

## GENESIS 13

### *Abram and Lot Separate*

#### *Abram and Lot Journey to Bethel*

1 So Abram went up from Egypt, he, his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. 2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. 3 And he journeyed<sup>1</sup> on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4 to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of Yahweh.

#### *Strife between Abram and Lot*

5 And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents, 6 so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together. For their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, 7 and there was strife (רִיב)<sup>2</sup> between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites<sup>3</sup> were dwelling in the land.<sup>4</sup> 8 Then Abram said to Lot,<sup>5</sup>

Let there be no strife (מְרִיבָה) between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right. Or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Lot Chooses Sodom*

10 And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of Yahweh, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) 11 So Lot chose (בָּחַר) for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other. 12 Abram settled (יָשַׁב) in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled (יָשַׁב) among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. 13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked (רָע), great sinners (...הַטָּאִים מְאֹד) against Yahweh.

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<sup>1</sup> **Ex 17:1** 1 All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages.... **Nu 10:12** 12 The people of Israel set out by stages from the wilderness of Sinai.

<sup>2</sup> Or "lawsuit" (*HALOT*, 1225-26).

<sup>3</sup> The Perizzites were one of several tribes living in Palestine, usually listed with the Canaanites (*Ge* 34:30; *Dt* 7:1; *Jdg* 1:4; 3:5).

<sup>4</sup> **Ge 12:6** 6 Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.

<sup>5</sup> **1 Co 6:1** 1 When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints?

<sup>6</sup> Abram generously allows Lot to choose. His phase two faith in Yahweh is evident.

*Abram Lift Up His Eyes on Canaan*

14 Now Yahweh said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him,

Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward, southward, eastward, and westward, 15 for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your seed forever. 16 I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your seed also can be counted. 17 Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.

18 So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks<sup>7</sup> of Mamre, which are at Hebron,<sup>8</sup> and there he built an altar to Yahweh.

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<sup>7</sup> **Ge 12:6** 6 Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh.

<sup>8</sup> Hebron is 22 miles south of Jerusalem. **Ge 35:27** 27 Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.

## *Biblical Worldview*

### **1. Genesis at a Glance.**

- a. Chapter 13 is the first account in a trilogy of Abram-Lot stories (Ge 13:2-18; 14:1-24; 18:16-19:38).
- b. Lot, the son of Abram's brother Haran (Ge 11:27), provides a contrast for Abraham and his heirs (Mathews, *NAC*, 1B:130).
  - (1) Genesis uses such opposites to distinguish the appointed lineage from its rival in the patriarchal narratives, for example, Isaac/Ishmael and Jacob/Esau.
  - (2) The Abram-Lot tension is a forerunner to the struggles among sibling rivals that are integral to the later patriarchal narratives (cf. Cain-Abel).
  - (3) Ge 13 is important to the whole by showing proleptically the difference between the selected and non-selected lines (Mathews, *NAC*, 1B:130).
  - (4) The contrast between Abram and Lot, both believers, is the main thrust of this chapter.
- c. Ge 13 also shows the beginning of perpetual conflict between Israel and Moab/Ammon (Mathews, *NAC*, 1B:130).
  - (1) The three Abram-Lot episodes demonstrate the loyal love of Abram toward his nephew, resulting in Lot's deliverance from slavery (Ge 14) and death (Ge 18-19).
  - (2) Likewise, Israel later tolerates Lot's descendants, the Moabites and Ammonites (Ge 19:37-38), heeding God's instructions (Dt 2:9, 19, 37) to avoid hostilities against them (Mathews, *NAC*, 1B:131).

### **2. God blesses loyal believers despite their huge sins and serious mistakes.**

- a. **Ge 13:1-2** 1 So Abram went up from Egypt, he, his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. 2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.
  - (1) Abram had hugely sinned by entering Egypt without God's permission and hiding from Pharaoh his marriage to Sarah, which demonstrated his lack of faith in God.
  - (2) Despite these huge sins, Abram left Egypt richer than he was before.
    - (a) **Ge 12:16** 16 For [Sarah's] sake [Pharaoh] dealt well with Abram. And he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.
    - (b) **Ge 12:20** 20 Pharaoh gave men orders concerning [Abram], and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.
  - (3) God will continue to bless Abram, though Abram isn't finished making serious mistakes.
    - (a) **Ge 24:35** 35 Yahweh has greatly blessed my master [Abraham], and he has become great. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male servants and female servants, camels and donkeys.
- b. Just as Abraham left Egypt with more blessing than he deserved, so Israel left Egypt with more blessing than she deserved.
  - (1) **Ex 12:35-36** 35 The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver, gold jewelry, and for clothing. 36 And Yahweh had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

