

GENESIS 12

BLIND FAITH

PASTOR BO ENDED LAST WEEK WITH WHAT WOULD BE THE FIRST MENTION OF ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE MEN OF THE BIBLE...

ABRAHAM!

ALTHOUGH HIS NAME IS ABRAM AT THIS POINT WHICH MEANS FATHER OF MANY.

TONIGHT, WE WILL SEE GOD CALL HIM OUT OF THE DARKNESS.

WE WILL SEE A WONDERFUL EXAMPLE OF HOW GOD WORKS IN LIVES OF THOSE THAT HE HAS CALLED BY NAME.

INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH ABRAM WAS LIVING VERY CLOSE TO THE LOCATION OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

WE KNOW FROM THE GENEALOGY THAT IT WOULD'VE BEEN 6 GENERATIONS AFTER THE DISPERSION OF THE NATIONS BEFORE ABRAHAM WOULD BE CALLED BY GOD.

WE SAW LAST WEEK THAT TERAH (ABRAM'S FATHER) LEFT UR WHICH WAS LOCATED SLIGHTLY WEST OF BABEL AND WENT WITH ABRAM AND HIS BROTHER ALONG WITH THEIR WIVES AND HIS NEPHEW LOT TO HARAN.

WE CAN ASSUME THEY NAMED THIS PLACE HARAN AFTER ABRAMS BROTHER HARAN THAT DIED WHILE STILL IN UR.

WE KNOW THAT TERAH WAS AN IDOL WORSHIPER, SO WE CAN CONCLUDE THAT ABRAM WOULD'VE HAD A VERY PAGAN UPBRINGING.

JOSHUA 24:1-3

THEN JOSHUA GATHERED ALL THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL TO SHECHEM AND CALLED FOR THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL AND FOR THEIR HEADS AND THEIR JUDGES AND THEIR OFFICERS; AND THEY PRESENTED THEMSELVES BEFORE GOD. ² AND JOSHUA SAID TO ALL THE PEOPLE, “THUS SAYS YAHWEH, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, ‘FROM ANCIENT TIMES YOUR FATHERS LIVED BEYOND THE ^[A]RIVER, NAMELY, TERAH, THE FATHER OF ABRAHAM AND THE FATHER OF NAHOR, AND THEY SERVED OTHER GODS. ³ THEN I TOOK YOUR FATHER ABRAHAM FROM BEYOND THE ^[B]RIVER AND LED HIM THROUGH ALL THE LAND OF CANAAN AND MULTIPLIED HIS SEED AND GAVE HIM ISAAC.

JOSHUA MAKES IT A POINT TO NAME NAMELY TERAH.

NOW WE COULD BREEZE OVER THIS FACT AND THINK OK, SO WHAT IF ABRAM’S FATHER WAS AN IDOL WORSHIPER.

WE KNOW ABRAM WASN’T....

WELL, HE WAS UNTIL GOD REVEALED THE TRUTH TO HIM.

IN VERSE 2 OF JOSHUA 24 WE ARE TOLD “AND THEY SERVED OTHER GODS.”

THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF THE FACT THAT NO ONE IS EVER OUT OF GODS REACH.

IF YOU BELONG TO HIM, HE WILL DRAW YOU UNTO HIMSELF.

THIS IS WHY WE DON’T GIVE UP ON OUR LOST FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS.

WE SHOULD BE CONSTANTLY PRAYING FOR GOD TO OPEN THEIR EYES TO TRUTH.

ANOTHER INTERESTING FACT ABOUT ABRAHAM IS THAT HIS LIFE COVERS 14 CHAPTERS IN GENESIS.

HE IS TIED WITH JOSEPH FOR THE PERSON WHOSE LIFE COVERS THE MOST CHAPTERS IN GENESIS.

THE ONLY PERSON THAT COMES CLOSE IS JACOB.

JACOB COVERS 11 AND NOAH AND ADAM BOTH ARE COVERED IN 4 CHAPTERS.

THIS TELLS US THAT ABRAHAM IS A VERY SIGNIFICANT PERSON IN SCRIPTURE.

HIS NAME IS MENTIONED 294 TIMES IN THE BIBLE.

SO NEEDLESS TO SAY, HIS STORY IS IMPORTANT.

AS I WOULD SAY EVERY OTHER PERSON MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE IS IMPORTANT.

THERE IS SOMETHING THAT IS COMMON THEME AMONG THE FATHERS OF THE FAITH.

THEY ALL MADE MISTAKES.

AS WE STUDY, WE WILL SEE SOME MASSIVE FAILURES ON HIS PART AS WELL AS GREAT FAITH.

WHICH JUST GOES TO SHOW EVEN MEN OF GREAT FAITH, THAT ARE CONSIDERED RIGHTEOUS IN THE EYES OF GOD BECAUSE OF THEIR FAITH, ARE HUMAN, THEY ARE FLAWED, THEY MAKE MISTAKES.

WHICH IS ENCOURAGING TO KNOW THAT AS WE STRIVE TO BE MORE LIKE CHRIST, WE WILL HAVE FAILURES OURSELF.

