

# CHAPTER 12

The pedigree and family of Abram we had an account of in the foregoing chapter; here the Holy Ghost enters upon his story, and henceforward Abram and his seed are almost the only subject of the sacred history. In this chapter we have,

- I. God's call of Abram to the land of Canaan (v. 1-3).
- II. Abram's obedience to this call (v. 4, 5).
- III. His welcome to the land of Canaan (v. 6-9).
- IV. His journey to Egypt, with an account of what happened to him there. Abram's flight and fault (v. 10-13). Sarai's danger and deliverance (v. 14-20).

## ~~1212~~ GENESIS 12:1-3

### THE CALL OF ABRAM

We have here the call by which Abram was removed out of the land of his nativity into the land of promise, which was designed both to try his faith and obedience and also to separate him and set him apart for God, and for special services and favours which were further designed. The circumstances of this call we may be somewhat helped to the knowledge of from Stephen's speech, ~~4102~~ Acts 7:2, where we are told,

1. That the God of glory appeared to him to give him this call, appeared in such displays of his glory as left Abram no room to doubt the divine authority of this call. God spoke to him afterwards in divers manners; but this first time, when the correspondence was to be settled, he appeared to him as *the God of glory*, and spoke to him.
2. That this call was given him in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran; therefore we rightly read it, *The Lord. had said unto Abram*, namely, in Ur of the Chaldees; and, in obedience to this call, as Stephen further relates the story (~~4103~~ Acts 7:4), *he came out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran, or Haran, about five years, and thence, when his father was dead, by a fresh command, pursuant to the former,*

God removed him into the land of Canaan. some think that Haran was in Chaldea, and so was still a part of Abram's country, or that Abram, having staid there five years, began to call it his country, and to take root there, till God let him know this was not the place he was intended for. Note: If God loves us, and has mercy in store for us, he will not suffer us to take up our rest any where short of Canaan, but will graciously repeat his calls, till the good work begun be performed, and our souls repose in God only. In the call itself we have a precept and a promise.

**I.** A trying precept: *Get thee out of thy country*, v. 1. Now,

**1.** By this precept he was tried whether he loved his native soil and dearest friends, and whether he could willingly leave all, to go along with God. His country had become idolatrous, his kindred and his father's house were a constant temptation to him, and he could not continue with them without danger of being infected by them; therefore *Get thee out, Ik-Ik — Vade tibi, Get thee gone*, with all speed, *escape for thy life, look not behind thee*, <sup><1917></sup>Genesis 19:17. Note, Those that are in a sinful state are concerned to make all possible haste out of it. *Get out for thyself* (so some read it), that is, for thy own good. Note, Those who leave their sins, and turn to God, will themselves be unspeakable gainers by the change, <sup><1992></sup>Proverbs 9:12. This command which God gave to Abram is much the same with the gospel call by which all the spiritual seed of faithful Abram are brought into covenant with God. For,

**(1.)** Natural affection must give way to divine grace. Our country is dear to us, our kindred dearer, and our father's house dearest of all; and yet they must all be hated (<sup><1945></sup>Luke 14:26), that is, we must love them less than Christ, hate them in comparison with him, and, whenever any of these come in competition with him, they must be postponed, and the preference given to the will and honour of the Lord Jesus.

**(2.)** Sin, and all the occasions of it, must be forsaken, and particularly bad company; we must abandon all the idols of iniquity which have been set up in our hearts, and get out of the way of temptation, plucking out even a right eye that leads us to sin (<sup><1929></sup>Matthew 5:29), willingly parting with that which is dearest to us, when we cannot keep it without hazard of our integrity. Those that resolve to keep the commandments of God must quit the society of evil doers, <sup><1915></sup>Psalms 119:115; <sup><1924></sup>Acts 2:40.

**(3.)** The world, and all our enjoyments in it, must be looked upon with a holy indifference and contempt; we must no longer look upon it as our country, or home, but as our inn, and must accordingly sit loose to it and live above it, get out of it in affection.

**2.** By this precept he was tried whether he could trust God further than he saw him; for he must leave his own country, to go to a *land that God would show him*. He does not say, “It is a land that I will give thee,” but merely, “a land that I will show thee.” Nor does he tell him what land it was, nor what kind of land; but he must follow God with an implicit faith, and take God’s word for it, in the general, though he had no particular securities given him that he should be no loser by leaving his country, to follow God. Note, Those that will deal with God must deal upon trust; we must quit the things that are seen for things that are not seen, and submit to the sufferings of this present time in hopes of a glory that is yet to be revealed (~~GEN~~ Romans 8:18); for *it doth not yet appear what we shall be* (~~GEN~~ 1 John 3:2), any more than it did to Abram, when God called him to a land he would show him, so teaching him to live in a continual dependence upon his direction, and with his eye ever towards him.

