

Destiny and Dreamers: Abraham Pt 2

Choices that Challenge Us! Genesis 12,13

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Sept. 14th AM

Pr 29:18 *"Where there is no vision (hāzôn: dream) the people perish" (pāra': let go, go/turn back)*

God has a dream for all of us! (Jer. 29:11!-13) We find and focus on God's Dreams when:

"we walk" (Peripateō: conduct ourselves) by faith, (pistis: reliance, trust) not by sight" 2 Cor 5:7

(2 Cor 4:18; Heb. 11:27) But our "invisible" faith should have a visible impact! Jms 2:17,18; Mt 5:16

Faith is Personal, but it shouldn't be Private!

God calls us to be light to a world darkened with doubt and deceit. (2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:12-14)

God calls us to "walk by faith" and gives us examples to help us. (1 Cor 10:11; Is. 51:1,2)

Reflection: Reflection: Last week we discussed:

1. Abram's Dream! Gen. 11:29 Abram means *"lofty Father"* 30 *"But Sarai was barren..."*
God had a much bigger dream for Abram! 12:2-3 *"...in thee shall all families be blessed!"*

2. God's Direction Gen. 12:1,2; Acts 7:2,3 God promised to fulfil that dream,
but gave him a 3-fold command to leave: Familiar: *"Get thee out of thy country."* 12:1
Family/Friends *"and from thy kindred"* Father: *"and from thy father's house."*

3. Abram's "Distractions" (Disobedience) In spite of God's direction, his family came along with him, sabotaging his obedience, and delaying him for 5 more years. (Acts 7:3,4)

4. Abram's Disappointment (Gen. 12:10) Even when he finally obeyed,
he was immediately confronted with: Discouragement Gen. 12:10 and Doubt.

Direction:

Let's look at the decisions Abram made in his disappointment.

1. Abram's decisions were distressed. (Painful)

A. Distressed decisions are often dangerous (Painful) Gen 12:10

"the famine was grievous" (kābēd': heavy, severe, stupid!)

1) Distress/fear dulls our perception. (Amygdala overrides the Frontal Lobe)

2) Distress/Fear shifts our focus. (Phil. 4:6-8)

a) He was initially focused on Family. (Leading/leaving him in "halfway" Haran)

b) He rededicated himself and focused on Faith, Building altars to worship God:

(1) At Sichem (6) (Where God reconfirmed His promise! Vs 7)

(2) At Bethel "The House of God" (vs 8)

c) As the famine continued, he focus shifted from Faith to Fear.

(1) Physically Drifting from Bethel (house of God) toward Egypt. (House of the pagan gods)

(2) Spiritually drifting from trusting God, To trusting his own instincts. (Pr 3:5,6)

(3) Instead of praying (Jms 1:3-5; 3:15-17) he chose the popular (reasonable) path. 12:10

"Abram went down into Egypt to Sojourn (gûr: to turn aside, shrink in fear) there."

2 Tim. 1:7 *"God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power...love...sound mind"*

2. Abram's His decisions were "Directional" (*Progressive*)

A. Notice the Subtle Inertia!

That which is set in motion tends to stay in motion until acted upon by an equal/opposite force.

12:9-10 *"Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south."*

1) What was he looking for?

10 *"And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there".*

B. Notice the Selfish Interests. 11-13 ... Say thou art my sister: that it may be well with me .."

3. His decisions seemed Reasonable (*Practical*) at the time,

But even reasonable choices have repercussions.

A. Sarai was taken by Pharaoh. Gen. 12:14-15

- 1) Pharaoh rewarded Abram with cattle and male/female servants. Vs 16
- 2) God punished Pharaoh and protected Sarai!
- 3) Pharaoh sent them away. 18-20

B. Lot became "infected" (taken) by Egypt. Gen 13

- 1) He got used to the "big life"! (Big LIE!)
- 2) Their prosperity produced:
 - a) Contentment. Vs 7 *"There was strife between the herdsmen..."*
 - b) Separation vs 9 *"...they separated..."*
 - c) Seduction: Vs 12 *"...Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom."*
 - d) Infection! 13 *"But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners ... exceedingly"*
 - e) Deterioration. 2 Pt 2:7-8 *"Lot, vexed (kataponeō: worn down) ...his righteous soul..."*

C. Sarai became "taken" with impatience, pressuring Abram to take

Hagar! (Gen 16) producing 1) Rebellion vs 4 2) Resentment vs 5 3) Bitterness. Vs 6

Conclusion:

Our decisions have lasting ramifications. That's why God warns us to:

Pr 4:23 *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."*

26 *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." (kûn: prepared)*

Abram failed to diligently "keep his heart" Because he failed to honestly

"ponder the path of his feet".

Rather than allowing God to *"Establish his ways"*, He followed the slow drift toward Egypt, sliding into self preservation, deception and compromise; Endangering his wife, life, family, and ultimately God's Dream for him (and us!) Thankfully he didn't stay in Egypt! Gen. 13:1-3

"And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him..."

And he went ...even to Bethel, the place where his tent had been at the beginning.. Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD."

Application: (1 Cor 10:11)

What do we do when we're faced with life's distresses, disappointments, or disasters?

- Do/will we go back to the altar at "Bethel" allowing God to "cleanse/keep our hearts" and "establish our paths" ? (Pr 3:5,6)
- Do/will we "lean unto our own understanding", making "reasonable" choices for our own protection and self preservation? 1 Cor 10:12