AND OUR FAILURES DON'T DIMINISH THE GRACE OF GOD BUT RATHER MAGNIFY IT!

DON'T LET YOUR FAILURES DEFINE YOU, DON'T LET YOUR SIN DEFINE YOU.

LET JESUS DEFINE YOU!

YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD AND THAT SHOULD BE THE ONLY THING THAT DEFINES YOU.

***GENESIS 12:1
AND YAHWEH SAID TO ABRAM,
“[A](#) GO FORTH FROM YOUR LAND,
AND FROM YOUR KIN
AND FROM YOUR FATHER’S HOUSE,
TO THE LAND WHICH I WILL SHOW YOU;***

THE VERY FIRST THING WE SEE IS THAT GOD CALLS ABRAM TO SACRIFICE.

WHICH WILL BE THE FIRST OF MANY.

HE ASKS ABRAM FIRST TO LEAVE HIS LAND, THEN TO LEAVE HIS PEOPLE AND FINALLY TO LEAVE HIS FAMILY.

AND WITH THIS GOD DOES NOT TELL HIM WHERE HE IS GOING.

JOHN CALVIN COMMENTS THAT IN EFFECT GOD SAYS “I COMMAND YOU GO FORTH WITH EYES CLOSED, AND FORBID YOU TO INQUIRE WHERE I AM ABOUT TO LEAD YOU, UNTIL, HAVING RENOUNCED YOUR COUNTRY, YOU SHALL BE GIVEN YOURSELF WHOLLY TO ME”

THIS WOULD BE THE FIRST OF MANY TIMES ABRAMS FAITH WOULD BE TESTED.

AND WHY DOES GOD DO THAT?

WHY DOES HE TEST OUR FAITH?

FAITH THAT HE HAS GIVEN US?

HE KNOWS WE HAVE FAITH BECAUSE HE IS THE VERY SOURCE OF THAT FAITH...

THE TESTING OF OUR FAITH IS NEVER TO PROVE TO GOD OUR FAITH BUT RATHER TO PROVE TO OURSELVES.

HE DOESN’T NEED PROOF OF SOMETHING HE HAS GIVEN US.

BUT US, ON THE OTHER HAND WE NEED TO SEE OUR FAITH IN ACTION IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND IT AND APPRECIATE IT.

IN OUR OWN LIVES WHAT WE SEE, IS WHEN OUR FAITH IS TESTED IT IS ALWAYS TO PREPARE US FOR WHAT LIES AHEAD.

FOR ABRAM WHAT WOULD BE THE GREATEST TEST OF HIS FAITH?

WHEN HE IS CALLED TO SACRIFICE HIS SON!

SO ALL OF THESE TESTS THAT LEAD UP TO THAT MOMENT WERE TO PREPARE HIM.

TO SHOW HIM HE WAS CAPABLE OF DOING WHAT GOD ASKED OF HIM AS WELL AS SHOWING HIM THAT GOD WOULD ALWAYS COME THROUGH FOR HIM.

SO, GOD CALLED ABRAM OUT OF HIS LAND, AWAY FROM EVERYTHING HE KNEW AND WAS FAMILIAR WITH, TO SHOW HIM THAT HE WOULD PROVIDE HIM WITH EVERYTHING HE NEEDED INCLUDING HIS FAITH.

AND WHILE WE NEED NOT PROVE OUR FAITH TO GOD, WE MUST STILL EXERCISE OBEDIENCE TO WHAT HE HAS CALLED US TO.

OBEDIENCE HELPS SOLIDIFY OUR FAITH AS WELL AS SHOWS OUR LOVE FOR OUR SAVIOR.

GENESIS 12:2

***² AND I WILL MAKE YOU A GREAT NATION,
AND I WILL BLESS YOU,
AND MAKE YOUR NAME GREAT;
AND SO  YOU SHALL BE A BLESSING;***

THIS MUST'VE COME AS SOMEWHAT OF A SHOCK TO ABRAM.

BY THIS TIME MEN WERE FATHERING CHILDREN IN THEIR THIRTIES, NOT ALL OF THEM SEEING AS HOW TERAH ABRAM'S FATHER HAD HIS CHILDREN WHEN HE WAS SEVENTY.

BUT THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WERE NOW HAVING CHILDREN IN THEIR THIRTIES.

AND ABRAM WAS 75 AT THIS POINT.

SO TO HEAR THE LORD SAY THAT HE WAS GOING TO BE A GREAT NATION WENT AGAINST EVERYTHING THEY KNEW TO BE TRUE.

AND THE PROMISE WAS NOT SIMPLY THAT HE WOULD HAVE A CHILD BUT THAT HE WOULD BE A GREAT NATION.

THE HEBREW WORD USED HERE FOR NATION IS GOY WHICH IS OFTEN USED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT TO DESCRIBE THE GENTILE NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

TODAY THE HEBREW WORD FOR GENTILES IS STILL GOY (SINGULAR)

GOYIM (PLURAL)

ABRAM'S OFFSPRING WOULD BE GOY AMONG THE GOYIM

OR A NATION AMONG NATIONS.

