# Cursed to Bless

# God Promises to Bless People Again

Episode: 3

Passage: Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 15:1-7

Characters: - Host - Sam - Pastor - Ben - Pete - Ruth - Kate

Authors: - Martin Olmos - Richard Utber

Language: en-AU

### Intro

**ATMOS**: Theme music 5 sec, Host background music below host’s volume

**HOST**: Hello, this is Mary, your host. Welcome to Cursed to Bless, the show that asks a big question: Why is life so hard, when God is so good? We hear God blesses us, but how? Money, health, happiness? The answers are found in *Jesus*, in who he is and what he’s done. We see this when we read the Bible as *one big story*, with Jesus as the hero from start to finish.

**HOST**: In this episode, we learn that God promises Abraham that he would bring blessing to the world through him.

**HOST**: Remember to pause, read the passage, and answer the questions when you hear the sound. Our first question is: Have you ever had to trust a stranger? How did you feel? What happened? Discuss now.

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: Thank you.

### Bible Study

**FX**: Flasback Outro

**ATMOS**: Host background

**HOST**: Listeners, let’s listen to the friends’ Bible study. They were all sitting at Pastor’s house…

**FX**: Flashback Intro.

**ATMOS**: House living room

**PASTOR**: Welcome everyone.

**PETE**: Thank you Pastor. Have you got any biscuits?

**PASTOR**: Yes, don’t worry.

**BEN**: Pete, you’re always hungry!

**PASTOR**: Here they are, please help yourself.

**PETE**: Oh, I love these! (Munching sounds)

**PASTOR**: Great. Let’s pray first: “Dear Father please help us listen carefully to your Word now, and learn together. In Jesus name…”

**ALL**: Amen.

**PASTOR**: Let’s review our memory verse from last time: Romans chapter 6, verse 23. I will read it out loud. When I pause, say the word that comes next, without looking at your Bible:

**FX**: In each ‘…’ gap below, Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence

**PASTOR**: (Leave a 2 second pause where you see ‘…’ and say the answer word with emphasis.)
“For the … *wages* of sin is … *death*, but the … *gift* of God is eternal … *life* in … *Christ Jesus* our Lord.”

**TRANSLATOR**: Replace this with text from the local Bible translation. Pick the same significant words for the gaps, as much as possible.

**PASTOR**: Good. Today, we’re reading Genesis chapter 12, verses 1-3 and Genesis chapter 15, verses 1-7. Let’s read them together now.

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**PASTOR**: Thank you. Pete, what do you think that’s about?

**PETE**: (Eating with full mouth)
Ahh, God is making some kind of deal with Abraham – right?

**PASTOR**: Yes. God makes some wonderful promises. So who can tell me the three promises God makes to Abraham?

**BEN**: Uhm… I can see a land, many children – enough for a whole nation! – and blessing.

**RUTH**: It’s so good to hear about blesing, after all the curses in the garden.

**PASTOR**: Yes Ruth, it’s a wonderful sign that God wants to remove those terrible curses on his creation.

**SAM**: And God says he’ll bless everyone!

**PASTOR**: Yes. God says he will bless everyone in the world, *through Abraham*. What do you think of that Sam?

**SAM**: Ah… I don’t feel very blessed right now – I have plenty of problems, pastor.

**PETE**: Well, Abraham must have been very good to impress God. Maybe he was very rich?

**PASTOR**: Well, he did have servants and animals, but that’s not going to impress God – he made everything Abraham had! The Bible just says God talked to Abraham, told him to go, and promised him some great blessings.

**PETE**: What does God want from Abraham to get this blessing? What’s the deal?

**BEN**: It looks like God is just promising gifts to be kind.

**PETE**: Ah, I know. God wants to have more followers. He wants Abraham because he’s rich, and he would be good to have on your side. Right Sam?

**SAM**: Well, I wouldn’t mind having Abraham on my side…

**PASTOR**: Think about it - who made Abraham?

**BEN**: God!

**PASTOR**: Anyway, Sarah and Abraham are old and still without a child. It’s the other way around – God promises to make Abraham into a great nation! God doesn’t need Abraham. Abraham needs God.

