

Mid-week Meditation June 24

Genesis 13

The passage of Scripture we have shared today, continues from last week's meditation, where Abram and his people went to Egypt as a response to a famine in the land. In Chapter 13 we pick up with Abram, Sarah and Lot as they are returning from Egypt into the region of Negev; which is the area of Southern Israel as it is today. The scripture says that from Negev, Abram returned to Bethel where he first built an altar to the Lord after answering his call from God. The Scripture says that Abram had become very wealthy. He had silver and gold and livestock. While they were in Bethel, Lot was also with them, and he also had a large herd of livestock. As it turns out, the land that they were occupying was not bountiful enough to support the amount of livestock that Abram and Lot had. And because that was true, quarrelling arose between Abram and Lot's herdsmen. And to make matters worse, others were also living in the land. So, Abram and Lot got together to see what solution they could come up with in order to solve this problem. Abram said, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are brothers. Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I will go to the right. If you go to the right, I will go to the left." Lot looked up and saw that the whole plain of Jordan was well watered like the garden of the Lord. So, Lot chose for himself the whole plain of Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company with no animosity between them. Abram lived in the land of Canaan. And Lot lived among the cities of the Jordan plains and pitched his tents near Sodom which is at the very southern tip of the Dead Sea. After Lot parted from Abram, the Lord said to him, "lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, and east 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 land for I am giving it to you." So, Abram pitched his tents in Hebron, and Lot in the area of Sodom which was green and lush like the garden of the Lord. Apparently, Hebron was not quite as green as the Lord's garden. But that did not matter to Abram. But this was the same area that the famine had devastated before they went to Egypt in the last chapter. Then, Abram made a desperate decision to move to Egypt, thus compromising the safety of his wife,

and himself and the rest of his people. Then, he tried to take control over his own destiny rather than trusting that the Lord would provide. Now, Abram knew that the Lord would provide. Abram had learned a lesson about trusting in God. He now realized that God would provide for him and his family without Abram's desperate intervention. And beside all of that, we know that it was God's will that Abram would dwell in the land of Canaan. When Abram conversed with Lot about the east or the west, Abram realized that no matter where he was in this world, or what the land was like, God would supply his needs. He learned that peace, and happiness, and love don't come from the prosperity of the land. He learned that the true measure of wealth is not silver and gold, or the amount of livestock that you own. Peace, happiness and love come from living in fellowship with God. And wealth is measured much more by your kinship with God than silver or gold. Even in the face of hardship, and, perhaps even more so, in the face of hardship, faith in God is the treasure that will you carry through. Put yourself in Abram's shoes for a moment. I'll bet that you would have been tempted to take the green lush valley just like Lot did. Abram could have chosen the lush green valley. He could have told Lot to stay in the west and he would go east. But Abram didn't, because peace with his brother was more important than the bounty of one land over another. Abram's story has a lesson that can shine a light on our path. We live in a world where value is quantified by money and by possessions. So, this lesson that Abram learned is probably one of the toughest one for us, not only to learn, but to learn how put the lesson into practice. This passage, I believe can teach us much about decision making in our lives. Will we make decisions with the intention of controlling our own destiny? Or, will we trust in God? Will we make our decisions based on the accumulation of wealth in this world, or according to the riches that God provides? Easy Street, or trusting in God even when God's way is far from easy street. Luxuries, and conveniences, or love and peace and fellowship with God. I will end today's meditation by sharing a couple of portions of Luke 12. Beginning with verse 22. Then Jesus said, to his disciples, "Therefore, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body what you will wear. Life is more than food and the body more than clothes. And then from verse 32 "Do not be afraid, Little flock, for your father has been pleased to give you the Kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted For where your treasure is, there is your heart."

That is the lesson that Abram learned. Trust in God, and he will deliver you. What decisions are coming up for you that require you to trust in God. How will you decide? Will you choose the green and lush valley in pursuit of earthly riches? Or will you remember Abram and Lot and realize that Peace in God's presence is not a function of the prosperity of the Land, but rather is a function of how much you trust that God will supply your needs. As the little chorus goes, Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you, Aleluiah, Alleluiah. Let us Pray