A POWERFUL POLITICAL ENTITY WITH A LAND, A LANGUAGE AND A GOVERNMENT!

AND THERE IS STILL MORE!

GODS PROMISE TO MAKE ABRAMS NAME GREAT, IRONICALLY ENOUGH WAS WHAT THE BUILDERS OF THE TOWER OF BABEL WANTED....

GENESIS 11:4

4 AND THEY SAID, "COME, LET US BUILD FOR OURSELVES A CITY, AND A TOWER WHOSE TOP WILL REACH INTO HEAVEN, AND LET US MAKE FOR OURSELVES A NAME, LEST WE BE SCATTERED OVER THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH."

"AND LET US MAKE A NAME FOR OURSELVES."

WHAT THEY SOUGHT IN PRIDEFUL ARROGANCE WOULD BE GIVEN TO ABRAM BECAUSE HIS FAITHFUL SUBMISSION AND OBEDIENCE.

KINGS WOULD COME FROM ABRAM AND SARAI.

A MILLENNIA LATER KING DAVID WOULD COME FROM THE LINEAGE OF ABRAM.

AND OF COURSE, WOULD COME THE KING OF KINGS AND THE LORD OF LORDS.

OUR KING AND SAVIOR JESUS!

GENESIS 12:3

***³ AND I WILL BLESS THOSE WHO BLESS YOU,
AND THE ONE WHO ^[c]CURSES YOU I WILL ^[b]CURSE.
AND IN YOU ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH WILL BE BLESSED."***

WE CLEARLY SEE THIS PLAY OUT.

WE SEE ABIMELECH AND MELCHIZEDEK BOTH BE BLESSED FOR HONORING ABRAM.

WE SEE THE CANAANITES WHO PERSECUTED ISRAEL ARE NO MORE.

I WOULD SAY IT IS A DANGEROUS THING TO DESPISE CHILDREN OF GOD.

BUT VERSE 3 ENDS WITH A BEAUTIFUL TRUTH.

ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH WILL BE BLESSED.

THAT WOULD ULTIMATELY BE FULFILLED THROUGH JESUS.

GALATIANS 3:6-9

6 JUST AS ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD AND IT WAS COUNTED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS, 7 SO KNOW THAT THOSE WHO ARE OF FAITH, THOSE ARE SONS OF ABRAHAM. 8 AND THE SCRIPTURE, FORESEEING THAT GOD ^[U]WOULD JUSTIFY THE ^[U]GENTILES BY FAITH, PROCLAIMED THE GOSPEL BEFOREHAND TO ABRAHAM, SAYING, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU." 9 SO THEN THOSE WHO ARE OF FAITH ARE BLESSED WITH ^[K]ABRAHAM, THE BELIEVER.

AS BELIEVERS WE FALL INTO THE CATEGORY OF THOSE FAMILIES THAT WERE BLESSED BECAUSE OF ABRAHAM.

GENESIS 12:4,5

4 SO ABRAM WENT FORTH AS YAHWEH HAD SPOKEN TO HIM; AND LOT WENT WITH HIM. NOW ABRAM WAS SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD WHEN HE DEPARTED FROM HARAN. 5 SO ABRAM TOOK SARAI HIS WIFE AND LOT HIS BROTHER'S SON, AND ALL THEIR POSSESSIONS WHICH THEY HAD ACCUMULATED, AND THE ^[E]PERSONS WHICH THEY HAD ACQUIRED IN HARAN, AND THEY DEPARTED TO GO FORTH TO THE LAND OF CANAAN; THUS THEY CAME TO THE LAND OF CANAAN.

HARAN WOULD BE WHAT IS THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF MODERN DAY TURKEY, AND CANAAN WOULD BE WHERE ISRAEL IS.

THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE TWO IS ABOUT 400 MILES.

WHICH IS ABOUT HOW FAR IT IS FROM FOLEY AL. TO CHATTANOOGA TENNESSEE.

THIS WOULD'VE TAKEN MONTHS OR EVEN LONGER.

THAT'S QUITE THE TREK, IT'S NOT LIKE THEY WERE GOING FROM FOLEY TO ROBERTSDALE.

NOT ONLY THAT BUT WHEN THEY LEFT HARAN THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHERE THEY WERE GOING OR HOW FAR THEY WERE GOING TO TRAVEL.

NEVERTHELESS, ABRAM TRUSTED THE LORD AND DID WHAT HE WAS TOLD TO DO.

IN VERSE 5 IT ALSO SAYS THEY TOOK WITH THEM “ *THE ^[E]PERSONS WHICH THEY HAD ACQUIRED IN HARAN*”

DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?

MANY THINK THAT IT MEANS SLAVES, BUT IT ACTUALLY TRANSLATES AS “SOULS THEY HAD WON”

THIS IS IN LINE WITH TRADITIONAL RABBINICAL TEACHINGS.

SO MOST LIKELY THE TEXT IS REFERRING TO PEOPLE THAT ABRAM HAD BEEN WITNESSING TO TELLING THEM ABOUT THE STORY OF HIS FAITH IN THE LORD.

