

Faith Resolves A Conflict

Genesis 13.1-18

In Gen. 12.10-20, Abram traveled to Egypt, where he 'flunked' his first 'test of faith;' he tried to help God out, and put God's promise in jeopardy instead! But he learned a lesson. Now back in Canaan, he faces another test of faith...and exhibits what he has learned.

- Blessing and Conflict: "Not room for both of us here!" (1-7)
Everything going well: Wealthy and worshipping God.
Too much of a good thing: Blessing leads to conflict.
- Faith and Sight: Making peace vs. Making a profit (8-13)
Those who walk by faith resolve conflicts (trusting the Lord)
Those who walk by sight are deceived (trusting themselves)
- Promise Renewed: Walking by faith wins the prize (14-18)
Blessing coming: "I'm giving it all to you...forever."
A walk of faith is shown in worshipping the Lord.

Lessons for our Lives

- Beware: Blessings often bring unforeseen conflicts.
- Those who trust in the Lord are generous with others.
- We may not see it yet, but faithfulness is rewarded by God.

KEEP CALM
AND
RESOLVE
CONFLICT



Digging Deeper

1. Genesis 13 tells a story many Christians heard growing up. Lot and Abram have become very wealthy in livestock, so much so that their herdsmen are fighting over grazing land. Most people today don't have this problem – but we may have problems *like* it. The conflict in this story is a result of God's blessing Abram and Lot. Have you ever experienced conflict that arose because you (and someone else) were blessed? It isn't uncommon at all. Can you think of other examples of this kind of problem in the Old Testament? With Jesus' disciples? In the New Testament church?
2. While Abram and Lot have much in common – they're family, and both wealthy, the text carefully highlights (by repetition, in verses 4 and 18) an action which only Abram exhibits. What is it? Where has Abram done this before? What was he signifying by doing this? What does it tell us about 'where his heart is'?
3. To whom did the *entire land of Canaan* actually belong (that is, to whom did God promise it; see Gen.12.7)? Abram could have simply told Lot to take his livestock and leave! That would have been coldhearted, but *permissible*. He could have decided where he wanted to graze his flocks and told Lot to go somewhere else. That would have been *fair*. But what he did showed *faith*. How so? What promises of God did Abram have to *believe* (instead of claiming them for himself) to act in this way? How did what he did show his *faith* in Yahweh?
4. After Abram's magnanimous act of kindness toward Lot, God expresses to him in the most complete and unconditional way that the *entire land* (God tells him to 'do a tour' of the *length and breadth* of the land) will belong to him and his descendants *forever*, and that his descendants will be innumerable ("like the dust of the earth"). God's promise was sure when Abram acted sinfully in Egypt, but God *affirms* His promise now that Abram acts in faith. What does God give Christians when we 'walk by faith' and live our lives in conformity to Christ?