

Genesis

Memorize the TRUTH!

Lesson 6
Abram: Called by God
Genesis 12-14

I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.
Genesis 12:3

Abram Is Obedient – Genesis 12:1-9

Day 1

1. a. What three things did God tell Abram to do?

b. What promises did God make Abram?
2. How do you think Abram knew where to go when he left Haran?
3. a. What do you think Abram's obedience to God's command cost him?

b. What did he gain?

c. How has your obedience to God proven to be both costly and rewarding?

Learn the TRUTH!



Trusting God's promises, Abram leaves his home to enter a new land. Although he begins hesitantly and fails at times, he grows in faith and obedience. As you study this week, ask God to show you areas of your life where you need to surrender control and follow Him more closely in faith and obedience.

Abram's Lapse of Faith – Genesis 12:10-20

Day 2

4. Why did Abram decide to leave Canaan?
5. a. What deception did Abram plan?

b. How did he put his wife at risk to ensure his own safety?
6. How did the Lord intervene in this situation to rescue Abram and Sarai?

Abram is Blessed
Genesis 13

Day 3

7. What problems forced Abram and Lot to separate?
8. Abram let Lot choose where he wanted to live.
 - a. What does this tell us about Abram?
 - b. What does Lot's choice tell us about him?
9. Why do you think God chose to speak to Abram at this time?
10. a. Who initiated the relationship between Abram and the Lord?
 - b. What does this tell you about God?

Lot's Troubles
Genesis 14:1-17

Day 4

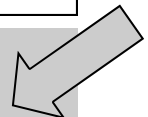
11. What prompted the invasion that led to Lot's capture?
12. Why was the outcome of the battle significant for Abram?
13. List at least three things you learn about Abram from verses 13-16.
14. a. Have you ever had to "come to the rescue" of someone who made bad choices? What did you do, and why?
 - b. If you can, share a time when God rescued you from a difficult situation that you got yourself into.

Kings of Salem and Sodom
Genesis 14:18-24

Day 5

15. a. What did Melchizedek bring to Abram when they met in the Valley of Kings?
 - b. How is this symbolic of the Lord Jesus Christ?
16. a. What can we conclude about the King of Sodom from Genesis 13:13?
 - b. Why did Abram refuse his offer of riches?
17. Have you ever had to choose between "the riches of the world" and "the things of God"? What influenced your choice?

Live the TRUTH!



Abraham worshiped God, both in good times — when Sarai was safely returned to him — and in bad times — when Lot selfishly took the best land. It was second nature for him to express love and gratitude to God. We, also, should worship God in both the good times and the bad. We no longer are required to build an altar like Abraham did, but we can fall on our knees and pray and worship. These moments will become cherished times that we look forward to, knowing that someday we will see the Lord of the universe, face to face!

Commentary Genesis Lesson 6

After his father Terah dies, Abram travels to the land of Canaan. In Genesis 12, Abram is in the early stages of his spiritual development; later he will come to a deep confidence in God. Genesis 12:1-3 forms the Abrahamic Covenant, where God makes promises to Abram. Those promises are still being fulfilled today. God has made a great nation of Abram, and his name is highly regarded by Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Most importantly, people have been blessed through God's Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, Abraham's most notable descendant.

About 2085 B.C., when Abram leaves Haran for Canaan, he is 75 years old; he brings his wife, Sarai, the family's possessions, and servants. Abram also brings his nephew Lot. As he enters the land, Abram is surrounded by the offspring of Noah's grandson Canaan. The moral climate of Canaanite society is terrible. Shortly after, God again appears to Abram, confirming His earlier promises. This story would have been meaningful to the infant nation of Israel as they approached Canaan much later. They were not migrating to the Promised Land merely as a people looking for a homeland. They knew that God had designated the land for them many centuries before.

Abram is tested soon after his arrival in Canaan. A famine has gripped the land. Abram temporarily moves into Egypt to escape terrible conditions. As they approach the Egyptian border, he realizes that the Egyptians would not hesitate to kill a man if they wanted his wife, so Abram insists that Sarai pose as his sister, placing her in an ethical dilemma. She lies, and Abram joins in the deception with her. Abram may console himself with the fact that Sarai is his half sister, but deep inside he knows he is being deceptive. The couple finds conditions just as they have feared. Sarai is chosen for Pharaoh's harem, though it is likely that God protects her from committing adultery while in Pharaoh's house.

