

# GEN. 12:10-20 - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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## THE PROMISE JEOPARDIZED - [\(SERMON MP3\)](#)

**Do you think the famine was a test to see if Abram would stay in the land that had been promised to him?** Why or why not? In what ways have you found God's promises tested in your life? How have you been tempted to compromise them?

**Sometimes we think we can sin and get away with it.** We say things like "It will all turn out right in the end." Maybe that's what Abram thought about his little venture down to Egypt. God straightened it all out in the end. He ended up with Sarai again and in addition he acquired sheep, camels, and servants from Egypt.

- One of the servants he acquired in Egypt was named Hagar. What is the significance of this maidservant?
  
- The price we pay for sin may not come as a debit in the beginning. Instead, there may be a payment plan with bills that come in the future. Such was the case with Hagar. Have you ever made a wrong choice and had to pay for it in the future? What lessons did you learn from the experience?

**Many times in the pressure of life's trials and difficulties certain character traits come to the surface.** It's as though crisis unveils our true character.

- What character qualities does Abram display in (Gen 12:10-13)? Have you ever been like Abram here YES | NO (circle one)
  
- What character qualities do you display when you are faced with difficult circumstances?
  
- Have you ever strayed from a godly path because you thought you had to take care of yourself? What do such choices say about God? Do you need to take care of yourself YES | NO (circle one)
  
- How can a person avoid the error of Abram in (Gen. 12:10-13)?

**Abram made a faithless choice to go to Egypt and lie about Sarai.** At first glance it seems like he's rewarded for it (Gen. 12:16). Perhaps this caused Abram to justify his actions. Have you ever tried to rationalize your disobedience because you were not experiencing God's immediate discipline?

**God planned to give Abram offspring through Sarai (Gen. 17:15-16), but Abram almost lost her to Pharaoh.** From a human standpoint, Abram jeopardized the promise by his faithless and deceitful decision.

- How did God deal with this threat to his plan?
  
- Could Abram's failures really defeat God's plan? Look up (Isaiah 14:26) for insight. How is this fact significant for us?
  
- Did Abram's sin nullify God's promises? Why is this fact important?
  
- What should Sarai have said to Abram when he instructed her as in (Gen. 12:11-13)? Peter commended Sarah for her submissive obedience to Abraham (1Peter 3:3-6).
  
- Is this a good example of submission?
  
- Are Peter's words in (Acts 4:18-20; 5:1-11) relevant here? Why or why not?

**What can we learn about God from (Gen. 12:1-20)?** List three things before reading further (1) \_\_\_\_\_, (2) \_\_\_\_\_, (3) \_\_\_\_\_. Take a moment in prayer and praise God for the qualities he exhibits in this chapter. Meditate upon his generosity and faithfulness, even to unfaithful people; his total control of events, even when things look bleak; his commitment to his plan. Thank him for his generosity, faithfulness, control, and commitment in your life.

- What difference do these qualities make to your life?

- Has God given you any commands or promises? If so, how can you respond to His commands, promises, and character this week?

**The Midrash is the body of homiletic stories told by Jewish rabbinic sages to explain passages in the Old Testament.** Its commentary on (Gen. 12:10-20) highlights how the account of Abram going down to Egypt at a time of famine was foreshadowing the sojourn in Egypt by the people of Israel later on. Notice some of the parallels. It is a famine that takes both Abram and later Israel down to Egypt. Egypt is the land of sojourning. The foreign potentate in both cases is Pharaoh. There is a threat to life in which the males will die and the females will live. There are plagues placed upon Pharaoh and his house in the account with Abram and Israel. In both stories, the departure is enriched with spoils from the Egyptians.

- How do you think the parallels would have spoken to the children of Israel when they received Genesis as the original audience?
  - How would the story of what God did for Abram impact them in their journey toward Canaan?
  - Do you see any parallels in the life of Jesus as recorded in Matt. 2? What role did Egypt play in the midst of Herod's attempt to squelch any competition to his throne?

**Abram became a curse and a source of trouble to the unbelievers around him.** Pharaoh and his entire household were afflicted because of Abram's sin. How was Jonah like Abram in this regard?

- What is so striking about the way Abram was caught and rebuked in his sin?
  - According to (Gen. 12:18-19) \_\_\_\_\_ demonstrates more character and better morals than God's chosen servant \_\_\_\_\_. Have you ever been challenged to do right by unbelievers? Have you ever been rebuked in the presence of lost people?
  - Abram was supposed to be a blessing to the families of the earth (Gen. 12:3). Instead he brought plagues upon Pharaoh and his house. What affect does a Christian's sin in the public square have on his ability to witness and share God's grace?

### **Trace the theme exercise:**

- Starting in our text, trace the theme of the “power of female beauty.” Some passages to help you might be (Gen. 2:23; 6:2; 12:11; 24:16; 29:17; 1 Sam. 25:3; Esther 2:2; Song of Solomon 4:1-2; etc.) What principles can be derived from this thematic thread. Is there any tie into (1Pet. 3:3-6)? How can a 95 year old be more beautiful than a 25 year old in God’s estimation?
  - Starting with our text, what do we learn about chastity and God’s view of marriage? What can we learn about the intended relationship between a husband and wife? Look up (Eph. 5:25; 1Pet 3:7)
  - Starting with our text, what can we learn about God’s sovereignty? Can God’s plans be thwarted? Can we, others, or Satan destroy God’s plans?

**Write down any questions you have about (Gen. 11:27-12:20).**

**Do you have any specific areas where you are facing difficulty or crisis and you have to make some decisions?** Would you share them with your study group so that they can pray with you and for you?