

Small Group Questions | January 13th, 2019

The Great Explorers — Abraham Part 2

Genesis 12:10–13:4

Other Passages Referenced: Gen 12:1–9; 16:1; 20:22; 26:7; Job 19:2; Psalm 13:1–2; Habakkuk 3:17–19; Acts 1:8; Romans 14:23

Introductory Comments to Group Leaders:

In this second sermon and small group of the series “The Great Explorers,” we follow the progress of Abraham’s decision to leave his homeland and family. He followed the Lord in faith to receive the promise of land and descendants where God would lead him. Abraham is held up as the poster-boy of God’s faithful explorers, but even he repeatedly took matters into his own hands showing that even the most faithful of God’s followers need a gracious Savior. Abraham’s fear for his own life caused him to trust a scheme to present his wife Sarah as his sister. It is very likely that the King of Egypt took Sarah as his wife in every sense of the word because of Abraham’s ploy.

Again this week, you will find some answers to the questions and commentary in bold text at the bottom of this document. The numbers correspond to the numbers of the questions. Please refer to those answers after you have delved into the text on your own. Please encourage your group members to go to the chapel website at wchapel.org and to download the small group questions by clicking on the button at the bottom of the page labeled “Small Group ?s”. Beginning next week with the January 20th sermon and questions, small group leaders will find introductory comments to leaders and other helps with answers on the “Resources” page of the Groups site on planningcenter.com.

Sermon Recap: Abraham initially believed God in the face of barrenness. However, when the barrenness became prolonged, he doubted in the delay. When we doubt in the delay we often engage in actions that do not proceed from faith, and “whatever does not proceed from faith is sin” (Rom 14:23); inevitably sin’s consequences are always greater than we anticipate. We find three lessons about dealing with delays in Gen 12. 1) God uses delays to build our faith—12:6–7, 10. 2) We can cause serious damage by decisions rooted in doubt during our delays—Gen 12:11–15. 3) Even when we doubt, God directs in the delay, not because we have been especially faith-filled but because He is faithful to His promises—Gen 12:17–13:4.

Background Info:

- Famine forced the migrations of the three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (12:10; 26:1; 42:5; 47:11–13).¹ Egypt’s Nile and, through irrigation, the Tigris-Euphrates valley provided a stable agricultural environment compared to Canaan, which was totally dependent on rainfall²
- In Gen 20:12, Abraham repeats the “Sarah is my sister” ploy with King Abimelech of Gerar rather than acknowledging that she is also his wife: “Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.” He obfuscates the truth that she is his wife with the partial truth of their half-sibling relationship.

Hook: A Question to Help Ignite Conversation

¹ K. A. Mathews, [Genesis 11:27–50:26](#), vol. 1B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 127.

² K. A. Mathews, [Genesis 11:27–50:26](#), vol. 1B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 127.

Tell us in a minute or less about a highlight of your week since we last met? (It would be good to go around and ask each person in the group to answer the question.)

Look:

Read Genesis 12:10–20

1. What was Abraham's motive for telling Pharaoh that Sarai was his sister without revealing that she was also his wife?
2. According to Gen 12:16, why did Pharaoh treat Abraham well?
3. What parallels do you see in Gen 12:17–13:4 with later events in the Book of Exodus (Exodus 12:33–14:30)?

Illustrations:

Illustrations and quotes can be found on the "Sermon Slides" link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org

Took: *Applying the message to our lives.*

Practical Applications:

1. Discuss the statement from Romans 14:23: "For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin." Can you see that truth applying to your own life?
2. Is there currently an area of delay in your life? If so, how are you dealing with the delay? Are you tempted to doubt or to take matters into your own hands?
3. Can you or group members think of promises from God's word that give you reason to trust in the midst of your challenge?
4. Do you need to answer the confession question: "What is this you have done?"
5. If yes, as you repent of scheming or taking matters into your own hands rather than trusting God, can you find a response to the question: "Why did I do what I did?"
6. How does seeing Abraham's epic failures of faith juxtaposed alongside of his glowing examples of trusting God impact your confidence in what God can do in and through you?

Verse (You might consider memorizing this one): "I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."— Genesis 12:3

Prayer:

- Please pray specifically for group members going through an extensive time of "barrenness." See if you can use promises from Scripture to pray God's word over the situation.

What we hope members glean from the passage.

1. **Abraham feared that Pharaoh would have him killed in order to have Sarai for himself. (Gen 12:12)**
2. **Sarai is said to be the reason Pharaoh treated Abraham well.**
3. **In Exodus we see God's covenant people taken captive in Egypt by Pharaoh (a delay of 400 years), leading to the Lord's intervention of plagues against the Egyptians, leading to freedom for the Hebrew people and their going out of Egypt with greater wealth than when they entered.**