

Day 7

Genesis 12:8-10 (ESV)

From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb. 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.

Abram had been obedient to the Father. His faithfulness in the journey brought him to a crossroad: two choices were before him as he looked for a place to call home – for now. Should he pitch his tent at Bethel or Ai? These choices are very symbolic as he finds himself between the two. On one side there is Bethel, “the house of God,” and on the other Ai, called “The Ruin.” Has there ever been a more significant choice for the Christian journey? Our hearts and minds are forever warring between living in our own Bethel or dying in the city of Ruin. Abram made the right choice: he pitched his tent, built an altar, and worshipped God. And in that worship, he discovered that neither was the right choice – for now.

Abram’s life is the epitome of faithfulness and obedience to the Father. When God called, He packed up and left everything behind. His had been a life that was comfortable and predictable; he had a host of family and friends to depend on during the hard times. But Abram had taken up his tent and was ready for the fulfillment of all God was promising. He built an altar and worshiped. Life was good, things were stable. Suddenly, in verse 10, things change as it does so many times in our lives. For Abram, there was famine. For us, it could be a lost job, a terrible boss, sickness, no money, rebellious children, or an unfaithful spouse. Suddenly, our world is not so full of promise and hope.

The obvious question as we read these verses is, “How would Abram become the father of a great nation if he starves to death?” Verse 10 sounds reasonable--even logical. Abram needed to act on for his family’s well-being. We, after all, are a people that have been taught to “get out there and pull yourself up by your bootstraps,” or “God helps those who help themselves.” While there is some truth in both, there is also the tendency of the human heart to panic and react instead of stopping and praying. In those moments, we tend to stop our worship and focus our gaze inward. That was Abram’s problem. He did not consult the Father for directions or protection. Often, we give in to our hurts and fears and take off in the direction of our own choosing. When you read all of chapter 12, you find that because of his choice, Abram involves his wife in deception, finds himself in a situation with the Pharaoh, and gets sent right back to where he was in the beginning. While Abram’s story ended well, he lied, and his actions could have cost him his wife forever.

Focused Prayer:

We are all on a journey; we all have options. Like Abram, if we leave the Father out of the decision-making process, if our prayers cease and our worship becomes mundane and

routine, we will find ourselves in a place of ruin and regret. Think about the decisions you have made over the past year. How much did you involve the Father? Ask Him to show you how to change your process. What do you hear the Father saying to you?

Today's Focus:

- Before you get to your crossroads, you need to have a plan. Decide right now that you will seek God's guidance in every decision.
- You will be faced with many choices today – some big and some small. Will you be willing to ask the Father to guide you in each of these?

P.M. Meditation:

How did it go today? Did you seek the Father's guidance as you made your decisions? Did you find yourself amid beauty, in a place of worship as you allowed your trust to rest in the Father? Write down some of the decisions and make a note as to whether you asked the Father for His direction. You can come back to these later to see how things worked out.

Regardless of how you answered these questions, seek peace tonight as you allow the Father to guide you. Rejoice knowing you are not alone and that the One who created you also will order your steps if you trust and obey. Journeys are often difficult so rest well tonight knowing the road tomorrow has already been mapped out by the Father.