

## A Tale of Two Fathers Gen 13:1-13

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. 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.

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.

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."

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. NKJV

In our message today we want to look at two fathers. They both came from the same family, born to brothers. They even had similar backgrounds for Lot's father died and Abraham too on the job watching out for his brother's son. When Abraham left home for the land God had promised him he took Lot along with him. But Lot was not dependent for Abraham. We see in verse 5 that Lot also had herds and servants and his own things. In all respects Lot seemed also destined to become rich as his uncle Abraham.

But as time goes on Lot's servants and Abraham's servants begin to quarrel over the resources necessary to keep their flocks thriving. Abraham gives Lot the generous choice of what part of the county he would choose. Lot chooses the area of the lower river valley around the south end of what today is called the Dead Sea. The place is compared to the garden of the Lord, Eden, for its beauty and lushness. But this was also the place of several wicked cities. But Lot choose what he thought would make him the most prosperous.

But God was still working in the life of Lot and even the wicked cities of the plain. For not long after Lot settled there they were invaded by a foreign league of nations who raided Sodom and took many captives along with their riches. Lot was among that group. I wonder if that experience gave Lot time to think? Did Lot begin to regret that he had compromised his morals in order to gain wealth and fame. Peter tells us that Lot was "oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt

his righteous soul tormented day after day with their lawless deeds)” 2 Peter 2:7-8 NASB

But yet he stayed, even after Abraham marshaled his servants and rescued Lot with the others taken away. Lot could have left at any time but what of his wealth, his influence. Lot was going to have it all.

But the end was quite different. The LORD appears to Abraham to tell him that he and Sara will have a child about a year later. But as Jehovah is leaving, He reveals to Abraham that He is about to destroy the cities of Sodom because of their terrible immorality. Abraham intercedes on behalf of Sodom for Lot, his nephew’s sake. And the LORD agrees not to destroy Sodom if there is at least 10 righteous persons in the place (Lot and his family made up at least 8). But alas there were not 10 but God did send angels to rescue Lot and his family. But sadly only Lot and his two unmarried daughters make it. The married daughters are destroyed for their unbelief along with their families and the rest of the cities of Sodom. And even Lot’s wife does not make because she disobeyed and looked back as they fled. And then to add insult to injury Lot’s two remaining daughters get their father drunk in order to be impregnated by their father. And so ends the story of Lot. Except that the offspring of those two daughters are later destroyed for their idolatry.

But Abraham was greatly blessed by God and became the father of many nations, most notably the nation of Israel to whom the Lord gave the promised land and to whom the Christ was to be born.

So how could two men who came from the same family, similar backgrounds and upbringing could end up so entirely different. Some might think it was just bad luck for Lot and good luck for Abraham but not so. There are very important reasons for the outcome of each of them. And these important reasons are lessons to live by for us even today.

#### I. Similarities

- A. Both were what we would call Christian today.
  - 1. Abraham was justified by faith as we have seen in our study of Romans.
  - 2. Peter referred to Lot as righteous and just. 2 Pet. 2:7-9
- B. They had the same parentage.
  - 1. Terah was Abraham’s father and Lot’s grandfather.
  - 2. Once Lot’s father Haran passed on Terah would have assumed Lot’s upbringing.
  - 3. After Terah passed on the job fell to Abraham.
- C. They both followed the call of God to go to the promised land.
  - 1. Lot could have stayed back in Haran with the rest of the family.
- D. They both became rich as a result of the Lord’s blessings.
  - 1. That was what started one of the problems between Abraham and Lot

2. But it seems that Lot wanted more, more than God was pleased to give him.

II. They had different walks.

A. Abraham walked with the Lord but there is no record of Lot doing that.

1. We find Abraham building altars of worship to God everywhere he went.
  - a. Genesis 12:7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. NKJV
  - b. Genesis 12:8 And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. NKJV
  - c. Genesis 13:4 to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the LORD. NKJV
  - d. Genesis 13:18 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. NKJV
  - e. Genesis 22:9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. NKJV
  - f. Worship says, "God you are important to me."
  - g. And when God asked Abraham to offer up his son it demonstrated just how important God was to Abraham.
  - h. For him there was a full understanding of who God was and who he was.
  - i. He understood that worship was important.
  - j. He practiced a costly worship with animal sacrifices.
  - k. At best Lot seemed content to allow Abraham to do that for him.
  - l. Not once do we find Lot building an altar, calling on the Lord, or anything like that.
2. Abraham had a living relationship with God.
  - a. We find Abraham following God's leadership and trusting on Him alone.

- B. Abraham sought God above all else, but Lot sought for wealth.
  - 1. When Abraham asked Lot to pick out what part of the land he would have he chose the best.
  - 2. He should have stayed with Abraham and worked it out with the shepherds and realized that God was the one who gave wealth.

### III. The Results

- A. Abraham's life was such that it had a good affect on his family.
  - 1. Gen 18:19 For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." NKJV
  - 2. The only affect that Lot had on his family led to their destruction.
- B. Because Abraham sought the Lord first, God gave him everything that Lot sought for.
  - 1. But Lot lost it all.
  - 2. He lost his position in Sodom.
  - 3. He lost his wealth.
  - 4. He lost his family for they could not understand this strange behavior of their father.
    - a. When Lot went to tell his daughters and son-in-laws of the impending doom to come upon Sodom they could not believe this new talk of the LORD.
    - b. Gen 19:14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking. NKJV
    - c. It was obvious that his family never took Lot's faith seriously, for he had not consistently lived out his faith.
  - 5. He lost all respect when his daughters committed incest with their father to get pregnant.
    - a. Lot had not passed on the moral teaching of his uncle and grandfather.
    - b. He had been negligent in instruction his children in the way of the Lord and their choices show that.

How could a two similar men from the same family turn out so differently?

It was not in their upbringing, or their education. It was not in their religious training. It was not that they had differing abilities.

The overwhelming evidence is that one sought God for him and his family while the other sought the world and had little time for God, even though he knew better.

The only glimpse of hope for Lot is found in a woman some 900 years later, a descendant of his named Ruth that became the great-grandmother of David.

There is still hope for you and your family today. God doesn't promise that it will be easy but it will render eternal rewards for generations to come.

Is it worth it to you?