

THE JOURNEY OF FAITH - Studies 1 - 7

We begin this year with the life of Abraham. He was called by God to set out on a great adventure. These chapters show something of his strengths and weaknesses, his hopes and fears. Through him God began to work out a plan to bring blessing not only to Abraham and his family, but to all peoples of the world.

Through Abraham, God promised to establish a nation that was unique. Only this nation, Israel, would know the presence of God living in their midst, first in the tabernacle and later in the Temple.

Study 1

Call and Fall!

Genesis 12:1-20

INTRODUCTION

5 MINUTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS 30 MINS

AIM: That we will respond in obedience whenever God calls us to take a new direction in his service.

When was the last time you were aware that God was calling you to make a change of direction in your life?

Perhaps it was a change:

- in your place of work
- in a relationship
- in your area of ministry at church

What was your response?

As we study the life of Abraham we need to remember that he had little previous knowledge of the one true God and he was surrounded by people who worshipped many different gods. He had doubts and fears and made mistakes like any other man, but his obedient response to God's call had far reaching results for him, for his family and for the nations.

Note: As the Genesis passages are quite long encourage members to read them at home. Only read the verses relevant to the questions in class.

Read Genesis 12:1-9

God sets the agenda:

1. When God called Abram and set a new agenda for his life, what four actions was he told to take (v.1)?

What four promises did God give to Abram (vv.2-3)?

2. Abram responded to God's call to step out in faith and took his wife, his nephew, Lot and his possessions with him (vv.4-5).

What reassurance and confirmation of his promises did God give when Abram arrived in Canaan (v.7)?

Read Genesis 12:10-20

Your wife or your life:

3. What does Abram's plan show about his understanding of his relationship to God at this time of personal danger (vv.10-13)?

Describe how you would react in a situation where your life was threatened?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT.	<p>search of food for his large company. Pharaoh could take whatever he wanted and court officials sought his favour by supplying those desires.</p> <p>Having taken such an initial step of faith and been reminded of God's promises in Canaan, Abram now made his own plans for deception. God, however moved in and forced Pharaoh to yield to the King of heaven and earth and send the embarrassed traveller on his way.</p>
<p>4. What did the actions of Pharaoh and his officials show about the nature of Egyptian society at that time? (vv.14-16)?</p> <p>5. On what grounds did Pharaoh challenge Abraham (vv.17-19)? How did God show his concern for Abram, even when he had been foolish (vv.19-20)?</p>	
TEACHING SUMMARY 5 MINUTES	APPLICATION 20 MINUTES
<p>There is every reason to believe that Abram was comfortably settled in Haran with his family and possessions.</p> <p>God's call 'to go' and leave family and security behind demanded both trust and obedience as God would now set the agenda for Abram's life. God pointed Abram in the direction he wanted him to go. He did not give a route map, but promised a future that Abram must have found hard to imagine.</p> <p>The 'national' promises were for the blessings to Abram and his family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to become a great nation, - to have a great name, <p>and - to be blessed.</p> <p>These alone must have challenged Abram's thinking since Sarai was barren. But how much more the further 'international' promise that through Abram 'all peoples on earth would be blessed'! Abram's response of obedience has been a personal encouragement to many, quite apart from the wonderful way in which the unfolding of God's plan has indeed brought blessing to the nations.</p> <p>Abram had every reason to fear for his life as he moved into Egyptian territory in</p>	<p>Divide into 2 or more groups for discussion and prayer.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why does it seem more difficult today, than it was in Abram's time, for families to 'step out in faith'? Give an example of a family who has allowed the Lord to direct their path. 2. Ask two members of the group to share a time when they have been in personal danger and God has intervened. How can this encourage the rest of us to show that we can entrust our daily lives to God? <p>Read Genesis 13:1-18; 14:8-24 before next week. What do you learn about Abram's character from these verses?</p> <p>SING: "Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus..."</p> <p>PRAYER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Thank God for the way he guides and keeps the lives of all who trust him. * Pray for a willingness to hear God when he calls us to change direction in our lives and to trust him to lead us. <p>MEMORY VERSE: Genesis 12:2-3</p>
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