

## The Sabbath School.

## INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

## ABRAM AND LOT.

AUGUST 8. B. C. 1918. GENESIS XIII : 1-18.

**V**ERSES 1, 2. *Went up*—Egypt was a low lying country.—*Into the South*—i. e. of Palestine. *Was very rich*—How he came by his wealth, see ch. 20 : 14. *Went on his journeying*—encumbered with so much “substance,” his progress would be by slow marches and frequent encampments; he had to regulate his movements by the facilities for water and pasturage. V. 3, 4. *Bethel*—12 miles north of Jerusalem. His coming back to “the House of God” symbolized repentance for having gone to Egypt and for his misconduct there. The scene of one’s early dedication to God recalls nallowed memories. *Called upon the name of the Lord*—re-established family and public worship and offered thanks for deliverance from trouble. Vs. 6-9. *Lot also shared the t-mporal blessings bestowed on Abram. The land was not able to bear them*—Their joint pasturage was overstocked with sheep and cattle. Water was scarce. The herdsmen became jealous of their respective master’s interests. *There was a strife*—matters had gone too far, worldly possessions often occasion contentions among relatives and neighbours. *The Canaanite, &c.*—who owned the land, might take advantage of these quarrels to seize the property of both Abram and Lot, and besides, it was an unseemly thing to strive thus before the heathen. *Let there be no strife*—there should be none, see Phil. 2, 14 and 2 Tim. 2 : 24. Abram’s proposal displays an amiable and magnanimous disposition. Lot owed everything to him, but his uncle treated him in the most generous manner and gave him the first choice of location. Vs. 10, 11. Sodom and Gomorrah were then flourishing cities of the plain near the south end of the Dead Sea. Zoar was a little farther south, on the borders of Arabia. *Lot chose*—with a selfish eye to his own advantage, forgetting that “all is not gold that glitters.” Had he foreseen the consequences, he would have thought twice about it. *They separated*—so much the better for Abram, who removed his tents to Hebron, while Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom—in the neighbourhood of the wickedest city in the plain, where he seems soon after to have taken up his abode, ch. 19 : 1. Vs. 14 17. The promises now renewed to Abram were in a material sense fulfilled in Solomon’s reign, 1 Kings 4 : 20. In another sense they are still being fulfilled to the spiritual seed of Abram, Rom. 9 : 4 8, and will only be fully accomplished when all the kingdoms of this world shall become subject to Christ, Gal 3 : 7-9.

LEARN the duty of praying to God for direction in the affairs of every day life. Strife among professing Christians brings religion into contempt. The best thing to choose is that which can never be taken from us, Luke 10 : 42.

## Abram and Melchizedek.

AUGUST 15. B. C. 1913. GENESIS XIV : 12-24.

**V**ERSE 12. *Took Lot...and his goods*—poor Lot was now reaping the fruit of his selfishness. V. 13. *There came one*—probably of Lot’s retainers. *Abram the Hebrew*—so called from his ancestor Eber, ch. 10 : 21. *Mamre*—afterwards called HEBRON, 12 miles south of Jerusalem. V. 14. Abram lost no time in setting out to the rescue of “his brother,” his kinsman. *Armed his trained servants*—his domestic slaves who were then treated as members of the family. *Three hundred and eighteen*—As a number must have remained to take care of the flocks and herds, this implies that the patriarch’s establishment must have consisted of more than one thousand, men, women, and children. *Unto Dan*—or Laish, at the foot of Mount Hermon and near the sources of the Jordan—150 miles north of Hebron. V. 15. *Divided himself*—formed his household troops and his allies into skirmishing parties, after the manner of the Arabs, following up the enemy by day, and making an unexpected attack by night. *Smote them*—defeated them. *Hobah*—north of DAMASCUS, one of the oldest cities in the world, situated in a fertile plain about 25 miles north east from Tiberias, is still an important city of 150,000 inhabitants. Vs. 16, 17. *Brought back the goods...and Lot*—At the risk of his life Abram saved Lot from exile and conferred a benefit upon his adopted country. His victorious return was hailed with public rejoicings. *The King of Sodom*—the chief of the confederates, met him at *Shaveh*—the King’s dale, see 2 Sam. 18 : 18, probably so called from this meeting of Kings. Vs. 18, 20. MELCHIZEDEC—one of the most mysterious personages in sacred history, who worshipped “the Most High God,” was himself a priest of the highest order, Ps. 110 : 4, a type of Christ, Heb. 7 : 1-4, and was also *King of Salem*—of peace, supposed to be Jerusalem. So far as known, he was without predecessor or successor. *Brought bread and wine*, a priestly act, recognized as such by Abram in the giving of tithes—the tenth part of the spoils. The tithes system was probably of very early date though now mentioned for the first time. Vs. 21-24. The usages of war entitled Abram to retain the whole of the spoil but he generously waived his right. He had *lifted up his hand*—sworn. It was customary in taking an oath to raise the right hand in solemn confirmation. *I will not take any thing*—He would not place himself under any obligation to Bera nor associate himself too closely with the Sodomites. As for the young men, and his allies, they should be allowed to judge for themselves. It would not be fair to make them adopt his standard of liberality.

LEARN that they who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, 1 Tim. 6 : 9, 10. It is a dangerous thing to associate with wicked companions. Remember them which suffer adversity, Heb. 13 : 3. It is our privilege and duty to devote a definite portion of our earnings to religious purposes. Faith in God is sure to be rewarded.