



DEVOTIONS FOR LIFE

Aldersgate Church ~ St. Louis Park, MN

Week of September 18, 2022 (Genesis 12:1-9)

Prayer for Groups & Personal Devotion:

Guiding God, for days when we see the way ahead clearly and for days beset by mist, we pray for the faith of Abram to set out on a journey, not knowing where it will take us, not knowing who we will meet along the way, but assured of your presence by our side.

We pray for those forced to make journeys not of their choosing, those who flee homes and lands and lives blighted by violence. May they see you standing by the roadside, crouching in their hiding places, languishing in the rubble that remains of all that they have known and loved.

We pray for all those thrust into environments that are foreign to them. May the kindness and compassion of others bring them comfort and speak to them of welcome.

We pray for those tasked...

Devotions for Life A LifeGroup & Personal Resource

The Story: Genesis 12:1-9

Context: This week we hit the story of Abram and Sarai (later called Abraham and Sarah). This is a core passage that informs the rest of both the Hebrew and Christian Bibles. Up until about this point the story has been mostly dealing with the big picture of creation and humanity. It's here that we get the very beginnings of what will (much) later become the nation of Israel, with Abraham as the patriarch.

Abraham is regarded among the most faithful in all of the Scriptures, and is included in what is often called the "Hall of Faith" in the Book of Hebrews. While he does indeed prove to be faithful in the end, we have no indication that this is why God called him. There is a way in which Abram is simply an "every man".



The core of his call is that he is to be the "father" of a great nation, but he and his wife cannot even have children because his wife, Sarai, is barren. Ultimately they will have two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. The father,

...with moving folk on, forced to uproot folk from all that they have known. May their words of promise match their actions and may peace accompany their paths.

God in every uncertainty you breathe the promise of hope.
In every conflict you breathe the promise of peace.
In every act of injustice you breathe the promise of love.

We pray for all whom we know facing the challenge of change, whether by choice or whether imposed by outside forces, those who are bereaved, those who are facing illness, those whose age and stage in life presents challenges that are unknown.

Lord God, breathe you faith, your hope and your love into the lives of this people and this community so that, together, we may journey on with you, the God of all.
Amen.

Compassion & Justice:

Community Outreach Focus:

The SLP High School Bird Feeder This month we're collecting food for the St. Louis Park High School Bird Feeder, a food shelf created by SLP High School students for SLP High School students. (see aldersgatemn.com for details)

son, and a grandson trio of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob respectively will be the three-part patriarch of the Jewish faith. Ishmael will be the line that leads Islam. In this way, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are all connected in what is called the "Abrahamic" faiths or tradition.

For the sake of today's reading, we are getting just the beginning of Abram's call. Pay attention to that to which God calls Abram specifically and not-so-specifically.

Questions for Discussion & Reflection:

- What images, phrases or words from this story captivate your imagination?
- Why do you think God chose Abram (later called Abraham)?
- What is the purpose of this "great nation" God plans to make through Abram? What does it mean to be "great"?
- How would you feel if you were chosen to leave every system of security and safety you know to head toward something and somewhere where everything is utterly known?
- How is Abram supposed to start a great nation in a land that is already occupied?
- Have you ever travelled to a foreign country? What emotions accompanied doing that, especially the first time you did? What was that experience like? Did you feel welcome? Excluded? Did you fit in or stand out? How does it feel to be a foreigner?
- Have you ever done something (or at least tried to do something) that was beyond yourself, bigger than yourself?
- To whom does God promise the land?
- How can we live out the old adage, "we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, but we borrow it from our children"? Is that even relevant here? Why or why not?

*Prayer For Groups and Persons; Devotion © 2014 Spill the Beans Resource Team
<http://spillbeans.org.uk>*

