

## Genesis 12:10-13:18

### Worldview: Looks can be deceiving

#### Part I: Famine in Egypt

Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was **severe** in the land. When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. **Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you,** and that my life may be spared for your sake." (Gen 12:10-13)

#### **Abram's account was not a complete lie:**

Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. (Gen 20:12)

#### **But it did reflect a lack of faith:**

Recall the promise

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 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. 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." (Gen 12:1-3)

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD! (Isa 31:1)

Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never return that way again.' And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold. (Deu 17:16-17)

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. (Pro 3:5-7)

#### **Worldview alert – biblical authority**

And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels. (Gen 12:16) (approx. 2,100 BC)

Last week, archaeologists Erez Ben-Yosef and Lidar Sapir-Hen of Tel Aviv University released a new study that dates the arrival of the domesticated camel in the eastern Mediterranean region to the **10th century B.C. at the earliest, based on radioactive-carbon techniques.** Abraham and the patriarchs, however, lived at least six centuries before then. The New York Times, in a story about the finding today, announced, "There are too many camels in the Bible, out of time and out of place ... these anachronisms are telling evidence that the Bible was written or edited long after the events it narrates and is not always reliable as verifiable history." Behold, a mystery: the Case of the Bible's Phantom Camels.

Liberal Judaism and Christianity, says Carol Meyers, often contribute to the problem when they do not look at the complexity of how ancient narratives were formed. Instead of worrying about proving history, she offers this suggestion: "If the Biblical writers are not interested in the facts, but rather in getting a message across, then people of faith can concentrate, instead of trying to verify every last item in the Bible, on what the overall message of the story is, not whether it is historically true or not."

<http://time.com/6662/the-mystery-of-the-bibles-phantom-camels/> Published 2/11/2014

## Part 2: Separation and Promise Renewed

So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. Now Abram was **very rich (contrast with severe in 12:10)** in livestock, in silver, and in gold. (Gen 13:1-2)

And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, 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. (Gen 13:5-7)

Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. 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." (Gen 13:8-9)

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

The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "**Lift up your eyes** and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." 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 the LORD. (Gen 13:14-18)

**Next Week: Genesis 14-15**

**Memory Verse: Genesis 15:6 And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.**