

"Selfless or Selfish?"

Genesis 13.1-18

WHAT DOES FAITH HAVE to do with PRACTICAL DAILY PROBLEMS?

WHAT DIFFERENCE does Being BELIEVER in GOD MAKE in BUSINESS?

ABRAM - Lived A LIFE OF FAITH / DID NOT LIVE IN FANTASY WORLD

2 MEN - ENCOUNTER A PROBLEM - RESOLVED - LASTING Implications

FAMILY ARGUMENT / ECONOMIC CONFLICT / Lot & Abram

Honoring GOD in Details of LIFE brings BLESSING to Every Area of Life

1. Sticky Situation

a. Property Problems - Ancient MATERIALISM - what to do w/ our stuff?!

v. 6 "the land could not support the (LARGE HERDS OF BOTH A & L)...for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together.

REASON FOR ANNUAL SALES > People sell stuff don't need, to other People

Who don't need it, so next year they can sell it to someone else

PROBLEMS OF THIS WORLD - Land, Houses, Cars, Jobs, Economy

NOT SHORTAGE OF LAND in WORLD > PROBLEM SURPLUS OF GREED

DANGER: "*the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil*" 1 Timothy 6:10

Jesus: "...the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful" Mark 4.19

b. Feuding Families > PROBLEM EXPANDS TO THEIR HERDSMEN

v. 7 "quarreling arose between Abram's herdsmen and the herdsmen of Lot"

PROBLEMS got Best of THEM INSTEAD of > Getting BEST OF PROBLEMS

BETTER TO DEAL with PROBLEM WHEN BEGIN > WAITED TOO LONG

Jesus: "Settle matters quickly with your adversary" Matthew 5:25

Apostle Paul: "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold." Ephesians 4:26,27

c. Nosy Neighbors EVEN before Cable TV, WiFi, 4G, Bad News Travels Fast

v. 7b "Canaanites & Perizzites were also living in the land"

They NOT GO to EGYPT & GET RICH – Stayed SUFFERED THRU FAMINE

WONDERED: Who are these OUTSIDERS? Came HERE, Change Everything?

PERHAPS HEARD of PROMISE TO ABE - HIS GOD GIVES THEIR LAND?

Genesis 15:18-19 "the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates-- the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, *Perizzites*, Rephaites, Amorites, *Canaanites*, Girgashites and Jebusites." > SAME ITES!

ONLY SOVEREIGN IS THE GOD OF ABRAHAM

"Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales...Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing." Isaiah 40.15,17

d. Spiritual Standing MOST IMPORTANT SITUATION - THEIR HEARTS

v. 5 "Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks & herds & tents"

BOTH LOT & ABE WENT DOWN TO EGYPT And CAME FROM EGYPT

BOTH HAD SAME EXPERIENCES BUT NOT THE SAME EFFECT

SAME MESSAGE IN CHURCH / NOT SAME MEANING / LIFE IMPACT

SITTING IN PEW NEXT TO SOMEONE / EVEN RELATIVE

HAVE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT REACTION / SPIRITUAL CONDITION

GOSPEL PREACHERS: "are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life." 2 Corinthians 2:15,16

PICTURE in Paul's Mind: RETURN Victorious Roman Armies to Hometowns
 PARADE of Victorious Soldiers leading Captives, Slaves, Prisoners in Rear
 GRATEFUL Citizens WELCOME Home their DEFENDING TROOPS
 HONOR them with FLOWERS, GARLANDS, to Show their APPRECIATION
 Victorious Soldiers Flowers from HOME SMELL Sweet: LIFE, Familiar, Secure
 BACK of Parade: CAPTIVES in Chains, Bound, DEFEATED, FAR from Home
 SMELL of Flowers from Foreign Land > AROMA of DEATH
 WALK in VICTORY of Jesus > AROMA of LIFE > Finally at HOME in Him

BOTH Abram & Lot WEALTHY > DIFFERENT Relationship to WEALTH

ABE IT WAS A TRIAL OF FAITH / LOT IT WAS TEMPTATION TO FALL
 GET BEST OF SITUATION / OR LET SITUATION GET THE BEST OF YOU
 James 1:12-15 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he
 has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to
 those who love him. When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me."