**II.** Here is an encouraging promise, nay, it is a complication of promises, many, and exceedingly great and precious. Note, All God’s precepts are attended with promises to the obedient. When he makes himself known also as a rewarder: if we obey the command, God will not fail to perform the promise. Here are six promises: —

**1.** *I will make of thee a great nation.* When God took him from his own people, he promised to make him the head of another; he cut him off from being the branch of a wild olive, to make him the root of a good olive. This promise was,

**(1.)** A great relief to Abram’s burden; for he had now no child. Note, God knows how to suit his favours to the wants and necessities of his children. He that has a plaster for every sore will provide one for that first which is most painful.

**(2.)** A great trial to Abram’s faith; for his wife had been long barren, so that, if he believe, it must be against hope, and his faith must build purely upon that power which *can out of stones raise up children unto Abraham*, and make them a great nation. Note,

[1.] God makes nations: by him they are *born at once* (<sup>2768</sup>Isaiah 66:8), and he speaks to build and plant them, <sup>2489</sup>Jeremiah 18:9. And,

[2.] If a nation be made great in wealth and power, it is God that makes it great.

[3.] God can raise great nations out of dry ground, and can make *a little one to be a thousand*.

**2.** *I will bless thee*, either particularly with the blessing of fruitfulness and increase, as he had blessed Adam and Noah, or, in general, “*I will bless thee* with all manner of blessings, both of the upper and the nether springs. Leave thy father's house, and I will give thee a father's blessing, better than that of thy progenitors.” Note, Obedient believers will be sure to inherit the blessing.

**3.** *I will make thy name great*. By deserting his country, he lost his name there. “Care not for that,” says God, “but trust me, and I will make thee a greater name than ever thou couldst have had there.” Having no child, he feared he should have no name; but God will make him a great nation, and so make him a great name. Note,

(1.) God is the fountain of honour, and from him promotion comes, <sup>908</sup>1 Samuel 2:8.

(2.) The name of obedient believers shall certainly be celebrated and made great. The best report is that which the elders obtained by faith, <sup>810</sup>Hebrews 11:2.

**4.** *Thou shalt be a blessing*; that is,

(1.) “Thy happiness shall be a sample of happiness, so that those who would bless their friends shall only pray that God would make them like Abram;” as <sup>891</sup>Ruth 4:11. Note, God's dealings with obedient believers are so kind and gracious that we need not desire for ourselves or our friends to be any better dealt with: to have God for our friend is blessedness enough.

(2.) “Thy life shall be a blessing to the places where thou shalt sojourn.” Note, Good men are the blessings of their country, and it is their unspeakable honour and happiness to be made so.

**5.** *I will bless those that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee*. This made it a kind of a league, offensive and defensive, between God and

Abram. Abram heartily espoused God's cause, and here God promises to interest himself in his.

(1.) He promises to be a friend to his friends, to take kindnesses shown to him as done to himself, and to recompense them accordingly. God will take care that none be losers, in the long run, by any service done for his people; even a cup of cold water shall be rewarded.

(2.) He promises to appear against his enemies. There were those that hated and cursed even Abram himself; but, while their causeless curses could not hurt Abram, God's righteous curse would certainly overtake and ruin them, <sup><020></sup>Numbers 24:9. This is a good reason why we should bless those that curse us, because it is enough that God *will curse them*, <sup><083></sup>Psalm 38:13-15.

6. *In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* This was the promise that crowned all the rest; for it points at the Messiah, in whom *all the promises are yea and amen*. Note,

(1.) Jesus Christ is the great blessing of the world, the greatest that ever the world was blessed with. He is a family blessing, by him salvation is brought to the house (<sup><019></sup>Luke 19:9); when we reckon up our family blessings, let us put Christ in the *imprimis* — *the first place*, as the blessing of blessings. But how are all the families of the earth blessed in Christ, when so many are strangers to him? *Answer*,

[1.] All that are blessed are blessed in him, <sup><042></sup>Acts 4:12

[2.] All that believe, of what family soever they shall be, shall be blessed in him.

[3.] Some of all the families of the earth are blessed in him.

[4.] There are some blessings which all the families of the earth are blessed with in Christ; for the gospel salvation is a *common salvation*, <sup><013></sup>Jude 1:3.

