

## GENESIS 12:10; 13:1-4 A LAPSE OF FAITH

*12:10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.*

*13:1 So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. <sup>2</sup> Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold. <sup>3</sup> From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier <sup>4</sup> and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the LORD.*

Although there are direct parallels in this story with Jacob's leaving Canaan for Egypt because of a famine and Jesus being taken from Bethlehem to Egypt, there is one element that is missing. There is no message from God telling Abram to go to Egypt. In fact, he had just been told that this was the place of the promise, and then, at the first sign of hardship, Abram takes to his heels instead of turning to the Lord. When one reads the entirety of chapter 12 and the sordid attempt of Abram to save his own life and enrich himself at the expense of Sarai, it appears that Abram was depending upon his own resources instead of God for this entire escapade. In short, the great man of faith has a lapse of faith in God.

Yet, God is ever faithful. In his mercy he allows Abram to experience the consequences of his choices, but also provides for him and his return to Canaan. Apparently in recognition of this fact, Abram does not make the Negev his final destination. Rather, he journeys back to the region of Bethel and Ai and worships at the altar he had earlier built there. Now, he calls upon the Lord.

How we human beings hate to bother God about our earthly decisions. Maybe our ancient forbearers were correct in naming the protrusion in the front of our neck, our "Adam's Apple." That bite of the "apple" from the Tree of Knowledge just sits there stuck in our throats and prevents us from calling out to God for help. What we need to do is swallow hard and know that true knowledge and wisdom come from God and not our puny mouthful of fruit. Seek God in all things. A good summary of the Scriptural message on this point is found in Proverbs 3:5-6.

*<sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;  
<sup>6</sup> in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*

**Lord, make me aware of my need to be ever dependent upon you. Let me not rely on my own understanding, but rather inspire me to turn to you in all things and at all times, no matter the circumstances or how obvious I think the right answer is. Amen.**