

Genesis 13-15

December 19, 2010

13:2: What does chapter 13 verse 2 say about Abraham and what are your thoughts about what it says?

- It says that Abraham was *very* rich. There is nothing wrong with having money and lots of it; there is only something wrong with any money having you. God chose a very rich man to be the first person of His chosen family. And God never condemns Abraham's wealth in any way. Notice in **14:14** that Abraham had **318 servants** who had been born to his adult servants. Abraham was a "city".

Why is it that some criticize people who seem to have a lot of money?

- The problem is usually envy and jealousy. Others, somewhere along the way, were fed the idea that poverty is more spiritual than wealth...that a person can't be godly and wealthy at the same time. Most of the Old Testament men who got attention in Scripture were wealthy (Job, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, Solomon, etc.).

13:5-7: What was the problem in verses 5 to 7? And why did it start?

- Abraham and Lot had too much stuff (wealth) to share the land together. The problem existed because Abraham took Lot with him when he was supposed to follow God's leading without him (**Genesis 12:1**).

13:8-13: How did Abraham solve the problem in verses 8 to 13?

- Abraham told Lot to choose the part of the land that he wanted and Abraham would essentially take the leftovers. Lot chose the green, fertile valley.

Where did Lot go wrong?

- First, **verse 10** says that he chose on the basis of sight. **See 2 Corinthians 5:7.**

What's the difference between walking by "sight" and walking by "faith"?

- To walk by "sight" is to choose on the basis of what *looks* good (appearances) and **seems** (thinking or emotions) to be right. To walk by "faith" is to follow God's direction in *spite of* what looks good or seems to be right.
- The second thing that Lot did wrong was to "choose for himself"; Lot was greedy and selfish. He was living where he was because Abraham brought him there. It's possible that much of his wealth was because of Abraham's help and influence.

13:14-18: What took place in verses 14 to 18?

- After Lot went east, God told Abraham to look all around him (east, south, west, and north). God was giving to Abraham all the land that he could see (including the land that Lot had just chosen).

What do we learn from how Abraham solved his problem with Lot and how God rewarded him?

- Lot was greedy and selfish (choosing for himself). Abraham was humble and giving ("I'll take what's left."). Lot ends up losing what he chose; Abraham ends up getting what he gave up. God blesses us when we humble ourselves. **See 1 Peter 5:5-6.** God also blesses those whose motives are to help others rather than to enrich themselves. Solomon was given enormous riches because his prayer to God was for the ability to lead God's people well, not to be made rich (**1 Kings 3:5-13**).
- **Lot chose to move into Sodom, a town known for its immorality and wickedness. Abraham went in the other direction, away from the immorality and wickedness, and built an altar to God (13:18).**

14:1-12: What takes place in chapter 14 verses 1 to 12?

- Four distant kings come into the region and conquer five local kings, including the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. They take the food supply, property, and all of the people away as slaves. Their “take” includes Lot, his family, and all of his possessions.

14:13-16: What takes place in verses 13 to 16?

- Abraham gathers his servants as an army, pursues, and defeats the conquering kings. He allows the people to go back to their homes and he returns to them all of their property. Abraham had to have God’s blessing and power to defeat those kings with His servants. When God is on your side, you’re always in the majority.

14:17-24: What happens in verses 17-24?

- Abraham is greeted by the King of Sodom and by Melchizedek, priest of the God Most High. The King of Sodom offers Abraham all of the spoils from the victory. Abraham completely declines the offer but allows three of his servant leaders to be rewarded for their effort with a portion of the spoils.

14:20: What happens in verse 20?

- The first “tithe” is given. Abraham tithes (gives a tenth of the spoils) to **Melchizedek**.

Who was Melchizedek?

- He was the priest of God Most High. [See Hebrews 7:1-4.](#)

Some say that tithing is a part of “The Law” and, therefore no longer relevant to today’s Christian.

What does this story teach us about that argument?

- Abraham tithed hundreds of years before the “Law” was given. Remember that his great grandson Joseph was dead for [400 years](#) before Moses was given the “Law”.

14:3: Notice in verse 3 of chapter 14 that Sodom was near the Dead (Salt) Sea. That area today is a desolate desert. That means that before God’s judgment, the valley there was green and fertile land (13:10).

15:2-6: What is the conversation between God and Abraham in chapter 15 verses 2 to 6?

- Abraham bemoans the fact that he doesn’t have a son. God tells him that he will be the father of a son and that his descendants would be as vast as the stars.

What new thing does God tell Abraham here?

- God tells him that he will father a son. In [12:2](#) God told Abraham that he would be a great nation. In [13:16](#) God told him that his descendants would be innumerable. Here God tells Abraham that he himself will father a son.

What Biblical principle do we learn from this?

- God’s revelation of His will to us is usually *progressive*. We walk in the “light” that God gives us and then He gives us more “light”. He tells us what to do and we do it. Then He tells us more and we do that. God seldom gives us the end of the story, just the next page or chapter. “Leave your family and I’ll make you a great nation.” Years later: “Your descendants will be innumerable.” More time passes: “You will father a son.”

15:6: How important is verse 6?

- Verse six is the first time we are shown in Scripture that we are saved by faith (believing) in God and not by our works for God. See **Galatians 2:16 and Ephesians 2:8-9**. This does not mean that works don't matter, though. We are saved for works. See **Ephesians 2:10**. Works are the evidence that we are genuinely saved (**Matthew 7:16,20**). By our works we lay up treasure in heaven (**Matthew 6:19-20**).

15:8-21: What takes place in verses 8 to 21?

- Abraham asks for a sign of God's faithfulness. God tells Abraham to prepare a sacrifice and then God miraculously brings fire to that sacrifice. God also tells Abraham about the future of his descendants.

15:13-16: What do we learn about the future of Israel (Abraham's descendants) in verses 13 to 16?

- They will live in a strange land (Egypt) that is not theirs. **They will be slaves there for 400 years (They were in Egypt for 430 years; they were slaves for the last 400 years. Exodus 12:40-41)**. God would judge the nation for its treatment of the Jews. When the Jews leave the land, they will do so with great wealth (**Exodus 12:33-36**).

15:16: What do we learn from verse 16?

- The Amorites were great sinners who possessed the land promised to Abraham while Israel was in Egypt. God would use Israel to judge the sin of the Amorites by exterminating them (**Exodus 23:23; Leviticus 18:16-18; 20:22-23**) when they entered the land.