

Genesis 13 -14 – Lot chooses Sodom and Melchizedek King of Righteousness

CHAPTER 13 - THEME: Abraham separates from Lot; Lot goes to Sodom; God appears to Abraham and reaffirms His promise.

In chapter 13, we see the return of Abram from the land of Egypt. Abram and Lot leave Egypt and return to the Land of Promise. Lot separates from Abram and goes to Sodom, and then God appears to Abram for the third time. As long as Abram is in the land of Egypt and as long as he is still holding on to Lot, God does not appear to him. The minute that he comes back to the land and there is the separation from Lot, God appears to him.

Gen 13:1-4 Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South. Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

Abram went far north of Jerusalem. He had come to the south, around Hebron, and now he goes north of Jerusalem to Bethel.

Although he may stumble and fall, this man comes back to God. There is always a way back to the altar for Abram, the prodigal son, and any man or woman who wants to come back to God. The arms of the Father are open to receive them.
– MCGee

Underlying Abram's return to **Bethel . . . from Egypt** was a return to fellowship with God. "Back to Bethel" is the rallying cry for all who have wandered from the Lord. – Believers Bible Commentary

Question: Have you returned to the Lord or are you still in Egypt?

Gen 13:5-7 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell 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. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

The Word of God is a marvelous Word if you just let it speak to you. Will you notice this: Abram got two things in the land of Egypt which caused him untold grief. One was riches, and the second was a little Egyptian maid by the name of Hagar. We will see more about her later. But now he has riches, and it causes him and Lot to have to separate—there is strife between them.

Did you notice this statement: "And the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land?" Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen are fighting, and then Abram and Lot disagree. The very interesting thing is that then the Canaanite probably whispered over to the Perizzite, "Look at them! Fightin' again! When they came into this land and built an altar to the living and true God, how we looked up to Abram! When he first came here, we thought he was such a wonderful man. We knew he was honest, we knew he was truthful, but look at him now. Look at the strife they're having!" I do not think the Perizzite and the Canaanite were very well impressed by Abram and Lot at this time. – McGee

Gen 13:8-9 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."

It is Abram who makes the division. It took a big man to tell Lot this. In other words, Abram is saying that Lot could choose what he wanted and Abram would take what was left. – McGee

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Question: Would you offer your tag along nephew the choicest land and depending on God regardless no your own eyes?

Gen 13:10-12 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom.

This is interesting. Probably during all the time Lot spent in that land with Abram, at night he would push back the flap of his tent and look out and say to Mrs. Lot, "Isn't that a beautiful spot down there?" In the morning he would get up and say, "My, it looks so attractive down there!" The grass is always greener in the other pasture. When the day came that Lot could make a decision and go, you know the direction he went. No man falls suddenly. It always takes place over a period of time. You lift the flap of your tent, and you pitch your tent toward Sodom—and that's the beginning. Lot lifted up his eyes, he saw the plain, and he headed in that direction. That is the biggest mistake he ever made in his life.- McGee

Question: Have you ever been deceived by your eyes and pitched your tent toward Sodom?

Gen 13:13-15 But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD. And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.

"And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him"—here is the third appearance of God to this man.

"Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward." This is the land God is going to give him. As God continued to appear to Abram and later on to the other patriarchs, God put sideboards around that land. In other words, He put a border to it and told them exactly what the land was. He was very specific about it. – McGee

Question: When Abram operates in obedience, separates from conflicts, and acts in faith, God appears. If we do this also, do you think we will hear more clearly from God and see His had in our lives?

Gen 13:16-18 And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you." Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.

Abram was quite an altar builder. You could always tell where Abram had been because he left a testimony. One of the meanings of Mamre is "richness," and Hebron means "communion." That is a marvelous place to dwell. In our day we can be fairly certain that we have located the tree where Abram was, and the well that is there—I have been there. It is quite an interesting spot between Hebron and Mamre, and that is where Abram dwelt. It is a good place to be: in the place of richness and of communion with God. This seems to have been Abram's home, and this is where he is buried.

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CHAPTER 14 – Melchizedek King of Salem

THEME: Kings of the east capture Sodom and Gomorrah; Abraham delivers Lot; Abraham refuses booty.

In chapter 14 we find the first recorded war, one in which Abram delivers Lot; and we find the appearance of the first priest, at which time Abram is blessed by Melchizedek. These are the two great truths that are here. In one sense, this is a most remarkable chapter. It does not seem to fit in with the story at all. It seems that it could be left out, that there is a continuity without it. But it is one of the most important chapters in the Book of Genesis.

