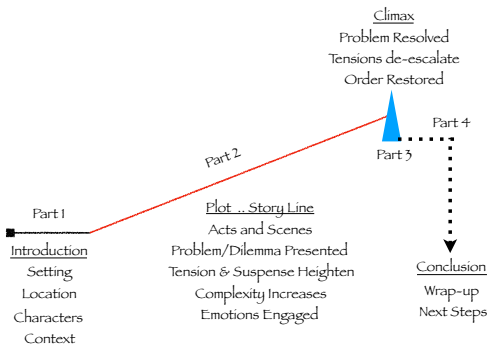


The Four Parts



Narrative .. Continued

- * Six different types of narratives
 - ◆ **Tragedy** - Story of an individual's decline
 - Samson, Saul
 - ◆ **Epic** - Long story with a series of episodes unified around an individual or group of people
 - Israel's wilderness wandering .. the Book of Numbers
 - ◆ **Romance** - A courtship between a man and woman
 - Ruth, Song of Songs

Narrative .. Continued

- ◆ **Heroic** - Story built around the life and exploits of a "hero" figure
 - Abraham, David, Daniel
- ◆ **Satire** - Story exposing human vice or folly through ridicule or rebuke
 - Jonah, Prov 1-9
- ◆ **Polemic** - An aggressive attack against or refuting the views of others
 - Elijah and his contest with the Baals, Moses and Pharaoh

Homework

Using Gen 13:1-18 tell me which verses belong to each of the four narrative parts ... AND

In a sentence of 18 words, or less, tell me what you think the main point is!

Time for Homework

* How do the 4-parts of the story break down

- ◆ What verses comprise the introduction?
 - Verses 1-5
- ◆ What verses comprise the plot?
 - Verses 6-13
- ◆ What verses comprise the climax?
 - Verses 14-17
- ◆ What verses comprise the conclusion?
 - Verse 18

Homework .. Continued

* What was the main point (THEN)?

- ◆ Moses wanted the Israelites to know that God uses conflict to grow their FAITH and reaffirm His blessing.

* What is the main point (NOW)?

- ◆ God uses conflict to grow our faith and reaffirm His blessings.

So Far .. We've Examined

- * Abram's faith inaugurated — Gen 12:1-9
 - ◆ God's call — vv. 1-3
 - ◆ Abram's response — vv. 4-9
- * Abram's faith refined — Gen 12:10-14:24
 - ◆ Through the [circumstances](#) of everyday life — Gen 12:10-20
 - ◆ Through our [conflicts](#) with others — Gen 13:1-18
 - ◆ Through the [crises](#) we encounter — Gen 14:1-24

Our Conflicts with Others

- * In chapter 13 we encounter the next obstacle in Abram's "faith journey"
 - ◆ As with the preceding one it is intended to both **TEST** and **GROW** Abram's faith ...
 - ◆ And to **REVEAL GOD'S CHARACTER**
- * In Gen 12, God used a [circumstance](#) ... "insufficient food" as the obstacle
- * Now He will use a [conflict](#) ... "insufficient land" as the obstacle

Abram's Conflict

- * Introduction to the narrative
 - ◆ The main characters ... Abram and Lot
 - ◆ The context
 - The return journey from Egypt
 - The setting — between Bethel and Ai
 - Abram again worships God ... "Called on the name of the LORD"
 - Both Abram and Lot had substantial "assets"
 - ◆ Further context: In v. 5 we learn that Lot had flocks ...
 - "And tents" — likely to convey that his "people" were many

Conflict .. Continued

* The Plot line ...

- ◆ First the “dilemma” is introduced - vv. 6-7
 - Insufficient grazing lands ...
 - Producing conflict .. literally STRIFE .. between the shepherds
- ◆ What is the point of the final clause in v. 7?
 - To heighten the shortage of land
 - It was not JUST Abram and Lot’s herds, but also the fact that there were already “occupants in the land”
 - So .. the Caananite’s and the Perizzite’s themselves are not important — just the fact of their presence contributing to the land shortage

Conflict .. Continued

- ◆ Continues with Abram’s appeal to Lot - vv. 8-9a
 - Abram uses a strong exhortation .. the Hebrew particle of entreaty (כי), here translated “PLEASE”
 - What sounds courteous to our English ear — is actually an exhortation, or command, better translated “Let there be no strife ...”
 - “Brothers” in v. 8 should be understood as familial, not spiritual — Abram is making a “relational” appeal
 - Then Abram uses a rhetorical question to introduce his proposal in v. 9a .. effectively saying, “we don’t need to fight over land”

