

The Patriarchs

Genesis Chapter 13

October 14 , 2018

Abram and Lot Separate

Genesis 13:1-4 (ESV) ¹ So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. ² Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. ³ And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, ⁴ to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the Lord.

Question for Discussion: Abram is described here in chapter 13 as a very rich man. In Mathew 19:23-24, Christ tells us...*"Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."* Is it paradoxical that God selected Abram, a very rich man, to be the one through whom he would bless all nations? Why or why not?

Question for Discussion: Abram returns from his sojourn to Egypt due to famine in the land. The wording of scripture here in verse 3 insinuates a resumption of God's plan that had been put in motion earlier. Do you believe Abram's decision to leave Canaan and travel to Egypt was in harmony with God's will? Why or why not?

Genesis 13:5-18 (ESV) ⁵ And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, ⁶ so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, ⁷ and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land. ⁸ Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. ⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." ¹⁰ And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other. ¹² Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. ¹³ Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.

Question for Discussion: God had promised Abram the land of Canaan. Was it careless for Abram to allow Lot to choose what land he would take possession of for his family and herdsmen? Why or why not?

Question for Discussion: Put yourself in Lot's situation. You've followed your uncle to a far off land, one that has been promised to him by God. Once you arrive, the conflict between your family and Abram's results in your uncle offering you first choice of the land in which you've settled. How would you have responded? How do you believe most would respond today?

2 Peter 2:7-8 (ESV) ⁷ *and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked* ⁸ *(for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard);*

Question for Discussion: As Christians, we are in this world, but we are commanded not to be of this world. Lot's decisions point to him being a "world borderer". What are some examples of behavior that modern day Christians engage in that resemble that same "world borderer" attitude?

Genesis 13:14-18 (ESV) ¹⁴ *The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward,* ¹⁵ *for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever.* ¹⁶ *I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.* ¹⁷ *Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you."* ¹⁸ *So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the Lord.*

Question for Discussion: In verses 14 through 17, God repeats his promise to Abram. Even going so far as to command him "lift up your eyes and look..." at the land that he had been promised. Why do you think God chose this moment to re-affirm and emphasize the promise he originally made to Abram?

Question for Discussion: Abram did not try to control the circumstances surrounding God's promise. Instead, he humbled himself by offering Lot first choice of land. Are there times today where we as Christians fail to trust in God and instead try to take matters into our own hands? If so, can you give examples?