

Genesis 13:12-15

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Abram stays in Canaan and God restates His promises to give this land to him and his descendants.

Abram settled in the land of Canaan, contrasted with Lot who settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom. Lot was putting himself at risk by choosing to live near the wicked men of Sodom ([Genesis 13:13](#)).

The fact that *the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the Lord* apparently did not influence Lot in his choice. He seemed to be primarily influenced by the lush environment that was appealing to his eyes. Dazzled by the material prosperity, Lot apparently overlooked the moral depravity of his future neighbors in making his choice. The word translated *as far as* can also be translated “toward.” This, plus the statement that *Lot settled in the cities of the valley* tells us that Lot intermingled with the local population. We will see that this is the case in [Genesis 19. 2 Peter 2:7](#) tells us that *God rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men*. So Lot appears to be enduring, rather than participating with wickedness. But apparently his willingness to do so is in order to gain material benefits.

Sodom and Gomorrah’s extreme wickedness and sin were so exceptional that they were still considered prime examples of sinful behavior during the time of Jesus, something like two thousand years later ([Matt 10:15](#); [2 Peter 2:6](#)). They even remain metaphors for debauchery to this day. In addition to sexual perversion, Sodom was abusive to the disadvantaged. Sodom is called out by God in [Ezekiel 16:49-50](#) over a thousand years later as follows: *Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy.*

God told Abram to *lift up your eyes and look*. Abram had finally fulfilled the conditions God had given to receive the blessing. God had said to Abraham:

“Now the LORD said to Abram,
“Go forth from your country,
And from your relatives

And from your father's house,
To the land which I will show you;
And I will make you a great nation,
And I will bless you,
And make your name great;"
([Genesis 12:1-2](#))

To this point Abram had only partially obeyed. He left Ur, but followed his father to Haran instead of leaving his relatives ([Acts 7](#)). Then he left Haran but took along his nephew Lot. Finally with the separation from Lot, Abraham has fully obeyed God's condition for blessing. Now God grants a part of the promised blessing, a grant of the land. God states to Abraham: *all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants*. At this point, God is granting to Abraham a part of the blessing, a grant of the *land*. It has taken a long time for Abraham to fully obey, and God has waited patiently, working with Abraham as he has progressed in exercising his faith.

Abram has finally left all his relatives, as God originally commanded ([Genesis 12:1](#): [Acts 7:2-3](#)). Now that he has finally fully obeyed, the grant of *land* is given. God also expanded the promised blessing to Abram for obedience, adding *forever* as the term of the grant of *land* given by God. It will be a permanent possession ([Genesis 17:8](#)). There exists a bond between Israel and the *land* powerful enough to defy thousands of years of exile.

Biblical Text

¹² **Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom.** ¹³ **Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the Lord.** ¹⁴ **The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward;** ¹⁵ **for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.**