

# GENESIS 13

## Abraham and Lot

<sup>1</sup> Abram went up from Egypt — he, his wife, and all that he had. Lot was with him. They went into the Negev.<sup>i</sup> <sup>2</sup> Now Abram was very<sup>ii</sup> rich in cattle, silver, and gold. <sup>3</sup> Then he left there and went by stages<sup>iii</sup> from the Negev to Bethel. This was the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai.<sup>iv</sup> <sup>4</sup> This was also the place where he had built his first altar. It was there that Abram had called on Yahweh's name.

<sup>5</sup> Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents. <sup>6</sup> Now the land was not able to support them while they lived together. They could not dwell together because they had so many animals. <sup>7</sup> Because of this, there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle. The Canaanites<sup>v, vi</sup> and the Perizzites<sup>vii</sup> also lived in the land. <sup>8</sup> So Abram said to Lot, "Please. There should be no strife between us and between our herdsmen because we are the same family. <sup>9</sup> Isn't the whole land before you? Let's go our separate ways. If you go to the left, then I will go to the right. Or, if you want to go to the right, then I will go to the left."

<sup>10</sup> Then Lot lifted up his eyes and saw the whole Jordan Valley. It was well watered everywhere, that is, before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. It was just like Yahweh's garden. It was like the land of Egypt, as you come into Zoar.

<sup>11</sup> So Lot chose the whole Jordan Valley. Then Lot journeyed east and they separated themselves from each other.<sup>viii</sup> <sup>12</sup> Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan. Lot dwelled in the cities of the valley and pitched his tent near Sodom.

## Wicked Sodom

<sup>13</sup> But the men of Sodom were exceedingly<sup>ix</sup> wicked and sinners against Yahweh.

<sup>14</sup> After Lot left him, Yahweh said to Abram, "Lift up your eyes<sup>x</sup> and look from the place where you are. Look to the north, south, east, and west. <sup>15</sup> For all the land that you see, I will give to you and your descendants<sup>xi</sup> forever."<sup>xii</sup> <sup>16</sup> I will make your descendants like the dust of the earth, so that if it were possible to count the dust of the earth, then it would be possible to count your descendants. <sup>17</sup> Arise. Go through the length and breadth of the land, for I will give it to you."

<sup>18</sup> Then Abram moved his tent and came to the tree<sup>xiii</sup> of Mamre, which is in Hebron. He lived there and built an altar to Yahweh.

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<sup>i</sup> The southern part of Canaan. Today, this is a hot dry desert. Back then, it must have been well-watered and fertile.

<sup>ii</sup> The Hebrew is רַבָּ. The root means vehemently. Synonyms include very, greatly, exceedingly, fervently, passionately, violently, intensely, much, mightily, and vigorously.

<sup>iii</sup> The Hebrew root נָסַח usually means journeys or setting up camp. It reflecting a series of stops or stages. It captures not just the physical movement, but also the idea of progress or phases in a long journey.

<sup>iv</sup> The Hebrew is אֵי ("The Ai"). The definite article may be proleptic, treating the site as already known in view of its later significance in Israel's history. Ai is an important place in the Book of Joshua.

<sup>v</sup> The Hebrew is הַכְּנַעֲנִי (*ha k<sup>e</sup>-nah 'ānee*), which is a singular. However, in Hebrew a singular ethnic term is often used collectively. It can represent the people as a whole, not as an individual. The English does not use singular ethnic labels collectively in the same way Hebrew does. The English equivalent requires the plural to convey the intended sense.

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- vi Genesis 10:6, 15-17 identified the Canaanites as sons of Canaan and grandsons of Ham. The Gen 12:6 and 13:7 references hint at a fearsome nation. Josephus, in describing the Gen 14 war of giants, describes the kings of Sodom as the children of giants (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 1, 9:1). This passage simply notes that the Canaanites were fearsome. They had interbred with the Rephaim (Gen 14:5, 15:20). The Rephaim were the offspring of fallen angels. The devil is already preparing for the future battles when Israel comes to claim its right to live in God's land. Moses told the Israelites to "utterly destroy them" (Deut 20:17).
- vii The Perizzites were not identified with a patriarch in the Gen 10 Table of Nations. The implication is that they were offspring of fallen angels. They are grouped with the Canaanites who were in the Gen 14 War of Giants. They were also grouped with the Amorites, Hittites, Hivites and Jebusites (Exo 23:23, 33:2, 34:11). Moses told the Israelites to "utterly destroy them" (Deut 20:17).
- viii Literally: "One from the other."
- ix The Hebrew is נִשְׁמָה. The root means vehemently. Synonyms include very, greatly, exceedingly, fervently, passionately, violently, intensely, much, mightily, and vigorously.
- x Or "look."
- xi The Hebrew is לְיִשְׂרָאֵל. It is a masculine singular noun. Wordplays are impossible to translate with few words. It applies to the one nation of Israel and to the one King Jesus who will rule the earth during the Millennium. The reader should see both national Israel and King Jesus at the one same time. The context is plural.
- xii Gal 3:16.
- xiii Or "by the great trees."