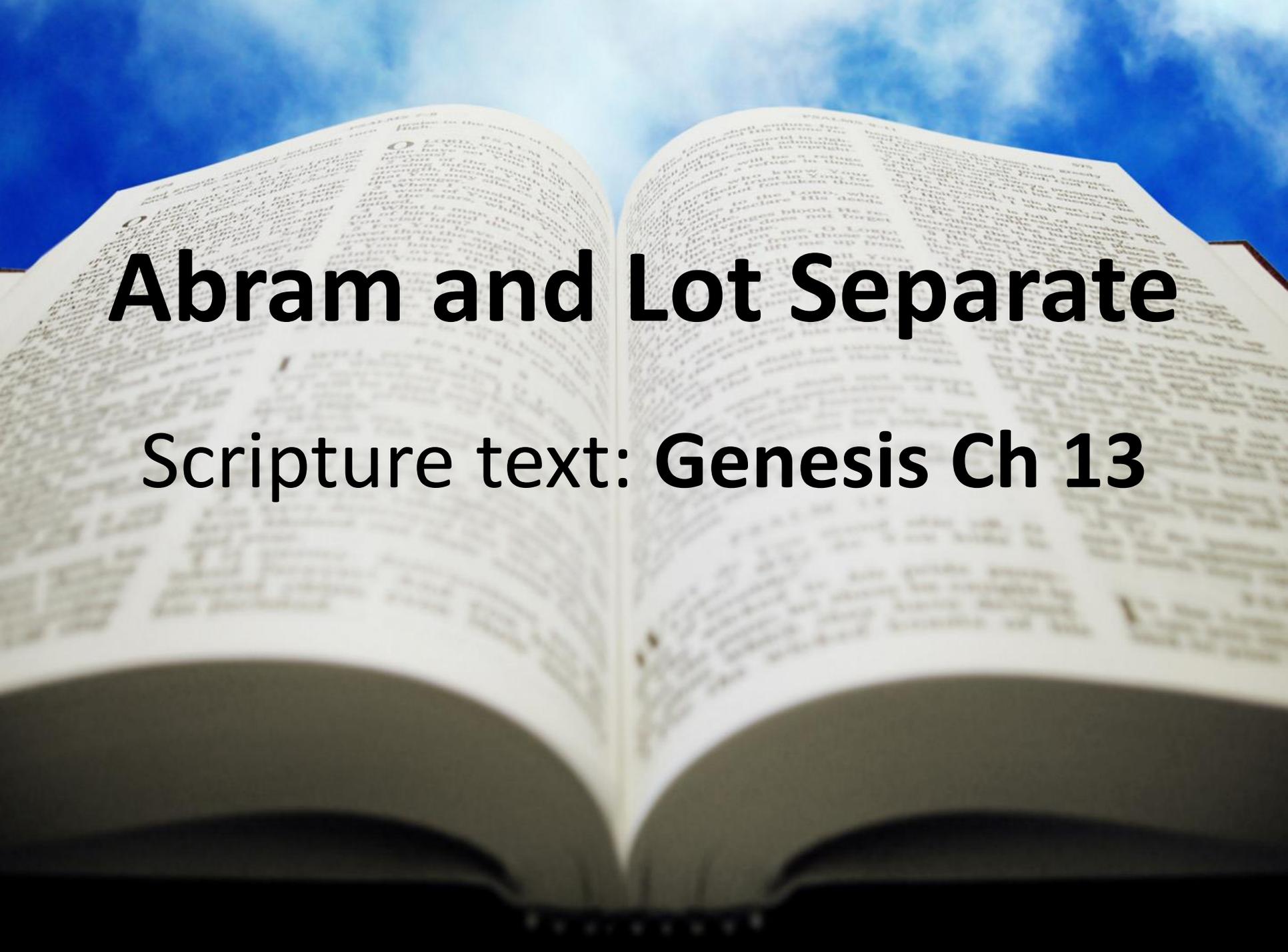


Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, but it is out of focus. The background is a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. The text is overlaid in a large, bold, black font.

Abram and Lot Separate

Scripture text: **Genesis Ch 13**

Genesis 13:1-4 So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as **Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place where he had made an altar at the first.** And there Abram called upon the name of the LORD.

When you find yourself without God, go back to where you were last with Him!

Genesis 12:7-8 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. From there he moved to the hill country on the east of **Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east.** And there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD.

Go Back to Square ONE, get back to GOD!

Genesis 13:5-7 And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, so that **the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together**, and there was **strife between the herdsmen** of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land.

I wonder how many family fights have been caused by the love of money. The newspapers often publish reports about families battling in court because of an inheritance or a lottery winning.

