14: Genesis 12, 13, 14

https://www.youtube.com/embed/9IcZWBNrxtE

Genesis 13

- Then Abram went up from Egypt
  - Remember it said “Abram went down to Egypt” now “went up from Egypt”
- He and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South
  - You can imagine Abraham walking back to Egypt in all thanksgiving, thinking he would never leave God again
- Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.
  - Many people think that being rich is evil or a sin… and justify it by saying Christ’s words that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. But here is a man who is **very** And yet, he had the best relationship with God on earth.
  - Richness is not the problem, but rather the relationship with money and richness is – if money is your god, or money is controlling your life, that is not right
  - Abram had so much in riches that he did not count it or care for it, but rather cared for his relationship with God
- And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the Lord.
  - Abram is returning back to where he started – as if starting over. Again, calling on the name of the Lord.
  - It is a renewing or a recharging – reminds us of Christ who told the apostles He would meet them in Galilee (which was far, but the first place they met Him)
  - Bethel was the place where Abram saw God, so he is returning back as in repentance
  - He went back to this place not because of its land or location but because it is the place of the altar
  - Abram called on the name of the Lord – he returned to prayer
- Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents.
  - Remember that Abram was to be a blessing to all of those around him
  - Lot did not realize that his good fortune and riches and success – were a result of being with Abraham who was with God. He thought it was his own success.
- Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.
  - That’s weird… land back then did not have the crowdedness that it has today (cars and buildings, etc – but this is a desert)
  - The land was not able to support them because of how rich they were!

    - Those in poverty can usually support one another, but those living in richness usually can't stand each other
    - This is all from the devil who wants one or both of them to fall
- And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock.
    - Devil doesn't start with the big guys – Abram and Lot. They are family. But he starts with the servants – the herdsmen. And when the herdsmen fight, they each go to their leader (Abraham and Lot) and start putting words in their ears
- The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.
    - Why is this sentence here?
    - The Canaanites and Perizzites are the people who don't know God.
    - It is as if to tell us… where would they go? Where would Lot go? To the people who don't know God? They would destroy you! The only reason they haven't destroyed you yet is because of Abram! And who will be there if they leave the land? The Canaanites and Perizzites would be ready to take the land.
- So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren.
    - Abram's reaction is that of love – he doesn't try to justify his herdsmen or blame Lot's herdsmen or talk about the situation. He didn't try to take credit for Lot's riches, or for raising Lot. He didn't take offense. His main concern is to keep the peace and love with his nephew who is like his son.
    - This is one of the characteristics of a man of God
    - "For we are brethren" – Abraham's humility. Lot should have humbled himself and said "brethren? No you are my father; you are my master; you are in charge; I follow you"
- Is not the whole land before you?
    - Abraham doesn't care which part of the land – all he cares about is God. His desire is God.
- Please separate from me.
    - This is a hard word for Abraham to say – he has no children. Lot is like his son. But he wants to make it easy for Lot
- If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."
    - For a shepherd, choosing is so easy – either rain or green land is good. Desert is bad.
- And lot lifted his eyes
    - What a disaster. Lot lifted his eyes and looked at the earth and looked at the ground.
    - It is the same temptation Satan used on Christ "look at all this I will give it to you if you worship me" but Christ looked up to heaven and said "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve"
    - Lot, instead of looking at Abraham and seeing Christ through him, looked at the ground and at the earth
- and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar.
    - Comparing to the Garden of Eden!!!
- Then Lot chose for himself

    - God's children do not choose for themselves – but they let God choose for them
    - Abram put the decision in God's hands
- all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.
    - The devil successfully split up a righteous family – but it's not Abram's fault, it's Lot's
    - Lot acted in this scenario like the Prodigal Son – took what was his father's, went to live in worldly pleasures, loses it all, and is accepted by his father again
- Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.
    - Lot should have asked about the place he was moving to… he asked about the waters and the herbs and the trees but not the people. He didn't care.
- And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him:
    - God came to comfort him ("I am your friend and I won't leave you") and to commend him and to reward him
- "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are – northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. 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.
    - You can imagine that Abram is so sad from Lot leaving, and his head is down. But God tells him "lift your eyes"
    - Abram looks around north, south, east and west and sees… sand, dust, desert. And God tells him "count the dust" and he can't count the dust and God says "so will your descendants be."
    - And Abram, of course, doesn't even have one grain of sand so far. No children. And of course he will only live to see a few of his children – but we know that anyone who has faith in God is a son of Abraham.
- Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you." And 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.
    - Abram had faith – God said go walk in the land and Abram did it
    - Lot was thinking of building a barn and some machines for shepherding and whatever else… Abram was thinking of building an altar.

