

GENESIS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Genesis chapter 13 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we saw last time, God called an idol-worshipping gentile by the name of Abram from the Ur of the Chaldeans and Abram obeyed the Lord; he began his journey of faith.

Now, keep in mind that at first he partially obeyed the Lord, which caused a 15 to 25 year delay in his entering into the Promise Land, the land of Canaan. As God calls him again and he enters the land, here comes the testing's from God and the temptations from Satan. A famine in the land causes Abram to walk by sight and not by faith. He does not trust the Lord and instead trusts what the world had to offer him and he went **DOWN** to Egypt. When you are not obeying the Lord, you are always going **DOWN**, not up!

In Egypt he compromises his faith even more by lying to Pharaoh and in the end this pagan king rebukes him for his deception! And like I said last time, you can never go down into the world and leave without taking something with you. For Abram, it was a maidservant that he obtained for his wife and this woman, Hagar, would be a thorn not only in his side but also in the side of his descendants, even to this day!

As we move into Genesis chapter 13 tonight, we are going to see how gracious God is as we walk by faith. Alexander Whyte put it like this; "The Christian life is basically a series of new beginnings." I am so grateful for that! With that said, let's begin reading in Genesis chapter 13, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us tonight as we study His Word!

GENESIS 13**VERSES 1-4**

1. Here we see Abram return to the place that God called him to in the first place, he returned to the land of promise and there he worshiped the Lord! Remember, he went ***DOWN*** to Egypt for help instead of trusting in the Lord. He looked to the world for help instead of the Lord. But now he goes ***UP***, he returns to his first love, he goes back to the house of God!

2. I find it interesting that when believers go into the world, when they sin, the Devil convinces them that the house of God is the last place they should go, and they listen to his lies! God wanted Abram to return and when he did, he was starting over again, but he was where God wanted him to be. If you are in that place of walking from the Lord, won't you return to Him, obey His voice, return to the house of the Lord, that place of fellowship with Him. Listen to what the Lord said in Jeremiah 4:1, **“If you will return, O Israel,’ says the LORD, ‘Return to Me; And if you will put away your abominations out of My sight, Then you shall not be moved.”** God wants to do the same with those who have strayed away from Him!

3. Now did Abram gain anything when he was down in Egypt? Well, according to Genesis 12:16 we are told, **“He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.”** He obtained great wealth in Egypt; it seems that he was blessed. He may have been blessed by the world, but not by God! You see, he wasted his time down in Egypt, in the world, out of the will of God. Just because he obtained all this wealth in Egypt it does not justify his actions.

You see, God could have and would have supplied all his needs, if he would have just walked by faith and not by sight. We too need to be careful that we don't let the end justify the means or what we gain is not always justified by our actions! And folks, there is always a cost to pay in our disobedience to the Lord. Like I have said, Abram picked up a maidservant for his wife by the name of Hagar who will become a thorn in his side and the side of his people!

VERSES 5-7

1. Remember what God told Abram back in Genesis 12:1, “. . . **‘Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.’**” But Abram brought his nephew Lot with him and a conflict arose between them. As their livestock grew the land could not support them both and there was tension between the herdsmen of Abram and the herdsmen of Lot. And this issue was not only their contention, but also their witness to the unbelieving people of Canaan. You see, Lot was a believer as was Abram but as we will see, Lot is tempted by the things of this world, he will walk by sight and not by faith!
2. Once again I am amazed at the number of Christians that fight, that quarrel, that bicker, that argue and-so-on. And the thing is, they see nothing wrong with their actions, they can justify their actions. And as the world looks on and sees and hears these things, they see no difference between them and us. In fact, Barnhouse said, “Many people will never listen to what any believer says because of what some believers are.” Paul put it like this in Ephesians 4:32, “**And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**” That is not a suggestion. Does that mean it is always fair, it is always right? Obviously not, but don't use that to justify your wrong actions!

Paul, in II Corinthians 3:2-6 wrote, **“You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart. And we have such trust through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”** In other words, we might be the only Bible some people read! Our lives, how we get along, how we live out our faith can be a tremendous witness to the world drawing people to the Lord or a terrible witness to the world pushing people away from the Lord.