Gen 14:1-7 *And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness. Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar.*

Gen 14:8-12 *And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains. Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.*

14:1-12 Thirteen years before the main events of this chapter, Chedorlaomer, king of Elam (Persia), had conquered various kings in the plains adjacent to the Dead (Salt) Sea. In the thirteenth year, the five captive kings rebelled against Chedorlaomer. So he allied himself with three other kings from the region of Babylon, marched south along the eastern side of the Dead Sea, then north on the western side to Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain. The battle took place in the Valley of Siddim, which was full of asphalt pits. The invaders defeated the rebels and marched north with their booty and captives—including Lot, Abram's backslidden nephew. – Believers Bible Commentary

Gen 14:13-16 *Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram. Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.*

When Abram received the news, he assembled a fighting force of three hundred and eighteen trained men and pursued the victors to Dan, in the north. He finally defeated them near Damascus, in Syria, and rescued Lot and all the spoils. Backsliders bring not only misery on themselves but trouble on others. Here Abram delivered Lot by the sword. Later he delivers him through intercessory prayer (chaps. 18, 19).

Gen 14:17-18 *And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his*

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return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him. Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.

As Abram was returning home, the king of Sodom went out to meet him, just as Satan often tempts the believer after a great spiritual victory. But Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, was on hand with bread and wine to strengthen Abram. We cannot read this first mention of bread and wine without thinking of these symbols of our Savior's passion. When we consider the price He paid to save us from sin, we are strengthened to resist every sinful temptation.

Gen 14:19-20 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

I have several questions here, and I am sure that you do. To begin with, where in the world did this man Melchizedek come from? He just walks out on the page of Scripture with bread and wine, he blesses Abram, and then he walks off the page of Scripture—that's it. I wonder where he came from. I wonder where he is going, and I wonder what his business is.

I find out that he is king of Salem, but he is also priest of the most high God. But now I have another question: How did he find out about "the most high God"? He found out somewhere. El Elohim is the most high God, the Creator of heaven and earth; in other words, the living God, the God of Genesis 1, the God of Noah, and the God of Enoch. This is the One—He is not a local deity. H. C. Leupold in his book on Genesis says that this is "strictly a monotheistic conception." Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer, in his *Origin of Religion*, says that this reveals that there was monotheism before polytheism. In other words, all men had a knowledge of the living and true God. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom_1:21). Paul goes on to say that men continued to go down to the point where they began to worship the creature more than the Creator.

Yet back in Abram's day here is a man who is high priest for the world of that day. He has a knowledge of the living and true God. He is a priest of the living and true God. He comes out, bringing bread and wine to Abram—those are the elements of the Lord's Supper! I wonder what he had in mind? How much did Melchizedek know?

Melchizedek is mentioned three times in Scripture. In addition to this passage in Genesis, he is also mentioned in Psa_110:4, which is prophetic of Christ: "... Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Finally, he is mentioned several times in Hebrews. After reading Hebrews, I know why nothing is said about his origin in Genesis. Nothing is said about his parents, and that is strange because the Book of Genesis is the book of families. It tells about the beginnings of these families. Every time we see mentioned a man who is important in the genealogical line (as this man Melchizedek is), his parents are mentioned. "He is the son of So—and—So," or "these are the generations of So—and—So." But we do not have the generations of Melchizedek. The writer to the Hebrews makes it very clear that the reason there is no record of Melchizedek's father or mother or beginning or ending of days is because the priesthood of Christ, in its inception, is after the order of Melchizedek. In service—in what our Lord did in the sacrifice of Himself and in His entering the Holy of Holies, which is heaven today—Christ's priesthood follows the order of Aaron. But in His person, our Lord had no beginning or ending of days, and His priesthood follows the order of Melchizedek. As King, Christ is son of Abraham, He is son of David—the Gospel of Matthew tells us that. But in the Gospel of John we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Joh_1:1, Joh_1:14). He had no beginning or ending of days as far as creation is concerned—He is the eternal God. He came out of heaven's glory, the Word was made flesh, and we beheld His glory. We have in Melchizedek a marvelous picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Brought forth bread and wine." I know now why Melchizedek does this. It is because the Scriptures say, "For as often as

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ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (1Co_11:26). Melchizedek is anticipating the death of Christ here!

On that basis he blessed Abram: "Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth"—El Elohim, the Creator. This man was the high priest of the world in that day. The Lord Jesus is the great High Priest for the world today. The Lord Jesus is after the order of Melchizedek—not Aaron—as set forth here. Aaron was just for Israel and just for a tabernacle. In His person, Christ is after the order of Melchizedek.

Gen 14:21-24 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'— except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

The king of Sodom said, in effect, "Give me the persons; you take the material things." So Satan still tempts us to be occupied with toys of dust while people around us are perishing. Abram replied that he wouldn't take anything from a thread to a sandal strap.

REFLECTION EXERCISE – Refer to complete lesson on Be Careful where you pitch your tent Gen 12-14.

What about Abram? After he separated from Lot, the Lord came to him and confirmed the covenant and the blessing promised. How about you? Where are you in the process?

1. Leave Egypt / Return to the Promised Land (Gen 13:1-2)
2. Call on the name of the Lord (Gen 13:3-4)
3. Resolve the conflict that arises from your sin. (Gen 13:5-7)
4. Trust in the Lord - don't have to control the situation. (Gen 13:8-9)
5. Choose wisely. God has a different perspective than we do! (Gen 13:10-13)
6. Sometimes you have to separate yourself, so God can use you fully! (Gen 13:14-18)