesis 12:3).

At the time of the promise, Abram was 75 years old. Not only did he pack up his belongings and his people and his livestock to go to a land that God hadn't even told him about yet, but he believed the promise that even though he was 75 years old and his wife was barren he would have a child. In a world where relationships were fractured, God used Abram to begin a new kind of family. But it's not just a new kind of family; it is *the* family through which God would ultimately fulfill His promise.

The nation of Israel would become the people of God who would be a signpost to all the nations. Ultimately Jesus Christ came from the line of Abram, and Jesus' redemptive work is not only for the nation of Israel, but for all the world. "For God so loved the **world** that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Some of you are here today and you wonder, "Could God love me? I just don't feel like I fit the mold." God's compassion is for everyone. No matter your title, your past, what you've done or what's been done to you. God is in the reconciliation business.

It's so important to Jesus that His commission for all of us is to "Go..." (Matthew 28:19). There is that word: go. Remember, that's God's call to Abram to go to a new place and God's call on us to go and make disciples of **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

When you get baptized, you declare that you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and on that profession of faith your old life gets buried, never to rise again, and the new person is resurrected, as it were, out of the abyss and into the light. You become a member of a new family.

To redeem the curse.

In the Creation story in Genesis 1, the word "bless" is used four times.

- Genesis 1:22, "And God blessed the birds and the fish."
- Genesis 1:27, 28, "And God blessed the man and the woman."
- Genesis 2:3, "And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy."

But after this we see five specific curses in chapters 3 and 4:

1. The serpent's curse: The serpent is cursed to crawl on its belly and eat dust, and hostility is put between the serpent and the woman's offspring (Genesis 3:14).
2. The ground's curse: Because of the man's sin, the ground brings forth thorns and thistles, and the man must endure painful labor to bring about crops (Genesis 3:17).
3. Pain in childbirth for women: God tells the woman her childbearing will be filled with pain and she will bring forth children in sorrow (Genesis 3:16).
4. Hard labor for men: The man will have to work with pain and toil his whole life to eat from the ground (Genesis 3:17-19).
5. The curse on Cain: "Now you are under a curse...." The ground would no longer "give forth its strength and Cain would be a restless wanderer on the earth (Genesis 4:11).

In response to these curses, God had a vision to reverse this five-fold curse. Five times in Genesis 12:2-3 He promises blessing: "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your

name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2-3).

The blessings is not only for Abram and his family; it’s for all the earth. There is a principle here: Every time you experience the blessing of God it is so you can pass it on. You are blessed to be a blessing.

What does the word “bless” mean and how can I be a blessing? The word in Hebrew is *barak*, which means to bestow favor, to empower for the sake of flourishing and well-being.

Sometimes we bless through our actions. For instance, when someone in your life group has a baby and you show up with food, your gift is a blessing.

When we ask God to bless our food, we are asking for flourishing. It is literally a prayer of provision, when we wonder if there will be enough, and we ask God to bless and enlarge the food like He did with the bread and fish.

Sometimes we bless through our words. I never understood this until my wedding day when Adrienne’s Uncle Johnny stood in front of us and blessed us. This blessing named who we were and then projected a future hope for our family.

Something we see in the early history of Israel is fathers speaking blessing into their children. Parents, one of the greatest gifts you can offer your children is to speak blessing into them. To speak a blessing is to name a character quality in someone that has already been displayed and to project a future hope for how that quality will impact the kingdom. This is huge and there is a lot of power in it.

The question is, would Abram do it? Would he step out in faith?

This was Abram’s “stand in the door” moment. There he was, flight gear on, standing in the door, holding on for dear life. The jump master put his two fingers over Abram’s eyes and what does Abram do? “So Abram left, as the Lord had told him” (Genesis 12:4).

