

Study of Abraham – Genesis Chapter 12

Background:

Hebrews 11:8-10

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.

Abraham is listed in this Faith Hall of Fame (HoF). Qualification for entering the HoF is exercising great faith.

Why is his life relevant to us today as believers?

- Called the Father of many nations. A forerunner of faith. Romans 4:1-3
 - Justified by faith and was credited with righteousness
 - He becomes an example for us. Romans 4:5
 - We are heirs of his promise by faith, we are to walk in that example of faith – Romans 4:11-24.
 - Abraham is an example; so if I do what he did, I get what he got....blessed!
- Why I studied Abraham more diligently and all other scriptural examples. Because there is no new thing under the sun. Eccl 1:9

Heb 11:8 – key observations

- God called him to go out. Why? Purpose for leaving?
 - The place that he was currently must not have been the place where God wanted him to be.
 - There was another place; better place where God wanted him to be. It was a place of promise, of greater blessings, God's best was in this place.
 - Abraham has to move in order to get there. Couldn't get there staying where he was.
- An inheritance promised after.....means something had to happen before.
 - God had to tell him to move from one place to another place....needed a Word.
 - Faith in the word, allowed him to not just hear the Word but to obey it.
 - Had to obey or move out; apply the word.
 - Knowing exactly where you are going should not keep you from faith and obedience in the word. Move on what you do know. If you wait to know all the details, you'll be stuck right there and never move.
 - Part of a faith walk is obeying and exercising faith in what you do know. If you knew everything....it wouldn't be called faith any more. Heb 11:1
 - He knew what he needed to know....the end.

- Application example. I was looking for a job and initially only got out of town offers. I didn't want to move or travel but I needed a job so I started considering some of these out of town offers. At the same time, I had a ministry opportunity in town. It didn't make sense that God would present this unique ministry opportunity (serve as the chaplain for a prison) only to have me leave it behind for an out of town job assignment. So I kept praying and asked myself....what do I obsoletely know? I knew that the ministry opportunity came from God. So I stood on that knowledge and turned down every out of town offer and by faith stood on what I knew assuming God would bless me with a job that would not interfere with my ministry assignment.
 - Results – in a few weeks I got a job in town where I could work from home...with a promotion and a pay raise.

- Abraham sojourned or hung around or visited the place before he actually took full ownership of the land.
 - He was enjoying the benefits of the promise before he had full ownership.
 - He didn't settle for that; experienced but was waiting for something more complete and better to happen.
 - Application – through faith and obedience some things God has promised you in the future, you should be enjoying a taste of now.
 - This world, condition is only temporary so don't settle for the world
 - Something better has been promised
 - Shared the promise and experience with his family/sons/heirs who had the same promise by faith.
 - Notice something here:
 - They had to be connected to him in order to experience it and be heirs.
 - They had to be where it was at that time; therefore, what they experienced and enjoyed.....we ought to be enjoying as well as we wait for the complete fulfillment of the promise.
 - What's temporary now, you'll own outright after a while.
 - Focus was not on this life but on something better. He knew the end of the story.
 - How can we use that today as Christians...the fact that he looked for a city?
 - Knew that this life wasn't the end of the story. Living for the city became a priority...by faith!

Analysis of Abraham

Genesis 11:30-32

Father was Terah. Started out living in idolatry, outside the will of God. Moved from Ur to Haran, about half way to Canaan but never made it all the way. The intent was to make it there.

Sarah was barren there. Dad dies.

- Just because you intend to get there, doesn't mean you'll make it.
- Application – Red Zone Christians

- Progress was incomplete
- Not good to stop, you might just settle there.

Genesis 12

Observations:

1. Now (means after dad dies). Something has to die in our life before we are ready and willing to move.
 - a. God's Word says get out of where you are now, leave some things behind. Must be some things that God knows we can't or shouldn't take with us. Why?
 - b. He doesn't know where the land is. When will God **show** him? When he leaves that place. Application – you know all you need to know for now in order to move.
 - c. No greater revelation coming until you act on the Word He gives you today.
 - d. There is a place beyond where he was now that God desired for him to be. Must be or he wouldn't have told him to move or get out.
 - e. We need to move or we'll stay right there and make that place home.
 - f. Application. (Exodus, Joseph, Ruth, woman with the issue, us)
2. After he moves, after he gets there, the promise of greatness. Great nation, bigger blessings, great name, be in a position to be a blessing or bless others. (Contrary to Gen 11:4).
 - a. Promises increase. Not always about us. Purpose of the move was also critical to others.
 - b. You can know the Promised Land is out there but never will see it unless you move.
 - c. God's plan for Abram included him impacting others.
 - d. Sarah can't produce, but when he moves, God says he'll take care of that/what's missing.
 - e. Great name, if he leaves no one will really know his name; but when he leaves everyone will know his name through the blessings of God. God promises to make his name greater or increase it.
 - i. Abram – original name = exalted father
3. Protection promised; what you do for others, God will make happen for you. Sowing and reaping principle.
 - a. In him or through Abram, we're all blessed. How? By exercising the faith he had in the promises of God.
 - b. This is why we should be studying these scriptures.
4. Leaves. Why is it easy for him to go now? Second calling, some stuff holding him back is gone, promises of success. He was failing in the place he was at now.
 - a. Key....he obeyed, by faith. Key themes in the story....faith, obedience, trust in God.
 - b. 75
 - c. Took Lot with him. Good and bad. Permissive will perhaps?
5. Took everything with him. All his substance. Application? No reason to come back to that place they just left (Exodus example). Major problem for believers is turning back from having faith.
 - a. Sarai – princess
 - b. Lot – covering, veil
 - c. Make it there to Canaan.