Conflict .. Continued

- ◆ Abram’s proposed solution - v. 9b
 - Go our separate ways
 - YOU CHOOSE FIRST!!!
- ◆ Why is Abram’s offer so shocking?
 - The superior defers to the inferior ...
- ◆ What can we learn from Abram’s approach?
 - ☞ Be willing to subordinate our SELF-INTEREST in resolving conflicts
 - ☞ Voluntarily give up our right to be right ... or first
 - ☞ Rely on God to “defend” or “protect” our interests

Conflict .. Continued

- ◆ Lot's choice — vv. 10-11
- ◆ How does Lot choose?
 - With self-interest & human sight ... devoid of God
- ◆ Note the sequence ...
 - Lot engaged his senses .. lifted up his eyes and saw the "temporal"
 - He saw something that approximated the beauty of Eden and was good for grazing — "the perfect place"
- ◆ What heart issue does this sequence engage?
 - DESIRE !!!!!

Conflict .. Continued

- ◆ Does Lot's sequence remind you of anyone?
 - How about Eve in Gen 3:6 (turn there)
 - This is the EVER RECURRING PATTERN OF SIN
 - The eyes are the gateway .. the heart is the control center
 - ◆ So also Achan — Josh 7:16ff (note v. 21); David — 2 Sam 11; and the theology of it all in James 1:13-15
- ◆ Can you think of a similar OT circumstance where the subordinate chose differently?
 - How about RUTH?
- ◆ Lot chooses the fertile Jordan valley .. North and East of the Dead Sea .. and separates from Abram

Conflict .. Continued

- ◆ The aftermath - v. 12
 - Abram settles in the land of Canaan .. that is the promised land
 - Lot settles in the cities of the valley .. making home base "as far as" (which means "next to") Sodom
 - ◆ So apparently Lot was not only interested in good pastures, but also the lure of certain lifestyle
- ◆ What is the folly of Lot's choice in v. 13?
 - He put himself "at risk" ... You can't FLIRT with sin!!!!

Implications

- 📖 God ultimately accomplishes His purposes despite our choices ... Note that Abram has NOW, FINALLY fulfilled all of Gen 12:1 — left country, relatives, and father's house
- 📖 The point of the story was not a choice between good or barren land — rather the nature of Godly and ungodly decision making in resolving conflicts!
- 📖 It is easy to overlook temptation and the sin around us in our decision making
- 📖 We should never become complacent about or immune to how "surrounding sin" will impact us

One Big ?? For Me

- * What to make of Lot????
 - ◆ He is hard for me to understand
 - ◆ Peter identifies him as a believer — 2 Pet 2:7 (turn)
 - ◆ At best his belief is superficial ... governed by selfish and worldly behavior
 - ◆ Yet God preserves him ... in Gen 14 and again in Gen 19

Conflict .. Continued

- * The climax has a surprise visitor ... The LORD
 - ◆ The climax is the main point of the story ... **What is it?**
 - ▶ Exercising DIVINE SIGHT reaffirms God's blessings
 - ◆ Abram apparently recalled and believed God's promise ... the last time He showed up - note 12:7
 - ▶ God had already told Abram would receive the land ... so he trusted God and didn't sweat the small stuff!
 - ◆ So we see Abram's faith growing ... He responds well to the trial, which leads to an implication and the "rest of the story"

Conflict .. Continued

👉 As we respond in faith, God can - and WILL - reaffirm and further reveal his blessings ...

* And this is what He does with Abram in vv. 14-17

* What does God reaffirm and further reveal?

- ◆ He reaffirms His unconditional covenant with Abram
 - ▶ Note the three "I wills" in v. 15, 16, 17
- ◆ He reaffirms Abram's responsibility
 - ▶ Note the command that opens v. 17 .. the same as 12:1 - GO claim it!

Conflict .. Continued

◆ He further reveals ...

- ▶ The extent of the land promise .. "everything you can see in all directions (N, S, E, W)" - v. 14
- ▶ The duration of the land promise .. eternal - v. 15
- ▶ The extent of his progeny .. more than you can even imagine!!
 - ◆ Note the use of hyperbole .. they will be "innumerable" - v. 16

* FINALLY — The Conclusion in v. 18 (READ)

- ◆ Again we see that Abram obeyed settling in Hebron
- ◆ And he builds an altar ...