GENESIS 12:6-9

⁶ AND ABRAM PASSED THROUGH THE LAND AS FAR AS THE SITE OF SHECHEM, TO THE ^[E]OAK OF MOREH. NOW THE CANAANITE WAS THEN IN THE LAND. ⁷ THEN YAHWEH APPEARED TO ABRAM AND SAID, “TO YOUR SEED I WILL GIVE THIS LAND.” SO HE BUILT AN ALTAR THERE TO YAHWEH WHO HAD APPEARED TO HIM. ⁸ THEN HE PROCEEDED FROM THERE TO THE MOUNTAIN ON THE EAST OF BETHEL, AND HE PITCHED HIS TENT WITH BETHEL ON THE WEST AND AI ON THE EAST; AND THERE HE BUILT AN ALTAR TO YAHWEH AND CALLED UPON THE NAME OF YAHWEH. ⁹ AND ABRAM JOURNEYED ON, CONTINUING TOWARD THE ^[G]NEGEV.

ABRAHAM’S JOURNEY IS A WONDERFUL DEPICTION OF WHAT AUTHENTIC FAITH LOOKS LIKE.

A LIFE OF FAITH DEMANDS THAT WE BE PILGRIMS IN THIS WORLD.

WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT.

THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT ABRAM IS DOING AS HE JOURNEYS THROUGH THIS NEW AND UNKNOWN LAND.

HE’S WALKING STRICTLY BY FAITH, BEING GUIDED BY THE LORD.

THE SAME EXPECTATION HAS BEEN PLACED ON ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN.

TO BE LED BY HIM AND NOT WALK ACCORDING TO THIS WORLD.

THIS MENTALITY SHOULD PERMEATE EVERY SINGLE ASPECT OF OUR LIFE.

WHERE WE WORK, THE PEOPLE WE HANG OUT WITH, THE CHURCH WE ATTEND, THE FINANCIAL DECISIONS WE MAKE...

EVERYTHING SHOULD BE GUIDED BY OUR FAITH IN THE LORD.

TRUE FAITH BELIEVES THE BARE WORD OF GOD

TRUE FAITH STEPS OUT ON GOD'S WORD ALONE.

TRUE FAITH FOLLOWS WHEREVER GODS WORD DIRECTS.

TRUE FAITH BUILDS ALTARS AND WORSHIPS WHEREVER IT GOES.

TRUE FAITH PROCLAIMS THE NAME OF THE LORD.

TURE FAITH KNOWS THAT HE VERY WELL MAY CALL US TO SOMETHING DIFFICULT OR UNCOMFORTABLE.

THAT'S WHY WE HAVE ACCOUNTS SUCH AS ABRAMS.

TO SHOW US THAT GOD WILL CALL US INTO THE UNKNOWN SOMETIMES.

BUT IT ALSO SHOWS US WHEN HE DOES CALL US INTO THE UNKNOWN THAT HE WILL PROVIDE US WITH EVERYTHING WE NEED, INCLUDING THE NECESSARY FAITH.

GOD ALWAYS PROVIDED ABRAHAM WITH EVERYTHING HE NEEDED.

HEBREWS 11:8-10

⁸ BY FAITH ABRAHAM, WHEN HE WAS CALLED, OBEYED ^[A]BY GOING OUT TO A PLACE WHICH HE WAS TO RECEIVE FOR AN INHERITANCE; AND HE WENT OUT, NOT KNOWING WHERE HE WAS GOING. ⁹ BY FAITH HE SOJOURNED IN THE LAND OF PROMISE, AS IN A FOREIGN LAND, DWELLING IN TENTS WITH ISAAC AND JACOB, FELLOW HEIRS OF THE SAME PROMISE, ¹⁰ FOR HE WAS LOOKING FOR THE CITY WHICH HAS FOUNDATIONS, WHOSE ARCHITECT AND BUILDER IS GOD.

ABRAMS CLEAR VISION OF GODS CALL AND WHAT THE FUTURE HELD DETACHED HIM FROM THIS WORLD, JUST AS IT SHOULD ALWAYS DETACH GOD'S PEOPLE FROM GROUNDING THEIR LIVES TOO DEEPLY IN THE PRESENT.

WE HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO FALL IN LOVE WITH THE WORLD AND THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD.

EVERYTHING AROUND US TELLS US TO HUNKER DOWN, SAVE EVERYTHING, DO WHATEVER NECESSARY TO PROTECT OURSELVES AND OUR POSSESSIONS.

OUR NATURAL DESIRES ARE FOR COMFORTS.

OUR CULTURE CELEBRATES GREAT HOMES, FANCY CARS, AND MATERIAL WEALTH.

BUT THE WORD OF GOD SAYS QUITE THE OPPOSITE.

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4

THEREFORE, IF YOU HAVE BEEN RAISED UP WITH CHRIST, KEEP SEEKING THE THINGS ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST IS, SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. ² ^[A]SET YOUR MIND ON THE THINGS ABOVE, NOT ON THE THINGS THAT ARE ON EARTH. ³ FOR YOU DIED AND YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN HIDDEN WITH CHRIST IN GOD. ⁴ WHEN CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE, IS MANIFESTED, THEN YOU ALSO WILL BE MANIFESTED WITH HIM IN GLORY.