**SAM**: So what does God want Abraham to do then?

**RUTH**: I think just to trust God…

**SAM**: Does Abraham trust God?

**PASTOR**: Well, he obeyed God – he left his own land, and went to Canaan. That shows Abraham listened to God’s promise, and trusted Him. He took him at his word.

**KATE**: I wish Adam and Eve had done that!

**PASTOR**: Ah! Very good Kate! That’s how we fell into a curse – remember? We didn’t trust God’s words, we thought we knew better what was good, and disobeyed him. We lost his blessing.

**RUTH**: And now God is promising blessing – again! As a gift! So God’s big rescue plan from our curse is beginning with Abraham!

**PETE**: But how did Abraham know God would keep his promise? I don’t trust someone’s words just like that – I’m not stupid.

**PASTOR**: Trusting someone doesn’t make you stupid – as long as the person is trustworthy. Abraham knew God was trustworthy, so he trusted God’s promise. That’s faith.

**PETE**: But what if Satan stops the blessings?

**PASTOR**: You know, someone comes much later who defeated Satan. He brings God’s blessings to all of us. We just need to trust him…

**PETE**: (Sceptical)
Ah… I’m not sure about that.

**RUTH**: I’m so thankful that God promises to bless the world despite our sinfulness. I sometimes feel I have to earn God’s blessing, but I don’t need to.

### Questions to Pastor and Application

**PASTOR**: Thank you everyone. What questions would you like to talk about?

**SAM:** Uhm, pastor, you said that there was someone who defeated Satan. Do you mean Jesus?

**PASTOR:** Yes! I will keep saying it, because it is one of the most important things to remember about the Bible: Jesus is the hero from start to finish. Remember last week we saw in Genesis chapter 3 verse 15 that a child of Eve would crush Satan? Jesus is the one who did that! He defeated Satan and rescues us.

**SAM:** But how?

**PASTOR**: Well… Jesus lived God’s way and never gave in to Satan’s temptations. Then he died on the cross for *us*, protecting *us* from Satan’s evil schemes. Then he rose to life again, showing that he has defeated death and Satan forever. And lastly, Jesus will return someday to bring this evil world to an end and to finally crush Satan completely.

**PETE**: Why should we trust God to give us these blessings he promises, when the world is so messed up?

**PASTOR**: Because God *always* does what he says he will do! He said in Genesis chapter three verse 15 that he would crush Satan, and in Genesis chapter 12 verse three that he would bless the world. He did that when he sent His only Son, Jesus, to die for us. It cost him the greatest price. A God who kept his promise at such a cost *must* be totally trustworthy.

**BEN**: Pastor, you always tell us the Bible is one big story. How does Genesis chapter 12 fit in with the rest of the Bible?

**PASTOR**: It fits in because at the very end of the Bible, in the book of Revelation we see God bringing millions and millions of people together to live forever in his land, heaven. And he blesses them with his presence and with perfect peace and happiness. God’s promises to Abraham are finally and wonderfully fulfilled there and then!

**BEN**: That sounds wonderful! Thank you.

**PASTOR**: Well, I see all the biscuits are gone. It’s time to finish. Today we’ve learned that God has made promises to bless this world, to make it good again. He told this to Abraham, who trusted what God said. The promised blessing finally came, two thousand years after Abraham, in Jesus. So we have to trust what God says about Jesus.

**BEN**: Hmm, yes.

**PASTOR**: OK, let’s talk about our own lives now. Life can be difficult. Can you think of a time you trusted God’s promise to bless us, despite our sinfulness?

**PETE**: I prayed that God would give me a better job so I could make more money. I repeated “God will give me a better job” three times per day. I even imagined what I would do with my first pay. But it still hasn’t happened, I don’t think it’s working.

