

# When Family's A LOT Of Trouble

Genesis 12:10 - 14:24

## The Life & Rhymes Of Abraham

- **12:1-9 The Abrahamic Covenant** - Abe was called to leave his station, God would make him a special nation.
- **12:10-20 Sarai Taken To Pharaoh** A man of faith, the plot a twister, while in Egypt, his wife was his sister.
- **13 Abraham & Lot Split** - The stock must split, the herd had grown. Lot took the best from Abe as his own.
- **14 Lot Gets Captured** - Lot gets captured in the heat of battle, Abe gets him back with all his cattle.

### I. Dealing With The Manipulative Truth-Stretcher (12:10-20)

- A. During \_\_\_\_\_ Days, God Leads Us (10)
- B. If God Leads Us, We Don't Have To \_\_\_\_\_ To Control The Situation (11-16)
- C. Even When We Lack Faith, God Will Still \_\_\_\_\_ Us (17-20)

### II. Dealing With The Entitled Free-Loader (13:1-18)

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ Arise When We Don't Let Go What The Lord Says To "Let Go" (1-5)
- B. A Wise \_\_\_\_\_ Brings/Keeps Peace (8-12)
- C. The Key Is To Trust God's Promise And Provision, Not \_\_\_\_\_ Your Circumstances (14-18; cf. Heb 11:8-10)

### III. Dealing With One Captured By The World (14:1-24)

- A. Realize How Easy It Is To Get Taken In By The \_\_\_\_\_ (1-12)
- B. Rescue Through Direct \_\_\_\_\_ (13-16)
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ God For Blessing Us Rather Than Manipulate God To Bless Us (17-24)

## Conclusion:

1. If we really trust God, we don't need to lie our way out of difficult situations.
2. When we trust God by faith and not by sight, God blesses beyond the world's strategies.
3. We endanger ourselves when we feel entitled to get things instead of responding in worship for what God does give us.
4. Peace-making is also an act of faith.

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- A. **Realize How Easy It Is To Get Taken In By The World (1-12)**
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## Introduction:

- When Daisy makes a scrapbook – she selects the best pictures to be remembered
- There are several pictures rejected
- In the family album of the OT, we get pages of biographies with the good and the bad pictures
- Abraham and his family was no exception
- A hero with flaws

## The Life & Rhymes Of Abraham

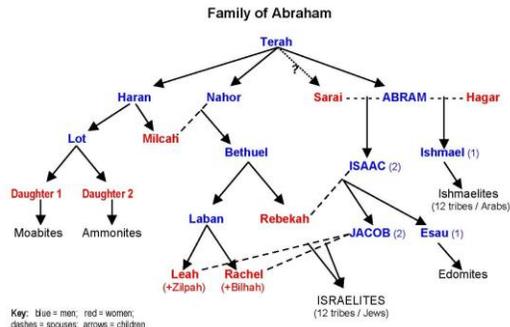
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The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Abraham, father of a nation, and a great man of faith... BUT he should could tell a whopper of a lie. **Genesis 12:16** note: How lonely is the desert for Pharaoh to call 65 year old Sarai a "hottie"?

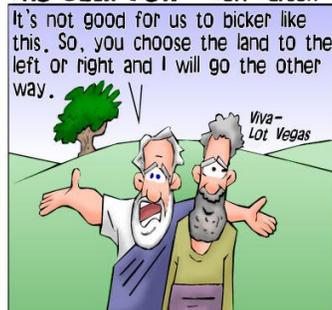


- **13 Abraham & Lot Split** - The stock must split, the herd had grown. Lot took the best from Abe as his own.



Abraham and Lot splitting up.  
Can you find the animal with the different colored eyes?

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Abraham and Lot enter into Land Negotiations. **Genesis 13:8-11**



- **14 Lot Gets Captured** - Lot gets captured in the heat of battle, Abe gets him back with all his cattle.

## I. Dealing With The Manipulative Truth-Stretcher (12:10-20)

**Genesis 12:10-20** <sup>10</sup> Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. <sup>11</sup> When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, <sup>12</sup> and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. <sup>13</sup> Say you are my

sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake.”