(2.) It is a great honour to be related to Christ; this made Abram's name great, that the Messiah was to descend from his loins, much more than that he should be the father of many nations. It was Abram's honour to be his father by nature; it will be ours to be his brethren by grace, <sup><020></sup>Matthew 12:50.

## GENESIS 12:4-5

### ARRIVAL OF ABRAM IN CANAAN

Here is,

**I.** Abraham's removal out of his country, out of Ur first and afterwards out of Haran, in compliance with the call of God: *So Abram departed*; he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but did as he was bidden, not conferring with flesh and blood, Galatians 1:15, 16. His obedience was speedy and without delay, submissive and without dispute; for he *went out, not knowing whither he went* (Hebrews 11:8), but knowing whom he followed and under whose direction he went. Thus God *called him to his foot*, Isaiah 41:2.

**II.** His age when he removed: he was *seventy-five years old*, an age when he should rather have had rest and settlement; but, if God will have him to begin the world again now in his old age, he will submit. Here is an instance of an old convert.

**III.** The company and cargo that he took with him.

**1.** He took his wife, and his nephew Lot, with him; not by force and against their wills, but by persuasion. Sarai, his wife, would be sure to go with him; God had joined them together, and nothing should put them asunder. If Abram leave all, to follow God, Sarai will leave all, to follow Abram, though neither of them knew whither. And it was a mercy to Abram to have such a companion in his travels, a help meet for him. Note, It is very comfortable when husband and wife agree to go together in the way to heaven. Lot also, his kinsman, was influenced by Abram's good example, who was perhaps his guardian after the death of his father, and he was willing to go along with him too. Note, Those that go to Canaan need not go alone, for, though few find the strait gate, blessed be God, some do; and it is our wisdom to go with those with whom God is (Zechariah 8:23), wherever they go.

**2.** They took all their effects with them — *all their substance* and movable goods, *that they had gathered*. For,

(1.) With themselves they would give up their all, to be at God's disposal, would keep back no part of the price, but venture all in one bottom, knowing it was a good bottom.

(2.) They would furnish themselves with that which was requisite, both for the service of God and the supply of their family, in the country whither they were going. To have thrown away his substance, because God had promised to bless him, would have been to tempt God, not to trust him.

(3.) They would not be under any temptation to return; therefore they leave not a hoof behind, lest that should make them *mindful of the country from which they came out*.

3. They took with them the *souls that they had gotten*, that is,

(1.) The servants they had bought, which were part of their substance, but are called *souls*, to remind masters that their poor servants have souls, precious souls, which they ought to take care of and provide food convenient for.

(2.) The proselytes they had made, and persuaded to attend the worship of the true God, and to go with them to Canaan: the souls which (as one of the rabbin expresses it) they had *gathered under the wings of the divine Majesty*. Note, Those who serve and follow God themselves should do all they can to bring others to serve and follow him too. These souls they are said to have *gained*. We must reckon ourselves true gainers if we can but win souls to Christ.

**IV.** Here is their happy arrival at their journey's end: *They went forth to go into the land of Canaan*; so they did before (~~CHIT~~ Genesis 11:31), and then took up short, but now they held on their way, and, by the good hand of their God upon them, to the land of Canaan they came, where by a fresh revelation they were told that this was the land God promised to show them. They were not discouraged by the difficulties they met with in their way, nor diverted by the delights they met with, but *pressed forward*.  
Note,

1. Those that set out for heaven must persevere to the end, still reaching forth to those things that are before.

2. That which we undertake in obedience to God's command, and a humble attendance upon his providence, will certainly succeed, and end with comfort at last.

## GENESIS 12:6-9

### ABRAM'S DEVOTION

One would have expected that Abram having had such an extraordinary call to Canaan some great event should have followed upon his arrival there, that he would have been introduced with all possible marks of honour and respect, and that the kings of Canaan should immediately have surrendered their crowns to him, and done him homage. But no; he comes not with observation, little notice is taken of him, for still God will have him to live by faith, and to look upon Canaan, even when he was in it, as a land of promise; therefore observe here,

I. How little comfort he had in the land he came to; for,

1. He had it not to himself: *The Canaanite was then in the land.* He found the country peopled and possessed by Canaanites, who were likely to be but bad neighbours and worse landlords; and, for aught that appears, he could not have ground to pitch his tent on but by their permission. Thus the accursed Canaanites seemed to be in better circumstances than blessed Abram. Note, The children of this world have commonly more of it than God's children.

