

AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP - BIBLE STUDY
Study Series: Abraham: Friend of God, Father of Faith

Part 3: Choices That Reveal the Heart
Text: Genesis 13:5–18

Wednesday, August 27, 2025
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Summary of the Lesson: As conflict arises between Abraham's and Lot's herdsmen, Abraham gives Lot the first choice of land. Lot chooses what looks best, while Abraham trusts God's provision. This week shows that our choices—especially in times of conflict—reveal the state of our hearts. Abraham's faith allows him to relinquish control, and God honors his trust with renewed promises of inheritance.

1. The Context (Genesis 13:5–7)

"Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time" Genesis 13:5-7 NIV

Abraham and Lot had both prospered materially after leaving Egypt. Their herds and flocks grew so large that the land could not support them together as a result strife arose between their herdsmen. The key insight here is that prosperity often reveals the heart as much as adversity. The test of abundance can expose hidden pride, selfishness, or contentment. Blessing can test loyalty as much as hardship. *"When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery". Deuteronomy 8:10-14 NIV*

- *Why do you think blessings can sometimes create conflict? Have you experienced a season where blessings created unexpected challenges?*
- *How does success test our character differently from hardship?*

2. Abraham's Heart: The choice as a Peacemaker (Genesis 13:8–9)

"So Abram said to Lot, 'Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives. Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left'" Genesis 13:8-9 NIV

Abraham's heart is anchored in God's promises and demonstrates his value in relationships over rights. He shows the following attributes:

- **Peacemaker Spirit:** Abraham takes the initiative to resolve the conflict: *"Let there be no strife... for we are brethren."* *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."* Matt 5:9 NIV
- **Selflessness:** He gives Lot first choice of the land, showing trust in God's provision.
- **Faith over Possession:** Abraham's security is in God, not in territory or resources and firm belief in God's promises

Key takeaway from this passage is that Abraham chose peace and righteousness over advantage.

When conflict arises, the question to ask is *"am I more concerned with winning or with honoring God and keeping peace?"*

- *What does it look like in today's world to let go of your rights for the sake of peace?*
- *Think about a time you had to choose between two good things. What guided your decision?*

3. Lot's Heart: The Choice of Sight over Discernment (Genesis 13:10–13)

"Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) So, Lot chose for himself the

whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.” *Genesis 13:10-13 NIV*

Lot’s heart can be described as someone who jumps first and then thinks, this is often guided by self-interest and focus on possession over relationships. The choice demonstrated as

- Sight over Faith: Lot chose based on what looked best materially—the well-watered Jordan plain—without considering spiritual dangers. Lot “lifted up his eyes” (*nasa ‘ayin*), a Hebrew idiom for choosing based on visual appeal (example Gen 3:6—Eve “saw” the fruit). The “Jordan plain” was lush like Eden (Gen 13:10), but proximity to Sodom carried moral and spiritual risk for compromise
- Short-Term Thinking: The land was near Sodom, a place of wickedness. There was no consideration for the danger of living in such “neighborhood”

The consequence of what seems like a gain can become a snare when chosen outside of God’s guidance. This mirrors James 3:15’s warning about “earthly, unspiritual” wisdom. *“But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.” James 3:14-16 NIV*

The key Principle: Choices made only on outward advantage often ignore spiritual cost. It is more important to make the choice based on faith than on sight. *“For we live by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corin 5:7 NIV* So let’s we evaluate our decisions by asking: *Does this draw me closer to God or closer to compromise?*

Question: Have you ever made a choice that seemed wise on the surface but later proved spiritually costly?

4. God’s Heart: Reaffirmation of His Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 13:14–18)

“The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, “Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.” So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the Lord.” Genesis 13:14-18 NIV

After letting go of something valuable for God’s sake, expect Him to confirm His faithfulness in unexpected ways. God honors those who trust Him over self-advancement. This is shown in the following ways:

- Affirmation after Separation: Once Lot departs, God reaffirms His promise to Abraham.
- Vision is Expanded: God tells Abraham to look in every direction—his inheritance will be vast.
- Faith is rewarded: Abraham builds another altar, showing continued worship and trust.

In conclusion: As we consider the lessons from the study, blessing can push us into situations where we will be tested. We will experience conflicts even with our family, friends and co-worker etc. When the conflicts arise, it will be a test that reveals whether we will seek peace over personal gain. Sometimes God’s direction comes after parting from what hinders including relationships. We also learned that in the place of “blind” faith in God, we will have to relinquish our “rights” and make choices that appears that we are on the losing end. But we can expect that God will restore what we have lost and note that nothing will hinder God’s allotment for us. (Psalm 16:5-6) However, when we choose without seeking God’s wisdom first, we could make selfish choices that will have deep spiritual consequences potentially leading to our ruin.

Action to take: Let’s commit to be peacemakers, discerning and willing to relinquish possessions and control.