



# ABRAHAM IS NOT THE HERO: EXHIBIT A

## OPENING COMMENT

It would be very easy to read the initial account of Abram and his faithful obedience and raise him as the prime example of unquestioning faith. Fortunately, for us who find ourselves struggling to untangling the persistent doubt and sin in our lives, we quickly see that God uses a man who finds himself faithless right out of the gate. Instead of embracing each of the promises God makes, Abram decides his best bet is to take matters into his own hands, a colossal mistake unless God himself intervenes.

## READ THE TEXT: Genesis 12:10-20

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. <sup>11</sup> When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, “I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance,<sup>12</sup> and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. <sup>13</sup> Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake.” <sup>14</sup> When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. <sup>15</sup> And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. <sup>16</sup> And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

<sup>17</sup> But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. <sup>18</sup> So Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell



me that she was your wife? <sup>19</sup> Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go." <sup>20</sup> And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.

## UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1. In the previous passage God promises to give Abram land, descendants, and blessing. In this story Abram denies each of those promises. How?
2. What is Abram's stated concern in verse 11-13? Based on the events of the passage, what was his actual concern?
3. How does verse 17 show God as faithful to his promises? (Cross reference 12:3)
4. How does verse 18-20 show God as faithful to his promises to Abram?

## APPLYING THE TEXT

1. How does Abram's actions reflect our own when faced with difficult circumstances?
2. Abram's deficiency is not correctly assessing the circumstances, he rightly identifies the famine and how the Egyptians will see Sarai, his challenge is in trusting the promise of God. Where do we fall into the same trap?
3. Despite Abram's failure he leaves Egypt unscathed. What does this reveal about God? How might that encourage us as followers of Christ?
4. Where are you currently being challenged to place your faith in God despite the "reality" of your circumstance?
5. How can we structure our lives to reflect both trust in the promises of God and our propensity towards disbelief?

## BIBLICAL THREAD

1. Genesis 20 – Abram falls into the same faithless trap again.
2. Number 13 – juxtaposing those who believe and those who doubt the promises of God in the same circumstances
3. Psalm 1 – A description of the righteous who place their hope in the promises of God.
4. Matthew 10:16-33 – in the face of a terrible reality Jesus grants great promises.
5. 2 Corinthians 3 – Boldness is found in the hope we have in Christ.
6. Galatians 3 – The promises to Abraham are fulfilled in Christ and yours.



## CONCLUSION

It is comforting to see that the “hero’s” of the faith are not always stellar individuals. Instead of Abram trusting God’s promise to flourish him in the land of Canaan, he evaluates the situation and moves on to Egypt. Instead of trusting God’s promise to make him a great nation Abram’s self-interest causes him to give up Sarai to Pharaoh. Instead of believing the promise of God to bless those who bless and curse those who dishonor Abram, he relies on his own ingenuity. In the end, Abram is found faithless and foolish, but our comfort is not found in his failure.

The comfort of this passage is found in God’s faithfulness towards Abram, in light of His promises, despite his failure and foolishness. Instead of simply giving Abram over to the natural consequences of his actions (probably certain death given the authority in Pharaoh he offended), God remained faithful to his promise to bless and protect and prosper this foolish and weak man. Our comfort is found in God’s faithfulness, not our own. Our hope is secured in His promises, His action, His steadfastness, His power, and His grace. So we can rest in that comfort as we face the impossibilities that lie before us.

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### LIFE GROUP VISION:

The goal to meeting together around the word of God is three-fold. First, we want to more clearly understand what God is saying to us through his Word and apply it to our own hearts and minds. Secondly, we want to build a loving community with each other to disciple one another toward maturity in Christ. Thirdly, we desire each of us, as ambassadors of Christ, to look outwards to our community and ask how we can bring the truth of the gospel to bear on those whom God has placed in our lives.