2. He had not a settlement in it. He *passed through the land*, v. 6. He *removed to a mountain*, v. 8. He *journeyed, going on still*, v. 9. Observe here,

(1.) Sometimes it is the lot of good men to be unsettled, and obliged often to remove their habitation. Holy David had his wanderings, his flittings, <sup>4568</sup>Psalm 56:8.

(2.) Our removes in this world are often into various conditions. Abram sojourned, first in a plain (v. 6), then in a mountain, v. 8. God has set the one over-against the other.



**(3.)** All good people must look upon themselves as strangers and sojourners in this world, and by faith sit loose to it as a strange country. So Abram did, <sup><3118></sup>Hebrews 11:8-14.

**(4.)** While we are here in this present state, we must be journeying, and going on still from strength to strength, as having not yet attained.

**II.** How much comfort he had in the God he followed; when he could have little satisfaction in converse with the Canaanites whom he found there, he had abundance of pleasure in communion with that God who brought him thither, and did not leave him. Communion with God is kept up by the word and by prayer, and by these, according to the methods of that dispensation, Abram's communion with God was kept up in the land of his pilgrimage.

**1.** God appeared to Abram, probably in a vision, and spoke to him good words and comfortable words: *Unto thy seed will I give this land.* Note,

**(1.)** No place nor condition of life can shut us out from the comfort of God's gracious visits. Abram is a sojourner, unsettled among Canaanites; and yet here also he meets with him that lives and sees him. Enemies may part us and our tents, us and our altars, but not us and our God. Nay,

**(2.)** With respect to those that faithfully follow God in a way of duty, though he lead them from their friends, he will himself make up that loss by his gracious appearances to them.

**(3.)** God's promises are sure and satisfying to all those who conscientiously observe and obey his precepts; and those who, in compliance with God's call, leave or lose any thing that is dear to them, shall be sure of something else abundantly better in lieu of it. Abram had left the *land of his nativity*: "Well," says God, "I will give thee this land," <sup><419></sup>Matthew 19:29.

**(4.)** God reveals himself and his favours to his people by degrees; before he had promised to *show* him this land, now to *give* it to him: as grace is growing, so is comfort.

**(5.)** It is comfortable to have land of God's giving, not by providence only, but by promise.

**(6.)** Mercies to the children are mercies to the parents. "I will give it, not to thee, but to thy seed;" it is a grant in reversion to his seed, which yet, it

should seem, Abram understood also as a grant to himself of a better land in reversion, of which this was a type; for he looked for a heavenly country, <sup><8116></sup>Hebrews 11:16.

**2.** Abram attended on God in his instituted ordinances. He *built an altar unto the Lord who appeared to him, and called on the name of the Lord*, v. 7, 8. Now consider this,

**(1.)** As done upon a special occasion. When God appeared to him, then and there he built an altar, with an eye to the God who appeared to him. Thus he returned God's visit, and kept up his correspondence with heaven, as one that resolved it should not fail on his side; thus he acknowledged, with thankfulness, God's kindness to him in making him that gracious visit and promise; and thus he testified his confidence in and dependence upon the word which God had spoken. Note, An active believer can heartily bless God for a promise the performance of which he does not yet see, and build an altar to the honour of God who appears to him, though he does not yet appear for him.

**(2.)** As his constant practice, whithersoever he removed. As soon as Abram had got to Canaan, though he was but a stranger and sojourner there, yet he set up, and kept up, the worship of God in his family; and wherever he had a tent God had an altar, and that an altar sanctified by prayer. For he not only minded the ceremonial part of religion, the offering of sacrifice, but made conscience of the natural duty of seeking to his God, and calling on his name, that spiritual sacrifice with which God is well pleased. He preached concerning the name of the Lord, that is, he instructed his family and neighbours in the knowledge of the true God and his holy religion. The *souls he had gotten in Haran*, being discipled, must be further taught. Note, Those that would approve themselves the children of faithful Abram, and would inherit the blessing of Abram, must make conscience of keeping up the solemn worship of God, particularly in their families, according to the example of Abram. The way of family worship is a good old way, is no novel invention, but the ancient usage of all the saints. Abram was very rich and had a numerous family, was now unsettled and in the midst of enemies, and yet, wherever he pitched his tent, he built an altar. Wherever we go, let us not fail to take our religion along with us.

