

Don't Knock Down the Wrong Domino

Written by Bill Perkins

Sometimes a poor alliance is the first falling domino in a line of dominos that leads to catastrophe. If you're looking for an example you don't need to go any further than the Old Testament. Seldom has a leader made more ill-advised alliances than Lot. Initially, the unions he forged seemed as harmless as choosing a Coke instead of a Pepsi.

The First Bad Decision

His first bad decision involved his uncle, Abram, who would later be named Abraham by God. Abram approached Lot, seeking to find a solution to a pressing problem--they had too many livestock on too little land. Abram told Lot, "Let's not have fighting between us, between your shepherds and my shepherds. After all, we're family. Look around. Isn't there plenty of land out there? Let's separate. If you go left, I'll go right; if you go right, I'll go left." (Genesis 13:8-9).

Because he was older, Abram could have assigned Lot a parcel of land or taken the best for himself. As the younger, Lot should have refused his uncle's offer, or urged him to make the decision. But hey, what's a selfish and shortsighted guy to do?

Near Sodom

Lot's decision to settle on the lush Jordan plain knocked over the first domino. Instead of allying himself with Abram and God, he chose a different alliance ... one that appealed to his senses. Later, as he grazed his flocks a second domino fell. In Genesis 13:12 we're told Lot "pitched his tents near Sodom."

In the Gateway

First, he took the lush land and then he moved near Sodom. Years later, before God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the third domino fell. When an angel of the Lord visited the cities he found Lot "sitting in the gateway of the city" (Genesis 19:1).

Another Domino

In the ancient world the leaders of a city met at the gate to make important decisions. I can think of no reason Lot would be there unless he was a leader. What had started as a campsite "near" Sodom resulted in an alliance with the city. Lot had become one of them. That terrible alliance explains why he found leaving so hard. And why his wife looked back and lost her life ... another domino fell (Genesis 19:26). And why his daughters got him drunk and seduced him ... another domino (Genesis 19:33).

The One Thing Lot Didn't Do

A single choice led to an alliance that resulted in tragedy for Lot and his family. Be warned: Before aligning yourself with a person or cause be sure you do the one thing Lot didn't do ... pray. And as you pray ask for the wisdom to choose the course of action that will align you with God and his purpose. Abram made the right choice and in doing so he knocked over a domino that led to a sequence of events that resulted in great good.