- c. So we leave the world, the flesh, and the devil with more blessing than we deserve.
- (1) **1 Co 2:9** 9 As it is written, What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.
- (2) **Eph 2:4-7** 4 God, being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Messiah—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Messiah Jesus.
- 3. If we commit huge sins, we must go back and regain our intimacy with God.**
- a. **Ge 13:3-4** 3 And [Abram] journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4 to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of Yahweh.
- b. Bethel was the second place Abram had come to after he had entered the land of Canaan. He had built an altar and experienced intimacy with God there. He's retracing his exact steps to recover his intimacy with God, and his newfound wealth is not distracting him from worship of God (Matthews, *NAC*, 1B:133-34).
- (1) **Ge 12:8** 8 From [Shechem] [Abram] moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to Yahweh and called upon the name of Yahweh.
- c. Just as Abram escaped Egypt to worship God again at Bethel, so Israel would escape Egypt to worship God again in Canaan. Israel was to regain her intimacy with God and not allow her newfound wealth to distract her from worship of God.
- (1) **Ac 7:7** 7 I [God] will judge the nation [Egypt] that they [Israel] serve, said God, and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.
- d. After a huge sin or serious mistake, we too should retrace our steps and regain intimacy with God. This gives us a fresh start, which we often need in our Christian lives.
- 4. We forfeit blessing when we allow conflict to distance us from God's people.**
- a. **Ge 13:5-7** 5 And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents, 6 so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together. For their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, 7 and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land. 8 Then Abram said to Lot, Let there be no strife (קְרִיבָה) between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right. Or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left.
- b. By allowing conflict to separate him from Abram, Lot forfeited God's blessing.
- (1) Lot was probably at this time Abram's heir (Wenham, *WBC*, 1:299).
- (a) **Ge 12:5** 5 Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan.

- (2) Lot had lots of flocks, herds, and tents precisely because of his association with Abram. But he wasn't grateful. Now he's allowing quarrels to separate him from his source of blessing. Greater and greater possessions distanced him from the people closest to him.
- (a) **Ge 12:2-3** 2 I [Yahweh] will make of you [Abram] a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
- (3) Eventually, Lot lost nearly everything, including his wife and all his possessions. He went from a fertile plain with Abram (Ge 13), to the city of Sodom (Ge 14; 19), to a cave (Ge 19:30-38), where he embarrassingly fathered two sons by his own daughters.
- c. Conflict and many possessions later separated Jacob and Esau, to Esau's disadvantage.
- (1) **Ge 36:6-8** 6 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his livestock, all his beasts, and all his property that he had acquired in the land of Canaan. He went into a land away from his brother Jacob. 7 For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together. The land of their sojournings could not support them because of their livestock. 8 So Esau settled in the hill country of Seir. (Esau is Edom.)
- d. In the same way, the Israelites of the Exodus generation continually quarreled (מְרִיבָה) with Moses and Yahweh in the wilderness. Like Lot, they were ungrateful and forfeited the blessing of enjoying life in Canaan.
- (1) **Ex 17:7** 7 [Moses] called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested Yahweh by saying, Is Yahweh among us or not?
- (2) **Nu 20:24** 24 Let Aaron be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land that I have given to the people of Israel, because you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah.
- (3) **Ps 106:32** 32 [Israel] angered [God] at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with Moses on their account.
- e. We, too, will forfeit blessing if we allow possessions and conflict to separate us from God's people.
- (1) How many churches have split over money and thereby forfeited God's blessing?
- (2) How many Baby Boomers in New Zealand have stopped going to church because of their growing number of possessions combined with some conflict they've experienced in their local church?
- 5. Every day, believers make choices that lead to blessing or cursing in this life.**
- a. **Ge 13:8-9** 8 Then Abram said to Lot, Let there be no strife (מְרִיבָה) between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right. Or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left.
- b. Abram and Lot chose different paths, and there were real-life consequences for their choices. Lot could: (a) resolve the conflict with Abram and remain with him; (b)

move to another spot in Canaan; or (c) leave Canaan to go “where the grass is greener.” Lot unwisely chose option (c), and he suffered for it.

- c. Keep in mind Lot was a believer. We know this from:
  - (1) **2 Pe 2:7-9** 7 If [the Lord] rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked 8 (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); 9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment...
- d. Moses relates this story to the Exodus generation as they are preparing to enter the promised land. Like Abram and Lot, the Exodus generation left Egypt wealthy and ready to enter and enjoy the promised land. But the Exodus generation, except for Caleb and Joshua, made the decision to follow Lot and not Abram. The story of Lot foreshadows the story of the Exodus generation who longed for Egypt instead of pursuing the promised land.
- e. In Ge 13, Abram typifies the believer whose faith in the promises of God drive him to remain in the promised land of blessing and keep a safe distance from the world. Lot, by contrast, typifies the believer who becomes so attached to the world and its allures that he ends up losing everything except the shirt on his back. As Paul says:
  - (1) **1 Co 3:15** 15 If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.
- f. Believer, will you choose the promised land of blessing or the environs of Sodom, under a curse and soon to be destroyed?

