

Near the Great Trees

Scripture Reading — Genesis 13

So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron. . . . There he built an altar to the Lord. — Genesis 13:18

The location of the great trees of Mamre was a renowned place of Canaanite worship where people went to buy and sell goods and to offer all kinds of sacrifices to their gods. There are many stories about these trees and the religious practices there, so it's significant that when Abram went to live near them, he built an altar to acknowledge his relationship with the Lord. Abram did this in the very place where people flocked to worship other gods.

We can imagine that while he lived near the great trees of Mamre, Abram may have been tempted with other possibilities for fulfilling his desires, yet he faithfully served the Lord, who revealed himself as the one who would guide each generation. This was also the place where Abraham (no longer called Abram) received three visitors, one of whom was the Lord himself. On that occasion, God promised Abraham and Sarah a child in their old age and asked: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (see Genesis 18).

Perhaps you live in or work in, or know of, a place where there's a strong contrast between a self-serving lifestyle and a life that's dedicated to God. Maybe God has called you to live and work in a place where you are challenged -every day to remain faithful to his promises—and you need to depend on God's goodness to persevere. In God's strength you can stand firm, and you can share his love with others.

Prayer

Lord, our God, nothing is too hard for you, so please empower us through your Spirit to live a life that is pure and full of integrity. In the name of Christ, our Savior, we pray. Amen.

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