

JUMPING AHEAD TO LOT

In our journey with Abram, let's jump forward to chapter 13 (we will return later to chapter 12), and get to know the nephew a bit more.

But the reason we jump forward is not so much to know Lot (his story doesn't end well), but to know *Abram*! And knowing Abram would be utterly impossible without knowing the land covenant that God made with him.

We could just study the land covenant, but I fear we would be missing something. The famous land covenant is *woven into Lot's story*. Can we fully understand the *life and times* of Abraham if we do not grasp the significance of the timing of the covenant?

In short, we jump to Lot because we *expect* the land covenant to come in Genesis 12, but it doesn't show up. Rather, it is embedded in the account of the unscrupulous nephew...and that may be important!

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THIS STORY? | GENESIS 13:1-13

GENESIS 13:1-5

In chapter 12, Abram and family had ventured down to Egypt. We do not know the time he spent there, but by chapter 13, the family, including Lot, returns. The family **went out of Egypt and into the south** (v. 1). This refers to going into the *southern parts* of the land, much as a citizen of the U.S.A. might speak of going *to the south*, even if they live in Florida!

But we wonder *why Lot came along in the first place*. In Genesis 12:4 we learned that **Lot went with him**, but in verse 5 that **Abram took...Lot**. We have already seen so much repetition to gather a pattern that *something is up* when the Biblical text concerning Abram becomes repetitive. So...what's up with Lot? We know that Terah was still alive, as well as Nahor, both remaining in Haran. Why didn't Lot stay? Why is Abram taking care of Lot? Let's just assume that *Lot wanted to go*, for reasons unknown, and that Abram decided to take him.

But this *could* create a problem in the future, because Abram's descendants play a *huge* part in the story. And since Abram and Sarai have no children, wouldn't "adopted Lot" have a claim? But was Lot of the character that the Lord would want him to stake claim on the promise?

We see Lot in Genesis 12:4-5, and then not again until chapter 13, and it is here that Lot "splits the family."

GENESIS 13:6-13

When they came into the land that would soon become known a "Promised Land," **the land was not able to bear them** (v. 6). Many Jewish scholars have considered this to be sarcasm, for the land *was* able to bear them. It looks as if Lot had fostered animosity among his herdsmen and Abram's, leading to a situation in which "the world was not big enough" for both. Note that **the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwell in the land** (v. 7), but by Genesis 15:19-21 ten groups are mentioned as living in the land of Promise. This appears to be a big land with plenty of room.

Abram, being gracious and generous, offered Lot the choice lands, with the result being that **they separated themselves the one from the other** (v. 11). Verse 14 clarifies that **Lot was separated from him**, hinting that perhaps Lot was the one desiring the separation. The entire account *seems* to show Abram as one who longs for **no strife** (v. 8), while Lot seems focused on wealth and personal well-being. The text almost shouts out the character of Lot in verse 13, saying that **the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly**. If this is not an announcement to the reader of the kind of person Lot is, then it is hard to imagine why it is included in the account.

A LAND COVENANT THAT MATTERS | GENESIS 13:14-18

It happens that **after that Lot was separated from him** (v. 14) that the Lord speaks again, for the first time since Genesis 12:7. Could it be that God was not going to move forward on His promises until Lot was out of the picture? And when God speaks again, He gives a promise that changes the world: **all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever** (Gen. 13:15). And perhaps more phenomenally, God promises **to 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** (Gen. 13:16).

This covenant of land is so sacred that it is mentioned repeatedly in Scripture. To miss it or ignore it is to fail to have a Biblical worldview. It is a covenant that affects world-governments perhaps more than any other Biblical covenant. It creates the longest-standing claim on real estate that the world knows or has ever known.

And it wasn't given until an heir-apparent was out of the picture. And this ought to tell us something both about Lot, and about Abram.