6. Passes through it and sees Canaanites in the land first. Someone else enjoying it.
7. What He let him see...showed him, God says he can have. Application Example – this is how I got saved. I saw someone else with peace from God. I wanted what this person had and God said I could have it. I wanted to enjoy the peace and relationship this other person was enjoying so I made a move in the right direction.
 - a. Built an altar, place of worship in that place...right there.
 - b. Application? After you see it praise Him right there, even before you possess it.
 - i. Act like it's on the way (Jericho).
 - ii. Becomes a reminder of the place where He promised/appeared to him.
 - iii. Bethel = house of God; Hai = heap of ruins
8. Moved, temporary move, built an altar (worship and prayed)
 - a. Prayed, worships, encounters God and then moves. Application?
 - b. Does something before he moves. Where he puts is tent, includes an altar.
9. Still moving south.
10. Moves to go down.....not up into Egypt. You can be doing His will and still face a famine or tough time. Why? (faith test)
 - a. Why? A famine or tough time caused him to move.
 - b. Journey has started; here's what you can expect...tests, famine...just part of the process.
 - c. Intent was just to sojourn....never intending to stay there long.
11. As he got closer to Egypt he started to doubt. Looked at his situation.
12. His logic, they will take me out but keep you alive.
 - a. Some things missing here.
 - i. Don't see where he ever spoke to God about all this before making this decision.
 - ii. Worship is missing.
 - iii. Reference to standing on promises is missing.
 - iv. Justifies plan to his wife.
 - v. Spiritually, should he have been worried? Application?
13. Develops a plan to protect himself. Problem with his plan?
 - a. Never consults God.
 - b. Self-centered.
 - c. Developed out of fear, doubt leading to lack of faith.
 - d. Note: he was doing so well before this. Application? Part of the test.
 - i. Test reveals something inside.
 - ii. Can have faith one minute and weak the next (Peter).
 - iii. Key is being consistent. Continuing faith.
14. Gets in trouble in Egypt.
 - a. Fell through unbelief and distrust of the divine providence even after God appeared to him twice.
15. Pharaoh sees her and takes her.
 - a. Takes away what belongs to Abram.
 - b. Not good since she's critical part of the plan/promise.
16. Got paid for it. But what he got in the short term wasn't worth what he was potentially giving up. Short term benefit.
 - a. Application. We do the same thing at times – don't give up a brighter future for a right now benefit outside of God's plan.

17. Where have we heard this before? God sends plagues on Pharaoh because he has something in his control that belongs to God.
 - a. His decision and lack of faith exposes both Pharaoh and his wife to sin.
 - b. Puts someone he loves at risk.
 - c. Great man of God but willing to put his wife at risk to save his skin.
 - d. Everybody has some hang ups or things that ain't quite right that we are hiding and covering up from others. God tests us so these things are exposed.
 - i. We never would have known that Abram had issues until this happened because on the outside he was praising. Problems have purpose.
18. God has to get involved to get him out of this mess. That's good news.
 - a. Only God can get you out of some stuff. God had to get involved or the plan would have been messed up.
 - b. Whatever you need that is critical to the success for God's plan in your life that may be missing; He will make sure you have it.
 - c. Sin is exposed; lie is revealed to Pharaoh....the world. Ask any exposed minister
19. Asks him a question Why? Notice.....he never answers.
 - a. There is a purpose to questions. Enemy and God has a purpose behind questions.
 - b. What is the question God is asking you tonight about your faith/walk?
 - c. What's the answer?
 - d. Tells him to behold his wife. Behold....look carefully on her.
20. Grace and mercy. Sent away safely, returned what was taken that he needed. Got blessed even though he screwed up.
 - a. Got to keep the stuff. Application.
 - b. Delivered by grace and mercy of God. He didn't deserve it.
 - c. Didn't someone else come out of Egypt with more stuff than when they had entered?
 - d. I wonder why God is allowing this to happen like this? Revelation of plan. Nothing new under the sun.