<sup>14</sup> When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. <sup>15</sup> And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. <sup>16</sup> And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

<sup>17</sup> But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

<sup>18</sup> So Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? <sup>19</sup> Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go.” <sup>20</sup> And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.

### Three Lessons:

#### A. During Difficult Days, God Leads Us (10)

*10 Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land.*

#### B. If God Leads Us, We Don't Have To Lie To Control The Situation (11-16)

*11 When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, 12 and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake." 14 When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. 15 And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16 And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.*

- Sarah is 65 and is attractive
- Gene Getz pointed out that “History records that Egyptian men were very impressed with Semitic women.” (*Abraham: Trials & Triumphs*, Regal Books, 1982, p. 30)
- It wasn't uncommon for men to gain wives through killing their husbands
  - Ie/ On this 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pirates of the Caribbean, I was reading an introduction to a book on the real pirates in the 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> century. We've romanticized them with eye patches, parrots on their shoulder and hooks for hands saying “arrrr”. But in reality, they were brutal murderers, thieves and rapists.
  - A lot of this was going on in the ancient civilizations in the Middle East at this time as well
- Abraham, a new believer, was fearful (“they will kill me”)
- But fear and faith are not compatible
- A famine forced Abraham to move his family to Egypt
- While there, he feared the Pharaoh
- He tells Sarai to say that she is his sister, instead of saying she's his wife
- He was afraid to be murdered and have her taken
- There's a half-truth here – Sarai is Abraham's half sister – sharing Terah as their father but having different mothers

**Genesis 20:12** Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.

- So instead of being a sister from another mister, or a brother from another mother, they were ... (I can't think of anything that rhymes for that)
- Upon entering Egypt, the Egyptian men did scope out Sarah as the new pretty girl in town
- V. 14 "woman" – impersonal term that conveyed Sarah was just a piece of pretty flesh to them
- They told the princes of the Pharaoh, who told the Pharaoh
- She was brought into the Pharaoh's home
- Abraham was treated well by the Pharaoh, being the brother of his new addition to his harem
- God protected Abraham despite his lack of faith
  - Abraham had the opportunity to come into Egypt as a missionary and emissary
  - He could have pronounced the truth of who he is, who his wife is and who his GOD is
  - But he had to stretch the truth for the sake of convenience because he feared
    - How often do we do that?
    - At work, we misstate our earnings or we don't talk about the weakness of our products
      - Ie/ Volkswagen's emissions reporting
      - Ie/ Noodles – some are made from plastic
      - IE/ Baby formula from China (baby formula having melamine which affected 300,000 babies in 2008, 54,000 of them were hospitalized and 6 babies died of kidney failure)
      - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008\\_Chinese\\_milk\\_scandal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Chinese_milk_scandal)
- Do we lie because we fear what others think of us?
  - Do we hide our Christianity because of what we think other people think about us?
  - Do we lie about going to CTF and tell our friends we're just out on Fridays because we're afraid of what people will think?
  - Do we try to blend in with unbelievers at work by joining in with coarse talk, gossip and insults?
  - It's not easy being a Christian in the Bay Area.
  - Though it might be easier to say which religion you are than which political party you are
  - Do you want to be an **Undercover Christian** disguised in the ways of the world or do you want to be an **Ambassador for Christ** with your allegiance and agenda evident for the world to see (despite the risk)?
- Are we men and women of integrity? Or will we lie and cheat to get ahead or protect ourselves?
  - W.C. Fields "A thing worth having is a thing worth cheating for"
  - Mark Grace, Chicago Cubs: "If you ain't cheating, you ain't trying."