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Hebrews 11:8-10)

In the summer of 2022, I had a “stand in the door” moment. I was the pastor of family ministries at a church near Butler University. One day my wife Adrienne asked, “What do you suppose God might have in store for you in your calling during the decade of your 50s?” At the time I was *only* 49 and I think I suggested that I was still young at heart and that she should not be in a hurry for me to hit the mid-century mark. Seeing as she had some skin in the game, she persisted and eventually I began to explore with her in prayer and through several discernment conversations what God might be up to. Eventually, God did make it clear that there was a new chapter unfolding.

The words God spoke to Abram echoed in my imagination: “Leave your people ... and go to the land I *will* show you” (Genesis 12:1).

In January of 2023 I shared with my close friend and mentor, who also happened to be my supervisor, that it appeared God was moving us. I submitted a letter of resignation and discernment to our elders. It was a moment filled with a mixture of sadness and anticipation. When we shared with our kids that our time at Common Ground was coming to a close at the end of the school year and we didn't know quite what was around the corner, our 13-year-old son Hudson wisely said, "Don't you think it would be a good idea for you to know where you're going before you resign from your job?" The thought had crossed my mind! But God called us to stand in the door.

On our final Sunday at Common Ground, we had a couple of ideas of what God might be up to, but no certainty. God snapped his fingers and we jumped. The next day God did show us what He had in store. I received a call from Dan Hamel, offering me a job to work at The Creek. For our family, being part of this family has been a huge blessing. God has been so good to us and I will never regret making the leap of faith.

I wonder how many of you are facing your own "stand in the door" moment right now? Is God calling you to leave something behind so you can step into a new vision that He has for you? Is there a risk God is calling you to take? Perhaps, like Abram, some of you are being called to leave behind an old way of life that has been filled with cursing and exchange that for renewed relationship with a God who is committed to setting things right in your heart. You may be called to serve somewhere in our church or in our community. For some of you, the leap of faith was just to come to church today. God wants to help you find what's been lost, redeem what's been stolen, and restore whatever has been broken. You took that first step to come here today. Well done! That is a leap of faith. It's inspiring and it can change the trajectory of your life, your future, and your family.

It takes courage to step out in faith. In fact, Dallas Willard says that faith is often stepping out onto a limb that has not yet grown into place.

Being faithful is not only about what we know or about staying free from sin. To live by faith is to take risks, to step out even when it doesn't make sense. I don't know about you, but every time God calls me to stand in the door, I'm flooded with reservation.

After we visited the Academy, I wrote these words in my journal:

Stand in the Door

*Do I have what it takes?
Am I ready?
What if it all goes wrong?
I feel the shakes.
Can I be steady?
Will the chute hold strong?
I'd love to put on the gear,
Climb into the plane,
Stand in the door,
Jump in the air.
Face my fear,
Feel the pain,
Encounter more,*

Take the dare.

*Am I getting too old to take a risk? My latest leap still has me wonder if the chute will open.
And I am left with so many questions:*

*Did God tell me to jump? Did I jump at the wrong time? How did I seem to get so tangled up
in this mess? Where is the landing field? We are moving too fast. I can't find the rip chord. Oh,
there it is.*

Take a breath...

Say your prayers.

Enjoy the Ride.

Into the air.

Nowhere to hide.

And now what? Do I play it safe? Can I step out in faith again?

How will this flight,

This failure,

Define me?

Refine me?

Design me

To be more like Him?

Without faith it is impossible to please God.

I don't just want to appease God,

Or tease God.

So get me down on my knees God

And fill me with faith

To rise from the floor

I'm ready for more,

So I'll stand in the door.

It's time ... to soar.

How many of you today, as you listen to this message, find something stirring in your heart and it seems that God might be calling you to "stand in the door"? Perhaps God is stirring in you to step out in faith in some specific ways. If you're sensing some sort of movement in this direction, as a symbol of your growing faith, would you please stand so I can pray for you?

The fulfillment of the promise was that through Abram all the world would be blessed. You see, Abram would have a son named Isaac. Isaac would give birth to Jacob, who would have a son named Judah and through the line of Judah would come King David through whom would ultimately come the Messiah, King Jesus, who would be the one to ultimately redeem the world. When we take communion, we celebrate the promise fulfilled through the family of Abram.