

coming to earth to die for both the children of Abraham and every member of every family who will believe in Him.

After moving to Haran, Abram took his clan on south, not knowing just where he would settle.

God again appeared to Abram, verifying that he would receive the land. A famine cut the food supply, so Abram moved his clan further south to Egypt. Here he represented his beautiful wife as his sister and she was taken to the Pharaoh for a wife. God sent a plague on that household and the angry Pharaoh returned her to Abram with orders to leave the country.

**Chapter 13:** Abram returned from Egypt a wealthy man because of the bride price he had received for Sarai.

Abram's nephew Lot also returned wealthy and their shepherds had conflict over grazing land. Abram told Lot to pick where he wanted to settle and Abram walked the borders of his land to legally settle its ownership.

## GENESIS CHAPTERS 12 - 13

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Genesis Previously			
<b>Creation</b> Genesis 1-2	<b>Fall</b> Genesis 3-5	<b>Flood</b> Genesis 6-9	<b>Chart of Nations</b> Genesis 10-11

The first eleven chapters of Genesis have centered on events. From here on, the story focuses on four men: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

This call of Abraham is about 2092 BC and begins a new era in Biblical history. The entire history of mankind from Creation to the Flood is covered in just six chapters of Genesis, but 19 chapters are devoted to Abraham even though he lived just 175 years.

The first 11 chapters of Genesis pave the way for the story of Abraham and his descendants while the rest of the Bible unfolds their history. At this stage, Abraham was still named Abram and was living in Ur (Genesis 15:7). The Genesis record does not say why God chose this man, but because of him, all history will change.

The city of Ur was advanced. **Cecil Clement (C.C.) Crawford** writes: "Archaeological discoveries have shown that Ur of the Chaldees was a center of advanced culture. There were libraries in the schools and temples. The people used grammars, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and reference works along with textbooks on mathematics, religion, and politics." (*Genesis Volume 3, Bible Study Textbook Series, College Press*)



## THE CALL OF ABRAM (ABRAHAM)

**(12:1 NLV)** The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you.

- Even if others did not go with him, **Abram** was ordered to go anyway. He was to leave what he knew, who he knew and even his loved ones, to journey to an unknown place. This is faith in action.

**It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going.**

Hebrews 11:8



## GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAM

**(2) I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. (3) I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."**

Since the land wasn't empty, this walk-around must have angered some of the inhabitants. Abram was doing what God told him to do. By legal custom of that day, walking the perimeter of the land legally completed the transfer of the property and thereby left both parties fully feeling closure on the transaction. This viewing of his property would drive home the size of the promise more than just the words.

- The childless **Abram** was to be the father of an uncountable number of **offspring**. More patience was required on **Abram's** part.



**(18) So Abram moved his camp to Hebron and settled near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. There he built another altar to the LORD.**

- This is the third altar that **Abram** has **built**.
- Housings: tents for **Abram** and clan; an **altar** for **the Lord**. **Bradford** claims that building an altar was customary to declare one god or another's authority over that territory.



**Summary:** Chapter 12 begins with the covenant promise to Abram that his posterity will be blessed and the whole earth will receive a blessing, too. That came to its fruition in Jesus

**soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day.**

**(11) Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. (12) So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. (13) But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the LORD.**

- While there is wickedness everywhere, that of **Sodom** was more than average. The writer says **they were sinning greatly against** the **Lord**. This should be a warning to all believers to consider where they settle to live. There is no hint that **Lot** was married at this time. If not, he may have later married a woman of **Sodom**.

#### **THE PROMISE REPEATED AND THE LAND SURVEYED**

**(14) After Lot had gone, the LORD said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction--north and south, east and west. (15) I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession. (16) And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! (17) Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you."**

- **The LORD** restated his blessing to **Abram**. Even though **Abram** allowed **Lot** to take the best land, **Abram** had something special going for him: The blessing of God. **Bradford** has an interesting comment here: “. . .the concept was that when a piece of property was acquired, the new owner had to walk the perimeter of the entire property, which was symbolic of marking his territory, if you would. Not until the new owner had done this was the transfer complete.”