People who used to love each other and enjoy each other start attacking each other just to get money, *but money cannot buy the blessings that families freely give.*

Abraham may have failed the first two tests, but he passed this third test with great success. The test was not an easy one, for it involved land and wealth; but Abraham is the example of what every believer should do when there are disputes about material things.

Abraham determined to be a peacemaker and not a troublemaker. The problem between Abraham and Lot was not caused by the land, the famine, their wealth (both of them were rich), or even their herdsman (13:7).

The heart of every problem is the problem in the heart. Lot's heart was centered on wealth and worldly achievement, while Abraham wanted only to please the Lord.

Amos 3:3 "Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?"

It was bad enough that this dispute was between brethren (Gen. 13:8); but even worse, the heathen people of the land were watching and listening (13:7).

When Christians have disputes, **it hurts the testimony of the Lord**. In my pastoral ministry, I frequently visited the unsaved relatives and friends of church members, seeking to interest them in spiritual things, only to discover that they knew about every “**church fight**” in town. No wonder our Lord prayed that His people might be one, that the world might believe (John 17:20–23). **Christian unity is fragrant and fruitful** (Ps. 133), but disunity turns that **fragrance into a stench** and the garden into a desert.

John 17:20-23 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, **that they may all be one**, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, **so that the world may believe that you have sent me**. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, **that they may be one even as we are one**, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, **so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me**.

Psalm 133 A Song of Ascents. Of David. **Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!** It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! **For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.**

How are we doing when it comes to dwelling in unity, are we one in Christ?

James 3:13–4:10 explains why **Lot was a troublemaker instead of a peacemaker**: He had **“heart trouble.”** He followed the wisdom of this world (as Uncle Abraham had done in Egypt) **and not God’s wisdom**. He was at war with Abraham because he was at war with himself, and he was at war with himself **because he was at war with God**. The world’s wisdom and the world’s wealth seem so satisfying, but they ultimately bring disappointment.

James 3:13-17 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But **if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts**, do not boast and be false to the truth. **This is not the wisdom that comes down from above**, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For **where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice**. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

James 4:1-4 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? **Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?** You desire and do not have, so you murder. **You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.** You do not have, because you do not ask. **You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly,** to spend it on your passions. **You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?** Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Covetousness—an insatiable appetite for more things—leads to all kinds of evil (1 Tim. 6:10). In order to get more money, people will lie (Prov. 21:6), mistreat people (22:16), cheat (28:8), and even trouble their own families (15:27).

“Covetousness is both the beginning and the end of the devil’s alphabet,” wrote Robert South, “the first vice in corrupt nature that moves, and the last which dies.”

1 Timothy 6:9-10 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

Proverb 21:6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor and a snare of death.

Proverb 22:16 Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth, or gives to the rich, **will only come to poverty.**

Proverb 28:8 Whoever multiplies his wealth by interest and profit gathers it for him who is generous to the poor.

Proverb 15:27 Whoever is greedy **for unjust gain troubles his own household**, but he who hates bribes will live.

Genesis 13:8-11 Then Abram said to Lot, "**Let there be no strife between you and me**, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for **we are kinsmen**. Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." And **Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered** everywhere like the garden of the LORD, **like the land of Egypt**, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) **So Lot chose for himself** all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other.

Abraham had caused trouble in Egypt because he was out of place, and **Lot caused trouble in Canaan because he was out of place**: His heart was really in Egypt (13:10).

According to 1 Corinthians 2:14–3:3, there are only three kinds of people in the world: the natural (unsaved), the carnal (saved but living for the world and the flesh), and the spiritual (devoted to God). You find all three in Genesis 13: the natural (13:13), the carnal (Lot), and the spiritual (Abraham).

1 Corinthians 2:14-16 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" **But we have the mind of Christ.**

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

Lot was a righteous man but not devoted to the Lord. He could not walk with Abraham because Abraham was the friend of God (2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8) and Lot was a friend of the world (James 4:4 *You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*).

Many church splits and family fights are caused by carnal Christians who are not walking with the Lord or with other believers.

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that **he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion** at the day of Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 2:7-9 and if **he rescued righteous Lot**, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that **righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard**); then the Lord knows how to **rescue the godly from trials**, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,

Isaiah 41:8 But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, **the offspring of Abraham, my friend;**

2 Chronicles 20:6-7 and said, "**O LORD, God of our fathers**, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. **In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you.** Did you not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and **give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend?**

Abraham lived for others, not for self. While in Egypt, Abraham thought first about himself; but when he returned to his altar in Canaan, **he put God first and others next.** As the “elder statesman” of the camp, Abraham had every right to decide the issue and tell Lot what to do; but he gave Lot first choice. “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another” (Rom. 12:10). **The spiritual Christian does not insist on his or her own rights but gladly yields to others.**

Philippian 2:3-7 Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but **in humility count others more significant than yourselves.** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but **also to the interests of others.** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but **made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant,** being born in the likeness of men.