- Freakanomics:
  - Chicago teachers – cheated on their students test – fill in blanks of unanswered questions (evidence that hardest questions were correct when easiest questions were wrong – teachers were under pressure to raise student’s levels of academics)
  - In Japan’s Sumo Wrestling culture, the stakes are high – high ranks live like kings, but low levels are mistreated
  - *Yaocho* – Japanese for “match rigging”
  - Those who cheat always try to cover their trail and these economists on Freakanomics can determine cheating through data analysis
    - To be an 8-win wrestler moves you up in ranking
    - Cheating is in the data – an 8-6 wrestler vs. a 7-7 wrestler losing 75% of the time (instead of a 50%) indicates cheating
  - Sumo: Purification & Honor of Shintoism (means: “way of the gods”), 2,000 years of history of culture, almost naked showing that they are hiding nothing, referee dressed as Shinto priest, clap hands to awake the gods, open hands to show no hidden weapons, stomp feet to stamp out evil spirit, throw salt for purification,
  - Yet matches were fixed because of the culture, the friendships and close ties of the men who live and train together
  - After this was exposed, the cheating stopped for a while, then after some time it resumed
  - Louis Brandeis – “Sunlight is the best disinfectant”
- The Light of Christ is the best SONLIGHT that disinfects.

**C. Even when we lack faith, God will still protect us (17-20)**

*17 But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife. 18 So Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go.” 20 And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.*

- God judged Pharaoh despite him being lied too (don’t think of Pharaoh as some victim – he still sinned in his polygamy)
- “afflicted” with plagues – Pharaoh got the message from God

**Genesis 12:17** But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife.

**Genesis 12:19** Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go.”

- I wonder if Sarai was asking that same question of her husband.
- What did Sarai think of her husband?
  - Thanks for standing up for me! Not!

- Thanks for protecting me! Not!
- Thanks for being proud that you're married to me! Not!
- Thanks for letting me be exposed to a possible violation by another man! Not!
- Yet, it seems God protected her.

## II. Dealing With The Entitled Free-Loader (13:1-18)

### A. Conflicts Arise When We Don't Let Go What The Lord Says To "Let Go" (1-5)

*So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. <sup>2</sup> Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. <sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the LORD. <sup>5</sup> And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, <sup>6</sup> 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.*

- Abraham was a man of faith, but not perfectly
- He obeyed God in leaving Ur, but instead of separating from his idolatrous father Terah, he kept his father with him and he was delayed 15 years in Haran because of him
- Leaving behind his family included leaving Lot too
- Abraham was a faithful family guy, perhaps to a fault

Sometimes we're a faithful company person or a family man to a fault:

- Sometimes we have employees that we keep on when they're not productive
- Sometimes we give our kids a sense of entitlement – that they deserve money and things because they're your kid, instead of letting them work for it
  - Do you think your parents owe you a car? A college education? A life without doing your share of chores in the home?
  - Parents, I'm not saying this is where we need to let our kids go, but we need to let the entitlements for our kids go
  - They will know how to take advantage of you
  - Watch how Lot takes advantage of the generosity of his Uncle Abraham
- **Wealth can be a source of conflict**
  - Money doesn't necessarily mean there will be conflict
  - It depends on our attitude towards it
    - If we feel **entitled**, there will be **conflict**
    - If we know what we have is a **blessing** from God, there will be **worship**

### B. A Wise Separation Brings/Keeps Peace (8-12)

*<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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.”<sup>10</sup> 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.)<sup>11</sup> So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other.<sup>12</sup> Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom.<sup>13</sup> Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.*

- God blessed Abraham, Lot thrived under Abraham’s blessings (v. 5)
- But Lot took more than he deserved from Abraham – he was an opportunist
- V. 10 “Lot lifted up his eyes and saw”
  - Lot was drawn by what he saw
  - Instead of faith, that doesn’t walk by sight, Lot chose sight
- Abraham gave Lot more than he deserved – but perhaps there was some guilt on Abraham’s part for thriving under Pharaoh by lying and selling out his wife
- Yet Abraham was generous offering Lot a deal that could have potentially benefitted Lot more than Abraham
  - Lot’s choice of the land towards Sodom was opportunistic – more fertile
  - V. 10 – the land of Jordan was well watered and a garden of God, much like Egypt
  - Lot chose for himself the better land and left Uncle Abe the lesser quality
  - Ie/ It’s like having 2 homes and you offer your nephew the choice of homes and he chooses the bigger one though you paid for them both