- There were two kinds of covenants, one being like a trade the other being a one-way agreement like this covenant from the Lord. That this was a covenant is established in 2 Kings 13:23, Acts 3:25 and many other places.
- He promised that Abraham would become:
  - **A great nation.** God told this childless man that his children would have so many children they could be called a **nation**. That will require a lot of reproducing through many generations. This was not a one-generation promise.
  - **A great name,** in the sense of a great reputation. Probably no man on earth has received more honor than Abram (Abraham). He is now revered by Jews, the followers of Mohamed and Christians alike. The promise extends to those children that had not yet been born.
  - **Blessings** for his friends and the opposite for his enemies.
  - **Curses.** Nations who have opposed the sons of Abraham have dwindled and fallen to neighboring nations.
- There is a veiled promise that the *entire* **earth will be blessed** through Abram, not just his family. The New Testament says this was fulfilled in Christ.
 

**What's more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would declare the Gentiles to be righteous because of their faith. God proclaimed this good news to Abraham long ago when He said, "All nations will be blessed through you."** Galatians 3:8

#### **ABRAM'S DEPARTURE**

**(4) So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. (5) He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth--his livestock and all the people he had**

**taken into his household at Haran--and headed for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in Canaan,**

- **The Lord** required that Abram separate from his friends and neighbors. **Abram's** nephew **Lot** choose to make the move, too. He honored Abram's leadership and faith in God's promises. It was like a secondary faith for **Lot**. He had not heard from God directly.
- **Abram** was not poor. He had developed a staff of people while at **Haran** with shepherds, food workers and others. He had enough to be comfortable in **Haran**, but his faith in God's promises caused him to move. At age 75, it may have been easier not to pack and go off into the unknown. The travelers stayed in Haran for some years. Imagine the patience and faith required in this layover.

**(6) Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites.**

- After arriving, **Abram** made a survey trip and settled at **Shechem**. Trees have a very long life and this **oak** was used as a landmark for **Abram**. The writer or editor knew of a time when **Canaanites** were no longer in the land.



### **GOD VERIFY'S THE PROMISE**

**(7) Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the LORD, who had appeared to him.**

- Remarkably, the **Lord** appeared to Abram and promised the land to the offspring of this childless man. He had come this far by faith and more faith was required for him to

still underway and grazing land was sparse. The two family groups could not live so close together.

**(8) Finally Abram said to Lot, "Let's not allow this conflict to come between us or our herdsmen. After all, we are close relatives! (9) The whole countryside is open to you. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want the land to the left, then I'll take the land on the right. If you prefer the land on the right, then I'll go to the left."**

- **Abram** was a peacemaker. Generous, he did not insist on his "rights." Here is a model for settling disputes among brethren.

**(10) Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the LORD or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)**

- **Lot's** choices can be questioned. He should have deferred to Abram's best interests because Abram was the older and leader. Lot chose exceptionally lush land. It was like the **Garden** of Eden and the Nile Delta in **Egypt**. The editor knew that **Sodom and Gomorrah** were destroyed although this is later in Genesis.
- Verse 13 shows that the wickedness of Sodom was well known, but **Lot** discounted the danger. His decision was based on potential gain rather than pleasing God. This was a serious lapse in judgment. Someone aptly said: "**Lot** got grass for his cattle while Abram got grace for his children." Moving requires that we examine our deepest motives.
- **Lot** was a true believer, but made a poor choice. 2 Peter 2:7-8:

**But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him. Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his**



blessing on him. **Negev** means *south*. **Silver and gold** were used for buying and selling, so Abram was a trader.

**(3) From the Negev, they continued traveling by stages toward Bethel, and they pitched their tents between Bethel and Ai, where they had camped before. (4) This was the same place where Abram had built the altar, and there he worshiped the LORD again.**

- We wonder if **Abram** had neglected his relationship with **the LORD** while he was in Egypt. It must have been difficult to worship while being involved in the gigantic deception and fraud about Sarai.

### **DIVIDING WITH LOT**

**(5) Lot, who was traveling with Abram, had also become very wealthy with flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and many tents. (6) But the land could not support both Abram and Lot with all their flocks and herds living so close together. (7) So disputes broke out between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. (At that time Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land.)**

- Nephew **Lot** had done well in Egypt before they were expelled. The newfound wealth that **Abram** received from his adventure in Egypt soon presented some unanticipated problems: between **Lot**, his nephew, and **Abram**, they had so much livestock there was no longer sufficient pasture lands nor water to sustain them, so fights broke out among the herdsmen. Believers are not exempt from family differences. Illustrations could fill volumes. The famine was



believe that his heirs would one day own this land. **Abram's** response was to build an **altar** there to the **LORD**. There may have been other **altars** to the gods in the area, but this one was for **Abram's** God. He later moved to Egypt, but returned to this location.