AS ABRAM TRAVELLED THE PROMISED LAND FROM END TO END HE SYMBOLICALLY TOOK POSSESSION OF IT FOR HIS DESCENDANTS.

LINGERING AT HOLY PLACES AND BUILDING ALTERS.

HIS FIRST STOP WAS SHECHEM.

WHICH IS IN THE GEOGRAPHICAL CENTER OF THE PROMISED LAND.

IN GENESIS 12:6 WE SEE THAT THE CANAANITE WAS IN THE LAND.

THEIR PRESENCE WAS AN INDICATOR THAT OPPOSITION WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE A REALITY AS ABRAHAM CONTINUED TO LIVE A LIFE OF FAITH.

A GODLY LIFE MUST ALWAYS BE LIVED OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF MISUNDERSTANDING, TEMPTATION AND EVEN PERSECUTION.

IN VERSE 6 WE ALSO SEE THE MENTION OF THE OAK OF MOREH.

MOREH MEANS TEACHER OR ORACLE GIVER...

THE GREAT TREE OF MORAH WAS WHERE THE CANAANITES GATHERED TO HEAR THE ORACLES THAT SOOTHSAYERS RECEIVED FROM LISTENING TO THE RUSTLING OF THE LEAVES...

ALL OF THESE PRACTICES ARE STILL PRESENT TODAY.

FROM CRYSTALS TO CONSTELLATIONS PEOPLE WILL LOOK EVERYWHERE THEY CAN EXCEPT THE WORD OF GOD.

THEY WOULD RATHER TRUST A ROCK THAN THE ONE THAT CREATED THE ROCK.

THEY WOULD PREFER TO TRUST THE STARS INSTEAD OF THE ONE THAT CREATED THE STARS.

SO WE CLEARLY SEE THAT IN THE VERY HEART OF THE PROMISED LAND THAT IDOLATRY WAS ALIVE AND WELL.

ABRAHAM TRAVELLED SO FAR AWAY FROM HOME ONLY TO ENTER INTO ANOTHER PLACE THAT WAS WROUGHT WITH THE SAME ISSUES.

BUT ALSO HERE IN THE HEARTLAND ABRAM EXPERIENCED A THEOPHANY WHEN THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM AND SAID... “TO YOUR OFFSPRING I WILL GIVE THIS LAND”

ABRAM THE FAITHFUL PILGRIM WOULD BECOME ABRAM THE FAITHFUL BUILDER, BUT HE BUILT NOT A TOWER NOR A CITY, HE BUILT AN ALTER TO THE LORD.

AND JUST LIKE NOAH HE WOULD OFFER A SACRIFICE TO THE LORD.

ABRAM WOULD BUILD ALTARS IN BETHEL, HEBRON AND MOUNT MORIAH.

AND HOW BEAUTIFUL IS IT THAT THE ONLY ARCHITECTURE THAT REMAINED FROM ABRAM’S LIFE WERE ALTARS.

THE THINGS HE BUILT TO HONOR THE LORD.

AS CHRISTIANS OUR DESIRE SHOULD BE JUST THAT.

THAT THE THINGS WE LEAVE BEHIND ARE THE THINGS WE DID TO HONOR CHRIST.

WE LIVE IN A WORLD THAT MEASURES SUCCESS ACCORDING TO MATERIAL WEALTH.

WHEN IN REALITY SUCCESS FOR A CHRISTIAN IS THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE FOR THE KINGDOM.

GENESIS 12:10

10 NOW THERE WAS A FAMINE IN THE LAND; SO ABRAM WENT DOWN TO EGYPT TO SOJOURN THERE, FOR THE FAMINE WAS SEVERE IN THE LAND.

THIS WOULD BE THE SECOND TEST OF ABRAMS FAITH...

THE FIRST WAS OF COURSE WHEN HE WAS CALLED TO LEAVE HIS HOME, HIS PEOPLE AND HIS FAMILY.

NOW UPON FOLLOWING THE DIRECTION OF THE LORD, GOING WHERE GOD HAD TOLD HIM TO GO HE ENCOUNTERS FAMINE AND WE ARE TOLD THAT IS WAS A SEVERE FAMINE.

SO WE SEE ABRAM BEING MET WITH A CHALLENGE AFTER STEPPING OUT IN FAITH.

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR TO ANYONE IN HERE?

HOW MANY PEOPLE IN HERE WHEN THEY STARTED TO GO TO CHURCH OR STARTED SEEKING THE TRUTH WERE MET WITH CHALLENGES?

IN KNOW I WAS AND STILL AM!

I REMEMBER WHEN WE FIRST STARTED THE CHURCH BACK UP IT SEEMED LIKE EVERY SUNDAY OR WEDNESDAY, WE WOULD HAVE A FLAT TIRE OR A DEAD BATTERY.