Abraham lived by faith, not by sight. **No matter what Lot did, Abraham was not worried about his future;** for he knew that everything was in the hands of the Lord.

Abraham had never read Psalm 47:4 or Matthew 6:33, but he was putting both into practice by faith. He had met God at the altar and he knew that everything was under control. **When God is first in your life, it makes no difference who is second or last.**

Lot had a tent but no altar, which meant he did not call on the Lord for wisdom in making decisions (James 1:5). Instead of lifting up his eyes to heaven, Lot lifted up **his eyes to the plain of Jordan** and stopped there. **The eyes see what the heart loves**. Abraham had taken Lot out of Egypt, but **he could not take Egypt out of Lot**. Outlook helps to determine outcome. Abraham's eyes were on the holy city of God, and he went on to walk with the Lord and inherit blessing. Lot's eyes were on the sinful cities of men, and he went on to worldly success, spiritual failure, and a shameful end.

Hebrews 11:13-16 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having **acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.** For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, **they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one.** Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Lot had a great opportunity to become a man of God as he walked with Abraham, but we don't read of Lot's building an altar or calling on the Lord. First, Lot **looked toward Sodom** (Gen. 13:10); then he **moved toward Sodom** (13:11–12); and finally, he **moved into Sodom** (14:12). Instead of being a pilgrim who made progress, **Lot regressed into the world and away from God's blessing** (Ps. 1:1). He “journeyed east” (Gen. 13:11) and turned his back on Bethel (“house of God”) and toward Ai (“ruins”; see 12:8). The people in Sodom **may not have appeared wicked to Lot, but they were wicked as far as God was concerned**; and His evaluation is all that matters.

Genesis 13:14-18 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "**Lift up your eyes and look** from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land that you see **I will give to you and to your offspring forever.** I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, **for I will give it to you.**" So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and **there he built an altar to the LORD.**

Abraham let God choose for him. After Lot had gone away, Abraham had another meeting with the Lord (13:14–18). **Lot had lifted up his eyes and seen what the world had to offer;** now **God invited Abraham to lift up his eyes and see what heaven had to offer.** Lot chose a piece of land which he finally lost, but **God gave Abraham the whole land which still belongs to him and his descendants.** Lot had said, “I will take.” God said to Abraham, “I will give.” What a contrast!

Lot lost his family, but Abraham was promised a family so large it could not be counted.

(Remember, Abraham and Sarah were old and had no children.)

Lot was living for the possible, but Abraham was trusting God for the impossible.

Luke 1:37 For nothing will be impossible with God."

“Lift up your eyes and look” was followed by “Lift up your feet and walk” (see 13:17). **Claim your inheritance by faith!** (Josh. 1:1–3; Deut. 11:24) The discipline he experienced in going down to Egypt had **taught Abraham to respect boundaries, so now God could trust him with horizons.**

It is your faith in God that determines how much of His blessing you will enjoy.

When you trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, God gave you **“all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ”** (Eph. 1:3). You now have your inheritance! All you need do is appropriate that inheritance by faith and draw on **“His riches in glory”** (Phil. 4:19).

The Word of God is the “will” that tells you how rich you are, and faith is the key that opens the vault so you can claim your inheritance.

Abraham gave thanks to God. Not only did Abraham lift up his eyes and look (Gen. 13:14) and lift up his feet and walk (13:17), but **he also lifted up his heart and worshiped God and thanked Him for His gracious blessing.** He pitched his tent from place to place as God led him, and **he built his altar of witness and worship.** The people in Sodom were proud of their affluence (Ezek. 16:49), but Abraham had spiritual wealth that they knew nothing about (John 4:31–34). **He was walking in fellowship with God, and his heart was satisfied.**

Ezekiel 16:49 Behold, **this was the guilt** of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had **pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease**, but did not aid the poor and needy.

John 4:31-34 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "**I have food to eat that you do not know about.**" So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "**My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.**"

Satan wants to use circumstances, people, and things to tempt you and bring out the worst in you; but **God also wants to use them to test you and bring out the best in you.** Abraham failed the first two tests because he resorted to faith in man's wisdom instead of faith in God's Word. But **he passed the third test with great distinction because he let God take control.**

1 John 5:4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.