

Faith's Choices

The Life of Abraham—part 3

June 21, 2026

Genesis 13:5-18

A **review** of Abraham's beginnings:

Week 1: The Beginnings of Faith. Faith is born when God speaks truth to us, and we begin to trust His character.

Week 2: Faith's Tent and Altar. The tent symbolizes the transitory nature of life and the transitory nature of human satisfaction. Only God can provide the ultimate satisfaction for which we long. The altar symbolizes my need of daily cleansing. The altar is the place of worship and centering.

DAY 1: What criteria do we use to make decisions?

1. In one sense we live backwards. When we are young, we have life-changing decisions in front of us but the least amount of life experience upon which to draw. And thus, later we hear ourselves with regret, "If only I had known, If only I had listened, if I could do it all over again."

*Prov. 3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and **do not lean on your own understanding.***

2. The failure of Egypt is behind Abraham, and now we pick up the story with him back in the land of Canaan, once again anchored in the metaphor of the tent and the altar.

Genesis 13:5 Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. ⁶But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. ⁷And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time.

3. Life affords us many tests, personally, relationally, and spiritually. One of the most common of tests regards money and possessions. Lot and Abraham have become prosperous, their herds outstripping the available pastureland. Pressure exposes what is still in our nature and must be transformed. Each man deals with his self-centeredness, but we deal with it very differently.

Gen. 13:8 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. ⁹Is 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."

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, o man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

4. Micah gives us three criteria when making godly decisions. First, what is the right decision regarding God? What will honor God? Second, what is right by people? Does this decision consider the needs of people, not just me? Third, what is the wisest decision?

5. What strikes you from Abraham's example?

DAY 2: Why did Abraham yield the decision to Lot?

1. We note **three important factors** that shaped Abraham's decision.
2. **First**, back in v. 7 we read that the Canaanites and Perizzites were in the land. Why does the writer mention them? The picture portrayed for us is that of a believer, Abraham, living among a culture of unbelievers.
3. What Abraham decides to do with this conflict will be either a good testimony or a bad testimony of a man following God. Godly decisions can shine a different light to a dark world. What would further God's purposes?
4. **Second**, Abraham says "no" to strife because "*we are close relatives.*" The decision Abraham would make would affect not just their finances, but children, families, and servant's families. When you decide based primarily on yourself and secondarily for others in the family, you may be "cutting off your nose to spite your face."
5. **Third**, he did what is considered "unthinkable." He gave up his right to put himself first. He deferred. How often do you hear someone "giving up their rights" for higher purposes?
6. When we learn the value of surrendering **our life** to the lordship of Jesus Christ, we also begin to learn to surrender life's **daily decisions** to God. Reflecting God to others becomes more important than "getting what I deserve." That does not mean eliminating factors regarding our responsibilities, but those factors must not take priority over doing right by God and others. (The real battle with "claiming our rights" has to do with what is going on inside of us with regard to our pride. "Claiming our rights" is often internally driven by seeking our own validation, having the last word, proving ourselves "right," etc.)
7. Which of the three lessons resonates with you the most?
8. Is there a past decision that you wish you could have a "do-over?"
9. In hindsight, what factors would have helped you make a better decision?
10. What is your biggest takeaway from today's devotional?

DAY 3: What do we learn from Lot's choices?

Genesis 13:10 **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.) ¹¹ **So Lot chose for himself** the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: ¹² Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. ¹³ Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.

1. **What did Lot “see”?** Look for at least four items.

2. Let's highlight two lessons from Lot's choice.

3. **First, it is not wise to trust what your eyes see, what you desire, what you feel, etc.**

John 7:24 “Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.” (Jesus)

4. Envision this scene. Two men walk up to the highest point in the land. North, east, south, and west. The Mediterranean and the hill country spread to the west. The fertile Jordan River valley and Sea of Galilee lay to the east. Along the Jordan River were palm trees, and lush pastureland.

5. To Lot, this was a “no-brainer.” It didn't take long for Lot to choose the “well-watered” Jordan River valley to the east. It looked “like the garden of the Lord.” But that is not the only thing he saw. Verse 10 tells us what he saw reminded him of Egypt. And verse 12 tells us, “Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom.”

6. What strikes you from what Lot “saw?”

7. What would you have seen if you were in his shoes?

8. **Second, without God, we see what we want to see and don't see what we don't want to see.**

Proverbs 12:15 The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.

You can't pick problem-free living but sometimes you can pick your problems.

DAY 4: What did Lot not see?

*Genesis 13:10 **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.) ¹¹ **So Lot chose for himself** the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: ¹² Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. ¹³ Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.*

1. What did Lot not see?

a. Lot did not see Sodom for what it was. V. 13 says, “Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.”

b. Lot saw a chance to become rich but did not see the moral cesspool toward which he was moving his family.

c. The name “Sodom” has become the English term for a morally rotten way of life (covered over by a thin, shiny veneer of wealth).

d. Lot also did not see coming judgment on Sodom.

Genesis 13:10 (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

e. Lot did not see with the eyes of a godly man.

*Proverbs 15:22 **Plans fail** for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.*

f. Lot did not see the need to seek God’s will on the decision.

*Matthew 6:33 **Seek first** His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be yours as well.*

g. Lot did not see God, nor seek God’s will. He didn’t discuss this with Abraham.

Genesis 13:11 So Lot chose for himself...

It is folly to assume I have all the facts needed to make a wise decision

2. Sodom would plummet into such wickedness that the whole culture was better off destroyed than metastasizing into the lives of children and people for generations to come.

3. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 5: The benefits of following God

The promise to Abraham

1. This brings us back to Abraham. Abraham yielded the choice to Lot, only after yielding himself and the decision to God. “God, I want what You want and what comes with it more than I want what I want and what comes with it.”

*Genesis 13:14 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. ¹⁵ All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.”*

2. Lot had “*lifted his eyes*” to see the Jordan River valley and the cities of the plain. Now the Lord tells Abraham, “*Look around...*” Lot looked eastward. God tells Abraham to look to the north and south, to the east and west.” In the short term, the land to the east would belong to Lot, but that would all come crashing down. In the long run all the land Abraham could see, including the land to the east would become his and for his descendants *forever!*

3. C.S. Lewis has famously written that we are always given the choice...

4. “There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, “Thy will be done,” and those to whom God says, in the end, “Thy will be done.” All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. Those who knock it is opened.”

5. (continuing the Lewis quote) “Son, 'he said,' ye cannot in your present state understand eternity...That is what mortals misunderstand. They say of some temporal suffering, ‘No future bliss can make up for it,’ not knowing that Heaven, once attained, will work backwards and turn even that agony into a glory. And of some sinful pleasure they say ‘Let me have but this and I'll take the consequences’: little dreaming how damnation will spread back and back into their past and contaminate the pleasure of the sin. **Both processes begin even before death.** The good man's past begins to change so that his forgiven sins and remembered sorrows take on the quality of Heaven. The bad man's past already conforms to his badness and is filled only with dreariness. And that is why...the Blessed will say ‘We have never lived anywhere except in Heaven, and the Lost will say, ‘We were always in Hell.’ And both will speak truly.” — C.S. Lewis, [The Great Divorce](#)

6. “Aim at Heaven and you will get Earth 'thrown in': aim at Earth and you will get neither.”
— C.S. Lewis, [The Joyful Christian](#)

7. In light of Abraham surrendering to God, and specifically the choice of land to Lot, what strikes you about God’s amazing response in Gen. 13:14-17?