

Genesis 13-14 – Thursday, December 20th, 2007

13:1 Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South. **2** Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.

- Abram leaves Egypt after messing up big time. He's back to where he was at the beginning after failing miserably.
- No matter how bad we've failed, it can't change how good God is to us in the midst of those failures.

"Why does God show us the failures of these great leaders? Could it be He wants us to know that in spite of our fiascoes, He can still make something glorious out of our lives? The list of names in Hebrews 11 underscores this truth. In this passage, men and women of great faith are noted – ones whom God Almighty approved. One might be shocked, however, to discover how many of them were restored spiritually following failures such as deception, drunkenness, adultery, idolatry and murder.

K.P. Yohannan When We Have Failed – What Next? God's Answer to Our Failures p 12

3 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, **4** to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

- Now we see him at the altar "he had made there at first," like the church of Ephesus, remember, repent, return, and repeat.

Revelation 2:4-5a **4** Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. **5a** Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. NIV

- So Abram returns back to Bethel, (House of God), which is the last place he heard the voice of God.
- When you don't know what to do, go back and do what the last thing you were told to do.
- Notice how that we never see him calling on the Lord before he "went down" to Egypt.

- Also worthy of noting is how Abram sinned after leaving his place of worship at Bethel.
- It would seem that Abram is a broken and humbled man at this point. He probably realizes the damage he's done.
- Notice, parenthetically; Abram is very wealthy. It's not what you have it's what has you. You can have wealth and still be in the faith.

- It's interesting that Abram would even go back to God. He doesn't think that God is through with him, and wants nothing to do with him.
- Satan is extremely crafty. He tries to deceive us into thinking that we should never go back to God, let alone to church, (Bethel).
- Satan condemns but God convicts. Condemnation alienates us from God, but conviction reunites us to God.

- So Abram is sort of reunited back to God and is right back where he started to begin with.
- I can't help but wonder how God would have miraculously provided had he stayed in put. I guess we'll never know now.

5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. **6** 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. **7** 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.

- Lot has also become wealthy because of Abram and now is in conflict with his uncle Abram.
- Again, if Abram would have obeyed God and left Lot in Ur, this wouldn't have happened. I wonder if Lot begged Abram to go with him.
- Sometimes, people are attracted to the hand of God's blessing on our lives.

- Notice the detail recorded for us; the Canaanites and the Perizzites dwelt in the land. Perhaps they witnessed Abram and Lot fighting.
- What a bad witness this would have been. No wonder Abram is will seek to resolve this as soon as possible.

"Many people will never listen to what any believer says because of what some believers are." (Donald Barnhouse)

8 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. **9** 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 seems that Abram has learned from his mistake in Egypt. Now instead of looking out for himself, he generously considers Lot.

Philippians 2:4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. NIV

- Abram is not cowering in weakness to Lot; he's being gracious to Lot because God gave the land to him not Lot.
- Also, I would imagine that Abram feels responsible for Lot since he came with him, and wants to make sure he's taken care of.
- This is really quite amazing because Abram offers Lot the first choice.
- In this we can start noticing a change in Abram, now people are more important than possessions, and other's more important than self.

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. NIV

- On final thought on Abram and Lot separating. Sometimes brethren need to separate, and this can be the Lord.
- It needs to be done in a God honoring way. It's not that we do separate its how we separate.
- When we get to Acts 15 in our on Sunday morning study, we'll see Paul and Barnabas have a sharp dispute and separate.

10 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. 11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. 12 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. 13 But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.

- Lot saw, chose, then he went. Lot should have given his uncle first choice. In this culture, the younger had respect for the elder.

"When there is an elder man and a younger man in the same room, the elder man should never mention it, but the younger man should never forget it."
George Washington

- Notice that prayer on Lot's part is completely absent. I wonder if he would have prayed would he still have gone to Sodom?
- This also makes me wonder if Abram would have prayed would he still have gone to Egypt?

- Lot's decision is made solely on the basis temporal material prosperity and as a result he ends up in a very sinful place.
- This doesn't mean that God doesn't send us into sinful places. If it's His will, He will, but Lot wasn't in God's will.
- One noted how that Lot saw it as a good place to raise cattle, but failed to see that it would be a horrible place to raise kids.

- It's interesting the progression. First in verse 10, Lot looked toward Sodom, then, in verse 2, he pitched his tent toward Sodom.
- When we get to chapter 19, we'll then see that Lot had become a leader in Sodom. This will be the worst decision Lot could have made.
- This decision will cost him everything. He'll lose his wife, his daughter's innocence, and his wealth. He will end up homeless in a cave.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. NIV

- Notice the contrast between Abram and Lot. Abram's decision was made "by faith," and Lot's decision was made "by sight."

2 Corinthians 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight. NIV

- Another contrast between Abram and Lot is that Abram loses but finds, while Lot tries to find his life in Sodom, but will lose it.