David said in Psalm 133:1, **“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!”** How true that is, that brethren should dwell together in unity because there is more that unites us than divides us and our actions are a witness of our faith to others!

VERSES 8-9

1. Abram was the elder and God gave the land to him. Thus, he could have said to Lot, “Take a hike boy, you bother me! This land is my land, not your land!” But Abram didn’t do that because he let love flow. He told Lot to take what he wanted and he would take the other portion. You see, Abram walked by faith, he was trusting in the promises that God made to him. As Christians there are times when we demand our rights. Here’s the thing, the only right we have is to go to Hell, and everything else is a free gift of God! And when you live with that perspective, you can let love flow from your life!

2. If you struggle with this, listen to what our Lord did out of love. In Philippians 2:5-8 we are told, **“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”** The creator of heaven and earth humbled Himself, freely let go of some of His Godly attributes that He might enter a body of flesh to die for our sins! And Paul said that this mind that was in Christ, let it be in you also, not looking out for your own personal interests, but for the well being of others!

3. Now when we speak of this AGAPE love or this unconditional love that the Lord shows to us, it may be difficult to grasp it. But listen to what Paul said in I Corinthians chapter 13, starting in verse 1, and right in the middle of a section that deals with spiritual gifts. He tells us, **“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. . . . And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”** I Corinthians 13:1-8a, 13.

Paul is saying that if all you do for the Lord is done without love, it is meaningless to Him. In fact, I believe it will be detrimental not only for you, but to those around you. Thus, let love flow as Abram is showing us here! And as we shall see, God will honor him for his love towards Lot; he is not going to lose out on anything!

VERSES 10-13

1. Verse 10 shows us the problem Lot had. You see, he only lifted up his eyes so far, to see the beauty of the land instead of lifting his eyes up to the Lord and being directed by Him. The Lord tells David in Psalm 32:8-9, “**I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.**” You see, keep your eyes on the Lord, be in fellowship with Him and let Him guide you!

2. Another point here is that this land Lot is moving to was beautiful, it was lush, it had a lot to offer. Thus, walking by sight showed that this was the place to be, but we are not to walk by sight but by faith. You see, the land was filled with wickedness, immorality that would not only affect Lot, but his family, as we will see in our study of Genesis. In fact, Peter tells us, “**and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds).**” II Peter 2:7-8.

Here's the thing, Lot *SAW*, he *COVETED*, and then he *TOOK* this land for himself. And he starts out by looking towards Sodom, he then pitches his tent towards Sodom, and finally, as time goes by, he is a leader in the government of Sodom! Folks, be careful in this area, don't walk by sight but by faith no matter how things may look outwardly. Listen to the Lord!

VERSES 14-15

1. As Lot separates from Abram, God once again reminds Abram of His promise to him, that all this land is his even though Abram gave some of it to Lot. God tells Abram it is still his. Now, we may see these steps of faith that Abram is making are small, but to walk you need to put one foot in front of the other and that is exactly what Abram is doing here – walking by faith. That is what the Lord wants us to do, to take those steps, one foot at a time!

VERSE 16

1. How many children did Abram have at this time? He had *ZERO!* Here again is a promise of God that was given to Abram as he dwelt in the Ur of the Chaldeans and once again in Haran, (Acts 7:2-4, Genesis 12:1-3). Abram is at least 75 years old at this point and God tells him that his descendants are going to be as the dust of the earth! By sight, impossible but by faith, it is very possible. It is as the angel said to Mary, **“For with God nothing will be impossible.”** Luke 1:37. May we have that kind of faith to walk!

VERSES 17-18

1. God has given to us His precious promises but we must walk in them just as Abram was given this land and then told to walk in it. And Abram didn't own any piece of this land and yet, he believed the Lord and walked; only going on the promise of God, His Word to him! Peter tells us in II Peter 1:2-4, **“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”** God gives to us all we need for life, for godliness, he has given to us His precious promises, and thus, He tells us to partake of what God has given to us or to walk in the land, walk by faith!

