

## FAITH BIBLE FELLOWSHIP of Fairfield Glade

Pastor Dave Evangelista ~ February 7, 2010 ~ Genesis 12:10-20

### "Wandering Sheep"

Our text today is from Genesis 12:10-20.

*"Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, 'I know what a beautiful woman you are. When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."*

*When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman. And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. He treated Abram well for her sake and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels.*

*But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai. So Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What have you done to me?" he said. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!" Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had."*

"Famine in the land" brought change into Abraham's life! It is implied that he was tempted to disbelieve God's promises. He fell to this temptation and he "departed" from God's leading. At our best and strongest moment we are in danger of falling.

**The trial of Abraham.** (See Genesis 12:10a) *"Now there was famine in the Land..."* A famine in the "Promised Land"? What a disappointment! Had God forgotten? No, this was a time of testing for Abraham as well as his faith. Faith, in order to triumph must be tested. See I Peter 1:7. It is often in the place of blessing where the keenest pangs of trial are felt.

While on the way to Canaan (while Moses was talking to God), the people made a golden calf. Moses then faced a multitude of trials. Trials make the promise sweet; there just is no discipline of the soul without testing.

**The Failure.** Genesis 12:10b *"And Abram went down to Egypt"*. Maybe Abram trusted the land instead of the land's creator. Perhaps he was looking to the blessing rather than the One who blesses. Our faith must be in Him, not in His gifts. Note what this backward step led to. See Jeremiah 2:19. *"Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you."* It led to fear. "They will kill me!" He was now afraid for his life. His courage to live for God was gone (but only temporarily). He found himself weak, fearful and foolish.

This led to selfishness. See Verse 12. *"But they will save thee alive."* NIV says, *"...they will let you live."* Abraham was more concerned about his own safety than the honor and chastity of Sarah. Had he forgotten the covenant God made with him?

*It led to hypocrisy. (see verse 13) "Say you are my sister so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."* He pretended to be what he was not. This was deliberate misrepresentation. It led to open rebuke (see verse 18). It is always sad when a child of God has to be rebuked and corrected by a man of the world!

*It led to trouble upon others. (See verse 17) "But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai."* Divine judgment is inevitable upon many because of unfaithfulness.

**The Restoration.** See verses 13:1-4. *"So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold."*

*From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier and where he had first built an altar.*

*There Abram called on the name of the Lord."*

It has been said, the man of God makes a poor worldling. Abram did not build an altar in Egypt. How could he worship God while living in disobedience? There is very little fellowship with God when we walk by sight and not by faith! The only remedy for backsliding is to come again to the altar (the cross of Christ is our altar). Abraham came back to the altar.

Our Lord's cross is the place of sacrifice, forgiveness, communion and consecration. There was neither happiness nor restoration for the prodigal until he came back.

**Think about this:** Wandering away or backsliding is an all too common condition and has many levels. Many suffer in this condition because they fail to "come back". God waits with outstretched arms for his children to return to Him. Do any of us need to return today?





