



Applied Faith Men's Bible Study

South Hills Baptist Church

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## Abraham, Trusting God

### Lesson #3

Genesis 12:10-20

Have you ever felt great about your relationship with God and suddenly the bottom drops out? You've committed your life to the Lord, to follow Him fully, and then everything seemed to go south.

Welcome to the Christian Club. It's not a new experience. Just when you think everything is in order spiritually, you face a crisis, in reality, a test of faith. It happened to Abraham shortly after he obeyed God fully and crossed the burning desert into Canaan. It happened after God appeared to him and affirmed the promise that He would give Abraham this new land (Gen. 12:7). It happened after Abraham responded in worship by building an altar to the Lord (12:7-8). The crisis came quickly and abruptly. We simply read: "Now there was a famine in the land" (12:10).

As far as we know, Abraham had never faced a famine before, not in Ur not in Haran, which were both prosperous and productive areas. Imagine what must have gone through his mind. “I came all the way out here for this? Lord, I obeyed you fully. I thought this was to be a land of blessings!” Think about the complaining he must have encountered from those closest to him, his father and wife.

Most of us tend to act quickly under pressure, especially when our human needs are not being met and doubly so when we’re under pressure from others. Abraham faced both problems.

Abraham took quick action. We read: “So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land” (12:10). Abraham literally went south, well, to be exact, southwest. When the bottom dropped out, he wasted no time doing something about it.

When Abraham arrived in Egypt, he faced another crisis. Egyptian royalty were on the lookout for beautiful women. If the women were married and their husbands resisted, warriors would simply murder the husband and take the wife captive to serve in their masters’ harems. Since Sarah was a very desirable woman, even at age sixty-five, Abraham was worried and rightly so.

As we have seen, there are several reasons why Abraham did what he did. But his actions were not right. He made a serious mistake. Had he consulted the Lord, he may have been the first man God used to convey a powerful message to the Egyptians, that God exists and desires to reach out to all men. Rather than fallen these people in judgment, which God eventually did, He might have extended His grace through Abraham.

You see, if Abraham had allowed God to prepare the way for him in Egypt, his strategy would have been God-centered rather than man-

centered. However, Abraham was operating under his own steam and had been ever since he headed for Egypt to avoid the famine in Canaan. But God in His grace, as He so often does throughout Old Testament history, stepped in to bail Abraham out of his predicament.

Abraham seems to have learned his lesson well. When he returned to the place where he had first built an altar, he once again “called on the name of the Lord” (13:3-4). This, of course, is what he should have done in the first place.

Again, let’s remember that this man was just a beginner in his walk with God. Calling on the name of the Lord and worshipping Him was a totally new experience for this man who had for most of his life bowed to idols of wood and stone. In those initial years, both Abraham and Sarah made some serious mistakes. But what is so encouraging, God patiently helped this couple to learn from those mistakes.

*Principle 1:* We will face periodic crises in our Christian lives, even when we are following God fully.

*Principle 2:* When we face crises, we will always be tempted to go to extremes in solving our problems.

*Principle 3:* God’s faithfulness and patience continues in our lives no matter what our decisions.

*Principle 4:* We must follow God’s divine order in determining His will for our lives.

- a. Consult God
- b. Consult other mature Christians
- c. Observe circumstances carefully
- d. Be cautious about feelings

Abraham faced two crises' in these verses. The first was a famine. His first reaction was to head to Egypt. Had he consulted God (another way of saying "trusted God") about this problem it would have been written in scripture. Since it was not, we can safely assume that Abraham made this decision on his own. That decision led to his second crisis, his wife Sarah being taken captive to live in Pharaoh's harem. His reaction to this was not to pray and ask God's guidance, it was for him and Sarah to lie to their captives and claim Sarah was only his sister. By not consulting God, they faced a tougher road than was possibly necessary. When we have a problem or situation and do not consult God, we face a more difficult road. Give God a chance to express and show His will and way in your life.

### **Questions**

To increase our Biblical knowledge, we must learn about the men that we intend to model ourselves after. The following are questions for you to find in your Bible or elsewhere concerning Abram/Abraham.

#### **From Genesis 12:10-20**

1. En route to the Negev, what happened to alter Abram's destination?
2. Where did they travel to escape the famine?
3. Why did Abram lie to the Egyptians?
4. What was the lie that Abram and Sarai told the Egyptians?
5. What did Pharaoh give Abram after taking Sarai?
6. What did Sarai get taken into?
7. How did God punish Pharaoh for taking Sarai?

### **From Genesis 12:1-5**

8. Who was Abram's (Abraham) father?
9. Who were Abram's brothers?
10. Who was Abram's wife?
11. Who was Abram's nephew?
12. Where did Abram live originally?
13. What kingdom or empire was this city in?
14. What was Abram's profession?
15. At what approximate time frame did Abram live?
16. What family members did Abram leave with?
17. How old was Abram when he left with his family?
18. What city did they travel to first?

### **From Genesis 12:5-9**

19. Who did Abram/Abraham take with him?
20. Where was their ultimate destination?
21. Name the four cities/regions that Abram and his family travelled to?
22. What people inhabited the land when Abram arrived in Shechem?
23. Who were these people a descendant of?
24. What did Abram build upon arriving at Shechem and in the hills of Bethel?
25. Why did he build these?
26. Where is the area known as the Negev?

(For Lesson #2, Obeying God)

### Application/Activity

Jesus told us that the two greatest commands are these, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Matthew 22:37-39

This week’s application is two-fold: first, each day start your morning off thanking God for being such a wonderful creator. Thank Him for allowing you to wake up and experience another day. Second, actively look for the people that God places in your life, seemingly random, and say thank you or hello. Use their name if you know it. When you checkout at the store, tell the cashier, using his or her name, thank you and for them to have a blessed day. Say it in a way that is genuine and shows that you are a Christ follower. Do this as many times as possible. Greet your co-worker with a good morning. Show God’s love in your life by showing others His joy in your response to them.

From Men of Character, Abraham, Holding Fast to the Will of God

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