Zoom Out - The Big Picture

* Homiletical outline of Gen 12-15 (high-level)

- ◆ Abram's Faith Inaugurated — Gen 12:1-9
 - ▶ His Call — vv. 1-3
 - ▶ His Response — vv. 4-9
- ◆ Abram's Faith Refined — Gen 12:10-14:24
 - ▶ Through Circumstances — Gen 12:10-20
 - ▶ Through Conflicts — Gen 13:1-18
 - ▶ Through Crises — Gen 14:1-24 (Actually there are "2")

The Crises We Encounter

- * Abram's crisis introduced .. [Read 14:1-4](#)
 - ◆ The combatants — vv. 1-3
 - Two armies .. one from the East, one from the West
 - ◆ The catalyst — v. 4
 - After 12 years of "tribute" the Western coalition rebelled
- * Abram's crisis initialized .. [Read vv. 5-10](#)
 - ◆ The western army pursues retribution — vv. 5-10
 - It was an extensive campaign .. subduing more than just the rebellious coalition
 - Any number of questions come to mind as to WHY .. but it is not the writers primary concern — he is simply preparing the way to v. 11ff

Crises .. Continued

- * Abram's crisis identified.. [Read vv. 11-12](#)
 - ◆ TWO crises arise from the spoils of victory .. the first in v. 11-12 and again in v. 21ff
 - Here is where we get to the problem, or dilemma, in the story ... Lot is taken captive by the victors — [What is Abram to do?](#)
- * Abram's response instituted .. [Read vv. 13-16](#)
 - ◆ Verses 13-16 open a new act in the drama including a new set of characters - This is a "compound narrative"

Crises .. Continued

- ◆ The new characters are ...
 - The first is an informant ... who makes Abram aware of Lot's troubles
 - The second is Abram ... "the Hebrew" (an ethnic designation)
 - The third are Abram's allies ... by means of a "treaty" - or literally, a "covenant"
 - ◆ Mamre, Eschol, Aner (brothers) — who were Amorites
- ◆ Abram "musters" his forces and heads out - v. 14
 - Trained men — of his household — numbering 318!
 - ◆ Abram's loyal and dependable core
 - No mention of the "force size" contributed by his partners

Crises .. Continued

- ◆ What is notable about Abram's response?
 - ▶ Sacrificial for sure
 - ▶ Courageous
 - ◆ Pursues a vastly superior force
 - ◆ Subjects himself to retaliation
 - ▶ BUT ... He doesn't consult God
- ◆ Why does he do it?
 - ▶ Duty — Lot is family
 - ▶ Thought Lot would be his heir .. needed to rescue him

Crises .. Continued

- ▶ Hopes Lot had learned his lesson and would be ready to “repent” and “rejoin” the team
- ▶ Had experienced God's provision and assumed he would prevail
- ▶ We really don't — and can't — know
- ▶ In fact, any of these reasons are plausible ... which leads me to a different conclusion
- ◆ His [motive](#) is not important ...
- ◆ Rather his [mindset](#) or maybe his [attitude](#) is what matters

Crises .. Continued

- ◆ What should we note about Abram's mindset?
 - ▶ In Gen 13 Abram subordinated his SELF-INTEREST
 - ▶ In Gen 14 Abram subordinates his SELF-SATISFACTION
- ◆ WHAT WOULD YOUR MINDSET HAVE BEEN?
 - ▶ Serves him right ... now I get some vindication
 - ▶ Let him feel the consequences of his choice
 - ▶ Let him “stew” so he will be more appreciative in the future
 - ▶ Or maybe piously — this must be God's judgment on Lot
 - ▶ All of which makes me think of Rom 12:17-19 (turn there)

Crises .. Continued

- ◆ Yet more evidence of Abram's maturing faith
 - Abram does his part and lets God deal with Lot - which He will in Gen 19 ...
 - ◆ [Sneak preview](#) — If Lot won't separate from sin, God will forcibly take him out and firebomb the city so he can't return!
 - 📖 God will go to great lengths to secure His plans and His people!

Crises .. Continued

- ◆ Abram's battle plan and victory - v. 15
 - Stealth — He attacks by night
 - Deception — Divides his forces to appear larger
 - Finishes — Pursues them out of the territory
- ◆ What's the point of all this?
 - We rely on God for the victory — BUT we have a plan!
- ◆ What is interesting about v. 16?
 - Abram's magnanimity ... He surely did not need to retrieve the losses of the Eastern Kings
 - Particularly since he was not going to keep it ... Which leads us to the final act of this drama in vv. 17-24

TO BE CONTINUED
