



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

Image by Christine Sponchia from Pixabay

THEY COULD NOT DWELL TOGETHER

By Sr. Christine Hilliard, CSJ

From Today's First Reading

Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold. Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, so that the land could not support them if they stayed together; their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. There were quarrels between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and those of Lot's. (At this time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were occupying the land.)

So Abram said to Lot: "Let there be no strife between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are kinsmen. Is not the whole land at your disposal? Please separate from me. If you prefer the left, I will go to the right; if you prefer the right, I will go to the left." Lot looked about and saw how well watered the whole Jordan Plain was as far as Zoar, like the LORD's own garden, or like Egypt. (This was before the LORD had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) Lot, therefore, chose for himself the whole Jordan Plain and set out eastward. Thus they separated from each other; Abram stayed in the land

of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the Plain, pitching his tents near Sodom. Now the inhabitants of Sodom were very wicked in the sins they committed against the LORD.

After Lot had left, the LORD said to Abram: "Look about you, and from where you are, gaze to the north and south, east and west; all the land that you see I will give to you and your descendants forever. I will make your descendants like the dust of the earth; if anyone could count the dust of the earth, your descendants too might be counted. Set forth and walk about in the land, through its length and breadth, for to you I will give it." Abram moved his tents and went on to settle near the terebinth of Mamre, which is at Hebron. There he built an altar to the LORD.

GENESIS 13:2; 5-18

Reflection

This passage describes typical nomadic people searching for grazing land for their flocks. It is noted that both Abram and his nephew Lot had very large flocks, along with numerous possessions “so great that they could not dwell together.” It’s a sad commentary that these family members’ possessions were so plentiful that they could not live together. So Abram’s solution to alleviate the tensions and quarreling was to separate the flocks, possessions, and the family. Notably, Abram, as the elder, could have by rights chosen first which land he wanted; instead he graciously defers to the younger man, who chooses the prime grazing land.

After Lot moves on, Abram hears from the LORD. The promise of land here parallels the promise of land in Genesis 12. Added here is the promise of innumerable descendants. Both land and progeny are God’s gifts to Abram, supporting a long, vibrant life for him and his family. In Abram's culture, God’s gifts are most desirable. The abundance of these particular gifts points to a God whose generosity exceeds Abram’s expectations.



Farm animals grazing
Photo by Cottonbro Studio

For Pondering

- Have you ever found yourself in a situation where having too many possessions becomes a barrier to community? How did you respond?
 - In what ways have you experienced God's generosity in your life? When you remember that experience now, what word comes to mind? Invite that word to stay with you today.
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For Prayer

GIVING

My God, help me become a "giver" like you.

Help me give . . . and go on giving.

You've called on us

to be charitable;

show me how.

Show me how to give

with a pure heart,

with an open heart,

with a heart filled with joy.

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