SOMETHING I OFTEN TELL PEOPLE PRIOR TO BAPTISM IS THAT THEY NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT TRULY MEANS.

NOT ONLY WHAT IT REPRESENTS BUT ALSO THE FACT THAT WHEN YOU MAKE THAT PUBLIC PROCLAMATION OF FAITH THE ENEMY IS GOING TO COME AFTER YOU.

I DON'T TELL PEOPLE THIS TO SCARE THEM BUT I WANT THEM TO UNDERSTAND THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION.

WHEN YOU COME TO CHRIST THE LEVEL OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN YOUR LIFE INCREASES.

EPHESIANS 6:10-12

¹⁰ FINALLY, BE STRONG IN THE LORD AND IN THE MIGHT OF HIS STRENGTH. ¹¹ PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD, SO THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO STAND FIRM AGAINST THE SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL. ¹² FOR OUR STRUGGLE IS NOT AGAINST ^[E]FLESH AND BLOOD, BUT AGAINST THE RULERS, AGAINST THE AUTHORITIES, AGAINST THE WORLD FORCES OF THIS DARKNESS, AGAINST THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF WICKEDNESS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES.

SATAN WANTS YOU TO FAIL, HE WANTS YOU TO FEEL DEFEATED AND HOPELESS.

HE WANTS YOU TO THINK LIFE USED TO BE SO MUCH EASIER BEFORE I BECAME A CHRISTIAN.

ALL OF THESE ARE TESTS OF YOUR FAITH.

GOD ALLOWS THESE TESTS TO HELP GROW YOUR FAITH.

HE ALLOWS THESE THINGS TO SHOW YOU THAT NO MATTER WHAT HE IS THERE WITH YOU.

HE ALLOWS THESE THINGS TO DRAW YOU NEAR TO HIMSELF.

HE ALSO GIVES US ACCOUNTS OF THOSE THAT HAVE GONE BEFORE US AND THE DIFFICULTIES THEY ENDURED TO GIVE US HOPE AND TO SHOW US THAT HE DIDN'T LEAVE THEM AND HE'S NOT GOING TO LEAVE US.

ABRAM AFTER DOING WHAT GOD TOLD HIM TO DO ENTERED INTO A LAND THAT EXPERIENCING SEVERE FAMINE.

WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO CONCEPT OF THIS.

THIS IS SOMETHING THAT IS TOTALLY FOREIGN TO US.

A FAMINE IS CAUSED BY A SEVERE SHORTAGE OF FOOD, USUALLY BECAUSE OF SEVERE DROUGHT, OR DISEASE.

IT WAS VERY OFTEN A JUDGMENT FROM GOD FOR PAGAN NATIONS OR WHEN HIS OWN PEOPLE WERE DISOBEDIENT.

IT DROVE PEOPLE FROM THEIR HOMES TO FOREIGN PLACES IN SEARCH OF WATER AND FOOD.

DEATH WAS PREVALENT IN PEOPLE AS WELL AS ANIMALS.

SO, GOD BROUGHT ABRAM OUT OF HIS HOME INTO THIS SITUATION....

AND WE ARE NO DIFFERENT, WE CAN'T BE SURPRISED WHEN WE ARE CALLED OUT OF WHAT IS COMFORTABLE IN TO THE UNKNOWN.

WE ARE EXPECTED TO WALK BY FAITH JUST AS ABRAM.

WHEN HE HEADED TO EGYPT, HE WASN'T ABANDONING WHAT GOD HAD TOLD HIM TO DO.

IF THAT WAS THE CASE HE WOULD'VE RETURNED HOME.

IT SEEMS AS IF THIS WAS TO BE A BRIEF SOJOURN UNTIL THE FAMINE HAD ENDED.

GOING TO EGYPT WAS THE NATURAL THING TO DO.

PEOPLE FROM CANAAN AND ESPECIALLY NEGEV OFTEN WENT TO EGYPT DURING DIFFICULT TIMES BECAUSE THE NILE ALWAYS GUARANTEED FOOD.

JUST BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT FELT NATURAL AND THIS IS WHAT EVERYONE ELSE WAS DOING DOESN'T MEAN IT WAS WHAT GOD WANTED HIM TO DO.

THERE IS NO MENTION OF HIM SEEKING DIRECTION FROM GOD IN THIS MATTER.

IT SEEMS AS IF THIS IS WHAT OTHERS IN THAT AREA WERE DOING SO HE FOLLOWED SUIT.

AND AS IS USUALLY THE CASE WHEN WE JUST GO ALONG WITH THE CROWD, WE SEE ABRAM EXPERIENCE HIS FIRST RECORDED FAILURE.

I DON'T THINK THIS WAS INTENTIONAL SIN.

I DON'T THINK HE WENT AGAINST SOMETHING GOD HAD TOLD HIM.

I THINK HE DIDN'T SEEK GODS WILL.

GOD HAD BROUGHT HIM THIS FAR BUT FOR SOME REASON HE DID WHAT HE THOUGHT HE SHOULD DO INSTEAD OF ASKING GOD.

