

**ABRAM - MAN OF FAITH**  
**Walking In Faith Part One**  
**Scripture: Genesis 12:4 – 13:14**

**Introduction:**

This is not just the account of what happened to Abram when he first entered the land of Canaan. For in this story we see also a picture of the principles and struggles of the walk by Faith. As such we will walk with Abram and see how this also applies in our lives. We start with Abram in the land, yet he is still learning the conditions of life in the land of promise. In a sense he stands in the same place as any believer in Yeshua, who is now 'walking with God' but has not yet learned to 'walk in Faith' or as Paul calls it in Galatians 5:16-18 to 'walk by the Spirit'.

**A) Walking in Faith**

Abram's pilgrimage into Canaan reveals to us some of the issues and principles of walking by and in faith (Genesis 12:4-8). Some of these issues and principles can be applied in our own lives.

**1) The Source of Strength**

*And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the terebinth of Moreh.* (Genesis 12:6a JPS)

There are names in this verse that may be significant.

- SHECHEM, Hebrew שכם — here a place name that comes from the root word for Strength or Shoulder which is a symbol of strength.
- MOREH, Hebrew מורה — teacher or instructions. (*Moriel God is my teacher*)
- A TEREBINTH TREE, Hebrew אלון — Alon is a tree that provides refreshing shade and whose leaves when crushed exuded a beautiful fragrance (*Trees, especially the oak and the terebinth were favorite resorts for religious practices see; Isaiah 1:29, 57:5; Ezekiel 6:13 and Hosea 4:13*), and were associated with Theophanies Genesis 12:7; Judges 6:11 and Judges 4:37a; In the New Covenant we see this in John 1:49 Nathanael meditates on the Bible).

Abram rests under the terebinth tree and it is there that he finds **strength** in the **teachings** of God and finds **rest**.

When we spend time in the Word and Pray we find the refreshing strength to Walk with the Lord in Faith (Psalm 19:7-10 [8-11 JPS]; 1 Peter 2:2-3). As it written in

Matthew 11:29-30 ASV Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

**2) The Life of Constant Conflict**



(Genesis 12:6b *And the Canaanite was then in the land*).

While the land was promised to Abram, there were enemies in the land who were obstructions to his spiritual life, so too for us there are blocks that inhibit the Walk of Faith, in other words it appears to be a life of constant struggles. (Galatians 5:17)

The Canaanites were the pagan tribes which hounded and afflicted Israel. They are a picture of the evils and problems we live with and continually wrestle against. We battle against both demonic (Ephesians 6:10-17) but also carnal forces (Galatians 5:19-21, 24-25). They are our daily enemies and we must stand against both of these.

### **3) The Life of Continual Cleansing**

*And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said: 'Unto your seed will I give this land'; and there he built an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.* (Genesis 12:7 JPS)

An altar is **first** a place of cleanings. After the cleansing it provides the basis for worship, relationship, fellowship and our service to God. As pilgrims we need the cleansing of blood (1 John 1:9) the cross of Messiah to judge and crucify the self (Matthew 10:38-39; Galatians 2:20; 6:14) so that with boldness we can enjoy relationship with Messiah (Hebrews 10:19-24). The walk of faith must be one of continual cleansing by the cross of Messiah, the altar, the place of self judgment where true worship and God's power is found (1 Corinthians 1:17-18).

### **4) The Life of Continual Change**

*And he removed from there to the mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west and Ai on the east; and he built there an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the Name of the LORD.* (Genesis 12:8 JPS)

Abram never stopped for very long for he was a pilgrim (Hebrews 11:8-10). To walk by faith is to walk in the Spirit. Everyday a new step and new lessons. The Spirit of God leads us and sometimes drives us to a place where we achieve some victory, overcome some habit, take some new step of faith. A walk by faith is a life of continual progress, a never ending journey (2 Corinthians 4:16-5:4). The patriarchs were tent dwellers and tent dwellers hold material things loosely for they are conscious of the fleeting, transitional values of what the world thinks important. Like them there should be a discontent in our lives with what the world offers. We should hunger and thirst for doing what is right (Matthew 5:6).

### **QUESTIONS/ Home Work:**

Reflect upon your walk in Faith!

List the areas in your life where the Lord has told you to change. You don't have to confess them here to everyone. However, if you do have a positive testimony don't be afraid to share it. For that is how we build one another up in the faith. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

List the areas in your life where you haven't allowed God's Spirit to change you! Ask yourself why not? Fear of the unknown, fear of man, not having a strong enough desire or passion to seek Yeshua and be changed, outside pressures - peer groups, working relationships, etc. Now do not feel condemned (Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Messiah Yeshua.) Abraham didn't change overnight! The Apostle Paul quotes in Romans 7:15-16 his war of the flesh against the war of the spirit. Like all men and women of faith before us, we may get discouraged from time to time, but a fresh start can be made. To day we should put down our burdens from our shoulder and place them before the cross of Messiah, spend time in the Word and Pray, strengthen the Walk with the Lord in Faith (Proverbs 3:5-6).