Matthew 10:39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. NIV

- One more thought regarding lot; it wasn't his choice that led him astray. His heart was already astray. It was evidenced by his choice.

14 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; 15 for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. 16 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. 17 Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

- Notice that it's only after Lot had separated from Abram; that God could finally do what He wanted to do for Abram.
- It doesn't matter what a Lot does to us, because it can't thwart what God does for us.

- God is sort of reminding Abram about the promise, and is repeating to Abram that He will keep the promise.
- I think it's very important to keep repeating to ourselves and reminding ourselves of the promises of God.
- Just because God's promises have been delayed, doesn't mean that God's promises have been denied.

- So what's the promise; God is giving all this land to the Hebrew's, by the way, this is pre-Palestinian.
- Also, the promise is that God is giving so many descendants to Abram that they will be innumerable.

- Why would God give them this particular land? Because this land connects three main continents.
- Now the world would pass through Israel to avoid the deadly deserts.

- One has noted that instead of Israel going out to the world, the world would come to them.
- Israel would be the revelation of God, from which would come the Word of God, from which would come the Savior of the world.
- This contrasts the great commission in the new covenant to go out to all the world.

18 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.

- Interesting that again; the name is the nature. Abram moves his tent and dwelt Mamre which is in Hebron and builds an altar there.
- **Mamre** means "vision"; **Hebron** means "communion." Abram is walking in the vision of the Lord and in communion with the Lord.

14:1 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, 2 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).³ All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea).⁴ twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5 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, 6 and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness. 7 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. 8 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 9 against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar -- four kings against five.

- The four kings of the cities in the region of Sodom and Gomorrah rebel against the five kings of nations ruling over them.
- It seems like this is a world war of sorts. I suppose it would be good at this juncture to mention that this is a true story.

Archaeologist Nelson Glueck documents the destruction left by these kings: "I found that every village in their path had been plundered and left in ruins, and the countryside was laid waste. The population had been wiped out or led away into captivity. For hundreds of years thereafter, the entire area was like an abandoned cemetery, hideously unkempt, with all its monuments shattered and strewn in pieces on the ground."

10 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.¹¹ Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. 12 They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

- So because they rebelled and wouldn't pay taxes, they come in and took people and goods as payment and departed.
- Lot was living with them and thus was one of them taken as slaves in this war.
- To be friends with the world is a costly mistake.

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. NIV

"Those believers who conform to the world must expect to suffer for it." (Spurgeon)

13 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.

- Abram is told about his nephew Lot and will now take responsibility for him and will put together an army to go rescue him.
- Interesting, this is the first mention of the name Hebrew, again because of Eber, who is in Abram's genealogy.

"The word Hebrew comes from a root that means *passed over*. The Septuagint translates it *the passenger*." (Barnhouse)

14 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.

- Abram's army consists of 318 servants, and we're told that they are armed and trained.
- It is interesting to note that though Abram was a man of faith; he still prudently had an army ready to defend himself.
- It's been said; 'trust God, but lock your house.'

15 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. 16 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. 17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.

- God gives Abram wisdom militarily to divide his troops and attack at night.
- God gives Abram victory and they are able to bring back Lot, along with all the people, and all the possessions.
- What's crazy about this is that Lot will go right back to Sodom. It's as if this God was warning Lot of Sodom and Gomorrah's judgment.

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

- We're introduced to Melchizedek, who as a Priest and a King brings bread and wine and blessed Abram.
- Abram gives Melchizedek a tenth (or tithe) of everything. This is the (Principle) of first mention as it relates to the tithe. (It's pre-law.)
- Melchizedek is a type of Jesus Christ, and some think He's even a Christophony, but Bible scholars are unclear as to who he is.

...we can, at the very least, say he was a remarkable type or picture of Jesus. Morris

Hebrews 7:1-17 1 This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, 2 and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace." 3 Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever. 4 Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! 5 Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, their brothers—even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. 6 This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. 7 And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. 8 In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. 9 One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, 10 because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor. 11 If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come—one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? 12 For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law. 13 He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. 14 For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. 15 And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, 16 one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." NIV

MELCHIZEDEK	JESUS
King	King of Kings
King and Priest	Our High Priest
King of Salem	Prince of Peace (Salem)
King of Righteousness	Our Righteousness
Without father or mother	Without earthly father (and mother pre-Bethlehem)
Without beginning or end	Alpha and Omega
Priest of the most high God	Son of the most high God
Remains a priest forever	Our High Priest for eternity
Another priest to come in his order	In the order of Melchizedek
Brings bread	Body was broken (bread)
Brings wine	Blood was shed (wine)

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself." 22 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, 23 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' --24 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 tries to get the people from Abram, and it's as if Abram is saying don't think that I sell out like my nephew.
- Abram, because of his vow to God by raising his hand, say's I will never take anything from you lest you take the credit instead of God.
- There would have been strings attached, and Abram would have been unable to speak against Sodom had he accepted anything.