

Homework for Discussion September 19 and 20:

1. Read Genesis 12-13.

Re-read our definition for Grace:

Grace can be seen as God's movement towards the sinner-saint; action that manifests as unmerited kindness towards the sinner-saint.

(\*Remember\* Kindness plays out more specifically than favor; kindness is specific blessings pertaining to the individual and the specific season they're in.)

Keeping this definition in mind, are you seeing any instances of Grace that you hadn't seen before?

2. Read Genesis 11.1-9.

Who's making plans in this portion of Scripture?

Re-read Genesis 12.1-9. How many times does the Lord say "*I will*"? Who's making plans in this portion of Scripture?

3. Write Genesis 12.1 here:

Write Genesis 12.4 here:

Did Abram obey God's command in Genesis 12.1?

How did this impact God's promise to Abram in Genesis 12.2-3?

Has there been a time when the Lord still blessed you even though you disobeyed?  
How does this impact your relationship with the Lord?

4. Why did Abram go to Egypt (Genesis 12.10)? Did the Lord command him to do this?

Re-read Genesis 12.16 and Genesis 12.20; read Genesis 16, as well. What were the results of Abram's time in Egypt?

5. Write Genesis 12.9 here:

Write Genesis 13.1:

After Abram's time in Egypt, where did he return to?

6. What are the similarities between Abram's and Lot's possessions in Genesis 13.2-5?

What is the result of this Genesis 13.6-7?

How does Abram respond?

How do you think Abram was able to respond so Graciously?

If you're being honest, how easy is it for you to show Grace to others? Is there someone in your life that you need to be more Gracious towards?

7. According to Genesis 13.7, who was dwelling in the land along with Abram and Lot during their time of strife?

What do you think these two people groups thought about the strife breaking out between Abram and Lot's herdsmen?

8. Incorporate Psalm 119.132 into your prayer time this week:

*Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is your way with those who love your name.*

September 19 and 20, 2023: God's Grace to Abram, 12-13

I. Events from Genesis thus far:

A. Noah and his family were spared as a remnant to preserve the Messianic line.

Noah's family is essentially starting over after the Flood and are told to "*Be fruitful and multiply,*" (Genesis 9.1 and 9.7).

B. The Flood did not remedy the wickedness of humanity's heart.

Genesis 11.1-4:

**1** Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. **2** And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. **3** And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. **4** Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth."

Here we see humanity coming together to commemorate their greatness apart from God.

C. A genealogy that takes us from Noah's son, Shem, to Abram:

Genesis 11.26-32:

**26** When Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran. **27** Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. **28** Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans. **29** And Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. **30** Now Sarai was barren; she had no child. **31** Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there. **32** The days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran.

Acts 7.1-8:

**1** And the high priest said, "Are these things so?" **2** And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. **3** and said to him, 'Go out from

*your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.’ 4 Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living. 5 Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child. 6 And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years. 7 ‘But I will judge the nation that they serve,’ said God, ‘and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.’ 8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.*

Joshua 24.2:

*And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.”*

-Jewish tradition goes a step further and says that Terah made and sold idols of the moon deity, Nanna.

-History records that the Chaldeans of Ur were polytheistic, but to them the moon god was supreme because he alone could bless fertility for families and crops and herds.

In the lives of the Patriarchs we are seeing God show Grace—unmerited favor—towards a handful of men, and intimate, powerful relationships developing as those men take small steps of faith towards God.

**12.1** *Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”*

i. Abram's story will be a story of God's Grace making someone great to bring glory to Himself. This is why there is so much "*I will*" language.

ii. God Graciously favors Abram, and now Abram is counted in the lineage of those who get to bring about the Messiah who will remedy the sin and curse problem that has plagued humanity since Adam and Eve's disobedience.

iii. When Abram doesn't respond perfectly at the onset of God's call and many, many other times over the course of Abram's life, God's Grace covers the distance between Him and Abram because God's will is still going to be done in Abram's life.

iv. What God Asks of Abram:

- Depart from his country
- Leave his family
- Go to a land that God will show him

What God Will Accomplish Through Abram:

- Make Abram in to a great nation
- Bless Abram and make his name great
- Bless those who bless Abram and curse those who dishonor Abram
- Bless all the families of the earth through Abram

What God promises Abram is meant to Graciously heal the wound inflicted by God's request.

