

A Lesson for Abram to Learn (Part 4)

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[0 : 00] We're in, of course, our study of the life of Abram, how God is dealing with him and what God shows him about himself, what God shows Abram about God.

! That's, of course, the most important aspect of all of this, to see how God just really works in Abram so that Abram can get a sense of who God is, what he is, how he operates, all of those things.

And so that can give us an idea, perhaps, of what God wants to do in and through our lives as well. So, Abram has been journeying through the land of Canaan as God has directed him and guided him, and now famine has hit the land.

So, Abram kind of steps out of the idea of determining what God wants. It takes things upon himself. A natural inclination would be, let's go find a place where there's food.

Remember, he and Sarah, the closest place to go would be Egypt. And so he and Sarai, his wife, had schemed together to try to avoid a catastrophe, if you will.

[1 : 28] That should have been his first inclination that things weren't quite right here, that they have to come up with something to prevent Abram, in essence, to be put to death. Because of Sarai, being a beautiful woman, and she being Abram's wife, they would want to kill Abram so that the Egyptians could have Sarah to themselves.

And so they, remember, cooked up the scheme. You tell them that you're my sister, which in reality is a half-truth, and everything will be okay. Now, in verse number 14, where we left off last week, Genesis 12.

Verse 14 of chapter 12, the book of Genesis, reads this way. It came to pass that when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair.

Now, remember, back over in earlier passage in verse 10 through 14, verse 10 in particular, that Abram, in making the plan with Sarah, told her that she's a fair woman.

And literally, some of your translations read a beautiful woman, and that's more accurate as far as the translation, that she was a beautiful woman. And so, that's the picture that you have here now.

[2 : 46] But realize, Sarai was 65 years old here when Abram told her she was a beautiful woman. Oh, love never dies, right? All right.

She was 65 years old when Abram made that statement to her. But she was a beautiful woman at age 65. Now, remember, she lived to be 127 years old.

And so, she was at middle age. That would have been, what, 25 to 30 years old in our day and time. All right. And so, that's the picture that you have there.

Now, coupled with that is that Egyptian woman, in comparison to the Hebrew women, were not quite as beautiful.

All right. In fact, there are some writers that have written both ancient times and more modern times that Egyptian women were just ugly. And they put it simply.

[3 : 46] That was it. Yeah. Now, you can realize the problem here is that if she's a beautiful woman and they go into Egypt where the women aren't quite so beautiful, the men are going to want to take a look at her and take her for themselves.

And so, that's the picture here. So, they go on into Egypt with that plan in mind and see what happens.

So, in verses number 15 through 20, we begin to see what takes place there. So, in those verses, Scripture says, the princess also of Pharaoh saw her.

So, as they've gone into Egypt now, wherever they were at, they saw her and commended her before Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

And so, you kind of get a broad picture here. The princess of Pharaoh see her. They come and tell Pharaoh about her. Pharaoh says, bring her in. And so, as a result, he wants to make her a wife. [4 : 51] And so, the Scripture goes on. So, as a result of that, he deals with Abraham very favorably. And he entreated Abraham well for her sake.

He had sheep and oxen and he-asses and men-servants, maid-servants and she-asses and camels. Okay? So, Pharaoh was a generous fellow here.

He really wanted to do right by Abraham, by whom he thought was his sister. And so, he gives him cattle and all of these things as a result.

But look what happens here. Don't you wait? Well, probably not so. God knew what he was doing when he gave the Scripture, right? About what all transpired and all of this. But we do get the picture here.

That no doubt, Pharaoh was going to take Sarai to himself for his wife. Now, but look what happens. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

[6 : 00] We don't have any indication what the plagues were. But realize, you know, when you look way ahead here, in the time of Joseph, and the plagues that God brings upon the Egyptians, you kind of suppose that maybe these were similar.

Maybe not as drastic, but similar to what you see later on. But nonetheless, whatever they were, it was a harsh plague that no doubt God brought upon them.

So, God does that because of the fact that Pharaoh was going to take Sarai for his wife. All right?

So, Pharaoh, no doubt, somehow realizes what's going on.

You know, later on, back when God, under Moses, when God does that, the magicians of Pharaoh were able to recreate some of those very things that Moses did with Aaron's rod.

But here, the idea was, no doubt, the Egyptians were thinking this was the result of the work of some deity.

[7 : 16] And Pharaoh figures it's got to be the work of the deity of Abram and Sarai. All right? How Pharaoh comes to know that Sarah was really Abram's wife is not told.

Whether Sarah tells him that, maybe Pharaoh's trying to put two and two together here because of the plagues. And he says, what's going on here? What's the deal?

And maybe she told him. All right? But nonetheless, he figures it out that something's wrong here.

That she's not Abram's sister. She's got to be his wife. And so, Pharaoh called Abram and said, what is this that thou hast done unto me?

What in the world have you done to me here? That'll help me not only what have you done, but why have you done this? Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?

Why saidst thou, she is my sister? So, I might have taken her to me to wife. So, now therefore, take thy wife.

[8 : 25] Take her. Go thy way. All right? Needless to say, Pharaoh's a bit upset here. All right?

