

What God Promises, God Gives

A Five-Day Devotional from Genesis 13:1–18

Day 1: Back to the Altar

Read: Genesis 13:1–4, Genesis 12:7–8

Genesis 13 begins with Abram retracing his steps. He leaves Egypt, returns to Canaan, and comes again to the place where he had first built an altar. There he calls upon the name of the Lord.

That return matters because of what happened in Egypt. Fear had led Abram to deception. He tried to protect himself, placed Sarai at risk, and created a crisis he could not repair. Yet God remained faithful and preserved His promise. Now Abram is back at the altar.

The passage does not tell us everything Abram thought or felt on that journey. It does show him returning to the place and practice of worship that marked his life in the land. His failure did not make worship unnecessary, and God's faithfulness did not make failure unimportant. Abram returns to the Lord who kept His word when Abram did not know how to secure the future.

We often respond to failure by hiding, explaining, or trying harder to regain control. Genesis 13 directs us back to God. We come with no record to defend and no promise we can fulfill for Him. We come because He is faithful.

The promise given to Abram would ultimately converge in Christ. Jesus has done what sinners could not do. Through His death and resurrection, He has secured an eternal inheritance for those who come to Him by faith. That means your failure does not require you to stay away until you have repaired yourself. Christ is the reason you can return, confess honestly, and worship.

The Christian life repeatedly brings us back to this place. We remember what God has promised, admit where fear has shaped us, and call upon the name of the Lord. His grace does not erase every consequence, but it gives us a faithful God to worship as we walk forward.

Reflection Questions

1. When you fail, are you more likely to hide, explain, or return to God in worship?
2. What does God's faithfulness in Christ give you courage to admit?
3. What practice of worship do you need to return to this week?

Today's Practice

Set aside ten quiet minutes. Name your failure honestly before God, thank Him for the inheritance Christ has secured, and read Genesis 13:1–4 aloud.

Prayer

Father, I am tempted to hide or regain control when I fail. Thank You for remaining faithful and for securing my hope in Christ. Help me confess honestly, return to worship, and trust Your Word as I move forward. In Jesus' name, Amen

Day 2: An Open Hand

Read: Genesis 13:5–9, Hebrews 11:8–10

Abram and Lot had prospered so greatly that the land could not support both households together. Their herdsmen began to argue. Abundance created a different kind of pressure than famine, but it still strained relationships.

Abram spoke first. He wanted no strife between the households because they were kinsmen. He also had every reason to choose first. He was older, he had seniority, and God had promised the land to him. Yet Abram offered Lot the whole land and let him decide which direction to go.

That is a remarkable change from Egypt. There Abram's words were full of self-protection: let it go well with me, and let my life be spared. Here there is no attempt to hedge his bets or secure the best portion. Abram acts like a man whose future rests on God's promise.

Fear often closes our hands. We hold tightly to recognition, preference, position, or our share because we are afraid no one else will protect what matters to us. We may even call that grip responsibility. Genesis 13 asks whether our confidence is in God's promises or in our ability to secure our own future.

An open hand does not mean abandoning responsibility or surrendering every legitimate concern. Abram addressed the conflict directly and proposed a real solution. His faith freed him to pursue peace without insisting on his own advantage.

Hebrews says Abram lived in the land of promise as in a foreign country, looking for the city whose designer and builder is God. His open hand grew from that larger hope. Believers now know that hope in Christ. He has secured the promised inheritance, so we do not have to win every dispute or protect every preference as though our future depends on it.

God's faithfulness is not earned by our generosity. His prior faithfulness makes generosity and peace possible. We can open our hands because our inheritance is safe in Christ.

Reflection Questions

1. What preference, position, or share are you holding with a closed fist?
2. Is your insistence coming from responsibility or from fear about the future?
3. Where could confidence in God's promise help you pursue peace?

Today's Practice

Identify one disagreement in which winning has become more important than peace. Take one faithful step toward peace without neglecting a real responsibility.

Prayer

Father, You know how quickly fear closes my hands. Forgive me for treating control as though it can secure my future. Thank You that my inheritance is safe in Christ. Give me wisdom to act responsibly and faith to pursue peace without insisting on my own advantage. In Jesus' name, Amen

Day 3: When Sight Is Not Enough

Read: Genesis 13:10–13, Genesis 13:14–15

When Lot lifted his eyes, the decision appeared obvious. The Jordan Valley was well watered, like the garden of the Lord and the land of Egypt. The advantages were not imaginary. Lot saw fertile land that could support his household.

Then Moses interrupts the view. Sodom and Gomorrah would be destroyed, and the people of Sodom were wicked before the Lord. Lot's sight was accurate, but it was incomplete.

The passage does not say Lot chose wickedness, and it does not tell us he was motivated by greed. We should not claim to know his heart from the narrator's silence. We can notice what Moses shows us: Lot looked, chose, and moved east. His decision is described by what he saw, with no mention of seeking the Lord.

Visible advantage is not a sufficient guide for a life of faith. A relationship, purchase, promotion, or opportunity may offer genuine benefits and still carry spiritual costs we are tempted to ignore. People rarely choose a bad place all at once. They choose a good-looking place, then keep moving a little closer to danger.

