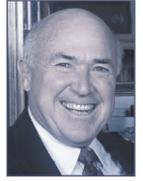


THE LOOK OF FAITH—PART 2

SIMPLY TEACHING THE WORD SIMPLY—PASTOR CHUCK SMITH

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ABRAM AND LOT SEPARATE

Not long after Abram and Lot returned to Canaan, a problem arose between them. They each had large flocks, herds, and tents, and it became clear that the land could not support them both. So Abram invited Lot to choose a portion of the land and occupy whatever part he desired. If Lot went to the right, Abram would go to the left. We read, *And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan ... then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan* (Genesis 13:10a, 11a). We learn that while Lot was a man of sight, Abram was a man of faith. Abram could see the invisible while Lot was fixed on the visible.

The sojourn in Egypt had cost Lot, as he had acquired a real taste for the fine things available in an advanced, pagan culture. So as a man of sight, not of faith, Lot chose the place in Canaan that most resembled Egypt—the plain of Jordan, the home of Sodom and Gomorrah.

By all rights, Lot should have deferred the choice to Abram—that would have been the honorable thing to do as the nephew and as the younger man. Yet even so, we have no indication that Abram felt animosity toward Lot. Abram had such a strong commitment to God that the choice didn't matter to him. "I'll take what's left, Lot. You take what you want." It's beautiful to witness a life of commitment that is able to say, "Whatever way the Lord leads, I'll take it."

READY TO OBEY FULLY

When Lot moved to the plain of Jordan, Abram had finally obeyed God's instructions fully. Not only had Abram left Babylon, he had now also separated himself from his family. I like that about God. If we're not willing at first to follow His command, then He'll allow things to happen so we will become willing. Because God loves you, He is going to see His plan executed in your life. You may rebel against it. You may disobey, but God will continue to work in your life until you become willing.

That's just what happened to Abram. After Lot and Abram separated from one another, the Lord again appeared to Abram and said,

Abram, look north. From that point, Abram could see Mount Hermon. Now look south, down toward the Negev. Look east toward Moab and the plain of Jordan. Look west

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toward the Mediterranean. You see all of that land? I'm going to give it all to you and your descendants, forever. And then God added,

And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.

GENESIS 13:16-17

God was essentially saying, *Abram, I've given all this land to your descendants, who will outnumber the grains of sand on the seashore. That's how much I'm going to bless you. However, you must step out and appropriate it. Walk through the land, from north to south and from east to west because I have given it to you.* So that's just what Abram did.

Through this incident, Abram provides us with yet another example of what it means to walk in faith with God.

Just as Abram needed to step out in faith and walk the land, we need to do the same. When God promises something to us, we must step out in faith and appropriate those promises. We need to lay hold of them in order for God to bless us.

THE GREATEST PROMISE OF ALL

Genesis 15 records Abram and God's next conversation:

"Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them. ... So shall your descendants be." And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

GENESIS 15:5b-6

This time, Abram gave the very best response one can give when God issues a promise: He believed God. This is more remarkable than it appears on the surface, because Abram didn't just believe that God was going to give him many descendants. Abram believed that God would, through his descendants, bring the Messiah into the world.

The word translated "descendants" is actually the Hebrew term for "seed"—in the singular, not the plural. That's why the apostle Paul said in Galatians 3:16, ***Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.***

Abraham believed God's promise that his Seed, the Messiah, would one day come into the world. He looked forward in time and believed the promise of God. We look back in time at the fulfillment of the promise in the coming of Jesus Christ. When we believe that Jesus died for our sins upon the cross, and on the third day after His crucifixion rose from the dead, God accounts us righteous, just as He did Abraham, the man of faith.