## GENESIS 12:10-13

### ABRAM'S REMOVAL INTO EGYPT

Here is,

**I.** A famine in the land of Canaan, *a grievous famine*. That fruitful land was turned into barrenness, not only to punish the iniquity of the Canaanites who dwelt therein, but to exercise the faith of Abram who sojourned therein; and a very sore trial it was; it tried what he would think,

**1.** Of God that brought him thither, whether he would not be ready to say with his murmuring seed that he was brought forth to be *killed with hunger*, <sup><12></sup>Exodus 16:3. Nothing short of a strong faith could keep up god thoughts of God under such a providence.

**2.** Of the land of promise, whether he would think the grant of it worth the accepting, and a valuable consideration for the relinquishing of his own country, when, for aught that now appeared, it was a land that *ate up the inhabitants*. Now he was tried whether he could preserve an unshaken confidence that the God who brought him to Canaan would maintain him there, and whether he could rejoice in him as the God of his salvation when the fig-tree did not blossom, <sup><37></sup>Habakkuk 3:17, 18. Note,

**(1.)** Strong faith is commonly exercised with divers temptations, that it may be *found to praise, and honour, and glory*, <sup><61></sup>1 Peter 1:6, 7.

**(2.)** It pleases God sometimes to try those with great afflictions who are but young beginners in religion.

**(3.)** It is possible for a man to be in the way of duty, and in the way to happiness, and yet meet with great troubles and disappointments.

**II.** Abram's removal into Egypt, upon occasion of this famine. See how wisely God provides that there should be plenty in one place when there was scarcity in another, that, as members of the great body, we may not say to one another, *I have no need of you*. God's providence took care there should be a supply in Egypt, and Abram's prudence made use of the opportunity; for we tempt God, and do not trust him, if, in the time of distress, we use not the means he has graciously provided for our preservation: We must not expect needless miracles. But that which is

especially observable here, to the praise of Abram, is that he did not offer to return, upon this occasion, to the country from which he came out, nor so much as towards it. The land of his nativity lay north-east from Canaan; and therefore, when he must, for a time, quit Canaan, he chooses to go to Egypt, which lay south-west, the contrary way, that he might not so much as seem to look back. See <sup><8115></sup>Hebrews 11:15, 16. Further observe, When he went down into Egypt, it was to sojourn there, not to dwell there. Note,

**1.** Though Providence, for a time, may cast us into bad places, yet we ought to tarry there no longer than needs must; we may *sojourn* where we may not *settle*.

**2.** A good man, while he is on this side heaven, wherever he is, is but a sojourner.

**III.** A great fault which Abram was guilty of, in denying his wife, and pretending that she was his sister. The scripture is impartial in relating the misdeeds of the most celebrated saints, which are recorded, not for our imitation, but for our admonition, that he *who thinks he stands may take heed lest he fall*.

**1.** His fault was dissembling his relation to Sarai, equivocating concerning it, and teaching his wife, and probably all his attendants, to do so too. What he said was, in a sense, true (<sup><1012></sup>Genesis 20:12), but with a purpose to deceive; he so concealed a further truth as in effect to deny it, and to expose thereby both his wife and the Egyptians to sin.

**2.** That which was at the bottom of it was a jealous timorous fancy he had that some of the Egyptians would be so charmed with the beauty of Sarai (Egypt producing few such beauties) that, if they should know he was her husband, they would find some way or other to take him off, that they might marry her. He presumes they would rather be guilty of murder than adultery, such a heinous crime was it then accounted and such a sacred regard was paid to the marriage bond; hence he infers, without any good reason, *They will kill me*. Note, The fear of man brings a snare, and many are driven to sin by the dread of death, <sup><2014></sup>Luke 12:4, 5. The grace Abram was most eminent for was faith; and yet he thus fell through unbelief and distrust of the divine Providence, even *after God had appeared to him twice*. Alas! what will become of the willows, when the cedars are thus shaken?

## GENESIS 12:14-20

### SARAI'S DANGER AND DELIVERANCE

Here is,

**I.** The danger Sarai was in of having her chastity violated by the king of Egypt: and without doubt the peril of sin is the greatest peril we can be in. *Pharaoh's princes* (his pimps rather) *saw her, and*, observing what a comely woman she was, they *commended her before Pharaoh*, not for that which was really her praise — her virtue and modesty, her faith and piety (these were no excellencies in their eyes), but for her beauty, which they thought too good for the embraces of a subject. They recommended her to the king, and she was presently taken into Pharaoh's house, as Esther into the seraglio of Ahasuerus (<sup>ESTHER</sup> Esther 2:8), in order to her being taken into his bed. Now we must not look upon Sarai as standing fair for preferment, but as entering into temptation; and the occasions of it were her own beauty (which is a snare to many) and Abram's equivocation, which is a sin that commonly is an inlet to much sin. While Sarai was in this danger, Abram fared the better for her sake. Pharaoh gave him sheep, oxen, etc. (v. 16), to gain his consent, that he might the more readily prevail with her whom he supposed to be his sister. We cannot think that Abram expected this when he came down into Egypt, much less that he had an eye to it when he denied his wife; but God brought good out of evil. And thus the wealth of the sinner proves, in some way or other, to be laid up for the just.