**(8) After that, Abram traveled south and set up camp in the hill country, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built another altar and dedicated it to the LORD, and he worshiped the LORD. (9) Then Abram continued traveling south by stages toward the Negev.**

- **Abram** and company moved again and set up an **altar** at the new location. It was the focal point of their worship. When **Abram** settled for a while, he included the **Lord** by setting up an altar. This is a good lesson for believers who came after his time. Make plans to worship when we relocate.
- Next, **Abram** moved into the southern part of the land promised to him — called the **Negev**. **Negev** means *south*.
- Concerning his worship, **C.C. Crawford** says, “It should be emphasized at this point that wherever Abram sojourned, there we find the altar, the sacrifice, and the priest (the patriarch himself), the elements of Biblical religion. It is impossible to harmonize this very important fact with the notion that Abram came out of Ur of the Chaldees contaminated by pagan idolatry.”

### **THE MOVE TO EGYPT**

**(10) At that time a severe famine struck the land of Canaan, forcing Abram to go down to Egypt, where he lived as a foreigner.**

**Abram** is moving again. The land of promise was occupied by someone else and now there **was** a food shortage. This had to have tested his faith in God's promise. He made a temporary move **to Egypt**, a fertile **land** south of the Negev. We wonder

what his family and workers must have thought of this continuous moving.

**(11) As he was approaching the border of Egypt, Abram said to his wife, Sarai, "Look, you are a very beautiful woman. (12) When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife. Let's kill him; then we can have her!' (13) So please tell them you are my sister. Then they will spare my life and treat me well because of their interest in you."**

- Verse 13 is simply a restating of an agreement that **Abram** had made with **Sarai** when they were married. In his own words:  
**When God called me to leave my father's home and to travel from place to place, I told her, "Do me a favor. Wherever we go, tell the people that I am your brother."** Genesis 20:13
- There was some truth here in that **Sarai** was his half **sister**. Abram's famous faith was not working in Egypt. He did not believe that God could keep their marriage safe even though they had been promised a son. He trusted his own subtle plan to deceive others to save his hide. Deception became a serious problem in his family as the years unfolded. Jacob deceived Isaac. Leah deceived Jacob. The sons of Jacob's deceived Jacob about Joseph.

**(14) And sure enough, when Abram arrived in Egypt, everyone noticed Sarai's beauty. (15) When the palace officials saw her, they sang her praises to Pharaoh, their king, and Sarai was taken into his palace. (16) Then Pharaoh gave Abram many gifts because of her--sheep, goats, cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.**

- **Sarai** was midway through life, had fairer skin than the Egyptian women, had no children to accelerate aging, but had led an easier life because of having servants. The Pharaoh wanted her for his harem and paid her "brother" a bride price. **Abram** was compensated lavishly for **Sarai** in

livestock and **servants**. The family **servant** Hagar may have been among the **servants**.

**(17) But the LORD sent terrible plagues upon Pharaoh and his household because of Sarai, Abram's wife.**

- When **plagues** came on **Pharaoh** and his other wives, it was easy to identify the lady who did not get sick as being **Sarai**. The **plagues** affected everyone who lived under his roof. They did not affect Egypt as a whole. The plagues in Pharaoh's household led to an investigation that turned up the cause. The writer still considers **Sarai** as **Abram's wife**.

### LEAVING EGYPT

**(18) So Pharaoh summoned Abram and accused him sharply. "What have you done to me?" he demanded. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? (19) Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' and allow me to take her as my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and get out of here!" (20) Pharaoh ordered some of his men to escort them, and he sent Abram out of the country, along with his wife and all his possessions.**

- **Abram**, the man of faith, had set a horrible example of dishonesty. His entire family group was expelled from Egypt, accompanied by armed guards. God did not forsake **Abram** over this but He did allow the sin to work itself out. Abram was publicly humbled by the **Pharaoh** and expelled from Egypt in disgrace.

### BACK IN THE NEGEV

**Genesis 13:1 So Abram left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev, along with his wife and Lot and all that they owned. (2) (Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.)**

- The group returned to the Negev, their launching point to go to Egypt. **Abram's** new wealth is stressed. It was God's