Genesis 14

- And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).
    - This is a world war! 5 kings against 4 kings
    - So the world is in war and Lot, who chose green grass and water, finds himself in the middle of a war. Abraham who chose God, finds himself sitting in the desert with his family and his wealth in peace
    - The world is full of wars and violence and noise, but there is one living from morning until evening in prayer at the altar. This is the Kingdom of God.

- All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.
  - Chedorlaomer was king of Elam and he took 4 kings with him against 4 other kings (two of which were Sodom and Gomorrah)
- In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness. Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar. And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains.
  - Sodom and Gomorrah lost the war to the other side
- Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.
  - Lot, when he lived with Abram he had food to feed a city – and now as soon as he left, he has lost everything he had
- Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram.
  - If it was one of us, we would probably say "I told you so" to Lot or "it's Lot's fault! I told him!" or maybe even "what would I do in front of kingdoms and nations?"
  - But Abram did not think – no, he prayed
- Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.
  - Think of how many people were in Abraham's household? Just the trained servants were 318 and remember none of those are Abraham's sons
  - Those who are paying attention might say that a few thousand years later, we have 318 bishops who rose up against the heresy of Arianism but of course this is just a coincidence
- He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.
  - Abram did all this for Lot, but of course everyone from Sodom was set free because of Abram
  - Abram's attack here was definitely a miracle and was successful through God
- And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.

    - So the 4 kings who lost to 5 kings were avenged by Abram and his soldiers – so it must be from God
    - This whole situation was a message for Lot
- Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he gave him a tithe of all.
    - This king was not part of the war at all! He came out of nowhere and he’s mentioned for a few verses and then never again mentioned until 800 years later when David writes in the Psalms a prophecy about Christ “You are a priest forever after he order of Melchizedek” and then again not mentioned another 800 years until St Paul writes about the relationship between Christ and Melchizedek.
    - So who is this mysterious king? And when he met with Abram, he did some strange things…
        - Abram is the one supposed to be blessing people… but Melchizedek came and blessed Abram
        - And it is known that celebrations involve slaughtering an animal and eating it, or offering it to God… but Melchizedek came and took bread and wine and broke the bread and ate
        - And Abram offered a tithe to Melchizedek
        - And Melchizedek is called priest of the Most-High God… but the priesthood is not established until Aaron, the grandson of Levi, the grandson of Abraham, whom Melchizedek blessed
        - Melchizedek does not have a known father or mother or genealogy or beginning or end of life…
        - Melchizedek was a king AND a priest… and his name means “King of Righteousness” and his title (King of Salem) meaning “King of Peace”
        - This mysterious character is a type of Christ
    - Blessing of Melchizedek
        - The role of the priest is to speak the word of God to the people (OT and NT)
        - “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth” – blessed is Abraham from the mouth of God Most High
        - The priest in the NT is the presence of Christ on earth. Many who reject priesthood, think that priesthood is a mediator between God and man, but the Scripture is clear that the Mediator is Christ (who is both God, and Man). But our priests are the presence of Christ and are just doing the things Christ did (i.e. sacraments).
    - Tithe
        - First time we hear of tithes
        - Tithes are not commanded until hundreds of years later in the Law of Moses… this must be an oral tradition
        - Tithes are the bare minimum – this is why in the New Testament Christ never mentions tithes. But he talks about giving all that you have
        - “Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.” (Hebrews 7)

- King of Sodom and King of Salem went out at the same time to Abraham. Melchizedek to tell Abraham “blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And king of Sodom to say “Give me the persons and take the goods for yourself.”
  - Whenever we hear the voice of the devil telling us “you are good – you serve well” And filling us with pride, we will hear the voice of Christ in the other ear saying “humble yourself before the Lord”

Revision #3
Created 2022-10-10 14:04:18 UTC by Fr.Maximus Wahba
Updated 2022-10-10 14:07:58 UTC by Fr.Maximus Wahba