Faith does not pretend practical questions are unimportant. Salary, benefits, title, and location may deserve serious consideration. The point is that attractiveness cannot be the only deciding factor. We need God's Word to tell us what our eyes cannot see.

That means asking deeper questions. Where will I worship? Who will know me well enough to tell me the truth? What will an ordinary week do to my time in God's Word? What will this opportunity require of my family, my integrity, and my life in the local church? Will it help me practice ordinary faithfulness, or steadily pull me away from it?

The less attractive option is not automatically more spiritual. Faith evaluates every option under God's Word. Our eyes can measure real benefits, but only God can teach us what those benefits are worth.

Reflection Questions

1. What attractive opportunity are you evaluating right now?
2. Which spiritual costs are easiest for you to overlook?
3. What does God's Word require you to consider before deciding?

Today's Practice

Write down the visible advantages of one decision. Beside them, answer one deeper question about worship, Scripture, family, integrity, or the local church.

Prayer

Father, my sight is limited, even when I see real advantages clearly. Keep me from treating appearance as a sufficient guide. Give me wisdom through Your Word, honest counsel, and courage to choose what supports faithful obedience. In Jesus' name, Amen

Day 4: A Gift on Its Way

Read: Genesis 13:14–17, Hebrews 11:13–16

After Lot separated from Abram, the Lord spoke. He told Abram to lift his eyes and look in every direction. Lot had lifted his eyes and chosen for himself. Now the Lord directed Abram's sight and told him what He would give.

The grammar matters. God says Abram should look because He will give the land to him and to his offspring. The seeing follows the giving. That reverses Lot's order, who saw first and then chose. Abram does not create the gift by looking. He looks because God has promised it.

The word “all” matters too. Lot's choice did not reduce the promise. The portion Lot selected still sat inside what God said He would give. Abram's open hand had not placed God's faithfulness at risk. He did not lose anything God promised.

Still, Abram had only God's Word. He held no title to the land and had no child. Sarai was barren. Nothing visible confirmed that the promise would be fulfilled. The land was a gift on its way.

God then told Abram to arise and walk through the land. That walk was a tangible response to the promise and a symbolic claim on what God would later provide, but it did not give Abram present possession. Abram looked and walked because God had promised to give, not to make God give.

Faith often lives in that space. It stands on ground not yet possessed and holds a promise before the promise is fully seen. Hebrews says the patriarchs died in faith, having seen and greeted the promises from afar. They desired a better country, a heavenly one, that God had prepared for them.

Believers live with the same posture. Christ has finished the work that secures our inheritance, yet we still await its fullness. We do not make God's promise secure by our obedience. We respond to the secure promise by trusting and obeying today.

Reflection Questions

1. Where does fulfillment feel distant even though God's Word is clear?
2. What are you trying to secure that must be received as God's gift?
3. What faithful step can you take because God has spoken?

Today's Practice

Choose one promise from today's readings. Write one sentence describing the faithful response that promise calls for today, then take that step without demanding immediate confirmation.

Prayer

Father, I often want visible proof before I trust and obey. Thank You that Your Word is sure and that Christ has secured my inheritance. Help me receive Your promises as gifts and take the next faithful step while I wait for their fullness. In Jesus' name, Amen

Day 5: Worship While We Wait

Read: Genesis 13:18, Galatians 3:16, 29, Hebrews 9:15, Hebrews 11:39–40

Genesis 13 ends where it began. Abram moves his tent to Hebron and builds another altar to the Lord. Between those altars he has faced strife, separation, and a promise he still cannot fully see. Yet he is still worshipping.

God's promise did not remove every uncertainty from Abram's life. He stood in the land without owning it and heard about offspring while he had no child. What the promise gave him was a faithful God to worship while he waited.

The land promise was real. Israel's later possession of Canaan was a true historical fulfillment of what God had said. Hebrews also tells us that the patriarchs died in faith without receiving everything promised because God had prepared something better.

That better inheritance converges in Christ. Galatians identifies Jesus as Abraham's offspring, the one in whom the promises come together. Those who belong to Christ are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to promise. Hebrews says Christ's death secures the promised eternal inheritance for those who are called.

Abram lived in anticipation of what God promised. Believers live in anticipation of what Christ has secured. We stand on the other side of His finished work as we await His return and the fullness of our inheritance.

Faith does not mean believing God will give us everything we hope for. It means trusting Him to fulfill everything He has promised. We may hold little in our hands, but in Christ we possess every reason for hope. His death and resurrection, not our control, secure our future.

While we wait, we worship. We gather with God's people, obey with open hands, and refuse to measure His faithfulness by what we can presently see. The God who kept His promise to Abram has kept His promises in Christ. He will not fail to complete what Christ has secured.

Reflection Questions

1. Which uncertainty makes waiting hardest for you right now?
2. How does Christ's finished work give you reason for hope while you wait?
3. What would worshipful waiting look like this week?

Today's Practice

Join the Lord's Day gathering ready to worship the God who keeps His promises. Before you arrive, thank Him for one promise secured in Christ and release one uncertain outcome into His hands.

Prayer

Father, thank You for keeping Your promises in Christ. When uncertainty makes me restless, fix my hope on His finished work and the inheritance He secured. Teach me to trust, obey, and worship with open hands while I wait for the fullness of what You have promised. In Jesus' name, Amen