

Destiny and Dreamers Abraham Heb. 11:8-19

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, April 7th AM

Last week we discussed how the disciples slipped into Satan's snares because their focus was on what they could naturally see (understand). Sadly, their perception was poisoned by their own Priorities, Pride and Perspective, leaving them disappointed, disillusioned and defeated! (Jn 10:10a; 2 Cor 4:4)

The Resurrection restored (realigned) their perspective and purpose. Ps 23:3 *"He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness..."* Restoration comes before Direction! Jer. 29:10-13

Restoration requires Repentance! (Mt 4:17) Direction requires Faith. (Heb. 11:1,6; John 10:27) Past failures/disappointments, makes such Faith/Trust difficult. This cycle of past failure and frustration leaves us distrustful of ourselves, others, and even our God! The disciples had to learn to replace their distorted/disappointed dreams with God's divine direction. (Jer. 29:11; Pr. 29:18)

This morning we're going to look at one such "disappointed dreamer" and how he learned to trust the Dream Giver in spite of his disappointments. In doing so, he paved the path of Faith, leaving mile markers for others to follow. Isaiah 51:1-2 *"Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: ...look to Abraham and Sarah...for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."*

Abraham's story is given more attention than any other in the book of Genesis; As well as in the "heroes of faith" in Heb. 11. His faith journey, and the "mile markers" he left along the side of the Road, serves to prepare us for our own.

1. Abraham's Dream. Gen. 11:29,30

A. Abram had a dream of a family

- 1) Abram means "lofty Father" Gen. 11:29
- 2) His Dream was initially denied! 30 *"But Sarai was barren; she had no child."*

2. God's Direction. The Challenge To Leave The Familiar. Vs 8

A. God promised to fulfil his dream, but gave him a three-fold command to leave:

- 1) **Familiar:** *"Get thee out of thy country."* (Gen. 12:1)
 - a) UR was the "capital" of the ancient world, located in the fertile crescent.
 - b) It was dedicated to the moon god "sin". (Nanna).
- 2) **Family:** *"From thy kindred"*
 - a) God called Abram to leave his family and friends and to follow Him. (see Lk 14:25-33)
 - b) God knew that these friends and family would try to dissuade him from pursuing God's Dream.
- 3) **Father:** *"From thy father's house."*

B. God gave Abram a promise of a dream greater than his own. Vs 2-3

"...thou shalt be a blessing...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

3. Abraham's "Distractions"

A. Faith isn't really tested until we cross the border of our "familiar."

- 1) Staying/living in "Familiar" doesn't require a lot of faith.

B. Those borders are usually patrolled by "border **bullies**".

(People who try to delay or detour us from following God's Dreams.)

- 1) They usually know us and may even love us.
- 2) They are close enough to us so that our "Comfort zones" often intersect.
- 3) Breaking out of our comfort zones **threatens** theirs!

C. Border bully's usually fall into one of the following:

- 1) Alarmist: Motivated by fear of failures.
- 2) Traditionalist: Motivated by comfort and routine.
- 3) Defeatist: Motivated by fear of embarrassment.
- 4) Antagonist: Motivated by control.

D. Notice How his border bullies delayed him.

- 1) God specifically called Abram to leave his father and family, they "came along."
- 2) They influenced him to Detour and Delay in Haran, (800 miles North of Canaan.) Acts 7:2-3
 - a) They were Idol worshippers. (Joshua 24:2)
 - b) Both Ur and Haran worshiped "Sin" (Nanna) the moon god (patron god of shepherds)
Sign: crescent moon
- 3) Abram didn't completely obey and as a result God's dream was delayed for 5 years.
 - a) God didn't meet/speak with him in Haran!
 - b) Only in Canaan did Abram build an altar and worship/meet God! (Gen. 12:7,8)

3. Abram's Disappointments (Gen. 12; Heb. 11: 9,13)

A. There's usually a "wasteland" between our familiar and God's promise.

- 1) Satan uses this to try to sidetrack us in Haran. (It was both Familiar and Comfortable.)

B. Even the Promised land can seem like a wasteland of:

- 1) Discouragement "*famine in the land*" Gen. 12:10 (His first year there!)
- 2) Doubt. (about God and ourselves)
Can God really take care of me? (Ps 78:19) Did I hear Him correctly? (Gen. 3:1)
- 3) Discovery (About God and ourselves) Jn 6:67 "*will ye also go away?*"
- 4) Development of Faith. (Faith is developed in disappointments)

Conclusion:

Between where/what we are, and where/what God desires for/with us, we will go through:

- 1) A Process (To grow our relationship) 2) A Path (To guide our steps)
- 3) Some Painful Detours (*To test our obedience*) 4) Some Perplexing Disappointments (James 1:3-5)

Application: Faith Always involves a Journey! (Heb 11:8-9)

Abraham couldn't stay where he was and still follow (obey) God. Neither can We!

Where are you in your faith journey? Still stuck in your familiar Ur?

Hanging out in "Haran"? (2 Tim 2:4; 4:10) "Dutiful", but discouraged by disappointments?

At every stage of this faith journey are critical Decisions that will:

- 1) Determine our Destination (*where we'll ultimately end up*)
- 2) Shape our Destiny! (*who we'll touch/influence along the way!*)

Next week we'll focus on some of the decisions Abram made along his journey and how they impacted his Family, Future, and his Faith.