

Discussion Guide

Week of June 8, 2014

Genesis 12:10-14:24

Passage Overview: In Genesis 12-16, we move from the macrocosmic (big picture) story of the nations in Genesis 4-11 to the microcosmic (zeroed in) story of one man, Abram, and his family. Yet the big picture of all nations is not lost in the story of Abram, since God promises to bless all nations through Abram's offspring. In this section of Genesis, God makes a covenant with Abram and his descendants (Gen 15), a covenant that is not deserved or based on Abram's faithfulness. It is a covenant that God himself guarantees.

Understanding God's Word—Read Genesis 13

- *Read 13:1-4.* Where does Abram go and what does he do when he returns from Egypt? (Review Genesis 12:10-20.) What do these actions tell us about his heart attitude as he comes back to Canaan?
- *Read 13:5-9.* What was Abram's and Lot's problem? What does Abram's solution tell us about his priorities? How does this give us practical instruction for our own lives?
- *Read 13:10-13.* What does Lot's choice tell us about his heart and character? How does this give us practical instruction for our own lives?
- *Read 13:14-18.* What does God promise Abram that he has not said before? Why do you think this promise comes now? How can God be so generous to Abram so soon after his failure in Egypt (12:10-20)?
 - What does this show us about the extravagant nature of God's grace?
 - Reflect on how God's grace is made possible—to Abram and to us—only because of Jesus.
- Abram and Lot looking out over the land (Gen 13:9-13) is reminiscent of Satan's temptation of Jesus. Satan took Jesus to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world (things that were rightfully Jesus' already) and promised to give them all to him if he would bow down and worship him.
 - *Read Matthew 4:8-10.* When comparing these two passages, how is Jesus greater than Abram?

Living and Applying God's Word

- The strife between Abram and Lot (13:5-7) was the result of prosperity and success. They had so much property and possessions that their "employees" fought with one another. We usually think of adversity/failure/poverty as being a test of our faith and wealth/success as a "blessing." But the story of Abram and Lot reminds us that prosperity and success can be as great a trial and problem for our faith as difficulty and failure.
 - How have you seen this truth play out in your own life and heart? In those around you?
 - How does this run counter to the prosperity gospel (that our faithfulness to God results in success/wealth in this life)?
- Abram chose to put "God and family" over "career and wealth-creation." What is your priority? Is this reflected in the way you use your time and money? *Obviously, we must strike a balance here, but in the end, our spiritual growth and relationships should take precedence.*

Prayer: Ask God to help you prioritize him, his Word, and relationships over career advancement and the accumulation of wealth and possessions.

Announcements

- Camp in the City (June 23-27)
- Child Dedication (July 27; pre-requisite class, July 13, 9am)
- Starting Pointe (Sept 12-14)