

Remnant Life Church

September 24, 2023

Lot:

Learning from a Duplicitous Man

Genesis 13:5-18

The book of Genesis is an account of the beginning of all things

- From the creation of all things, to the first families, to the first nations
- Those primary or first people found in the book of Genesis, whose stories we are all so familiar with, are known collectively as the patriarchs of the OT
- Adam is the first and it continues through to Noah and then to Abraham among many others many of whose names are both familiar as well as hard to pronounce
- And through the course of these accounts there are a select group of men whose stories are recorded and presented in much greater detail

The Bible gives us such a story in the genealogical account of Abraham

- Abraham is the 10th generation removed from Noah
 - From the line of Noah's oldest son, Shem
 - Side note of interest - for the first 57 years of Abraham's life Noah was still alive
 - Imagine talking with your 7x great grandfather
 - That would be like me being able to talk with my Great (7x) grandfather who fought in the second crusade of 110
 - But the line of Shem is the ancestral line chosen by God through which David would come as well as the kings of Israel and, eventually, Jesus
- In **Gen 11** we are told...
 - Abraham is Lot's uncle (**11:27**)
 - Abraham came into the place of responsibility and authority over him when Lot's father, Haran died (v **28**) and then his grandfather died (v **32**)
 - Abraham was the next closest relative to Lot
 - This is why Lot is with Abraham when God calls him
- Two thoughts on the call of Abraham and Lot (**12:1**)
 - The first is that Abraham disobeyed God by taking Lot with him (v **4**)
 - The second is that Lot had no choice but to go since he was, at that time, a part of Abraham's immediately family
- Abraham and Lot
 - READ – Gen 11:27-32**
 - They arrived in Harran from Ur of the Chaldeans (**11:31**)
 - Ur of the Chaldeans was an occupied area second only to Egypt in size, importance, and the advanced level of its civilization (located in modern day Iran)

- Situated on the Euphrates, one of the 4 rivers that God provided to run through the Garden of Eden, just above the northern most point of the Persian Gulf
 - The Euphrates, Tigris, Pishon and the Gishon were the 4 rivers of the Garden
 - Harran was about 600 hundred miles inland to the north due west from the city of Nineveh (Jonah)
 - Away from the business and excitement of a city on the water
 - Like moving from NYC to Bowmansdale
 - The Bible does not tell us why they moved but it was the beginning of a pattern of wandering for Abraham
- Understanding the journey
 - Hermeneutics is the study of interpreting the Bible
 - How you read the Bible is influenced by several factors with one of them being your presuppositions
 - IOW when you read the Bible your knowledge, experience and understanding influences how you are reading and what you are comprehending
 - One such factor is that our 21st century mind influences our understanding of how things took place in biblical times
 - This is even true with how we think of their travel
 - It was approximately 650 miles from Abraham's home to Harran ([Gen 11:27-32](#))
 - Let me give you some numbers that you never think of because you live now instead of then
 - The average walking speed of an adult is now and was then 3 – 4 mph
 - Consider also that there were women, children, all the possessions, livestock
 - Decreasing the average to compensate for all of the other people, animals and things they were hauling let's use 2.5 mph for 6 hours a day = 15 miles a day
 - If you then divide the 650 miles by the 15 miles a day = 6 - 7 weeks of travel
 - So, their journey from start to finish would have been approx. 2 months
 - The only reason I slide this information in is to hopefully give you a real-world perspective of how people really lived in that time and how God's intervention was just as spectacular to them then, as it is and would be to us today
- One thing that we see throughout the life of Abraham is that God always supplied an abundance for he and his families
- After a stopover in Egypt (where Abraham did not exactly behave as a godly man) they left very wealthy (not the last time this would be the case)
 - By the time they had come back through the second time, he and Lot had acquired so much that the land could not support them

READ – Genesis 13:8-18

We now see the duplicitous nature of Lot begin to emerge (IOW his 2 ways of thinking as well as living)

