

3. The Consequences, v.12-18

a. Lot gained what he could not keep.

- 1) He chose to make wicked sinners his good friends.
- 2) He focussed on his fortune and neglected his family. As far as we know, his whole family went to hell.
- 3) We will see his sad future unfold in subsequent chapters.

b. Abram maintained God's blessing

- 1) God renewed His promises to Abram.
 - a) God again promised him the land (v.14-15).
 - b) God again spoke of his innumerable offspring (v.16).
 - c) God encouraged him to walk through the land that would one day belong to his seed (v.17).
 - d) Abram moved his tent and all that he had down to Hebron, in the plain of Mamre (v.18).
 - e) Abram again built an altar and worshipped God.
- 2) Abram did not need the well-watered paddocks for his flocks to increase. He did not need the social life of the cities to make a name for himself. God blesses those who put Him first.

✞ *If, like Lot, your choices are fleshly and selfish, you may gain prosperity, pleasure, popularity, and prestige, but you will enter eternity with nothing but regrets. However, if like Abram, you live godly and selflessly, and invest your time, talents, and treasures in the work of the Lord, you will reap dividends for all eternity. (Matthew 16:26) "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

Conclusion: This evening we have looked at Abram and Lot's conflicts, choices, and consequences. Each time you face a conflict you will need to make choices. Will you follow Lot's example of godless, selfishness, and greed, or will you follow Abram's example of humility and godliness? The choice you make will determine the consequences that follow.

If you have already made some bad choices, confess your sin to God and receive His cleansing. He promises to forgive you, but that does not always change the consequences.

Song: Is Your All on the Altar? 381

Conflicts-Choices-Consequences

2 May 2021 PM – Genesis 13:1-18 – Gen21 – Scott Childs

Introduction: After his bad experience in Egypt, Abram returned to the Promised Land. He headed back to the altar he had built near Bethel, and there he worshipped God, Genesis 13:1-4. God had not moved; he had moved. If you are not as close to God as you once were, you have moved, not God. Abram did what God tells us to do in James 4:8. *"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."*

As so often happens, shortly after Abram got right with God, the devil began to give him trouble.

Transition: This evening as we look at the conflicts, choices, and consequences that both Abram and Lot faced, I want us to identify several principles that will help us when faced with tough choices.

1. The Conflicts, v.5-7

a. Yes, conflicts began with Abram's nephew Lot

- 1) Lot went with Abram, that is, he travelled with him.
- 2) Abram still had no children, but he and Sarai were wealthy. They had many flocks, herds, servants, and tents.
- 3) Abram had been Lot's guardian, but now Lot was a man who had family, flocks, herds, servants, and tents.
- 4) Their flocks and herds were too large to dwell together. They needed more space.
- 5) This reminds us of an **important family principle** that God established in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 2:24) *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."* It is not good for married children to live with their parents. It is not good for more than one family to live under the same roof. This interferes with the family leadership. Two heads cause conflicts.

b. Lot's herdsmen had strife with Abram's herdsmen.

- 1) Their quarrels were probably over paddocks, water, and shelters for their animals.
- 2) Another problem was that they had to share the land with the Canaanites and Perizzites who were there first.

- 3) All this strife caused tension between Abram and Lot.
- 4) Conflicts are so common. Our conflicts may be with our spouse, with our children, with our in-laws, with relatives, with neighbours, or with our boss. Conflicts often arise over personalities, child-discipline, job demands, lack of family time, lifestyle desires, debt, music, entertainment, or choice of friends. When we face conflicts, we must draw near to God to learn how to deal with them biblically. Here are some verses that can help. Jas 1:19-21; Mt 18:15-17; Eph 4:31-32; Pr 15:1; Col 3:13; Mt 5:24; Php 2:4; Pr 17:14; 1Co 6:1-8; Pr 21:23; Mt 5:25; Ro 12:17-19; Pr 15:18; Pr 18:13; Ga 6:1; Col 4:6; Ps 1; 1Jn 1:9.

2. The Choices, v.8-11

a. Abram made Lot a selfless offer.

- 1) Abram was older. He was Lot's uncle. Abram had every right to give Lot the poorer paddocks and keep the best for himself, but that is not what he did. He humbly gave Lot the choice of the land, v.9.
- 2) We live in a selfish, self-centred, self-loving, egotistic society. Selfishness is part of our sinful nature. This attitude existed in Abram's day, but God tells us that it will increase in the last days. (2 Timothy 3:1-2) "*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*"
- 3) The principle of putting others first is one that will sweeten our marriages, improve our families, build relationships, and honour the Lord. Consider some of what the Lord says about putting others first. (Romans 12:10) "*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*" (Romans 15:1) "*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*" (Philippians 2:3) "*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*"

b. Lot responded in the flesh.

We see no humility in Lot, no gratefulness, no respect for his Uncle, only selfishness. Here are three indications that he responded in the flesh.

- 1) He followed his greedy desires, v.10.
 - a) He looked greedily at the well-watered plain of Jordan.
 - b) He saw it as the garden of the LORD.
 - c) It was like the land of Egypt, which he had recently visited with Abram, especially down near Zoar at the bottom of the Dead Sea.
- 2) He lacked discernment.
 - a) He chose all the plain of Jordan (v.11).
 - b) The Jordan valley was a good place to raise sheep but a poor place to rear a family, v.12. He chose to live in the godless cities of the plain.
 - c) Certainly he knew that the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners, v.13.
 - d) Where was his discernment? He made his decision based on gain not on godliness, on pride not on piety, on worldliness not on wisdom.
- 3) He left God out of his life.
 - a) Nothing is said about him seeking God's will.
 - b) He chose to live among the wicked Sodomites.
 - c) If Peter had not told us that Lot was a just or righteous man, we would never have guessed it by his lifestyle (2Pe 2:8).

✞ *What does God tell us to do when we face decisions? We need to pray for wisdom (James 1:5). We must be wise toward good and simple toward evil (Rom 16:19). We must be sure God approves. 1 Thess. 5:21-22 "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil."*

c. Abram took the leftover land

- 1) We find no hint of complaint.
- 2) He truly put others first.
- 3) He is a great example to us.