2. Abram pitched his tent in Mamre, which means “fatness” and in the land of Hebron, which means “fellowship or communion.” Notice the picture here as Abram is walking with the Lord, as he was in fellowship with God, he had fatness of soul or he was so overwhelmed with the Lord, which then causes him to worship the Lord as he builds an altar to the Lord! Abram left all the world had for him behind and looked to the richness of communion he had with God! May we learn the lesson from Abram!

GENESIS 14**VERSES 1-4**

1. Here we see a confederation of four powerful eastern kings invading the Jordan Valley, near the Dead Sea or Salt Sea. And these kings were brutal. Archaeologist Nelson Glueck documents the destruction left by these kings. He tells us: “I found that every village in their path had been plundered and left in ruins, and the countryside was laid waste. The population had been wiped out or led away into captivity. For hundreds of years thereafter, the entire area was like an abandoned cemetery, hideously unkempt, with all its monuments shattered and strewn in pieces on the ground.”

And so these four eastern kings defeat these five kings in the Jordan Valley and they served them for 12 years. But they did get tired of that kind of relationship and so in the thirteenth year they rebelled against these eastern kings. Did they succeed? Let’s read on and see.

VERSES 5-10

1. These eastern kings put up with their rebellion for one year, maybe gathering their forces together during this time and they came down hard upon them, defeating them and taking many captive. Why is this so important to us? Because of who they took away captive! Look at the next two verses.

VERSES 11-12

1. Lot was living in Sodom at this time and when these four eastern kings with their armies came down into Sodom, they took Lot and his possessions captive with them.

2. Can we as Christians glean anything from what is going on here? I believe we can. You see, Lot was living in a place he was not to be in, among very wicked people, in Sodom, and thus, he is taken captive! Spurgeon makes this point, “Those believers who conform to the world must expect to suffer for it.” You see, if you are living in this world, conforming yourself to this world, you will be swept away with it, you will be taken captive by it!

3. One more point before we move on. Amraphel king of Shinar is thought by some to be the great Babylonian king Hammurabi of yore. He is famous for the code of Hammurabi or laws to live by you might say. Consider the following from Compton’s Interactive Encyclopedia regarding Hammurabi, “In a small room in the Louvre museum in Paris, France, stands a black diorite stela, or column. On it is inscribed in Akkadian, a Semitic language, the Code of Hammurabi. This collection of laws has been ascribed to the reign of Hammurabi, the sixth and best-known of Babylon’s First Dynasty.” It is possible that he was one of the kings involved in this invasion!

VERSES 13-14

1. Here we see the first mention of Abram being called a Hebrew, which means “one who has crossed over.” In other words, he crossed over to the life of faith, walking in the spirit, living in the land of promise!

2. As one of the captives escapes he heads to see Abram for help, to rescue his nephew Lot. And notice what Abram doesn't do when he hears his nephew is in trouble. He doesn't say, "He is only getting what he deserves living out there in the world like that!" No, he sees his brother in the Lord in trouble and he gathers up his troops and is going to come to the aid of Lot! How about you, when you see a brother in trouble do you come to his aid, rallying the troops? That is what we are to do. Folks, Paul, in I Thessalonians 5:14-15 tells us, "**Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.**"

3. Abram was doing very well. God blessed him. He had 318 trained Special Forces you might say, that went out with Abram to rescue Lot. And they go as far as Dan, the northern border of Israel. Let's see how they did.

VERSES 15-16

1. So Abram and his Special Forces do a reconnaissance mission in Hobah, some 100 miles north of Dan and then are able to rescue Lot and the people, bringing back the goods that were taken by these eastern kings.

2. Do you think God was warning Lot that his living in Sodom was not a good idea? I think He was but Lot does not listen and he will go back to Sodom to live. Folks, God does warn us and if we refuse to listen there are consequences to our failure to obey. For Lot, he will eventually lose everything, even most of his family because he refused to listen to the voice of God and obey His leading.

VERSE 17

1. Here the king of Sodom comes out to greet Abram and thank him for rescuing his people. But, as we are going to see, this king of Sodom is a type of Satan who is not interested in people but their souls and we will see that in a few minutes. Now, in contrast to the king of Sodom, who is a type of Satan, there is another king we are going to meet, who is a type of Jesus Christ! That is what we will look at next.