God protects the couple by afflicting the Egyptian king personally, as well as members of his household, with various illnesses. Pharaoh concludes that the troubles in his household can be traced to the day that Sarai became a part of it. It is clear to him that Sarai is Abram's wife. Abraham finds himself in the position of being morally reprovved by a pagan king. Pharaoh's integrity seems for the moment to be superior to Abram's. Pharaoh does not punish Abram, but sends him away wealthier than when he came. Even though Abram and Sarai jeopardize His intent by their deception, He is able to overcome the worst that men can do. Abram and Sarai also learn the lesson — though they will have to learn it again — that trusting in the Lord is a more stable basis for safety than any amount of human brilliance.

Embarrassed but enriched, Abram returns from Egypt where Abram and Lot's herdsmen argue with one another. The logical choice would be for the younger man to grant first choice to his older uncle, but Abram leaves the choice to Lot. Choosing the plain of the river and its water as his new home, Lot takes his family, herds, and flocks, and departs from his uncle to live near the river adjacent to Sodom, a town infamous for its immorality, placing himself at great risk. Though the New Testament identifies Lot as a righteous believer (2 Peter 2:7-8), Sodom will affect Lot more than Lot affects Sodom.

Check It Out:

Pharaoh rebuked Abram in Genesis 12:18 for lying about Sarai. To be justly criticized by an unbeliever because we know we have not honored the name of God (Matthew 6:9) is especially sad. Have our shameful actions caused someone to say, "If that's what Christians are like, I don't want to be one"?

Making wrong choices ruins our testimony before unbelievers, brings grief and dishonor to our heavenly Father, and will probably embarrass us. Our heart's desire must be to live in a way that points people to the Lord.

Abram's actions in Genesis 13 show that the one who lives by faith is more concerned for God's reputation among the unconverted than for the increase of his own wealth. Significantly, it is only after Abram makes this critical choice that God again appears to Abram to reaffirm His promises. In obedience to this divine promise, Abram moves south and camps near Hebron, one of Canaan's principal southern cities where he builds an altar and worships the Lord, leaving on the land a visible token of his devotion.

City-states like Sodom paid taxes to the most powerful kings in their region. The kings of the five city-states of the lower Jordan valley rebel against the powerful Kedorlaomer. The invaders attack not only the cities of the plain, but a host of other towns as well. Lot's family and possessions are considered part of the invaders' plunder of Sodom. He is soon headed north with the northern army, probably expecting to spend the rest of his life as a slave.

An escapee finds Abram and reports his nephew's capture. Abram felt a responsibility to rescue his nephew and calls on 318 trained men born in his household, offspring of his servants. Abram apparently trained them to defend his property from attack by local raiders. Abram's band performs very well, hiking over 125 miles and attacking the northern army at night. They continue to attack the raiders for 50 miles, recovering everything taken from Sodom. Again, Abram proves to be a blessing — not only to Lot and his family, but to all who were forced from their homes in the Jordan Valley.

As the people of Sodom and their king meet the triumphant Abram upon his return, the contrasts between the king of Sodom and Melchizedek, the king of Salem, are significant. The king of Sodom comes to improve his political position. The king of Salem comes to bless Abram. The king of Sodom falsely poses as Abram's generous-hearted benefactor. The king of Salem brings gifts to sustain a weary but victorious Patriarch. The king of Sodom comes posing as a benefactor, wanting to appear before the people of Sodom as a liberator rather than the coward he is. He "generously" suggests to Abram that he keep the possessions gained in the battle. Abram is too wise to yield to the king of Sodom's tactic. The only "wages" he will accept are the modest amounts of food consumed by his trained force. Thus Abram maintains his testimony before the pagans of the Promised Land.

Though Melchizedek appears only here and in Psalm 110 of the Hebrew Scriptures, he is regarded in the New Testament as a highly important person (see Hebrews 7). *Melchizedek* means *king of righteousness*. As both a king and a priest, he serves as a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ, who is proclaimed a Priest according to Melchizedek's order (Psalm 110:4). Melchizedek brings bread and wine — another connection to Christ (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Abram offers him a tenth of the spoils of the battle, acknowledging that God Most High is the true Source of his blessings.



Given the opportunity to profit as richly as Abram, could you have resisted? He won the battle and earned the reward, but Abram believed that to capitalize from the victory would tarnish his reputation and weaken his testimony to his pagan neighbors. The New Testament warns us when it says, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?" (2 Corinthians 6:14).

Whether the partnership is a business or personal alliance, we must be careful. How we make money can affect our reputation and our witness to the unbelieving world. Money itself is not evil; it's the love of it that gets us in trouble. Before the temptation ever occurs, spend time with the Lord and settle the question.



What do these verses say about how to know God?

John 5:24

Ephesians 2:8-9