**II.** The deliverance of Sarai from this danger. For if God did not deliver us, many a time, by prerogative, out of those straits and distresses which we bring ourselves into by our own sin and folly, and which therefore we could not expect any deliverance from by promise, we should soon be ruined, nay, we should have been ruined long before this. He deals not with us according to our deserts.

**1.** God chastised Pharaoh, and so prevented the progress of his sin. Note, Those are happy chastisements that hinder us in a sinful way, and effectually bring us to our duty, and particularly to the duty of restoring that which we have wrongfully taken and detained. Observe, Not Pharaoh only, but his house, was plagued, probably those princes especially that

had commended Sarai to Pharaoh. Note, Partners in sin are justly made partners in the punishment. Those that serve others' lusts must expect to share in their plagues. We are not told particularly what these plagues were; but doubtless there was something in the plagues themselves, or some explication added to them, sufficient to convince them that it was for Sarai's sake that they were thus plagued.

2. Pharaoh reprov'd Abram, and then dismissed him with respect.

(1.) The reproof was calm, but very just: *What is this that thou hast done?* What an improper thing! How unbecoming a wise and good man! Note, If those that profess religion do that which is unfair and disingenuous, especially if they say that which borders upon a lie, they must expect to hear of it, and have reason to thank those that will tell them of it. We find a prophet of the Lord justly reprov'd and upbraided by a heathen ship-master, <sup>316</sup>Jonah 1:6. Pharaoh reasons with him: *Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?* intimating that, if he had known this, he would not have taken her into his house. Note, It is a fault too common among good people to entertain suspicions of others beyond what there is cause for. We have often found more of virtue, honour, and conscience, in some people than we thought they possessed; and it ought to be a pleasure to us to be thus disappointed, as Abram was here, who found Pharaoh to be a better man than he expected. Charity teaches us to hope the best.

(2.) The dismissal was kind and very generous. He restored him his wife without offering any injury to her honour: *Behold thy wife, take her*, v. 19. Note, Those that would prevent sin must remove the temptation, or get out of the way of it. He also sent him away in peace, and was so far from any design to kill him, as he apprehended, that he took particular care of him. Note, We often perplex and ensnare ourselves with fears which soon appear to have been altogether groundless. We often fear where no fear is. We fear the *fury of the oppressor, as though he were ready to destroy*, when really there is no danger, <sup>2513</sup>Isaiah 51:13. It would have been more for Abram's credit and comfort to have told the truth at first; for, after all, *honesty is the best policy*. Nay, it is said (v. 20), *Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him*, that is,

[1.] He charged them not to injure him in any thing. Note, It is not enough for those in authority to do no hurt themselves, but they must restrain their servants, and those about them, from doing hurt. Or,

[2.] He appointed them, when Abram was disposed to return home after the famine, to conduct him safely out of the country, as his convoy. Probably he was alarmed by the plagues (v. 17), and inferred from them that Abram was a particular favourite of Heaven, and therefore, through fear of their return, took special care he should receive no injury in his country. Note, God has often raised up friends for his people, by making men know that it is at their peril if they hurt them. It is a dangerous thing to offend Christ's little ones. ~~4186~~ Matthew 18:6. To this passage, among others, the Psalmist refers, ~~4185~~ Psalm 105:13-15, *He reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying Touch not my anointed.* Perhaps if Pharaoh had not sent him away, he would have been tempted to stay in Egypt and to forget the land of promise. Note, Sometimes God makes use of the enemies of his people to convince them, and remind them, that this world is not their rest, but that they must think of departing.

*Lastly,* Observe a resemblance between this deliverance of Abram out of Egypt and the deliverance of his seed thence: 430 years after Abram went into Egypt on occasion of a famine they went thither on occasion of a famine also; he was fetched out with great plagues on Pharaoh, so were they; as Abram was dismissed by Pharaoh, and enriched with the spoil of the Egyptians, so were they. For God's care of his people is the same *yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*