VERSES 18-20

1. The name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness” and he is also the king of Salem or the “king of peace.” Also, the king was a priest. Folks, these are titles that are given to the Lord Jesus Christ. In Jeremiah 33:15-16 we are told, **“In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”** In Isaiah 9:6 we are told, **“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”** In Hebrews 4:14 we are told, **“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”** You see, the king of righteousness, the king of peace and the great high priest!

2. Now who is this Melchizedek? In Hebrews 7:1-3 we are told, **“For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated ‘king of righteousness,’ and then also king of Salem, meaning ‘king of peace,’ without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.”**

Because there were no genealogies of this man, no report of his birth or death, many believe this is none other than Jesus Christ, an Old Testament appearance of Jesus or a Christophany. I don't believe that is what the text is saying here. I believe this is a picture or type of Christ, but not an Old Testament appearance of Him. Let me explain why I believe this. In verse 3 of Hebrews chapter 7 the Greek word for "**make like**" is APHOMOIOO, (af-om-oy-o'o) and it speaks of a model or a copy. Also, in verse 15 of Hebrews chapter 7 we are told, "**And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest.**" The word "**likeness**" or "**similitude**" is the Greek word HOMOIOTES, (hom-oy-ot'-ace), which speaks of being similar, a resemblance to but not the person. It is a copy of that person, a picture you might say. I personally believe that Melchizedek is a type of Christ or a picture of Christ, that this man was real, not an angelic being as some think. Now, what about his eternal existence? I believe the Holy Spirit edited it out to fit the type. So I don't believe this is an Old Testament appearance of Christ.

2. We also see here that this king and priest offer's bread and wine to Abram, which should get our attention. You see, these are the symbols of the New Covenant that Jesus instituted the night before His crucifixion. The bread symbolized life, (John 6:35) and the wine spoke of the joy we have in the Lord, (Psalm 104:15). The Holy Spirit is once again showing us that this king is a type or picture of Jesus!

3. In regards to His priesthood, we are told in Psalm 110:4, **“The LORD has sworn And will not relent, ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’”** This is some 500 years before the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Law, the establishment of the Levitical priesthood. Here’s the thing, the Levitical priesthood was not sufficient; it could not take away a person’s sins through their sacrifices. In fact, that is what Paul tells us in Hebrews 7:11-28, **“Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’ For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. . . .**

. . . And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: ‘The LORD has sworn And will not relent, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek”’), by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.” Thus, Jesus is from the priesthood of Melchizedek, not the Levitical priesthood, He is from an eternal priesthood that can save to the uttermost!

4. And Abram pays a tithe or one-tenth of the spoil to this king and priest. The point being is that Melchizedek is greater than Abram or Jesus is greater than Abram.

VERSE 21

1. Remember I said that this king of Sodom is a type of Satan Just as the king of Salem is a type of Jesus Christ. Here is the reason I believe that is the picture the Holy Spirit is painting for us. The king is interested in the people or literally their souls and not the possessions. Isn't that true of the Devil? He doesn't care about toys, about possessions, he will use them to destroy people's lives, but he is interested in their souls, he wants to destroy them and keep them from the true and living God, keep them from heaven! May we be wise and not let the possessions of this world that Satan dangles in front of us cause us to go down that path of destruction!

VERSES 22-24

1. Why did Abram refuse the spoil from this victory? Because he did not want any man to take credit for what he had obtained, he wanted God to get the credit, God to get the glory for it was God who gave him the promise and what God has promised He is more than able to bring to pass! And thus, instead of grabbing for the possessions, he raises his hands to the Lord in praise and thanksgiving. What a great lesson for us.

2. Abram does allow those who went with him to partake of the spoil from the victory as they were entitled to.

3. As I close this evening let me leave you with this to think about. Paul, in I Timothy 6:6-12 tells us, **“Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”**

May we be content with what God has given to us and learn to walk by faith, trusting in the Lord and not trying to pursue human measures for success, fleshly methods. God will bless as He sees fit and then He gets the glory as it comes to pass. Let love flow from our lives, let God shine through our lives as we walk by faith and not by sight!