

## **Genesis 13:14-18 – Promises- A Help for those Under Trials**

Calvin, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Trapp, Pulpit, PASN, Whytock, Delitzsch, Geneva, Poole, Leupold, Gill

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: How do you deal with that frustration...like the frustration of having a stubborn, wayward child, or the frustration of not advancing in your career, or the frustration of having an unhelpful spouse, or the frustration of constant sickness? Abram was faced with similar difficulties and you can see today how God dealt with Abram in those circumstances (He had a selfish son with a no-good future.) God drew Abram's mind back to his promises to him, and reminded Abram of his obligation to plan and work as well. This is what we will examine today.

Our headings are: **Promise of Plenty – Land**, **Promise of Plenty – Lineage**, 血统 and **Promise of Plenty – Response**.

Our goals are: That you will remember God's covenant promises that come to you through Jesus Christ so that you will not be unduly attached to things of this world and learn to **take whatever God lets you accomplish from your plans, and you will accept whatever things God stops in your plans**.

### **Promise of Plenty - Land**

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; 15 "for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.

1. Abram had learned “that in whatever state he was to be content.” He was content because he knew what he had in Christ Jesus. He had a heavenly home in eternal security through Jesus Christ. Because of this, Abram was willing to give up anything in this world, especially when giving up things in this world would result in peace between brothers.

Hebrews 11:10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. **16** But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

The man whom God graciously gives wealth is usually the man who is least tied to wealth...and that was the case with Abram. He was rich but his richness did not go to his head. He was neither boastful nor indulgent. This was a man God could trust with wealth 财富...and much more. Lot was moved to the world by his sight, but Abram was moved to the Word of God by faith. The eye of faith is better and deeper things than the eye of sense. This must have disappointed Abram.

2. What is interesting here is that Abram was not bitter 苦. I remember some years ago an old fellow named Harry regularly called me. His trouble was that his son took all his money he had saved up, bought a home and put his father out. He was living in group home under harsh 严酷 circumstances. But it wasn't the money that Harry was worried about, but how greedy his own son was. It made his sad. And I can imagine that Abram felt the same way.

3. So God spoke to him to comfort him and, probably from the mountain he was on, showed him all that he would give to him and his descendants. (God ordered him **to lift of his eyes** as far as he could see.) Abram had offered Lot half of the land, the Lord instead promised Abram all of it.

Acts 7:5 "And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even *enough* to set his foot on. But even when *Abraham* had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him.

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

And all of this land was in addition to the eternal salvation to Abram and his children. You see, Lot had a provisional paradise, but Abram had the permanent promise.

Trapp: A great part of a Christian's estate lies in bonds secured in God's hand.

4. And not only would God give Abram the land, but God would also give him the descendants to fill the land. Children to fill the land was a much greater promise than just having the land.

5. But note the word “forever.” It does not always mean forever, but a long continuance of something – where it seems forever. For instance, many of the ceremonies of the Old Testament were to “continue forever.” Those ceremonies continued for a long time until Jesus came.

Exodus 12:14 `So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. 教仪

Exodus 21:6 "then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.

Neither of these 2 things continues...but when Christ died (Exodus 12)...and when the servant died (Exodus 21)...these expectations died.

### **Promise of Plenty - Lineage**

16 "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. 17 "Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

1. Abram probably hoped that Lot, his nephew, would become his heir, inheriting his vast wealth and remaining faithful to the Lord. How disappointed he must have been with Lot. And feeling down, his Savior went to him to comfort him. And he heard his Savior. Isn't this one of the reasons you study God's Word everyday and you come to worship each Sabbath? You are encouraged, corrected, and rebuked by your loving Savior. He gives you just what you need. You learn to look to the mountain and God speaks from the mountain.

Psalm 24:9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

When you are in trouble you learn to open up the gates of your heart (like the temple gates) that the Lord may speak to you.

2. So God said that he would give Abram descendants as much as the dust of the earth. (This is hyperbole, of course.) God meant that Abram would have many, many descendants – an overwhelming number of children.

