

ABRAHAM AND LOT

BIBLE TEXT: Genesis 13:1-18; 18:1-8, 16-19.

LESSON 9 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Genesis 13:1-18;

¹ And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

² And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

³ And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai;

⁴ Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

⁵ And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

⁶ And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

⁷ And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

⁸ And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

⁹ Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

¹⁰ And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that

NOTES:

Prosperous

Abraham had much cattle. God had prospered Abraham because he was obedient. Abraham had answered God's call, had left his homeland, and had gone to a land where God led him. His nephew, Lot, went with him, and he, too, had many herd of cattle. The hillsides were dotted with their herds, flocks, and tents. There were so many that there was scarcely enough room for all of them to live together. The herdsmen quarreled. Each wanted the best grass and the nearest pasture for his master's animals. Quarrelling makes one unhappy, and it is displeasing to the Lord. One person cannot quarrel; it takes two to make a quarrel.

No Strife

As soon as Abraham heard about the strife between his herdman and Lot's, he put a stop to it. The Bible says, "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men" (II Timothy 2:24). Some children seem to like to quarrel and are always picking on someone. They do not have Jesus in their hearts. We read, "He loveth transgression that loveth strife" (Proverbs 17:19). Children should remember the teaching of Jesus which says, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9). We read in the Book of Proverbs that strife is caused by pride and hatred (**Proverbs 10:12**; ¹² Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins. **Proverbs 13:10**; ¹⁰ Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.), and also that "it is an honour for a man to cease from strife" (Proverbs 20:3).

In the writings of Paul we are taught to "let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3). Abraham never read the writings of Paul, but he had the love of God in his heart and he did just as Paul said that a Christian would do. Unselfishly, Abraham gave his nephew the first choice of pasture land. Because there was not room for all the cattle, it was best to separate in order to keep on good terms and to keep unity among the herdsmen and in the family. Sometimes it is necessary to give in to the other person in order to keep unity. Abraham humbled himself. He could have asserted his rights, saying that he should have first choice since he was the older, that God had promised him the land, and that God had called him into this new land and that Lot had just come along. Abraham mentioned none of these things. He was willing to take second best, if necessary, in order to keep peace in the family. He said, "Let there be no strife... for we be brethren." In a generous way he told Lot to take the first choice. Satan tries to make people selfish and greedy. Jesus helps them to be unselfish and loving when He saves them and gives them a new heart. They must keep praying so Satan cannot put those sins back into their lives. The next time someone comes to play with you, Satan will probably tempt you. Who will play with your toys, especially your favourite ones? Who will have first choice of apples or cookies, especially if one is bigger than the other?

A Poor Choice

Before Lot made his choice, he looked around to see which

it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

¹¹ Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

¹² Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

¹³ But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

¹⁴ And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

¹⁵ For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

¹⁶ And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

¹⁷ Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

¹⁸ Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Genesis 18:1-8;

¹ And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

² And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

³ And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not

was the best land. He saw the plain of Jordan, that there was plenty of water and that it was "even as the garden of the LORD." Lot chose all that well-watered place for himself and his herds. Abraham and Lot separated. Lot journeyed eastward to the well-watered, grassy plain of Jordan and pitched his tent toward Sodom, a very wicked city.

Material Gain

Lot did not pray and ask God what would be best for him. He forgot about his uncle. Lot's eyes could see only the well-watered plain where there was much grass for his cattle. He did not look heavenward. Lot is like one who lives for material gain, losing sight of the better and spiritual things.

How much better it would have been for Lot had he shown respect for and honour to his uncle! The Word of God instructs us to be courteous, to be thoughtful of others, and to honour older people. Had Lot been unselfish as his uncle was, he would have said, "uncle Abraham, you take first choice. You are older than I, and you should choose first." God would have blessed him, and he would have had grass for his cattle, too.

Some children spend so much time in playing that they have little time to study the Sunday School lesson or to learn the memory verse. Some unsaved children who spend their money on shows and comic books have little to spend on music lessons, which could increase their talents, which sometime might be used for the Lord. Those children want only earthly things and are not seeking heavenly blessings. The things of the world are not lasting and do not satisfy, while the spiritual things bring true pleasure here and rewards in Heaven. So long as Lot stayed with Abraham, he prospered. What would happen when Lot left him? Would Lot be as diligent about his work when he was not near Abraham's influence? Would Lot prosper when he had been so selfish? Would he be tempted to go to the wicked city of Sodom?

A Rich Blessing

One might think that Abraham had not acted wisely by giving Lot first choice. But Abraham did not get the second best. In his heart, Abraham felt the peace that comes from doing right. In his life was the blessing of the Lord because he wanted unity rather than strife. Abraham's choice was to do the right thing, and to put spiritual things before earthly things. Abraham made God his choice. God blessed Abraham. In fact, God gave Abraham temporal blessings along with the spiritual.

God talked to Abraham. He told him to look to the east as far as he could, to look to the west as far as he could, to the north as far as he could, and to the south as far as he could. God gave Abraham all the land that he could see. God renewed His covenant to bless Abraham. In turn, Abraham built an altar and worshiped the Lord. Abraham often built an altar and worshiped God. That was his way of giving praise and thanks to God. Not even in one place in the Bible do we read that Lot ever built an altar unto the Lord. Let us not neglect to worship God.

At different times God visited Abraham. "He was called the Friend of God" (James 2:23). One time God said to him: "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." God gave him a new name. Before this time he had been known as "Abram," but from now on he was called "Abraham."

God said about Abraham: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment." What would God say about you?

Your Choice

God is pleased to have people set their affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for where their treasure is, there

away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

⁴ Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

⁵ And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

⁶ And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

⁷ And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

⁸ And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

Genesis 18:16-19.

¹⁶ And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

¹⁷ And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

¹⁸ Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

¹⁹ For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

will their heart be also. Jesus promised: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). What do you love more, the things of the earth or the spiritual things? What kind of choice have you made -- to follow God or to seek for worldly things?

QUESTIONS

1. Why had God prospered Abraham?
2. Why did Lot and Abraham separate?
3. Who had first choice?
4. Why did Abraham want no quarrelling among the herdsmen?
5. What was Lot's choice?
6. Why did he choose that land?
7. What kind of people lived in Sodom?
8. How much land did God give to Abraham?
9. Which man made the better choice?
10. Should we seek heavenly or earthly things first?