SAME Event // ONLY 2 REACTIONS MOVE FORWARD OR BACKWARD

ABE POSSESSED HIS FLOCKS - LOT'S FLOCKS POSSESSED HIM

SEE THE 2 MEN AND SEE WHAT SHAPED THEIR DECISIONS

2. Selfish Longing

a. Weak Devotions HEART of the PROBLEM IS PROBLEM of the HEART

BOTH ABE AND LOT HAD FLOCKS, HERDS, SERVANTS, TENTS

ABRAHAM HAD SOMETHING LOT DID NOT HAVE - AN ALTAR

NOTHING TO IN ANY WAY SUGGEST IN THIS PASSAGE THAT
 LOT HAD PRAYER LIFE, QUIET TIME of WAITING ON GOD, WORSHIP

LOT JUST ALONG FOR THE RIDE - ABE'S NEPHEW, HARAN'S SON

WHEN LIFE got TOUGH in CANAAN, WENT w/ UNCLE > EAT in EGYPT
 HE GOT RICH IN THE PROCESS - NOTHING TO FEEL BAD ABOUT
 HE WAS LUCKY - IN RIGHT PLACE AT RIGHT TIME - GOOD FOR HIM
 LIKE "Pliable" IN STORY OF "Pilgrim's Progress"

"In every great religious movement there always have been... a number of individuals who cast their lot with it, without knowing the power which inspires it. Beware of them! They cannot stand the stress of life and separation to God. The mere excitement will soon die away from them; and having no principle to take its place, they will become hindrances and disturbers of the peace" F.B. Meyer

LOT WAS GOOD AT GUARDING HIS FLOCKS BUT NOT HIS HEART

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” Proverbs 4:23

b. Worldly Desires GREATEST JOY IN THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD

v. 10 “Lot looked up and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, toward Zoar. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)”

IN Valley Last Week > Post Sodom/Gomorrah Destruction State > NOT Pretty

INSTEAD OF ASKING "is this a good place to raise CHILDREN?"

LOT ASKED "is this a good place to raise CATTLE?"

2 REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE JORDAN VALLEY

RELIGIOUS REASON - it was like the Garden of Eden

REAL REASON - it was like the Gardens of Egypt

NO DISCERNMENT > COULDN'T TELL DIFF. btwn EGYPT & EDEN

Apostle John: “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” 1 John 2.15-17

c. Wrong Decisions LAND ITSELF WAS GOOD / MOTIVES WERE BAD

v. 11 “So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company”

MADE THE WRONG CHOICE / Made COMPANY WITH WRONG PEOPLE
SOMEONE gets a BETTER JOB / NOT BAD / LEAVES A GOOD CHURCH

2 QUESTIONS A SOUL MUST ANSWER

1) Heaven or Hell? - Lot chose heaven, left Ur w/ Uncle Abram

2) Heaven or Earth? - Lot chose earth, moved to Sodom

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”
Proverbs 14.12

d. Wicked Drifting IT ALL BEGAN WITH A LUSTFUL LOOK

v. 10 “Lot looked up and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered”

Eagerly Calculated > JUST THINK OF ALL THE HERDS IT CAN SUSTAIN!
MORE THAN JUST PASSING GLANCE / LOOK OF LUSTFUL LONGING
KIND OF LOOK THAT SACRIFICES YOUR SOUL / GODLESS GAZE

Apostle John continues: “For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.”
1 John 2.16

DID LOT’S WIFE LEARN THAT LONGING GAZE FROM HER HUSBAND?

As she turned back and stared at the Home Sweet Home in Sodom?

