

Friendship With God: The Abraham Journey (3)

A Man Who Builds Altars

Genesis 13:1–18

Introduction: Spiritual fathers are builders; they build places of worship and peace for their homes and families. We all know Father’s Day sermons can become sentimental in a hurry. But Genesis 13 takes us deeper than sentiment. It asks a more searching question: *What kind of man are you building into your home?*

Genesis 13 comes after Genesis 12, and that means it comes after failure. Abram had gone down to Egypt in fear. He had compromised. He had lied. He had made a mess. *Yet when chapter 13 opens, grace is still at work.*

I. Return to the altar: (vv. 1-4)

A. The reason for the return - Abram had to come up from Egypt because he had gone down to Egypt – (Gen. 12:10-13)

1. *Faith moves in the direction of peace and hope, but unbelief moves in the direction of restlessness and fear. (Isa. 28:16; Js. 1:1-12)*
2. In the Bible, Egypt is a symbol of the world system and its bondage, while the land of Israel is a picture of the inheritance of blessing God has for you (Deut 11:10-12)

B. – The restoration -Abram’s recovery began when he went back to Bethel, back to the place of worship, and back to calling on the name of the Lord.

When we have wandered, the way forward is often the way back.

(Genesis 12:7–8; Psalm 51:12; Genesis 35:1–3; Revelation 2:5)

II. Relinquish your rights for peace: (vv. 5-9)

A. The problem –

1. Two households –
2. Too much increase –

B. The people –

1. Tensions rise –
2. The test – Abram needs to decided will he insert his rights or surrender them?
3. The testimony - Abram chose peace over preference and relationship over rivalry. He gave Lot first choice because he had

already given God first place. (Mt 5:5;5:9; Rom. 12:18; Phil. 2:3–4; Js. 3:17–18)

Abram’s wisdom is deeply masculine and deeply godly. He is not passive. He solves the problem. And he solves it without selfishness. That is what spiritual leadership looks like.

III. Reject the lure of worldly prosperity: (vv. 10-13)

A. The look - Lot looked by sight...

B. The lure - chose for himself what looked good.

C. ,The lean - moved toward Sodom, and drifted toward danger. What attracts the eyes can wound the soul.

D. The loss - Lot chose what looked good – but it cost him everything! His peace, his testimony, his family and his stability. (1 John 2:15–17; James 4:4; Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 14:12; 2 Peter 2:7–8)

Holiness asks, “How far can I stay from whatever will dull my soul, weaken my witness, and poison my home?”

IV. Raise an altar on the promise: (vv. 14-18)

A. The voice - God said, “Look.” Then God said, “Walk.”

B. The view – *Lot saw what was lush – Abram sees what is promised.*

C. The venture – Abram walked the land because faith doesn’t just see, it steps.

D. The worship =Abram answered by building an altar to the Lord.

E. The witness -. The tent said, “This world is not my home.” The altar said, “God is my home.”

(Heb. 11:8–10; 13:15; Rom. 12:1; Josh. 1:3; Deut. 6:6–9; Job 1:5)

Dads, our families and the watching world are watching to see what we are building our lives upon.

Father’s Day Challenge: Build an altar in prayer. Build an altar in your speech. Build an altar in your home. Build an altar in conflict. Build an altar in failure. Build an altar in decision-making.