

- 5) There is an old saying that we need to remember when tempted to do wrong. "It is never right to do wrong to get a chance to do right."

- a) Abram fled to Egypt to "help" God save his life.
- b) Abram lied and told his wife to lie to "help" God save his life.
- c) God does not want our help. He wants us to have faith in Him and to obey Him. (Proverbs 3:5) "*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*"

b. The Lord plagued Pharaoh, 17-20

- 1) To protect Sarai, God stepped in and plagued Pharaoh and his house with GREAT plagues. This brought out the truth.
 - a) Abram was shamed.
 - b) Pharaoh returned Sarai to Abram.
 - c) Pharaoh told Abram to leave.
- 2) God could have used His same omnipotent power to provide food and water for Abram during the famine if Abram had trusted Him.
- 3) Many times the troubles that come our way are because we fear and fail to trust God. We then act without following God's leading first. When we do things our way instead of God's way, it causes great trouble.

Conclusion: When things are going well, or you have just had a victory, remember (1 Corinthians 10:12) "*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*" Abram was a man of great faith, but his faith wavered, and he fell in the mud. Keep your focus on eternity. Trust the Lord with all your heart. Follow the Lord's leading instead of running ahead of Him. If you are **doing wrong** to try to "help" God solve your problems – **Stop!** God does not need that kind of help. Ask God to help you learn from Abram's mistakes.

Song: Yield Not to Temptation – 364

Take Heed Lest You Fall

25 April 2021 PM – Genesis 12:6-20 – Gen2021 – Scott Childs

Introduction: In the winter as a boy, Dad cleared the snow from the driveway with the tractor and pushed it into large piles. We used to play a game called "King of the Mountain". The object of the game was to climb to the top of the pile of snow and keep others from pushing you off the top.

Abram was on a mountaintop in his life. God was blessing him. God had promised to make him a great nation. However, he was about to face circumstances that would push him off the top of that mountain.

Trials or temptations often follow spiritual victories. After a spiritual victory, we must obey the words of (1 Corinthians 10:12) "*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*"

Transition: This evening we are going to learn the truth of that verse as we examine Abram's testament, his testing, and his trouble.

1. Abram's Testament, v.6-9

a. The Lord promised to give him the land, v.7

- 1) A "testament" is a promise to give property to another. God promised to give Abram's seed the land where he was standing. This was a great honour for Abram.
- 2) The Lord appeared to Abram at Shechem [See Map]. Abram was blessed to have God appear to him in a physical form. Before the Bible was complete, God occasionally appeared to people in a human form. Peter assures us that physical appearances of God are not necessary now that we have the complete Bible. (2 Peter 1:19) "*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.*"
- 3) This was a mountaintop experience for Abram. He responded well to it and built an altar to the Lord.

b. Abram continued to explore the promised land, v.8

- 1) Abram pitched his tent between Bethel and Ai and there built another altar to the LORD. Here he called upon the name of the LORD [See Map]. He is still in the will of God

and still in fellowship with God.

- 2) God led Abram to Canaan (v.5) and promised to give that land to his seed. God had not yet given him any land, but he had God's testament that it would be his.
- 3) He journeyed still southward in the land of Canaan, v.9. As long as he remained in the land of Canaan, he remained in the centre of God's will.

📖 *If you are a Christian, God reveals His general will for your life in the Bible. He wants you to be baptised by immersion after salvation, to join a biblical church, to develop a flourishing relationship with God, to witness, to test all things by the Bible before you get involved, and many other things. As you yield to Him, He will reveal His specific will for your life. See Romans 12:1-2.*

2. Abram's Testing, v.10-13

a. God tested Abram with a famine, v.10

- 1) Famines are terrible. Crops dry up and die. Grass in the paddocks turns brown. Water sources dry up. Cattle die. People die.
- 2) God allowed a famine to test Abram's faith. The Mesopotamia valley was well watered. Famine may have been a new experience for Abram. He had many herds, flocks, and servants under his care.
- 3) Abram failed to take heed lest he fall, and he chose to sojourn in the land of Egypt to escape the famine. It appears that he stepped out of God's will.
 - a) God did not tell him to go to Egypt.
 - b) Leaving Canaan was a lack of faith.
 - c) His choice led him into temptation and problems.

📖 *"The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you." – Minnesota Bible Fellowship*

b. God tested Abram with fear, v.11-13

- 1) As he neared Egypt, Abram was troubled by a "what if" fear. He thought, "What if the king of Egypt kills me to get my beautiful wife Sarai?" God was testing him again.
 - a) In this he also lack of faith in God. God had promised that his seed would inherit the land. If God let him

die, the promise could not be fulfilled.

- b) It is wrong to act on a "what if" fear. The devil often uses "what if" fears to get us to worry or to make wrong choices about things that are not real.
Remember, the devil is a liar! Instead, trust God! (Psalms 55:22) "*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*"

- 2) Abram convinced Sarai to help him lie about their marriage. It was true that Sarai was his half-sister, but she was also his wife. Instead of being a godly leader as a husband, he led his wife astray.
- 3) Abram had left God's Promised Land, and now he lied to "help" God protect his life. Often, one sin leads to another. **Did God need Abram's dishonest help? NO! Was God able to provide food and water for Abram and his company during the famine? Yes! Was God able to protect his life? Yes!**

3. Abram's Trouble, v.14-20

a. Sarai was taken to become Pharaoh's wife, v.14-15

- 1) God tells us that Sarai was very fair though by this time she was about 70 years old. She must have been an unusually beautiful woman.
- 2) Pharaoh took Sarai to his house. Abram's lie backfired on him. He was not expecting this. He should have thought about his wife instead of just thinking about himself, but lies are not usually logical.
- 3) Pharaoh gave Abram riches. It looks like it was dowry payment for Sarai, v.16.
 - a) Abram's troubles worsened.
 - b) Very likely Hagar was among the maidservants received from Pharaoh in Egypt. Later we will see how she adds to Abram's troubles.
- 4) If Abram had stayed in Canaan and trusted God, he could have avoided disobedience, lying, nearly losing his wife, and gaining a maidservant that would later cause him grief. Failing to trust God always hurts us.