

GENESIS 13

Abram leaves Egypt and despite the incident with Sarai, he is a very wealthy man. He comes again to Bethel and to the altar he had built earlier.

Lot also has accumulated wealth and tensions are growing between his people and Abram's people. Abram initiates a parting of their ways and a new chapter begins.

Wealth

In those days, wealth was described in terms of livestock, silver, and gold. Abram possessed these in abundance and his nephew Lot was also well blessed.

We know that some ministries today concentrate a lot on material wealth, and even suggest that all believers should be very rich.

Although Abram's wealth was a sign of God's blessing, his greatest treasure was knowing God and being part of God's great plan of salvation. We know Jesus warned about the trap riches can bring and said that those who are blessed need to be willing to share with those less fortunate.

The altar.

The altar again is a powerful checkpoint. It reminds Abram he is in a covenantal relationship with God and that he must always put his God and his trust in God first. He must always offer sacrificial worship to God.

The land.

In this chapter Abram and Lot are sharing the same area of land. It is becoming very cramped for them both. Wisdom is needed to overcome this problem before it creates bitterness and division.

The quarrel.

Note the quarrel was between Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen. Quarrels do occur between leaders but often the people of God are unsettled and this creates division and confusion.

The solution.

It is Abram who exercises good leadership as he and Lot begin to talk. We know how Paul and Barnabas disagreed and parted company (Acts 15:36-41). When Paul writes to the Philippians, he urges 2 sisters in the faith to stop quarrelling(4:2-3). There were some serious discussions in

the early church regarding the matters of circumcision and adopting Jewish ways in becoming a Christian.

Abram makes a generous and unselfish offer to Lot. He lets Lot choose and this results in a parting of their ways. Lot chooses land that will eventually become Sodom and Gomorrah. It looked a wonderful land but its inhabitants had chosen evil and it became a very dangerous place to live.

God's promise

The physical land left to Abram may have been less attractive but God's glorious promise remains secure. God will give him much land and his descendants so many that like the dust of the earth they cannot be counted.

Points to consider:

When is wealth a stumbling block?

How do we build an altar in our lives? What is its significance to us as we walk with God?

What is the cause of the quarrel between Abram's people and Lot's people? How do you perceive that Abram is generous in his offer to Lot?

What can we learn about resolving quarrels from this story?

What is the promise that God reaffirms to Abram?