

## In the Beginning

### Genesis 12:7-20

- If we ever start to doubt whether God is the God of second chances all you have to do is read the chapters immediately following the flood to erase those thoughts. In **Genesis 6:5** it says that Man's corruption had become so bad that every intent of his thoughts was only evil continually. That meant all he thought about on a daily basis was how to get what he wanted and to do whatever it was that made him happy whether it hurt others or offended God didn't matter.
- So God cleansed the earth of all those who had rebelled against him and started anew with Noah and his sons, but no faster than the flood waters could completely dry up man had descended back into his old ways of drunkenness and disobedience, which grew into murder, idolatry, and rebellion. But rather than destroying us which God could have easily done instead He instituted a Redemption plan that introduces us to a couple named Abram and Sarai.

### V7-20

- **V7-9** we read that God appears to Abram and tells him that **"He will give him and his descendants this land"** this is a promise that God had already given to Abram but the Lord knows how easily we can forget what He has said to us and about us. Man breaks his word often so much so that we have contracts that give our word and hire lawyers who show us how to break your word, but God is a keeper of promises, He doesn't need a contract or any lawyers if He has said it then it will come to pass > **Num 23:19- "God is not a man that He should lie"**
- It's at Shechem that Abram **1<sup>st</sup>** builds an altar to God, there are 3 important facts to remember about altars > **1<sup>st</sup>** it's a place to meet with God, **2<sup>nd</sup>** a place to offer sacrifices for sin, **3<sup>rd</sup>** a place where you outwardly worship the Lord and how submission and surrender to Him. We do the same today as **we have places where we meet with God** (in your home, in your car, at work), **make and offer sacrifices to Him** (prayers, tithes and offerings) **place where we can outwardly worship and show our love and appreciation for all that He has done and is doing** (church).
- **V8** Abram moves from Shechem to East of Bethel and here he builds an another altar but at this second location we see its Abram who calls on the name of the Lord instead of the Lord calling to him he now is approaching the Lord. That's how it is for you and I at first, it's the Lord doing all the initiating as He woos us, reassures us, draws us, and after you have been saved you then start to call on the Lord, seeking Him, getting to know Him, desiring to please Him.
- **V10-13** after building altars Abram is about to face his fears, you can expect that after a great spiritual experience that you are going to face a threatening spiritual attack. Abram's faith is tested by famine as he travels South to Egypt because there was a famine in the land and Egypt

had food, but before he enters Egypt he has a conversation with his wife about his survival. In this last section we are going to witness three types of tests the first being “**circumstances**”.

- Since Abram’s left Haran he’s been doing well, building altars to the Lord, getting instructions from the Lord, worshipping and calling out the name of the Lord, but now he’s facing something that is new to him “**famine**”. We have no record that Abram was ever threatened by hunger in Ur or Haran, in fact he seemed to be very comfortable when he left Haran as he had servants traveling with him, but now he needs to find answers in the midst of something he’s never faced
- You ever find yourself in circumstances that seemed to just happen from no fault of your own, it’s just life, Abram is concerned about feeding his family and there’s nothing wrong with that the problem arises when I don’t rely on the Lord for the answers in the midst of the unforeseen circumstance. **V11** reveals the second test > “**people**” Abram sole purpose in going to Egypt was to get away from the famine, but when we run away from **one test** without seeking the Lord you can be sure you’ll soon face another. Abram whether he knows it or not has enrolled in the “**school of faith**”, and once you’re in your not allowed to drop out even for failure > **Ps 138:8**.
- In Canaan all he had to deal with was the famine but in Egypt he has to worry about “Pharaoh” and his officers. **V12-13** Abram tells his wife Sarai that because of her beauty the Egyptians will see her and want to please Pharaoh but when they find out your already married they will kill me and I know you don’t want that so here’s what you should do just tell them were siblings. Here’s the “**father of faith**” stumbling in the “**arena of faith**” as he uses his charm to first flatter his wife, then manipulate her into doing something that’s in opposition of who they are now.
- Sarai and Abram were actually half brother and sister as both had the same father but different mothers, and in that time God hadn’t established Levitical Law that forbid this practice of sibling marriage, so technically this was half true, but we know to God a half truth is a total lie. **V14-15** just as Abram feared the officers see Sarai and took her to become part of Pharaoh’s harem. **V16-20** but God He intervenes on Abram’s behalf because He has made a promise to them both that He would start a people through them where the Messiah would one day be born through.
- Abram has prospered financially from the sad events and although Abram’s gone brain dead spiritually, but God keeps His promises. **V17** is for all who wrongly think because others haven’t looked out for just best interest and may not have protected you that the Lord also must have forgotten you, notice God plagues Pharaoh and his household to protect Sarai. Others may neglect and forget you but not God He will not forget His promises that He has made to us.
- It’s sad when unbelievers are correcting believers for not doing what they know is right, but all this is a part of teaching Abram that its always better to trust the Lord than to lean on our own understanding. This is the Lord also preventing Pharaoh from killing them both because in Egypt

he was the law and anything that offends him normally would cost you your life but God allows him to get off with a rebuke instead of a beheading.