

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 13: December 6-13

Genesis 13

The journey of faith is like a rollercoaster ride with many ups and downs. One day our faith may be soaring high above the problems of this world. But on the next day we may be falling into a valley of fear and doubt. The life of Abraham shows us how God helps us to grow in our faith in good times and bad times. In Genesis 12, we saw Abram struggle with fear and doubt while he was in Egypt. In Genesis 13, we will see Abram walking by faith as he returns to the Promised Land.

Read Genesis 13:1-4

1. Where did Abram go after he left Egypt? (13:1)
2. What does verse 2 tell us about Abram?
3. Where did Abram go in verse 3?
4. What did Abram do when he came to the altar he built near Bethel? (13:4)

Read Genesis 13:5-9

5. What problem developed between Abram and Lot? Why? (13:5-7)
6. Who else was living in the land at that time? (13:7)

James Smith notes,

Moses made the statement about the Canaanites and Perizzites for two reasons. First, he was explaining that Abram and Lot had to share the pasture and water with others who lived there. Then too he was suggesting that unbelievers were looking on as the dispute between the herdsmen intensified. Unbelievers always rejoice when believers quarrel.¹

7. Why did Abram want to end the quarreling that was taking place? (13:8)

8. What solution did Abram propose to Lot? (13:9)

Abram loved his Nephew, Lot. With no thought to himself, Abram was willing to give Lot the first choice of the best land. He valued peace in his family as a greater blessing than property. Kent Hughes observes,

Abram's words were explicitly tender. Twice he says in the Hebrew, "I pray you" (please). He appealed to their kinship. The sense is, "men should not quarrel, let alone brothers." Unlike Cain, Abram saw himself as his brother's keeper (cf. 4:9).²

Read Genesis 13:10-13

9. What did Lot notice about the plain of Jordan? (13:10)

10. What land did Lot choose? (13:11)

Paul Kissling points out that "moving to the east" in Genesis is often symbolic for moving away from God. He writes,

Moving to the east in the book of Genesis is not a sign of God's favor, but his judgment. When Adam and Eve leave Eden they travel east. Cain is banished to wandering in the east. Babel was built in the east. The non-chosen sons of Abraham and Keturah are sent out to the east. When the Israelites left the presence of God in the Tabernacle or Temple they went east. The fact that Lot travels east is a hint to the readers that he is heading into danger away from the Lord's presence.³

11. Where did Abram and Lot end up living? (13:12)

12. How does the Bible describe Sodom in verse 13?

The Hebrew text emphasizes just how evil Sodom was. The men of Sodom were not only "wicked" (רע), they were also "sinners" (שׁוֹטְטִים) "great" (גָּדוֹל) "against the LORD" (לְיְהוָה). It is interesting to note that the word for "men" here is not the general word for humans or people. This is the specific word for males.

¹ James Smith, *The Pentateuch* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 123.

² R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 200.

³ Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 81.

Read Genesis 13:14-18

13. What did the LORD promise to give to Abram? (13:14-15)
14. What did the LORD promise concerning Abram's offspring? (13:16)
15. What did God command Abram to do in verse 17? Why?

The Hebrew word for "walk" is in the *hithpael* form, a verb stem that is intensive and reflexive. The reflexive idea means that the subject (Abram) is both doing the action and receiving the action. The intensive idea emphasizes the process and the purpose of the action. Kissling explains why this is much more than just a survey of land. He writes,

The Hebrew verb translated as "walk through" is in the *hithpael*, an unusual form which occurs in instances of God's special presence. The Lord "walked" in the Garden in the cool of the day (Gen 3:8); Enoch and Noah were said to have walked with God (Gen 5:22, 24; 6:8)... Since the land is God's gift, to walk through the length and breadth of it is, in a sense, to experience God's presence and this is hinted at by the use of the *hithpael* of הָלַךְ (*hālak*, "walk").⁴

16. Where did Abram go in verse 18?

We learn from Genesis 14:13 that "Mamre" was one of three Amorite brothers with whom Abram had an alliance.

17. What did Abram build at Hebron? (13:18)
18. Why is it sometimes hard to get along with family members?
19. When have you seen families divided over wealth or possessions?
20. What lessons can be learned from the way Abram resolved the conflict with Lot?
21. How can you encourage peace between family members?
22. What can you do to focus on the promises of God this week rather than the things of this world?

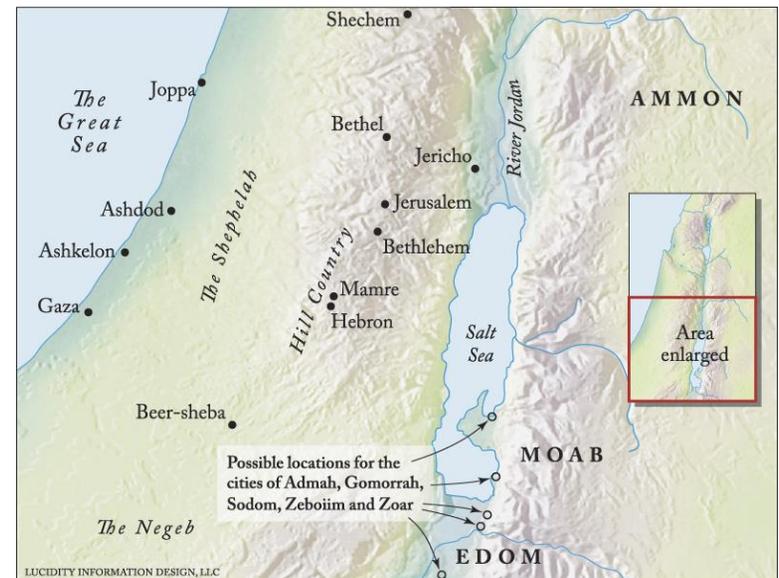
⁴ Kissling, 84.

Sermon Notes 12/6/20

Abram and Lot

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 13?

1. _____ the Lord above everything else.
Genesis 13:1-4
Colossians 1:18
2. _____ peace with one another.
Genesis 13:5-9
Romans 12:18
3. _____ righteousness and flee from evil.
Genesis 13:10-13
2 Timothy 2:22
4. _____ God for His promises.
Genesis 13:14-18
2 Peter 1:4



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