### **Prayer**



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**B) The Works of the Flesh**

As occasionally happens in the believers life we find a failure in faith that brings the 'works of the flesh' in our walk of faith to the foreground (Genesis 12:10-20).

**1) The Fear of Famine**

Abram is faced with the impending crisis of a food shortage in the land to which God had called him. *And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was sore in the land.* (Genesis 12:10 JPS)

In this situation Abram took counsel not from God but from his own fears (Isaiah 30:1-3). Famine in our lives is any trial, circumstances that threatens our dependence on God. It's any situation beyond our control that makes faith and fellowship hard. When it happens, we are tempted to flee rather than trust God for His provision (Ruth 1:1-5). We escape by a flight into unreality looking for solutions from the resources of the world (Psalm 1: 1-3; 37:3-5; Proverbs 3:5-7)

**2) The Folly of Faithlessness**

Abram's experience is given to teach the folly of flight to Egypt (Genesis 12:11-20). Going down to Egypt means adopting the attitudes, the expectations, and resources of the world, instead of the walk of faith.

**a) Release from Pressure**

There is initially a release from the pressure of the famine; there is plenty to eat in Egypt. It's more comfortable to live in a house with food in Egypt than in a tent in barren famine filled Canaan.

**b) Lost Faith and Courage**

Abram lost his faith and, therefore, he lost his courage. He feels cast upon his own resources to protect Sarai, and his only resource is a compromising lie.

**c) Deceitfulness of Riches**

For Sarai's sake Abram is made rich (Genesis 12:16). This endangered Sarai's life, and perhaps its here that Lot develops the lust for comfort and worldliness (Genesis 13:10-12; Genesis 14:12). It is here Abram is given maidservants one of whom is Hagar the Egyptian. The price of living in Egypt is a fearsome one, for the back-slider and the compromiser.

**d) A Curse and Cursed**

Abram becomes a curse rather than a blessing (Genesis 12:2; 12:17), a believer out of fellowship with Messiah (through the body of Messiah) is a hindrance because of the hypocrisy and weakness displayed in their life. Finally, Abram is cursed and driven out of Egypt rebuked and humiliated (Genesis 12:20).

### e) Second type of Famine

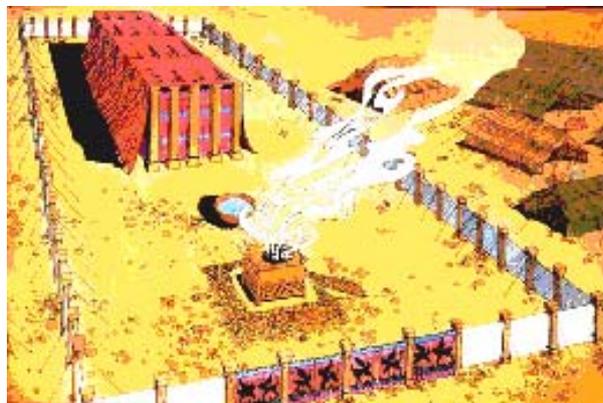
Today in Australia there is a famine, even amongst believers in Yeshua. This famine is addressed in Amos 8:11 'Behold, the days come, said the LORD God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD'. We have seen the folly of faithlessness; this came about by ignoring the promises of God. Will we make the old mistake or search for the word of the Lord, and delve deeply in to it.

### Conclusion

As soon as Abram gets back to the land, there is the restoration of a lifestyle dominated by the altar and the tent again, (Cleansing and Fellowship). And he went on his journeys from the South even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Ai; (Genesis 13:3 JPS), And Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the terebinths of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.. (Genesis 13:18 JPS)

Abram's life; like our own life is a life of continual choice. בית־אל Beth-el means "**The House of God**", העי (or עי) Ai means "**ruin**" (as if overturned) or a "**heap**", Finally comes חברון - Hebron, from the root Chavar "**to join**", "**a companion or a fellow**", in other words **to have fellowship**.

This is where we live as believers ever looking to the things of God and leaving behind the ruin of the flesh. We are either pleasing God or ourselves, we must continually choose to be joined to God and have fellowship with other believers.



Do we live in spiritual ruins; do we walk in Faith with God and the fellowship of the saints? We are not called to be the *Lone Ranger* but to have fellowship with one another, as John wrote: (1 John 1:7) '*but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Yeshua His Son cleanses us from all sin.*'

### QUESTIONS/ Home Work:

Have we compromised in any way our walk with Messiah this week? Is it weakness or wickedness? God can use weakness, however wickedness is sin and we need to repent in order to let the Spirit of God change us, and restore the walk of faith in us. We need to walk in the Old Paths (**Thus saith the LORD: Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.** Jeremiah 6:16a JPS). Note: the old English ye the plural you, "youse", God is asking **us** to walk in His paths together in faith. Let's walk and pray this week for a fresh start in our walk of Faith with the Lord and each other.

### Prayer