- Lot is given the choice, by Abraham, of the land for them to divide
 - As his elder – meaning his superior - Lot should have deferred to Abraham
 - But he took the first choice and in doing so revealed some things about himself

1. Lot did not understand humility

- a. In the culture of that day the hierarchy within the family was unbreakable and unchallenged
 - i. This was one of the main reasons Joseph’s brothers hated him so much
 - ii. Have you ever thought after reading Joseph’s story, “That seems to be a bit of overreaction to a dream!”
 - iii. Not when you understand that his dreams placed him, the youngest at the time, above them - unthinkable
- b. The head of the family held absolute authority in all matters that impacted the entire entourage
- c. It did not matter that Abraham gave Lot first choice, it was not his pace to accept the offer
- d. But that is what pride does
 - i. It puts you in places that you do not belong
- e. And because of that, it is why you will always fall
- f. **Prov 16:18** - *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*
- g. Lot allowed his “success” – something he had because of Abraham – to elevate himself to a position that was not his

2. Lot did not understand gratitude

- a. Much, if not all, of what he had he owed to Abraham (also in part from the death of his father)
- b. The Hittites called Abraham a mighty prince in **Gen 23**
 - i. Lot was in line as a possible heir of Abraham and would have benefitted greatly by his position
 - ii. But he did not live in gratitude
- c. I spoke yesterday at the memorial service about appreciating what and who you have in your life
- d. The great 20th-century American poet Mya Angelou wrote, *Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good.*
- e. Faith and gratitude should live side by side in your life
- f. And as we have said many times here, few things angered God faster than when the Israelites grumbled and complained
- g. I can assure you His view on that has not changed

3. Lot put his faith and trust in worldly wealth rather than in God
 - a. The Bible does not condemn wealth
 - b. It condemns putting your trust in possessions and loving it more than God
 - i. **1 Tim 6:17** - *Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment*
 - c. To trust God to provide would have meant giving back to Abraham the first choice of land in which to live
 - d. Lot was presented with an opportunity to demonstrate his faith in the care of God but instead chose to rely on the care of the world
- What did these weaknesses do to him – what were the consequences?
 - It put him on a path of destruction that cost him nearly everything
 - And we see the progression of his divided thinking in his life
 - **13:12** – he settles by pitching his tent near Sodom
 - Make no mistake, the sins of Sodom and the neighboring Gomorrah, were not unknown
 - **14:12** – Lot is captured in a war as a member of Sodom’s population
 - This means that Lot has moved from the suburbs into the city – a resident
 - **19:1** – After being rescued by Abraham, Lot now is in a place of prominence within the city as he sits at the gate
 - But God in his mercy still spared Lot
 - **2 Peter 2:7** – calls him a righteous man who was distressed by what he saw happening around him in Sodom
 - Yet he stayed and even got in deeper with them
 - Why did he not leave?
 - It was not even Lot who pleaded with God to spare the city it was Abraham (**Gen 18:1-33**)
- When you try and live with a foot in both worlds you will end up suffering the consequences
 - The Bible calls it being lukewarm (**Rev 3**)
 - God will not accept that way of living
- Lot tried to play both sides
 - Peter called him a man of righteousness meaning that Lot did understand what it mean to live for God
 - But because he was not fully committed to living his life that way...
 - And because of his duplicitous nature
 - He lost his home
 - He lost his wife
 - And in a drunken stupor he fathers 2 sons named Moab and Ammi through his own daughters (**Gen 19:30-38**)

- Their descendants will become the Moabites and the Ammonites
- Two nations of people that would become and remain the enemies of Israel

The dangers of living a dual spiritual life and the lessons of Lot are clearly warnings for us today

- You must choose how you are going to live your life
 - IOW, whose side are you going to be on?
 - You cannot serve both God and the world
 - **Math 6:24** - *“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money (the world).”*