Why have you done this to me? Now, what does Pharaoh do here?

What could Pharaoh have done here? Put him to death and gone ahead and taken Sarai. But he didn't do that.

He questions here. What have you done? Why have you done this? Why? I find it interesting that there's no explanation given from Abram.

Nothing. Nothing. So, what happens here? Pharaoh told Abram and Sarai, get out.

[9 : 25] Leave Egypt. Go. And so, Pharaoh commands some of his men that they go with him and escort him out of Egypt.

Not just to be sure he leaves, but for safe passage. All right? Now, let me ask you this question before you read the notes. Why would Pharaoh do that?

Why would Pharaoh send men to safely escort them out of Egypt? So, nothing happens. Plus, the idea that he lets all those cattle and everything he gave Abram, to let him take them with him.

Why did he do that? I'll be afraid of Abram's God. Okay. That's one way to be sure that God doesn't continue the plagues or even make them worse.

Because he's figured out, no doubt, that this was Abram's God that did this. Without really having any, probably, indication or knowledge of who Jehovah really is.

[10 : 33] He just knows this is the deity that Abram worships. So, he's not going to want to upset him anymore. Sends him out with his gifts he's given to him, and men to escort them safely out of

the way.

Now, no word from Abram here. God interjects himself here into what's taking place with Abram and with Sarah.

He sends the plagues. Now, so many different scenarios could have taken place here. He could have sent Abram on out of Egypt and left Sarah there.

Why did God intervene on behalf of Sarah as well? God had a purpose and a plan for Abram. Some things he wanted to accomplish through Abram.

All right? All right? And that included Sarah. She was going to be the vessel through which that Redeemer that was promised would come.

[11:51] So, again, let me ask you. What's the necessity here of God intervening on Sarah's behalf?

It's like he does in so many instances down through the history of Israel. God's going to work it so that the line through which Messiah comes will be a pure Hebrew line.

Okay? For that to happen, he's got to intervene here for Sarah. Okay? Aren't you glad that you and I aren't the ones that had to plan all this out?

The plan of salvation? You recognize all throughout the history of all of this, how many different possibilities there were of things happening to change that line, that lineage, through which Messiah is going to come.

But God, in his knowledge, foreknowledge, understanding, wisdom, everything else, as he's planned all this out, works to see to it that nothing interferes with how and through whom he's going to bring that Redeemer.

[13:20] So that's what he has done here. So, Pharaoh gives Sarah back to Abram with that reproof of his untruthfulness to him, tells him to leave, sent men to conduct him out of the land of Egypt.

With all the cattle, with all the slaves, and possessions that he had received from Pharaoh. Isn't it amazing how God blesses us in spite of ourselves?

Amen? That's what he does here to Abram. All right? Abraham's a bit richer when he left than he was when he came. But, God had a purpose for Abram.

Some things he wants to accomplish through him, and so he's going to do that. So he intervenes. God blesses in spite of that because of the promises that he's made to Abram.

Even though Pharaoh sends all the gifts with Abram that he had given him, in spite of what he's done to him, it's no excuse for Abram.

[14:41] Amen? No excuse. In fact, it makes the sin even worse. But now he's leaving to go back into the land that God placed him in to begin with.

But I think, no doubt, Abram recognized that God intervened. God brought the plagues to bring he and Sarah out of that difficult situation.

Now, it's a great thing. It's a humbling thing, no doubt, for Abram. I can only imagine that as they leave Egypt, every step that he takes, he's thinking, pondering, about what took place, how it took place, what God did.

I mean, after all, he realizes that, boy, he could have been put to death easily. Not just if Pharaoh had taken Sarah as a wife, but when Pharaoh found out what he had done.

Realizing, pondering, how God spared him, and he had to, within himself, if nothing else, acknowledge his guilt before the Lord.

[15:57] All right? And move on. It's gracious of the Lord to enable us to see our sin. Amen? Amen? Now, the question is, what do we do with that sin?

When we see that sin for what it is, how do we respond to it? Of course, 1 John 1, 9 is the familiar passage. God is faithful and just to forgive us our sin.

If we confess our sin, first though, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

in the original Greek, the term that speaks of confession is a term that means to make an agreement with someone about something. All right?

To make that agreement, to say the same thing, literally, is the idea. To say the same thing as someone else does or make that agreement that someone else agrees with about the same thing, to say the same thing.

[17 : 04] That's what confession is here. So, the idea here is we are to come to the point where we are in agreement with God about our sin.

That we say the same thing about our sin as God does. That we see it the same way. We see in it what it is the same way God does.

All right? That includes all the implication of that sin as far as our life's concerned. All right? First of all, it includes our hatred for sin or a hatred for sin.

God despises, abhors, and hates sin. You agree with that? Yeah. That's what we should feel about sin.

When we discover sin in our lives, that's how we should feel about that. The same way God feels.

All right? Then it also includes the idea of our guilt about sin.

[18 : 10] Now, God always knows when we sin, we're guilty of that sin. All right? Now, I'm not talking about justification here. I'm just talking about the fact of it.