**12.4** *So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan,*

The Lord is not expecting perfection out of Abram. Abram's Faith is a Faith that grows and God's Grace handles the rest.

**12.6** *Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. 8 From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an*

*altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. 9 And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.*

This promise is relayed by an actual appearance of the Lord, or a theophany. He **appears** to Abram to reassure him of His will and His pleasure for Abram's life. That is sublimely Gracious.

Abram **responds** by building an altar, then we see Abram continue to journey.

**12.10** *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. 11 When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, 12 and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake."*

i. This famine was sovereignly allowed to:

- Punish the Canaanites
- Develop the faith of Abram along with his relationship with the Lord
- Magnify the Grace of God when Abram ultimately failed

Even though the Lord knew Abram's Faith was just in its infancy, it still pleased Him to try Abram with a famine in the land because trials are the supreme developers of a deep relationship with the Lord. Trials are exceedingly Gracious because of what we learn about God through a trial.

ii. The Lord thoroughly knew the quality of Abram's Faith at this point and never expected a stalwart display of Faith from Abram in the face of famine...what He expected was Abram's faith to build and grow over time and the Lord understood that it would start here during Abram's time in Egypt.

**12.14** *When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. 15 And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16 And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels. 17 But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18 So 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 my wife? Now then, here is your*

wife; take her, and go.” **20** And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.

- i. Because of Sarai, Pharaoh deals with Abram generously giving him all manner of livestock and servants.
- ii. The Lord afflicts Pharaoh and his household which stops the progress of any sin with Sarai. The Lord does manage, and even stop, the sin of the World. That is Gracious. That is a kindness He extends to His people but also something He accomplishes according to His holy will.

**13.1** So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. **2** Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. **3** And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, **4** to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the Lord.

Abram returns to essentially the same place he left from but now wealthier and Faith a little sturdier as noted by “Abram called upon the name of the Lord.”

**13.5** And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, **6** so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, 7 and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land. **8** Then Abram said to Lot, “Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. **9** Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left.”

- i. “...the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land.” These heathens were looking on these two men and their associates who claimed to worship YHWH—the one true God—and they were watching them act just like them.

To show Grace to someone is not all that different from God showing Grace to us. Showing Grace to someone is many, many times unmerited kindness...specific to the individual and the specific season that they're in.



Grace considers another and seeks to honor them and whatever they might be facing or going through...especially if you have no knowledge of it. If she doesn't wave at you or smile at you or talk to you long enough or in a peppy tone...what if instead of making a judgment about it, you prayed for her instead?

**13.10** And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) 11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other. 12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. 13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.

i. Lot did not consult the Lord, he did not show Grace to his uncle, instead his decision is made wholly from the flesh: His eyes saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered. He saw, it was pleasing to the eyes, and he went. He gives no consideration to the fact that he is relocating nearer and nearer to wickedness and evil, and he takes up residency in Sodom.

Lot will be a kindness to those sinners because the Lord takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked; throughout the Old Testament we see a pattern of the Lord sending preachers or prophets of righteousness before He destroys and Lot was Sodom's preacher of righteousness.

Ezekiel 33.11:

Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

**13.14** *The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, 15 for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. 16 I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. 17 Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." 18 So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the Lord.*

i. Abram had graciously acquiesced to Lot, but if we're looking with just our physical eyes, it looks like Lot got the better end of the deal.

Genesis 13.10:

*And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt...*

God draws Abram's eyes up to remind him of the promise He will accomplish through Abram and His offspring: All the land that he can see will belong to Abram's descendants forever. And, Abram's descendants will number as the dust of the earth—so numerous they can't be counted.

Abram conducted himself correctly with Lot...he did what was right by being Gracious and deferring to another. But more than that, Abram demonstrated that He trusted and had Faith in the Lord, so for the Lord to reassure Abram here is so kind.

ii. In response Abram builds an altar. He saw the Grace, he beheld the Grace, and responded to the Grace.