### **C. The Key Is To Trust God’s Promise And Provision, Not Manipulate Your Circumstances (14-18; cf. Heb 11:8-10)**

*<sup>14</sup> 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,<sup>15</sup> for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever.<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup> Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.”<sup>18</sup> 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.*

- Lot went with what the world would say would make him successful
- Abraham trusted God not circumstances, land or human effort
- Lot saw a weakness in Abraham and exploited him
- Abraham saw the provision of God and trusted him

**Hebrews 11:8-10** <sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

- Abram settled in Mamre. This place was named after the person Mamre, who was an Amorite – but secured himself through an alliance with Abraham
- Hebron – from Hebrew word that means “confederacy” (Waltke, p. 223) which may reflect the alliance of several clans
- V. 18 – Abraham responded in worship to God with an altar

### III. Dealing With One Captured By The World (14:1-24)

#### A. Realize How Easy It Is To Get Taken In By The World (1-12)

<sup>1</sup> In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, <sup>2</sup> these kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). <sup>3</sup> And all these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). <sup>4</sup> Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. <sup>5</sup> In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, <sup>6</sup> and the Horites in their hill country of Seir as far as El-paran on the border of the wilderness. <sup>7</sup> Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh) and defeated all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who were dwelling in Hazazon-tamar.

<sup>8</sup> Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out, and they joined battle in the Valley of Siddim <sup>9</sup> with Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar, four kings against five. <sup>10</sup> Now the Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into them, and the rest fled to the hill country.

<sup>11</sup> So the enemy took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. <sup>12</sup> They also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who was dwelling in Sodom, and his possessions, and went their way.

- Lot's vulnerability is demonstrated in the last chapter when he was drawn to Sodom and Gomorrah
- What he **saw** was his **draw**
- He saw a fertile land, lots of water, an opportunity to make himself successful
- Lot was a fool
- We have fools in our family and as friends
- They don't trust God and get in trouble because of it

#### B. Rescue Through Direct Intervention (13-16)

<sup>13</sup> Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner. These were allies of Abram. <sup>14</sup> When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. <sup>15</sup> And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. <sup>16</sup> Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people.

- Abram used 318 trained soldiers (14) and strategically divided and defeated (15) Lot's captors

- V. 13 – allies of Abram – “allies” = “those bound by treaty” (Waltke, p. 232)
- He rescued not only Lot’s life, but also his possessions and family members
- The captivity people face today are not always a kidnapping, but a kidnapping by the Christians’ enemies: the world, the flesh or the devil
- Our trained soldiers are our disciplers, teachers, sponsors, pastors, counselors who must directly intervene to help us out of our captivity to sin, lust and greed

**C. Worship God For Blessing Us Rather Than Manipulate God To Bless Us (17-24)**

*<sup>17</sup> After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). <sup>18</sup> And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.)*

*<sup>19</sup> And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; <sup>20</sup> and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.*

*<sup>21</sup> And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." <sup>22</sup> But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, <sup>23</sup> that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' <sup>24</sup> I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share."*

- Melchizedek had a banquet – bread and wine
  - Melchizedek’s name means “king of righteousness
  - Salem – probably Jerusalem
  - Melch blessed Abe
- V. 21 King of Sodom tried to negotiate as a loser and offered , but Abe wouldn’t (he didn’t want to give any credit to the King of Sodom for his provisions) because he trusted in God’s provision
  - All he asked was for the food the people have eaten already and help for 3 people – Aner, Eshcol and Mamre who were victors with Abram in their alliance

**Conclusion:**

1. If we really trust God, we don’t need to lie our way out of difficult situations.
2. When we trust God by faith and not by sight, God blesses beyond the world’s strategies.
3. We endanger ourselves when we feel entitled to get things instead of responding in worship for what God does give us.
4. Peace-making is also an act of faith.
  - God makes peace with us through faith