Now, what do you and I a lot of times or some of the times perhaps try to do? All right.

In justifying, what else do we try to do when it comes to the guilt? Is there anybody here that just loves to feel guilty?

Yeah. It's like years ago, an old guy said he was drunk. And he got caught one day doing something while he was drunk, got thrown in jail. A lawyer came to talk to him and he says, well, I'm going to do my best to make sure that justice is done.

And the old drunk says, I don't want justice. I want to get it out of here. I don't want to be set free.

Yeah. Yeah. A lot of times we try to soothe our conscience.

[19 : 19] All right? How do we do that? Well, by trying to make ourselves think that that sin isn't quite as serious as people might think it is. It's really not that bad. What's the old adage?

Oh, there are some that are worse sinners than I am. Amen? Yeah. To try to soothe our conscience of that guilt that we possess.

All right? So that's one of the pictures here. The fact that God sees us as guilty. We've got to see ourselves as guilty.

Now, I recognize that justification frees us through Christ and His resurrection, frees us from the guilt as well as the penalty of sin judicially before God.

But as far as our commission of sin at the moment, we should feel guilty of that. Amen? And not try to mitigate that guilt by soothing ourselves and soothing our mind about that instead of facing that for what it is.

[20 : 24] Has the idea of the implication of contrition as well, but also the determination to put that sin out of our life and never allow it to return again.

That's how we should feel about sin whenever we commit that in our lives. All right? Feel the guilt?

Yes. The shame? Yes. The contrition?

Yes. And in all that determined, I don't want that anymore. Yeah. I was always a good kid. I really was.

Mom and dad dropped me up right. When I went into the Air Force, gave his career in Navy and went through all of that as a kid. When I joined the Air Force and finished basic training and went to tech school in Mississippi, our group was late getting there.

They flew us in there, put us on a bus and took us to the barracks and it was what, 10, 30, 11 o'clock at night. It was late. Everybody else was in bed. So they put us in bed and everything else.

[21 : 29] We got up. It was the weekend. Saturday morning came. All right. First time we could do anything we wanted to do. Couldn't believe that.

Didn't know what to do. But a lot of the guys, I mean, this was, for a lot of them, their first time away from home, away from military discipline for a while.

And first thing they wanted to do was go out to the bars and get drunk. Yeah. Yeah. Go out to the bars. And so some of them did. But the thing I couldn't understand is, wow, what were they doing the next morning?

Let me just say it this way. It was hard to get to the bathroom if you needed to. Because everybody's in there throwing up. Yeah. I'm having a grand old time. Yeah.

And I think, why? Why? Put yourself willingly through all that stuff. Because you know good and well that they'll get over this.

[22 : 34] All right. wait till next Saturday night. Amen. Same old thing. Yeah. But the idea of confession brings us to the point. We don't want that sin in our lives.

For two reasons. Because first of all, we don't like the way guilt feels. And sin brings guilt. But more importantly, we recognize that sin is against the righteous, holy God.

And we don't want to insult him at all. Yeah. Don't want to bring a reproach to his name. So that's what confession means here.

Now, the construction of that phrase in the original is a construction that speaks of a continual action. And the idea is here that that's the way the believer should continually feel about sin.

Yeah. So that it heads us off when we're tempted to do that and that becomes a possibility for us. It stares us right in the face that we can remember, hey, wait a minute.

[23 : 48] First and foremost, that's against God who loves me, who sent a son to die for me, to redeem me, make me his. So I belong to him. but also makes me feel terrible for the guilt and the shame that inwardly it brings to me.

All right? So, that's what we should feel. Now, ever eager to confess our sin before God, put it out of our life.

The psalmist David wrote of that kind of heart in Psalm 51, 17, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise.

So, here's a good question for us that we can quit on tonight. And we'll get into chapter 13 next week. All right? How do we feel about our sin?

No matter how small or how large it may be, how do we feel about that? Then secondly, how do we respond about that? How do we respond to it?

[25 : 04] To our sin? Good question for us to ask ourselves. What do you think, what are you going to tell yourself when you ask yourself that question? Do we say, yeah, that's right.

Lord, that did not honor you. And I sense the reality of that and I feel the guilt of that and I don't want that in my life anymore. So, let's think about that and ask ourselves and say, God, show me. Show me honestly my heart and how I respond to sin in my life. And then if there's anything that's not right there, show me.

And then work that in me so that my heart feels about sin the way yours does. Amen? Father, again, thank you for your love and grace today. And again, Father, for the privilege of the time together and the good fellowship you've given us and good fellowship in your word.

So, Father, thank you for that. And I pray now that you will enable all of us to take what you've shown us tonight and make that application of it to our lives. And I pray, Father, that you will work in our minds and our hearts to the extent that if we're not already at the point where we can willingly be honest with ourselves and honest with you that you'll bring us to that point so that we can see ourselves as you see us and then enable you to make that adjustment in our lives.

[26 : 33] And we'll thank you for it. Thank you for these sweet folks that come week after week. And I just pray to continue to bless their desire and love for you and your word and making that application to their lives.

Well, just thank you and praise you as you bring us back together next week. We'll thank you for it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.