Surely > MUCH MORE *CONVENIENT* TO LIVE IN CITY - NEAR OTHERS

v. 12 “Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom.”

v. 13 MOSES adds little EDITORIAL DETAIL: “Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.”

James describes this drift: “each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” James 1.14,15

CHRISTIAN PARENTS WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED to CHILDREN

"This family came to church, but it was perfunctory attendance. Their hearts were not in it. Their interest in money and sophisticated friends led them to associate with unbelievers more than believers. Most of their income went to maintain their lifestyle. Additional funds went to the support of their daughters, whom they had placed in an academically demanding, but worldly, private school. Understandably, the daughters rejected Christianity. The father said, "What has happened to our girls?" The mother responded, "What do you expect when you pitch your tent near Sodom?" James Boice

“Blessed is the man (or woman) who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.” Psalm 1.1

PICTURE OF INCREASING INVOLVEMENT WITH WICKEDNESS

WALK DOWN its PATH - STAND in DOORWAY - SIT IN ITS EASY CHAIR

Genesis 14:12 Abram's nephew Lot...he was living in Sodom.

LOT HAD LITTLE IMPACT IN SODOM FOR GOD

Genesis 18:32 AS ABE INTERCEDED FOR GOD TO SPARE THE CITY

GOD SAID "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it."

BUT THERE WERE NOT EVEN TEN RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE

Genesis 19:1 “two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening” TO USHER IN THE JUDGMENT OF GOD “Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city”

ANCIENT WORLD “sitting in gateway” = POLITICAL & BUSINESS Leader

LOT was LEADER IN SODOM BUT MADE NO IMPACT FOR the SAVIOR
 OWN Son-in Laws LAUGHED at HIS God, REFUSED TO FLEE JUDGMENT
 WIFE LOOKED WITH SUCH LONGING SHE TURNED TO PILLAR

Paul to Timothy: “Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith,
 love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

2 Timothy 2.22

ABE - FATHER OF ALL THOSE SAVED BY FAITH IN JUSTIFICATION

LOT - FATHER OF ALL THOSE SAVED THRU FLAMES OF JUDGMENT

IF Lot got to Heaven – he Arrived Covered with Soot and Smoke

ETERNAL IMPLICATIONS > Simple, Little Business Decision

3. Selfless Look

a. Contrite > CONTRAST ABE HUMBLER UNDER GOD'S MIGHTY HAND

vs. 3,4 “ABRAHAM RETURNED to the place between Bethel and Ai where his
 tent had been earlier and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on
 the name of the LORD”

LIKE PRODIGAL SON RETURNING HOME after BITTER LESSONS

CAME BACK RICH - RICHES WERE REMINDER OF HIS FAILURE

// RING, SHOES, ROBE REMINDERS OF FORGIVENESS OF HIS FATHER

ABE HAD BEEN TOLD TO LEAVE ALL BEHIND - TOOK LOT ALONG

LOT BECOMES A SOURCE OF MANY PROBLEMS

PERHAPS Abe thought GREAT NATION would come THRU HIS NEPHEW

Yes! There is FULL FORGIVENESS FOR SIN - CONSEQUENCES REMAIN

Timeless DIVINE PRESCRIPTION “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and
 just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

ABRAM’S SIN WAS CONFESSED TO GOD AND FORSAKEN

LIVED IN GRACE “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.”

Colossians 3:1-3

b. Consoles **HAVING PEACE WITH GOD HE MAKES PEACE WITH MAN**

v. 8 “Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine”

ABE “Make(s) every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace”
Ephesians 4.3

JESUS: “Blessed are the peacemakers, they will be called sons of God” Matthew 5.9

"both the stops and the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord" George Mueller

c. Challenges v. 8 "for we are brothers" **HUMBLE** could've Enforced Seniority

NO STINKING LIVESTOCK SHOULD DISRUPT SWEET FELLOWSHIP

We must **DISAGREE WITHOUT BEING DISAGREEABLE**

Conflict in Middle East > Sons of Isaac & Ishmael **FORGOTTEN** this **TRUTH**

Churches **SPLIT BY BAD PERSONALITIES NOT BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES**

STRONG Christians in **CORINTH** ATE MEAT OFFERED to **PAGAN IDOLS**

“Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak... So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.” 1 Corinthians 8:9-12

TO DIVIDE THE BODY IS TO DESTROY OURSELVES

“there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!"...God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.”