GENESIS 12:11-13

11 AND IT HAPPENED AS HE DREW NEAR TO ENTERING EGYPT, THAT HE SAID TO SARAI HIS WIFE, "NOW BEHOLD, I KNOW THAT YOU ARE A WOMAN BEAUTIFUL IN APPEARANCE; 12 AND IT WILL BE WHEN THE EGYPTIANS SEE YOU, THAT THEY WILL SAY, 'THIS IS HIS WIFE'; AND THEY WILL KILL ME, BUT THEY WILL LET YOU LIVE. 13 PLEASE SAY THAT YOU ARE MY SISTER SO THAT IT MAY GO WELL WITH ME BECAUSE OF YOU, AND THAT ^[H]I MAY LIVE ON ACCOUNT OF YOU."

ABRAM A FATHER OF THE FAITH, A MAN WHO WAS CREDITED RIGHTEOUSNESS BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH WAS SCARED.

HE FORGOT GOD, HE DOUBTED GOD.

OR MAYBE HE THOUGHT GOD NEEDED SOME HELP, AND IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE PROMISES MADE TO HIM WERE KEPT HE DEVISED THIS PLAN SO HE WOULDN'T BE MURDERED...

EITHER WAY THIS WAS A SINFUL ACT, NOT ONLY WAS IT SINFUL, BUT HE DOES THE EXACT SAME THING LATER ON.

A WONDERFUL LITTLE REMINDER THAT GOD NEEDS NOT OUR ASSISTANCE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WILL.

HE DOESN'T NEED OR REQUIRE OUR HELP.

HE DOES HOWEVER REQUIRE OUR FAITH AND OBEDIENCE.

GOD'S WILL IS GOING TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

THE QUESTION YOU MUST ASK YOURSELF IS "DO I WANT TO BE PART OF IT OR A HINDERANCE TO IT"?

WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WOULD'VE HAPPENED HAD ABRAM NOT GONE TO EGYPT.

JUST LIKE WHEN WE STEP OUTSIDE OF GODS WILL WHAT WOULD'VE HAPPENED HAD WE BEEN OBEDIENT INSTEAD.

SO WE CAN'T GET CAUGHT UP IN THE WHAT IFS.

WE LOOK AT WHAT IS AND ASK WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO IN ORDER TO REALIGN OURSELVES WITH WHAT GOD WANTS FOR US.

GENESIS 12:14-16

14 NOW IT HAPPENED WHEN ABRAM CAME INTO EGYPT, THAT THE EGYPTIANS  SAW THAT THE WOMAN WAS VERY BEAUTIFUL. 15 AND PHARAOH'S OFFICIALS SAW HER AND PRAISED HER TO PHARAOH; AND THE WOMAN WAS TAKEN INTO PHARAOH'S HOUSE. 16 THEREFORE HE TREATED ABRAM WELL BECAUSE OF HER; AND SHEEP AND OXEN AND DONKEYS AND MALE AND FEMALE SERVANTS AND FEMALE DONKEYS AND CAMELS  CAME INTO HIS POSSESSION.

WE CLEARLY SEE WHAT LOOKS LIKE ABRAM BEING REWARDED FOR HIS SIN.

THE PHAROAH GAVE HIM AN ABUNDANCE OF WEALTH FOR WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS HIS SISTER.

SO IT SEEMS AS IF ABRAM CAME OUT ON TOP, BUT AS I SAID WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WOULD'VE HAPPENED HAD HE NOT GONE TO EGYPT.

WE CLEARLY SEE ABRAM DOUBTED GOD'S ABILITY TO SPARE HIS LIFE.

IF NOT, HE WOULD NOT HAVE CREATED THE ELABORATE LIE IN ORDER TO PROTECT HIMSELF.

I ALSO WONDER HOW SARAI FELT ABOUT ALL OF THIS...

DOESN'T SEEM AS IF SHE IS GIVEN ANY CHOICE IN THE MATTER.

SHE MUST'VE BEEN A VERY BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

BECAUSE WHAT ABRAM THOUGHT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED.

SO HOW DO WE KNOW THAT ALL OF THIS DISPLEASED THE LORD?

IT SEEMS AS IF ABRAM MADE OUT PRETTY WELL IN THE WHOLE DEAL.

HE DIDN'T GET MURDERED AND THE PHAROAH GAVE HIM A TON OF STUFF!

WELL THE NEXT FEW VERSES MAKE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR GOD WAS DISPLEASED.

GENESIS 12:17-20

17 BUT YAHWEH STRUCK PHARAOH AND HIS HOUSE WITH GREAT PLAGUES BECAUSE OF SARAI, ABRAM'S WIFE. 18 THEN PHARAOH CALLED ABRAM AND SAID, "WHAT IS THIS YOU HAVE DONE TO ME? WHY DID YOU NOT TELL ME THAT SHE WAS YOUR WIFE? 19 WHY DID YOU SAY, 'SHE IS MY SISTER,' SO THAT I TOOK HER FOR MYSELF AS A WIFE? SO NOW, ^[K]HERE IS YOUR WIFE, TAKE HER AND GO." 20 SO PHARAOH COMMANDED HIS MEN CONCERNING HIM; AND THEY ^[L]SENT HIM AWAY WITH HIS WIFE AND ALL THAT BELONGED TO HIM.

