

JESUS IN GENESIS

SEASON 2

JESUS IN GENESIS - SEASON 2: GENESIS 12:1-20

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE - WEEK OF APRIL 11, 2021

Introduction:

- We'll be studying the section about Abraham in Genesis for the next couple of months. Though this text is ancient, the world has not changed spiritually since Abraham's life or the writing of Genesis. We have the same God. The same Satan is constantly trying to cause Christians to abandon their belief in God.
- Abraham is a very influential figure in Christianity, Judaism and Islam. He is the Father of all who believe in Jesus Christ.
- Our text today shows how Abraham is the father of those with true faith in JC. While he does show remarkable obedience in following God's call on his life, he also stumbles egregiously in his faith. In Abraham's wavering between faith and doubt, we should all see ourselves, and ultimately derive assurance in our faith and salvation in the faithfulness of the God who has graciously called us.

1. Tremendous Faith

- How did the Lord speak? We don't know. Abram hears God and it's enough, it is God's self-authenticating word.
- Scripture gives us reason to believe that there were other true followers of God at the time of Abram's call, so why is the call of Abram special? Because God promises to bless the nations through Abraham specifically.
- What did Abraham do to be chosen by God? Nothing. He is not being rewarded for his own faithfulness. His family consisted of idol worshippers who worshipped the creation rather than the creator, the same problem that we all struggle with prior to our salvation.
- Did Abraham obey immediately? Probably not. After being called out of Ur to the land of Canaan, Abraham and his family stopped halfway in Haran. This gives us a lesson for faith today: there has to be growth in obedience and faithfulness in the Christian life. Christians cannot settle for listening to God halfway.
- v2: We are saved to be a blessing.
- v4-5: Abraham called at an old age and left many comforts behind, as we also are called to do.
- v6-7: Abram follows God, not to a place full of worshippers of God, but to a land of idol worshippers, and promises to give him this land. Abram's building of the altar is an act of faith in God and defiance of the Canaanite gods worshipped in that area.
- v8-9: Abram pitches his tent and worships God; he is planting a church in a godless place.

2. Tremendous Faithlessness

- We should praise God for Abram's faithfulness to this point, but verse 10 reveals a shift in Abram's faith. When obstacles arise, despite God's promises in verses 1-3, Abram loses his trust in God's plan and goes to Egypt.
- We need to be cautious not to stray from God's word when we face similar obstacles. Scripture reveals that the more committed one is to God, the more struggling one will face in this life. God is going to test our faith so that it will be strengthened.
- Even though God told him he will make Abram's name great and curse those who curse him, Abraham makes a second large compromise in his faith when he gives his wife to Pharaoh for a payment. We can call this an exhibition of spiritual amnesia.
- v11-16: The reporting of these details provides strong evidence for the truthfulness of scripture. Who would invent a religion in which the father gives his wife away?
- v17: Even though Abram is willing to fall back on his covenantal commitment to his wife, God is not willing to forego His covenantal commitment to bless Abram and his marriage/family. God is faithful even when we are faithless.
- v18-20: A story that began on a high note, ends in despair.

3. Tremendous Faithfulness

- How is Abram even in the Bible after this? God made a covenant with him, and even though Abram broke it, God kept it. We are all like Abram. He's the prototype for all believers (think about the fluctuations of David, Peter, Paul). We all suffer from similar moments of spiritual schizophrenia and amnesia, but God is faithful to His promises to those who are in Christ.
- So where do we see Jesus in this text? We see it in God's promise to bless the nations through Abram in verse 3. Building off of His promise in Gen. 3:15, God identifies the seed through which he will crush Satan.
- Though Abram was willing to give up his bride to preserve his life and comfort, Christ showed his faithfulness to His bride, the church, even to the point of going to the cross for her.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

To understand that Abram was graciously picked to receive the blessing of God's promises.

Heart

To follow Abram in trusting in the faithfulness and sacrifice of Jesus Christ in order to receive righteousness before God the Father.

Hands

To be a blessing in life, primarily by sharing the gospel of Christ, from our position of being graciously blessed by Christ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We will hold **9:30** and **11:30 services** this coming Sunday, April 18.

Please go to <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/serve> to **sign up for a service team**.

The next **Members' Meeting** will held on **May 2 at 3PM** in the Temple sanctuary.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why does scripture call Abram righteous, and a friend of God (James 2:23)? John 8:58 tells us that Abram saw Christ and was glad. Abram understood that he was a sinner, was unworthy of the promises and blessing of God, but truly believed that Jesus Christ, who appeared to him (probably through a Christophany), would be the one in his line who would be faithful to God's call in his life and in his death. Abram is righteous, and all of us in his family are righteous, because he knew he would be redeemed by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.
- Gen. 3:7-9: Jesus Christ has made the church into a family so numerous that it's impossible to count, and a body that is diverse in that it has people from every nation and walk of life.
- Conclusion: 2 Tim. 2:11-13

Read Genesis 12:1-20.

1. How do each of the actions of Abram in these verses reveal Abram's faithfulness or faithlessness?
2. How is God's faithfulness on display in this chapter?
3. How do you relate to Abram in his moments of "spiritual amnesia" and "spiritual schizophrenia"? What hope does this passage offer to you?
4. The word bless is used 5 times in verses 1-3. What does the emphasis on this word in the context of these verses reveal about the heart of God?
5. How does meditating on God's desire to bless "the nations" through Abram counter any perceptions that you have heard about the "God of the Old Testament"?
6. See Genesis 11:31-32. After God called them to go to Canaan, Abram and his family settled in Haran after completing about half of the journey. Chapter 12 reveals that God called Abram to show his faithfulness by completing the entire journey to the land of Canaan. As you reflect on this, can you identify ways that you are following God halfway?
7. Why may there be obstacles or suffering when Christians obey God entirely?
8. Where do you see Jesus in this text?
9. **Read Galatians 3:7-9.** How would you explain to someone how the promises given to Abram connect to Christians today? How do they connect to the present day church?
10. How does the story of Abram's call, particularly the details of his travels down to Egypt in verses 11-16, help bolster the argument for the truthfulness of these verses?