1 Corinthians 12:20-26

d. Confident FULL FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISE OF THE LAND

v. 9 "Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left."

REFLECTS BOTH HIS HUMILITY AND HIS BOLDNESS

CONFIDENCE IN THE PROMISE OF GOD - IT WAS ALL HIS ANYWAY

IF LOT WANTS TO STAY ON ABE'S LAND FOR AWHILE HE COULD

"Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world"
Romans 4.13

Theological FOOTNOTE > Go BACKWARDS to Think in Terms of Israel

ETERNAL DEED IS ALREADY THE POSSESSION OF CHILDREN OF ABE

"since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe" Hebrews 12:28

WISE ADVICE OF APOSTLE PAUL TO CORINTHIANS CHRISTIANS

"the time is short... From now on those who buy something, should live as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away" 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's. 1 Corinthians 3:21-23

e. Confirmation GOD SAYS, "You done good Abram!"

WANT to have CONFIDENCE in FAITH / SPIRITUAL ASSURANCE??

vs. 14-17 The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."

Abe MUST WALK THRU LAND - RECEIVE PROMISE STEP BY STEP
 PROGRESSIVE HARVEST / WORK FOR IT

Prophet Amos: "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes" 9.13

MAY NOT HAPPEN AS FAST - OR IN WAY - WE EXPECT - NT APPLIC?

1973 WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICE CHURCH > near Los Angeles

USED AMERICAN LEGION HALL NEXT DOOR FOR S.S.CLASSES

PASTOR READ Joshua 1:3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

THEY SET THEIR FEET IN AMERICAN LEGION HALL - CLAIMED IT

Saw 2012 - CHURCH STILL THERE - AMERICAN LEGION NEXT DOOR

WORD OF ASSURANCE CAME TO ABE AS HE WALKED IN OBEDIENCE

"Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 3:13

f. Consecration DIFFERENT LOOK THAN LOT v. 14 "Lift up your eyes"

LOOK OF EXPECTANT FAITH - EAGER OBEDIENCE - GOD WILL DO IT

LORD JESUS: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." Matthew 5.8

v. 18 "So Abram moved his tents and went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he built an altar to the LORD"

CALL TO FOLLOW IN FAITH OF ABE - LIFT UP OUR EYES IN FAITH

TENT > All of Life is TEMPORARY / ALTAR > All of Life is SACRED

Prophet Isaiah "Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? ... Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.... Lift up your eyes to the heavens... my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail." 40.26, 51.6

REUBEN A. TORREY - wrote in early 1900's: "We do not live in a praying age. We live in an age of hustle and bustle, of man's efforts and man's determination, of man's confidence in himself and in his own power to achieve things, in an age of human organization, and human machinery, and human push, and human scheming, and human achievement; which in the things of God mean no real achievement at all...What we need is not so much some new organization, some new wheel, but the 'Spirit of the living creature in the wheels' we already possess"

Reuben A. Torrey

LIFT UP YOUR EYES WITH THE WRITER TO THE HEBREWS: 2.9, 12.2-3

“we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory & honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. ..Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith”

SOME DAY SOON “You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Mark 14.62

IF OUR EYES are FIXED ON JESUS - WHAT DOES HE WANT US TO SEE?

Jesus: “I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields!

FIELDS not Filled with Cattle BUT CHRISTIANS > and Soon to be Christians!

They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.” AMEN! AMEN!!

John 4:35-36

Genesis 13 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. 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. 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.