

# Readings

## Scripture

<sup>1</sup>So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb.

<sup>2</sup>Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. <sup>3</sup>And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, <sup>4</sup>to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the Lord. <sup>5</sup>And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, <sup>6</sup>so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, <sup>7</sup>and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land.

<sup>8</sup>Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. <sup>9</sup>Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." <sup>10</sup>And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) <sup>11</sup>So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other. <sup>12</sup>Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. <sup>13</sup>Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.

<sup>14</sup>The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, <sup>15</sup>for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. <sup>16</sup>I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. <sup>17</sup>Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." <sup>18</sup>So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the Lord.

- Genesis 13:1-18 (English Standard Version)

## Reflection

The pilgrim frequently faces difficult moral choices. Abraham fears he can only escape death by tarnishing his honor through lies and by jeopardizing the honor and purity of his wife. Is being defiled better than death? If we act out of fear, we are not acting out of faith. Without faith we cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6), and whatever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). Furthermore, the coward denies God the opportunity to glorify himself. Jesus said that unless we take up our cross, the symbol of death, we are not worthy to be his disciples (Matthew 16:24-27). Jesus forewarns Peter that Satan will tempt him to disown his Lord to save himself (Luke 22:31-34). Afterward Peter repents of his cowardice (Luke 22:54-62).

- Bruce Waltke, *Genesis* (p. 216)

# Sermon Outline

## We Are What We Love

Genesis 13:1-18

*The Life of Blessing*

Brad Anderson

*Since God has created humanity to bear his image; we are destined to become more like what we worship (for better or for worse)... (Genesis 12:1-4)*

### How does this covenant dynamic of blessings and curses surface in Abram's life?

#### Faith – Abram is learning to worship God in the middle of conflicts...

(Genesis 13:1-7)

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#### Hope – Abram is learning to worship God in the middle of choices...

(Genesis 13:8-13)

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#### Love – Abram is learning to worship God in the middle of covenant...

(Genesis 13:14-18)

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### Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- Listen closely this week to what you hear people saying about love. When you hear people making comments, "I love...(this or that)", what do you hear them saying about love?
- After Abram's "exile" in Egypt, he demonstrates more faith in his relationship with Lot in Genesis 13:1-14:16. When the land cannot support both him and Lot, he allows Lot to choose whichever land he might want (Genesis 13:8-13). When Lot is taken captive in a war by the kings of that area, Abram goes to rescue him (Genesis 14:12-16). How does the Lord affirm Abram's faith and his own promises in Genesis 13:1-14:16?
- What do you make of Lot's decision to separate from Abram's community?
- Faith, hope, and love are three qualities that summarize God's renewing grace within the human race. How do you see the fruit of this grace in Abram's life in Genesis 13? How is the image of God in Abram being restored?
- What are some of your big observations to this point in our study of the life of Abram?