

Genesis 12

Faith- Slide show

Overarching Themes

Divine - Human relationships, Posterity, land.

The promise of blessings

1. I will make you into a great nation .
2. I will bless you .
3. I'll make your name great .
4. you will be a blessing .
5. I will bless those who bless you .
6. whoever curses you I will curse .
7. all peoples on earth will be blessed through you

The life of faith entails prompt obedience to God's word on a pilgrimage based on a revealed and perceived vision, faced demands and ruthless abandonment of the past.

Most people in this time never wanted to leave the solidarity of their family.

For Abraham to have worshipped God would have meant he would have had to given up worshipping at the other festivals. This would have caused friction with the people around him.

The idea of faith is stressed in these passages. Abram was told to leave several things—his “country,” his **people**, and his **father’s household** (Gen. 12:1). But he was told nothing about the land to which he must go. His departure required an unparalleled act of faith. The themes of blessing and cursing are heightened here. In fact this is the central passage of the Book of Genesis. Here begins the program that was so desperately needed in chapters 1-11 (a purpose of which was to show that this blessing was needed). This was the call; Abram responded to it by faith. The ensuing promises were formulated later, under covenant conditions (15:8-21).

“ The importance of the stranger in patriarchal history is illustrated best in chaps. 18–20, where the custom of hospitality plays a central role. A “sojourner” (*gēr*) is a person who lives among a population with whom he usually has no family affiliation (but cp. 32:4) and does not have full citizenship rights.” K. A. Mathews,

What does blessing mean?
Prosperity, potency/fertility, victory.

Note well , in ancient near East , the name was not merely a label but also the revelation of character.

Question-how should we relate to the Jewish people , and why?
Answer-should we bless them as Abraham was blessed by people.

Note well-it often seems at first compromise between the methods of the world and God's will promises works out very well. Christians who compromised might easily misinterpreted that prosperity that follows such a compromise is a confirmation that this was after all God's leading and they may become quite satisfied with the situation.

This compromise has destroyed the testimony. On perception of what had happened Pharaoh would no longer look towards the God of Abraham and Sarah.

The situation resembles the days of Noah, with harems and violence.

Sarah's treatment is that of an object, by selling her Abraham becomes rich.

One cannot miss the deliberate parallelism between this sojourn of Abram in Egypt and the later event in the life of the nation in bondage in Egypt. The motifs are remarkably similar: the famine in the land (12:10; 47:13), the descent to Egypt to sojourn (12:10; 47:27), the attempt to kill the males but save the females (12:12; Ex. 1:22), the plagues on Egypt (Gen. 12:17; Ex. 7:14-11:10), the spoiling of Egypt (Gen. 12:16; Ex. 12:35-36), the deliverance (Gen. 12:19; Ex. 15), and the ascent to the Negev (Gen. 13:1; Num. 13:17, 22). The great deliverance out of bondage that Israel experienced was thus already accomplished in her ancestor, and probably was a source of comfort and encouragement to them. God was doing more than

promise deliverance for the future nation; it was as if in anticipation He acted out their deliverance in Abram.

Abram at this stage fails, he moves from the promised land without permission, he lies and puts the whole plan in jeopardy, God acts and keeps his word.

So why is this man held as such a paragon of Faith in the bible, why does God record that of him?

Experiment!!

Faith brings delight to God.- Job is a celebration of faith, framed in the character of God!

ill- Making breakfast!

We need to encourage a culture where we are free to step out in faith, to experiment with God, "better to walk with God and fall flat, finding how far he can take us, than to never take the first step"

Faith is a positive response to the activity of God in your life. It shows the way to the lasting realities of God's kingdom, and removes the dross of a mundane existence.

God would rather two steps of a faith filled life than lifetime of timidity and fear.

Because Faith brings delight to God, he is excited at the response to his character and celebrates this above and beyond all the human considerations.

Example- Peter and his walk on water.

Matthew 14:22-33 (NLT) Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. 23 After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone.

24 Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. 25 About

three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!"

27 But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!"

28 Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water."

29 "Yes, come," Jesus said.

So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted.

31 Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?"

32 When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. 33 Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

Faith grown by intentional choice!

Do not ask God to guide your footsteps if you are not willing to move your feet.

Freedom to experiment, God celebrates the faith of his creation as they respond to His activity in their lives!