## 6. Mature believers know they don’t need to take matters into their own hands.

- a. **Ge 13:9** 9 If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right. Or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left.
- b. Abram graciously allows Lot to choose. He’s able to do this because he totally trusts God with his future. If Lot chooses to go right, he knows God is able to bless him on the left. If Lot chooses left, he knows God is able to bless him on the right. Abram is totally at rest. He is practicing phase two faith. In the next chapter, Abram again shows his great faith by not accepting any gifts from the king of Sodom.
- c. God expects his children to be open-handed, not closed fist.
- (1) In law school, we are taught to take every advantage, to push every possible legal theory, to wear down our opponent to seize the upper hand. This is exactly opposite how Abram acts here.
- (2) We can safely give our “opponents” the upper hand. We can be magnanimous in our dealings with others. We don’t need to press every advantage. We don’t need to nickel and dime everyone. This is living magnanimously. We are able to live this way as Christians because we know God has our back.
- d. Believer, in that business deal, in the preparation of your will, in your giving to the church and world missions, do you have the magnanimity of Abram based on faith in God’s provision?

## 7. The believer who moves closer and closer to “Sodom” is inviting disaster.

- a. **Ge 13:10-13** 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of Yahweh, like the land of Egypt, in the direction

- of Zoar. (This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) 11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other. 12 Abram settled (ישב) in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled (ישב) among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. 13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked (רע), great sinners (חַטָּאִים...גְּזָאִים) against Yahweh.
- b. From a hill southeast of Bethel, Lot could get a good view of the southern end of the Jordan valley and the northern end of the Dead Sea (Wenham, *WBC*, 1:297). He'd been all the way through Canaan. With Abram, he'd come in from the north, travelled all the way down to Egypt, and come back again to Bethel. Abram invited him to go southern Canaan (right) or northern Canaan (left). There was plenty of room for Lot to separate from Abram but still be in Canaan. But Lot wasn't satisfied with the land. What was so special about it? After all, the Jordan valley looked absolutely wonderful. Full of water and lush vegetation, like the garden of Eden itself. Never mind that the inhabitants of the valley were great sinners against God. What did that matter? So Lot chooses neither the right nor the left. He chooses the Jordan valley and ends up getting closer and closer to Sodom. He not only settles among the cities of the valley, he moves his tent close to the ultimate wicked city, Sodom. Soon he will be living in the city itself (Ge 19). Notice the downward spiral Lot has gotten himself and his family into. He displays a disregard for God's promises and falls for the deceptively attractive "cities of the plain."
- c. That Lot goes east signals this is a very bad decision, a knowing affront to God. In the Bible, going east signal the loss of blessing and often judgment.
- (1) **Ge 3:24** 24 [Lord Yahweh] drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.
  - (2) **Ge 4:16** 16 Then Cain went away from the presence of Yahweh and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.
  - (3) **Ge 11:2** 2 As people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.
  - (4) **Ge 25:6** 6 To the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastward to the east country.
- d. Eventually, Sodom will be destroyed. The lush land Lot chooses will be consumed by fire.
- (1) **Genesis 19:25** 25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.
  - (2) **Genesis 19:28** 28 And [Abram] looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the valley, and he looked and, behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.
- e. Believers are often tempted away from God's promises through their eyeballs. Satan knows how to allure us through our eyes.
- (1) **Ge 3:6** 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes....
  - (2) **Mt 4:8-10** 8 The devil took [Jesus] to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.

(3) **1 Jn 2:15-17** 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

- f. Especially to young men and women, the world looks very attractive. In numerous ways, the world promises the good life. It's not a moral life, that's for sure. It's not a God-honoring life. But it's a life filled with money, sex, power, and praise. It's glamorous, cosmopolitan, and filled with pleasure. But God clearly warns us the world and its pleasures will come to an abrupt end.
- g. Young man, young woman, what will you choose? The way of God or the way of the world? When you leave home, will you draw closer and closer to the allure of eyes? Will you lose faith in God's promises of blessing in the promised land? Will you be caught in a downward spiral through your area of weakness, whether it be greed, lust, envy, or arrogance? Will you be trapped in Dunedin's, Wellington's, Auckland's, Brisbane's dirty underworld, finding yourself doing things you would have never dreamed of when you were walking with God in the promised land? You are setting yourself up to be caught up in the destruction that will one day take place. Be warned. Don't go near. Stay with Abram in the promised land. Keep a safe distance from the world. Separate yourself and maintain your holiness.