**BEN**: I trusted God when I stopped trying to earn his blessing. I used to volunteer for lots of jobs at church, thinking that would please him. But then I realised it was *Jesus’* work that pleased God, not mine. I think that’s when I really became a Christian.

**KATE**: I still feel like I’m under God’s curse, even though my parents and grandparents are good christians. Maybe I’m not trusting him.

**PASTOR**: Thank you Kate. I hope you can keep coming so we can discuss it together. Remember that God made promises to *rescue and bless us*, not just destroy us when we rebel. He is a wonderfully good and gracious God.

**RUTH**: I once sensed that one of my friends needed me to pray for her. I felt anxious, but I reminded myself that God wanted to bless her. It took some courage, but I asked her what I could pray for her. She was very thankful and we had a great talk.

**PASTOR**: Thank you everyone. Let’s read our memory verse on the whiteboard: John chapter 10, verse 10b. Let’s read it together now.

**ALL**: “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

**PASTOR**: Let’s memorise that for our next lesson. Let me pray. Good Father, it’s so exciting to see the start of your great rescue mission! Thank you for your great promise to bless the world. Please help us follow Abraham’s example, and listen, trust, and obey your word. Thank you for Jesus, who brings us these promises fully and finally. In Jesus’ name…

**ALL**: Amen.

**PASTOR**: Thank you everyone, see you next time.

**ALL**: Goodbye pastor.

### Interactive Questions

**FX**: Flashback outro

**HOST**: Listeners, let’s answer some questions now. Say your answer aloud.

**HOST**: What are the three things that God promises Abraham? I will list a few words. Say ‘yes’ if it’s one of God’s promises to Abraham, say ‘no’ if it isn’t:
Land [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] Yes.
Money [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] No.
Children [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] Yes.
Power [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] No.
Blessing [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] Yes.

**HOST**: God promised to create a *people* through Abraham, give them a *land* and *bless* them. God promised he would bless *all peoples* of the world through *Abraham*.

**HOST**: How does God promise to bless everyone. Is it *through a great vision*, *through Abraham*, or *through a miraculous rain*?

**FX**: Response prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: Through Abraham. In Genesis chapter 12 verse 3, God says to Abraham “all peoples on earth will be blessed through you”.

**HOST**: How do we know Abraham trusted God’s promises? Do we know because *he left for the promised land*, or because *he became wealthy*?

**FX**: Response prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: Because he left for the promised land. Abraham’s obedience showed that he trusted God’s promises.

**HOST**: What did Abraham have to do to earn God’s promises? *Nothing*, they are a *gift*, or did he buy them with *sacrifices*?

**FX**: Response prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: Nothing. Abraham didn’t have to earn God’s promises, they were a gift from God.

**HOST**: Which descendant of Abraham defeated Satan and gives us all God’s blessings? Was it *Jesus*, *Isaac* or *David*?

**FX**: Response prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: Jesus. Ephesians chapter one says that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Jesus Christ.

**HOST**: Discuss this question: How do God’s promises to Abraham come true fully in Jesus?

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence

### Outro

**FX**: Flashback outro

**HOST**: Listeners, now we’ve heard about Sam’s day, listen to what he prayed before going to sleep…

**ATMOS**: Soft prayer background effect (e.g. chimes) fade in

**SAM**: Dear God, You promise so much blessing to us, but my life is hard. I’m not sure I’m one of the people you’ve promised to bless - I feel like I missed out. What do I have to do to get your blessing? Please help me understand your blessing - and help me trust your words. Amen. ::: {custom-style=“Instruction”} **ATMOS**: Prayer background fade out :::

**HOST**: Thank you for completing this lesson. We learnt that God promises Abraham to bring blessing to the world through him. Will you join me for our next lesson? We will learn that God creates his own new people, Israel, by rescuing them. Please read Exodus, chapter 19, verses one to six, and chapter 20, verses one to three, before then. Now you can discuss how this lesson matters in your life: Can you think of a time you trusted God’s promise to bless us, despite our sinfulness? Goodbye.

**FX**: Theme music fade out.