

# GVBC Sermon Study Notes – The Story of Family

Genesis 13-14 | Practicing Generosity

January 17, 2021

## Genesis 13

<sup>1</sup>So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. <sup>2</sup>Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold. <sup>3</sup>From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier <sup>4</sup>and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. <sup>6</sup>But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. <sup>7</sup>And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time.

<sup>8</sup>So Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives. <sup>9</sup>Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left."

<sup>10</sup>Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) <sup>11</sup>So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: <sup>12</sup>Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. <sup>13</sup>Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. <sup>15</sup>All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. <sup>16</sup>I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. <sup>17</sup>Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."

<sup>18</sup>So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the LORD.

## The Bankruptcy of Earthly Rewards

*Rise up, Lord, confront them, bring them down;*

*with your sword rescue me from the wicked.*

*By your hand save me from such people, Lord,*

*from those of this world whose reward is in this life.*

Psalm 17. 13-14

(See Jesus' warning in Matthew 6.1-6 to religious hypocrites who "have received their reward in full" in Matthew 6.1-6)

### Comparison of Abram and Lot

Both surveyed the land,  
But Lot's vision was limited, Abraham's expansive (v.10 & 14);  
Both are treated with generosity,  
But Lot is self-focused, Abram is God-focused (v.9 & 15);  
Both travel to their allotted portions,  
But Lot settles near wickedness, Abraham worships in the land (vv.12-12 & 17& 18);  
Both desire space to grow,  
But Lot chooses a region that will be destroyed, while Abram's inheritance will be forever  
(Genesis 19 & 13.15).

### Genesis 14

<sup>1</sup>At the time when Amraphel was king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goyim, <sup>2</sup>these kings went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). <sup>3</sup>All these latter kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea Valley.) <sup>4</sup>For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

<sup>5</sup>In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaites in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emmites in Shaveh Kiriathaim <sup>6</sup>and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran near the desert. <sup>7</sup>Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar. <sup>8</sup>Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboyim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) marched out and drew up their battle lines in the Valley of Siddim <sup>9</sup>against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. <sup>10</sup>Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills. <sup>11</sup>The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. <sup>12</sup>They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.

<sup>13</sup>A man who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshkol and Aner, all of whom were allied with Abram. <sup>14</sup>When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan. <sup>15</sup>During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. <sup>16</sup>He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.

<sup>17</sup>After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). <sup>18</sup>Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, <sup>19</sup>and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. <sup>20</sup>And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand."

*Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. <sup>21</sup>The king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself.”*

*<sup>22</sup>But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “With raised hand I have sworn an oath to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, <sup>23</sup>that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the strap of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, ‘I made Abram rich.’ <sup>24</sup>I will accept nothing but what my men have eaten and the share that belongs to the men who went with me—to Aner, Eshkol and Mamre. Let them have their share.”*

#### **vv. 1-16 Three battle reports:**

*vv.1–4 Eastern kings vs Westerners: round 1*

*vv.5–12 Eastern kings vs Westerners: round 2*

*vv.13–16 Abram vs Eastern kings*

*The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind:*

*“You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” Psalm 110.4*

#### **Summary of Hebrews 7**

- Melchizedek stands outside the mainstream of redemptive history, he illustrates that the OT prophesies that pointed out the inadequacies of the old order and to the superiority and sufficiency of the coming new age.
- Melchizedek serves as a precedent for a superior priesthood based on a character apart from line of descent and ordained by God apart from law.
- Melchizedek’s significance lies in the timeless nature of his office as priest without successor.
- Melchizedek’s priesthood points to eternal Son Jesus as the completely unique and eternal high priest.

*Be indebted to no one, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. Romans 13.8*

#### **Generosity leaves room for God**

- Generosity expresses God’s heart
- Generosity trusts God to be our promoter
- Generosity believes God to be our rewarder

#### **Generosity creates room for others**

- Generosity frees up others to make choices
- Generosity leaves space for others to grow in faith
- Generosity, when involving others, must be submitted to wisdom

**For Reflection**

- When have you given and felt joyful? When have you given and felt sorrowful?
- How do you experience generosity?
- How have you left room for God, as you make choices about giving, tithing, and spending?
- We do not have a cause-and-effect relationship with God. How has God tested your faithfulness in regards to generosity?
- Have you felt rewarded by God? Describe that experience.
- Generosity is more about our heart than numbers. How will you be generous towards others this week?