

LIVING BY FAITH

ROMANS 4, GENESIS 12

Text: Romans 4:20

Romans 4:20 (KJV)

²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

Introduction:

The study of Abraham's life will not only be an instructive and rewarding experience in seeing many Gospel truths, but it will also be a very helpful experience in learning how to walk the life of faith in God's Word; for the Gospel not only involves the saving of the soul, but it also involves a new walk of faith. Abraham's successes and failures in this life of faith will teach invaluable lessons.

1. THE CALL FOR FAITH

Genesis 12:1-3 (KJV)

¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Separation. "Get thee out" is the command to separate. The call of Abraham was a call to separation. He was to separate from a place ("thy country") and a people ("thy kindred, and from thy father's house"); and, as Scripture makes plain in the story of Abraham, it also included separation from the practices of evil. If one is to do the will of God and live for and serve Him acceptably, he will oftentimes have to separate from places, people, and practices which go counter to obeying God.

Note that the separation commanded here of Abraham was twofold. He was to come out that he might go in.

2. THE CHALLENGE OF FAITH

A. Famine

Genesis 12:1-10 (KJV)

¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. ⁴ So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. ⁵ And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. ⁶ And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land. ⁷ And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

⁸ And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, *having* Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD. ⁹ And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south. ¹⁰ And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine *was* grievous in the land.

Far too often fear is heard instead of the Father, and fear causes us to do things in the flesh.

This famine led to fear and this fear led to:

1. Forsaking

2. Folly

Genesis 12:11-13 (KJV)

¹¹ And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou *art* a fair woman to look upon: ¹² Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This *is* his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. ¹³ Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

Isaiah 31:1 (KJV)

¹ Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because *they are* many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!

B. Family

Genesis 13:1-11 (KJV)

¹ And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that

he had, and Lot with him, into the south. ² And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. ³ And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; ⁴ Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. ⁵ And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. ⁶ And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. ⁷ And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. ⁸ And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for *we be* brethren. ⁹ *Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left. ¹⁰ And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even* as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. ¹¹ Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

1. Lot - took the choice land

Abram had to trust God to allow the land to produce for his family and livestock.

2. Isaac - was to be laid on the altar

Genesis 22:1-13 (KJV)

¹ And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*. ² And he said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I

will tell thee of. ³ And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. ⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. ⁵ And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. ⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid *it* upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. ⁷ And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering? ⁸ And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. ⁹ And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. ¹² And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me. ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

3. COMMENDATION OF FAITH

Romans 4:19-23 (KJV)

¹⁹ And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: ²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; ²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. ²² And therefore it was imputed to him

for righteousness. ²³ Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

Hebrews 11:8-13 (KJV)

⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. ⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: ¹⁰ For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God. ¹¹ Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. ¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

James 2:23 (KJV)

²³ And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.