

Threats to the Promise
Genesis 12—25: Abraham Narratives

Threat to the Promise		Threat Overcome	Resultant Blessing
<i>Abandoned Land</i>	Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. (12:10)	¹⁷ But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. ¹⁸ So Pharaoh called Abram and said ... "here is your wife; take her, and go." (12:17-19)	And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels. (12:16)
<i>Foreign Harem</i>	he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance ... ¹³ Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me" ... ¹⁵ And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. (12:11-15)		
<i>Gave Away Land</i>	⁵ And Lot ... also had flocks and herds and tents, ⁶ so that the land could not support both ... ⁸ Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me ... Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." (13:5-9)	¹⁰ And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the LORD ... ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east ... ¹² Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. (13:10-12)	¹⁴ The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look ... ¹⁵ for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. ¹⁶ I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth" (13:14-17)
<i>Alternative Heir</i>	² But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." (15:2-3)	And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." (15:4)	⁵ And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be" ... ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates" (15:5, 18-21)

<i>Alternative Heir</i>	And Sarai said to Abram, “Behold now, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. (16:2) ¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” ¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!” (17:18)	¹⁹ God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac ... whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year.” (17:19, 21)	And God said to him, ⁴“Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations ... and kings shall come from you ... ⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God ... ¹⁰ This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. (17:1-14)
<i>Foreign Harem</i>	¹ From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar. ² And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. (20:1-2)	³ But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife ... it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her.” (20:3-7)	¹⁴ Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male servants and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and returned Sarah his wife to him. (20:14-16)
<i>Sacrifice</i>	¹ After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ² He said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” (22:1-2)	¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him ... “Do not lay your hand on the boy ... for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. (22:10-13)	“because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” (22:16-18)