

1 ☐ **“Lift Up Your Eyes”**

[Genesis 13:10-18]

2 ☐ **Abraham as God’s fountain of blessing:**

✱ Gen. 12:2b - “... *all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*”

✱ All true Christians are related to Abraham:

*Romans 4:16-17 Abraham is, “*the father of us all*”

* Galatians 3:7 “... *those who believe are children of Abraham*”

* Gal. 3:29 “*If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.*”

3 ☐

✱ **Our point of connection with Abraham is “faith”!** [i.e. Christians have the same kind of faith which Abraham demonstrated in his life.]

4 ☐ **The church is the “community of faith”**

✱ It is the place where individual Christians come to faith and in which they can “grow in faith;”

✱ It is the place Christ has appointed for progressive sanctification to take place, through faith in His Word!

✱ It is also the “harvesting center” from which Christians are to propagate the faith and engender it in others [i.e. evangelism and discipleship]

5 ☐ **Abraham as the embodiment of saving faith**

✱ When Abraham was separated from Lot, it was one more loss he had to endure:

✱ Gen. 12:1-4a From the very beginning, Abraham’s faith in God led to a separation, a leaving behind of the things of this world!

✱ cf. also Gen. 13:10-12 Abraham’s separation from his nephew, Lot, was yet another point of sadness for Abraham.

6 ☐

✱ This principle of “stepping out in faith” and trusting God [even when it costs us something] is a foundational element of true faith! This principle was illustrated in Abraham for the first time in the Bible.

7 ☐ **Jesus also emphasized this when He encountered the rich young ruler in Luke 18:18-30.**

✱ Lk. 18:22 - Jesus had said to him: “... *sell everything that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me.*”

✱ Lk. 18:28 - Peter, who was there among the disciples, said: “*We have left all we had to*

follow you.”

✳ Lk. 18:29 - Jesus replied to Peter: *“I tell you the truth ... no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life.”*

8 God gave this same assurance to Abraham when Lot had departed from him in Gen. 13:14:

✳ *“The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, ‘Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, 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 ...”*

9 **But Abraham had to do two things:**

✳ Gen. 13:14 *“Lift up your eyes;”*

✳ Gen. 13:17 *“Go walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.”*

10 Note that there are two kinds of “looking” in the context:

✳ Gen. 13:10-11 *“Lot looked up and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, toward Zoar. ... So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of Jordan and set out toward the east.”*

11 **A word to those who are discouraged:**

✳ Gen. 15:1-6- God encouraged Abraham by taking him outside and making him look up to the stars! - Abraham believed God’s encouraging words, and God *“counted it to him as righteousness”!* [v. 6]

✳ Isa. 40:26-31

✳ Isa. 49:14-16a

12 The dangers we need to beware of when we face such experiences

✳ Focusing on ourselves

✳ Panic - taking matters into our own hands [Abraham lied about his wife]

✳ Allowing ourselves to become overwhelmed by fear [II Tim. 1:7; Isa. 41:10; I Cor. 10:13]

✳ Becoming resentful and bitter [Heb. 12:15]

13

- * Remember, God’s encouragement of Abraham involved two things:
 - (1) *“Lift up your eyes”* - Gen. 13:14; and,
 - (2) *“Go walk through the length and breadth of the land”* - Gen. 13:17.
- * God continues to use these two directives to encourage believers and to see them through their difficult times. - And we would do well to listen to them.

14 ☐

- * Consider the words of Isaiah 30:18
- * *“... the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. ... blessed are all who wait for him!”*.

15 ☐ **“Lift up your eyes”**

Gen. 13:14

- * Gen. 15:5 *“look up at the heavens”* - [when Abraham was struggling with trusting God concerning a son.]
- * Psa. 42: 5 & 11 *“Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God ...”*
- * Psa. 121:1-8 *“I lift up my eyes to the hills - where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth....”*

16 ☐

- * Heb. 12:2 *“... Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith ...”*
- * Jesus is often portrayed in the Gospels as *“lifting up His eyes”* toward heaven:

John 11:41-42 At the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus *“looked up”* and said, *“Father I thank you that you have heard me, ...”*

John 17:1 *“After Jesus had said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed ...”*

17 ☐ Another important truth here is to beware of the effect of “distractions”!

- * In Matthew 14:28-31, Peter stepped out of the boat to walk on the water, he was successful until he was distracted by the waves and took his eyes off Jesus!
- * - On the Mount of Transfiguration [Matt. 17], Peter was distracted by the glorious beings he saw.

18 ☐

- * II Sam. 7:10 & 11b *“I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. ... I will also give you rest*

from all your enemies.”

✳️ Micah 4:1a, *“In the last days ... (v.4) “Every man will sit under his own vine, and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken.”*

19 Psalm 37, the *“Do not fret” psalm, brings out this spiritual significance of ‘the land’*

✳️ 1) v. 3-5 *“Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this ...”*

✳️ 2) v. 8b & 9 *“... do not fret, it only leads to evil. For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.”*

✳️ v. 11 *“... the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace.”*

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✳️ v. 22 *“Those the LORD blesses will inherit the land.”*

✳️ v. 27 *“Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land forever.”*

✳️ v. 29 *“... the righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever.”*

21

v. 34 *“Wait for the LORD and keep his way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you will see it.”*

Finally, note how the concluding words of the psalm seem to summarize the spiritual significance of dwelling in the land:

“The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble. The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him.”

22

✳️ **IN OTHER WORDS:** *“Dwelling in the land,”* seems to correspond to *“abiding in Christ”!* It seems to be equivalent to *“walking with the Lord”!* It is Proverbs 3:5-6 living!!!

✳️ **THIS MEANS:** There is a spiritual sense in which true believers begin to *“dwell in the land”* here and now, in this life, and in this world. We do not fully inherit the land in this life, but God calls upon us [as He called upon Abraham] to *“Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you”* [Gen. 13:17].

23

✱Such thinking also corresponds with the description of those O. T. saints given by the writer of the book of Hebrews:

✱* Heb. 11:13-16

✱* Heb. 13:14 *“For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.”*