

Genesis 13 -14 Bible Study

Chapter 13 opens with a familiar sight in scripture, family rivalry. We see it in Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau, and here in Abram and Lot. The relationship between Abram and Lot will reveal to us the difference between the chosen and the non-chosen blood lines. The conflict we see between the herdsmen of both men will show up later in the history of Israel.

Let's take a look at the scene between the two lines:

So, Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. ² Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. ³ And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, ⁴ to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the Lord. ⁵ And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, ⁶ so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, ⁷ and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land.

⁸ Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. ⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." ¹⁰ And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus, they separated from each other. ¹² Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. ¹³ Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord. (Genesis 13:1-13)

Why did the two families decide to part ways?

What land did Lot choose and why?

Take a look at Genesis 12:5-7. Which land was the promised land?

“And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So, he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.” (Genesis 12:5–7)

How does Lot’s choice of land display poor judgement?

Lot could have chosen the promised land, but he considered the Jordan Valley his best choice, seeing that it resembled the land of Egypt. Egypt was known as the breadbasket of the ancient near east.

How does Genesis 13:10 remind you of Eve’s looking at the tree in Genesis 3:6 and the sons of God looking at the daughters of men in 6:2?

- *¹⁰ And Lot lifted up his **eyes** and **saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered** everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) (Genesis 13:10)*
- *“So when the woman **saw that the tree was good** for food, and that it was **a delight to the eyes**, and that **the tree was to be desired** to*

make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.” (Genesis 3:6)

- *“the sons of God **saw that the daughters of man were attractive.** And they took as their wives any they chose.” (Genesis 6:2)*

Why do you think these might be so similar?

Which direction did Lot journey? (see Verse 11)

In Genesis 11 we saw that the Tower of Babel was built in the east and that the use of the word eastward marks separation from God in the book of Genesis. We see this same thing happening here with Lot.

Genesis 14

In Genesis 14, we see a war involving a lot of kings. This is the second scene in the Abram-Lot storyline. In Genesis 13 Lot sets himself up as much different than Abram. He is passive while Abram is bold and decisive. Lot is an incompetent leader of his household who loses all his stuff, while Abram rescues Lot.

“In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, ²these kings 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). And all these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, and the Horites in their hill country of Seir as far as El-paran on the border of the wilderness. Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh) and defeated all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who were dwelling in

Hazazon-tamar. Then 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 they joined battle in the Valley of Siddim ⁹with Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar, four kings against five. ¹⁰Now the Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into them, and the rest fled to the hill country. ¹¹So the enemy took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. They also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who was dwelling in Sodom, and his possessions, and went their way.

¹³Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner. These were allies of Abram. When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people. (Genesis 14:1-16)

In verses one and two we see who is on each side of the war. After that we learn all about the battles that took place, specifically where they took place. According to verse one which kings are at war?

According to verse two who are the first kings listed fighting against?

The final battle between the kings takes place in the Valley of Siddim. According to verse 11, who lost the war?

The victors then took Lot captive, as we see in verse 12. Take a look starting in verse 13 to see what happened next. How does Abram defeat the enemy?

Now, let's see what happens next:

*17After his [Abram's] return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, **the king of Sodom** went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). 18And **Melchizedek king of Salem** brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) 19And he blessed him and said,*

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!” And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself.” But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have lifted my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’ I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share.”” (Genesis 14:17–24, ESV)

According to verse 17, who did Abram defeat?

After this battle what two kings comes out to meet Abram in the King's Valley? (see vs. 17-18)

How is Melchizedek described?

What differences do you see between the way these two kings welcomed Abram? (see vs. 18-21)

What was Abram's response to them both?

This is the first occurrence of the word 'priest' in the Old Testament and the only priestly blessing in the book of Genesis. The New American Commentary says that to bless God means to recognize God's goodness as shown in the bestowal of divine benefits to his subjects.¹

What do you notice about what Abram gave to Melchizedek?

We see this same gift being talked about in Genesis 28:22 by Abram's descendant Jacob: "*and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.*" (Genesis 28:22)

Abram's response to the king of Sodom was completely different. Why do you think that would be?

What might refusing to take anything from the king of Sodom say about Abram's faith in God to provide for his needs?

So far, Abram has proved his faith in God to provide for him. He allowed Lot to pick the land he wanted first. He didn't feel the need to take the spoils of his victory. Instead, he entrusted himself to His God. This week notice the ways that God may be wanting to be your soul provider. Can you rest in the knowledge that He can be trusted and that you don't have to fight to protect yourself?

¹ K. A. Mathews, [Genesis 11:27-50:26](#), vol. 1B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 150.