THIS IS A PRIME EXAMPLE THAT OUR SIN CAN NEGATIVELY EFFECT OTHER PEOPLE.

PHAROAH HAD NO IDEA THAT SARAI WAS ABRAM'S WIFE.

HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG INTENTIONALLY.

HE EVEN PAID ABRAM FOR WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS HIS SISTER.

WHICH WAS CUSTOMARY IN THAT TIME.

BUT GOD DIDN'T PUNISH ABRAM, HE PUNISHED PHAROAH AND HIS HOUSEHOLD WITH GREAT PLAGUES.

POOR GUY HUH?

GOD'S INTERVENTION WAS FOCUSED ON PHAROAH IN ORDER TO PROTECT SARAI.

HE INTERVENED WHERE ABRAM HAD FAILED TO PROTECT HIS WIFE.

NOW I'M SURE NO MEN IN HERE HAVE EVER SOLD THEIR WIFE TO A PAGAN KING TO SAVE THEIR OWN NECKS, BUT THIS IS A PRIME EXAMPLE THAT GOD TAKES MARRIAGE SERIOUSLY AND AS MEN WE ARE EXPECTED TO PROTECT OUR WIVES.

THE HARMONY BETWEEN MAN AND WIFE IS AN EXPECTATION.

THIS DOESN'T MEAN THAT WE ALWAYS GET ALONG BUT WE HAVE HAD COMMANDS PLACED ON US AND OUR RESPECTIVE ROLES IN THE RELATIONSHIP THAT GOD TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY.

EPHESIANS 5:33

33 NEVERTHELESS, EACH INDIVIDUAL AMONG YOU ALSO IS TO LOVE HIS OWN WIFE EVEN AS HIMSELF, AND THE WIFE MUST SEE TO IT THAT SHE [LO](#)RESPECTS HER HUSBAND.

WE SEE ABRAM CONCERNED FOR HIMSELF AND NOT FOR HIS WIFE BUT SARAI DOES WHAT HE ASKS OF HER.

DID YOU KNOW THAT GOD TAKES THE LOVE AND RESPECT WE SHOW FOR WIVES VERY SERIOUSLY.

1ST PETER 3:6,7

6 JUST AS SARAH OBEYED ABRAHAM, CALLING HIM LORD. YOU HAVE BECOME HER CHILDREN IF YOU DO GOOD, [LA](#)NOT FEARING ANY INTIMIDATION.

7 YOU HUSBANDS IN THE SAME WAY, LIVE WITH YOUR WIVES IN AN UNDERSTANDING WAY, AS WITH A WEAKER VESSEL, SINCE SHE IS A WOMAN; AND SHOW HER HONOR AS A FELLOW HEIR OF THE GRACE OF LIFE, SO THAT YOUR PRAYERS WILL NOT BE HINDERED.

MEN AS THE SPIRITUAL LEADERS OF OUR HOMES THE BURDEN FALLS ON US TO RESOLVE CONFLICT.

THE BURDEN FALLS ON US TO LEAD OUR FAMILY IN PRAYER.

THE BURDEN FALLS ON US TO LOVE OUR WIVES AND TREAT THEM AS THE WONDERFUL BEAUTIFUL CREATION THEY ARE.

REMEMBER SHE IS DAUGHTER OF THE KING.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN EVER DO FOR YOUR CHILDREN IS TO LET THEM SEE YOU LIVE A GODLY LIFE.

THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO FOR THEM IS TO LOVE THEIR MOTHER WELL.

TO LOVE HER AS JESUS LOVES THE CHURCH.

WHAT THAT DOES IS IT TEACHES YOUR LITTLE BOYS HOW TO TREAT THEIR WIVES WHEN THEY GROW UP AND IT TEACHES YOUR LITTLE GIRLS HOW THEY SHOULD EXPECT TO BE TREATED.

DON'T YOU DARE NORMALIZE DISRESPECTING AND MISTREATING EACH OTHER IN FRONT OF YOUR CHILDREN BECAUSE THEY WILL REPEAT WHAT YOU TEACH THEM.

AND I KNOW NO ONE IS PERFECT, SO WHEN YOU DO MAKE A MISTAKE CONFESS IT TO YOUR WIFE IN FRONT OF YOUR CHILDREN AND ASK FOR FORGIVENESS.

CONFESS TO YOUR CHILDREN YOU WERE WRONG AND ASK FOR THEIR FORGIVENESS.

WE OFTEN THINK ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN HAVE TO BE SUCCESSFUL BUT THAT'S ONLY HALF OF IT.

WE HAVE TO TEACH THEM TO DO THE RIGHT THING WHEN THEY FAIL.

IF THE NEXT GENERATION IS GOING TO BE GODLY GENERATION IT'S UP TO US TO SET THE EXAMPLE.

LET'S HONOR THE LORD IN ALL WE DO SO THAT OUR CHILDREN WILL DO THE SAME.