Genesis 48:4 "and said to me, `Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.'

We can also say that this promise continues to be fulfilled today...though in an expanded way – to the ends of the earth.

Hosea 1:10 "Yet the number of the children of Israel Shall be as the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, `You are not My people,' *There* it shall be said to them, `You are sons of the living God.' 11 Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel Shall be gathered together, And appoint for themselves one head; And they shall come up out of the land, For great *will be* the day of Jezreel!

3. Why was this promise so important?

a. In an agricultural society, children without number was an incredible promise.

b. This was a society without standing armies. So children was a source of protection.

God provides the inheritance, he will provide the heirs继承者。 In other words, the same God who provided the land would provide the lineage to inherit the land.

4. And Abram was commanded to walk the land – lifting up his legs...live like the land belonged to him...for it did. This showed ownership...and would give him confidence in God's ability to keep his promise. Remember how Abram ran off to Egypt, but God made it clear to him that he

was to walk in Canaan...knowing that God would preserve him there. Abram had to stay within bounds...and wait for the complete fulfillment of that promise. This is the theme of Psalm 48.

Psalm 48:12 Walk about Zion, And go all around her. Count her towers; 13 Mark well her bulwarks; Consider her palaces; That you may tell it to the generation following. 14 For this is God, Our God forever and ever; He will be our guide Even to death.

While Lot was moved by his own understanding, Abram would be moved by the promises of God. This, brothers, and sisters, is a key point. Planning without God's direction is wrong.

5. So when you are discouraged by what you see in the world...the attacks against Christians...the indifference of Western Christians... lazy church members...parents who don't care what their children are being taught...remember God's covenant promises...his children will inherit the land (not just Israel) and will become like the dust of the earth. God's words are true! God's kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven.

### **Promise of Plenty – A response**

18 Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.

1. Lot went and pitched his tent toward Sodom for his personal enjoyment, but Abram went and built an altar for the worship of God. God told him to **lift of his eyes** and look, and **lift of his feet** to go and see his promise, and Abram responded by **lifting up his heart**. Trusting God's providence was combined with work and worship.

2. Abram's desire was for communication with God...and God did not fail him. He knew the importance of having his tent next to the altar. Worship was never far from his home.

3. Abram's altar was a testimony to the Canaanites who had much wickedness in their pagan worship.

### **Conclusion:**

Lot did not look for pitfalls (traps) in his lust for wealth and possessions. This must have broken Abram's heart and was indeed a trial of his faith. He must have thought: "What about this promise God made to me...I don't have any children and my nephew, my heir, is a lover of wealth?" So God reassured him of his promise – blessings of land and descendants as numerous as the dust of the earth. But this was not just a promise about land and lineage. Abram also knew that through his seed Messiah would come and be that sacrifice for sins. God was indeed promising to keep that line of promise open by keeping him in the land and giving him a lineage. And with these increasing blessings, and reminders of promises by God, Abram did not become arrogant and proud, rather Abram responded with work and worship. He knew that everything he was and had was because of Jehovah God, and had to be used for God's glory.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: 1. Let the promises of the Lord add courage to your heart and strength to your hands to do work and worship. Those promises are earthly, just as in Abram's time: The meek will inherit the earth. 2. But those promises are also spiritual. Ephesians 1:3: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.* 3. So rejoice. Face the fire. Face the lions. Face the troublesome child. Face the broken marriage. Face the trials at work. Face that illness. Face death. Don't worry under trials. God kept that line of promise open and you now have the promise of earthly inheritance and spiritual blessings.

Finally, if you look to the things (possessions, pleasures, peoples) of this world to give you the satisfaction you need, you will not find it. What you think is true satisfaction is only a literal 'sugar rush' 糖高峰 that does not satisfy your true needs. Only when you surrender to the Lord who bought sinners with his blood that you will have true fulfillment in life and have the hope of heaven for eternity.