## 8. God offers spiritually maturing believers a view of the place of ultimate blessing.

- a. **Ge 13:14-17** 14 Yahweh said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward, southward, eastward, and westward, 15 for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your seed forever. 16 I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your seed also can be counted. 17 Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.
- b. God offers Abram a view of the entire land of Canaan in the same place from which Lot looked over the valley of the Jordan. It was now clear that Lot would not be the one to carry the Abrahamic blessing and inherit all his property. Like Esau two generations later, Lot despised the blessing. And so, in Ge 15, Abram would learn that a child from his own body would be born. This would be Isaac, through whom the Abrahamic blessing would pass to Jacob and his twelve sons, the twelve tribes of Israel.
  - (1) From a place northeast of Bethel it is possible to see the Mediterranean in the west, the mountains of Transjordan in the east, Mount Hermon in the north, and the Dead Sea to the south (Wenham, *WBC*, 1:298).
- c. The Abrahamic covenant involves three central promises: land, seed, and blessing. Here, in Ge 13, Abram receives more specific information about the borders of the land and the number of his descendants. Throughout his life, Abram will continue to receive additional revelation from God about the covenant, with greater explicitness.
  - (1) **Ge 12:1-3** 1 Now Yahweh said to Abram, Go from your country, your kindred, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be

- a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
- (2) **Ge 12:7** 7 Then [at Shechem] Yahweh appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land.
- d. Yahweh later reassures Isaac and Jacob with the same promises.
- (1) Isaac:
- (a) **Ge 26:2-5** 2 Yahweh appeared to [Isaac] and said, Do not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. 3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your seed I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. 4 I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, 5 because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.
- (2) Jacob:
- (a) **Ge 28:13** 13 Yahweh stood above [the ladder] and said, I am Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your seed. 14 Your seed shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south, and in you and your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 Behold, I am with you, will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.
- e. Most Church age believers are not ethically Jewish and thus are not a direct recipients of the physical land, seed, and blessing promises of the Abrahamic covenant. The physical land, seed, and blessing promises will be fulfilled ultimately in the future Messianic kingdom, when Jesus rules the earth from Jerusalem. However, Church age believers:
- (1) Are Abraham's spiritual seed; and
- (a) **Ga 3:29** 29 If you are Messiah's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.
- (b) **Ro 4:11** 11 [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well.
- (2) Receive a spiritual land, or inheritance:
- (a) **Acts 20:32** 32 Now I [Paul] commend you [Ephesian elders] to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance (κληρονομία) among all those who are set apart.
- (b) **Ro 8:16-17** 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Messiah, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
- (3) Receive spiritual blessing:
- (a) **Ga 3:8-9** 8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham saying, In you shall all the

nations be blessed. 9 So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

(b) **Ga 3:13-14** 13 Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree—  
14 so that in Messiah Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

f. The invitation to traverse the length and breadth of the land is a sign of ownership. Bible study and the preaching and teaching of God’s word is how we “walk through the length and the breadth of the land” today.

## 9. When major events happens in your life, be sure to build another altar to Yahweh.

a. **Ge 13:18** 18 So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to Yahweh.

(1) Hebron is in the south central mountains of Judah, the highest city in Palestine (3,040 ft.), about nineteen miles south southwest of Jerusalem. Mamre is about two miles north of Hebron (Matthews, *NAC*, 1B:139-40). It became the primary settlement of Abram and Isaac and was especially important as the burial site for the patriarchal family in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre (Matthews, *NAC*, 1B: 139-40). The cave of Machpelah is the first piece of real estate purchased by Abraham in Canaan (Ge 23:1-20). Hebron’s citizens were the first to acknowledge David as king (2 Sam 2:4; 5:3). Today, over the traditional site of Machpelah is the mosque known as *Haram el-Khalil*, meaning “the enclosure of the friend (of God),” an allusion to Abraham (2 Ch 20:7; Is 41:8; Jas 2:23)(Matthews, *NAC*, 1B: 140).

(2) **Ge 35:27** 27 Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.

b. Wherever Abram lived, he built an altar to the worship of Yahweh. It is a demonstration of his great faith in Yahweh as the one, true God.

c. Believers today are wise to “build an altar to God” when they make big moves in their lives.

(1) We live in a mobile society. People move all the time. And often when they move, they lose connection with God. They stop going to church. The routines of spiritual life they followed in their previous location are forgotten in their new location.

(2) Don’t let this happen to you. When you move, find and keep with a Bible teaching local church. That is how you “built an altar” today. That is where you continue your worship and allegiance to the one, true God.

*Notes*