

# GENESIS

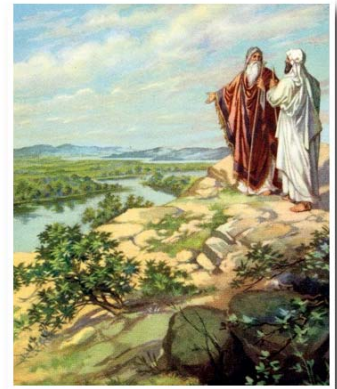
## Lesson 9

**Abram believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness . . .**

### **ABRAM AND LOT SEPARATE**

#### **Genesis 13:1-18**

Genesis 13 begins with Abram leaving Egypt and retracing his steps back to an area between Bethel and Ai. The Scripture indicates that Abram was a wealthy man with a great amount of livestock as well as silver and gold. The livestock that Abram owned along with what flocks and herds were held by Lot prove to be too much for the available pasture. This leads to strife between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot.



1. **How did Abram propose to solve the problem of livestock grazing with Lot (Genesis 13:8-9)?**
2. **What area did Lot choose to take his herd and why did he choose this area (Genesis 13:10-11)?**
3. **What does this tell us about Lot?**

Generously, Abram allows Lot to choose the land he would settle. It was well within Abram's right to choose his land first, but he places family over wealth and offers Lot the first choice of land. Lot selfishly takes that which he believes to be the choice land because it was fertile and rich and had cities nearby. It is unlikely that Lot knew the scope of the wickedness of the people that lived in Sodom and Gomorrah at this time.

4. **What promise is made to Abram in Genesis 13:14-17?**

# **ABRAM RESCUES LOT**

## **Genesis 14:1-16**

Some time passes and Lot is caught in a war between four kings from the east and five kings who lived in the area. After twelve years the kings rebelled against king Chedorlaomer. In the end the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah are defeated and Lot is taken captive. This causes Abram to get involved without hesitation. Abram got together 318 men and went in pursuit of the enemy. Even though he must have been outnumbered greatly Abram is victorious and rescues Lot and his possessions.

Lot got into this trouble because he had separated from Abram and lived amongst a most wicked people.

**5. Why might Abram have taken risk to intervene to save Lot?**

**6. Describe the risks associated with living amongst a wicked people.**

# **ABRAM IS BLESSED BY MELCHIZEDEK**

## **Genesis 14:17-24**

After defeating Chedorlaomer, the king of Sodom went out to meet Abram. He was also met by Melchizedek king of Salem. Melchizedek is one of the most fascinating characters in the Bible. We know this about Melchizedek: 1) He is king of Salem (perhaps an old name for Jerusalem). 2) He was a priest the Most High God. 3) He blessed Abraham. 4) He was given a tithe by Abram. See also Hebrews 7:4-10.

The king of Sodom wanted to give Abram all the spoils of the war, but Abram refused. He did not want anyone to say that he had become rich because he had taken anything from this pagan king. All that Abram had came from God.

# **GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAM**

## **Genesis 15:1-21**

In chapter 15, we have the fifth appearance of God to Abram. In the course of the chapter, God does most of the speaking and Abram asks just two questions (15:2,8).

**7. What did it mean for God to say that he was Abram's "shield?" (Genesis 15:1)**

## **8. What is the question of Abram in Genesis 15:2-3?**

It has been ten years since God made the first Promise to Abram, but thus far Abram could not see any fulfillment. God tells him that he will have a son, one from his own loins, and that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. Even though ten years had passed and Abram was growing older, he believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. The promise of land is repeated to Abram again in Genesis 15:7.

To demonstrate the faithfulness of the promise God asked Abram to bring a three year old heifer, a three year old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon. Abram was to cut these in half. Abram drove birds of prey away that tried to steal away the carcasses. Then Abram fell into a deep sleep and the Lord spoke to him. After the Lord spoke Abram saw a smoking pot and a flaming torch pass between the pieces of meat. Abram recognised this as a great covenant from God.

Abram was also told that his descendants would receive the land after these five conditions were met: 1) His descendants would spend 400 years as sojourners in a land that was not their own. 2) God would bring judgment on the nation where they sojourned. 3) They would leave the land with great possessions. 4) Abram would die in peace at a good old age. 5) After four generations (counting a generation as 100 years) his offspring would return to the land of promise.

## **9. What land were the descendants of Abram to receive (Genesis 15:18-21)?**

# **SARAI AND HAGAR**

## **Genesis 16:1-16**

Sometimes it is hard for the servant of God to wait upon the blessing of God. In these times, people sometimes take things into their own hands to help God along. This is what happens in the life of Abram, Sarai, and Hagar.

## **10. What was the plan of Sarai in Genesis 16:1-2 and why would she consider such a plan?**

## **11. Why did Abram listen to the voice of Sarai?**

## **12. How did the birth of a son to Hagar effect the relationship between Sarai, Hagar, and Abram? (Genesis 16:4-6)**

The action of Sarai and Abram was nothing short of faithless. Yes, they were getting old in years and by human reckoning there was no way Sarai could have a child. Yet God had promised Abram a child and instead of waiting and relying upon God he fell for the sinful scheme of Sarai.

Sarai held the role of first wife to Abram and thus had more status than Hagar. When Hagar held Sarai in contempt, Sarai confided in Abram who told Sarai to do whatever she pleased with Hagar.

Due to the mistreatment that Hagar endured, she fled. The angel of the Lord spoke to Hagar and told her to return to Sarai and to submit to her. He also promised Hagar that her offspring would be a multitude. The son she would bear was to be named Ishmael which means “God hears.” This son would be a “wild donkey” of a man. He would roam the desert and be a powerful man.

**13. What was the age of Abraham when Ishmael was born?**

## **ABRAM AND THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION**

### **Genesis 17:1-14**

**14. How many years pass between the end of chapter 16 and the beginning of chapter 17?**

God now identifies himself as El Shaddai (God Almighty) in Genesis 17:1. Abram is called by God to walk before the Lord and to “be blameless.” This is Abram’s responsibility in the covenant that God makes with him. Now God reiterates his promise to Abram.

**15. What promises does God make to Abraham? (Genesis 17:2-8)**

**16. What was the outward sign of the covenant? (Genesis 17:9-14)**

James Smith says that the amount of space given to circumcision demonstrates its importance. Circumcision shows that even the the most private part of man is to be dedicated to God. Any male who refused to be circumcised was to be “cut off” from his people.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, James E. *Old Testament Survey Series: The Pentateuch*. Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1992.