

Genesis 13:8-11

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Abram did not want any strife, so he gave Lot the choice of land. Lot chose the land to the east in the valley of Jordan. Uncle and nephew parted from each other.

*Please let there be no strife between you and me...for we are brothers, Abram took swift action. As the elder and guardian of Lot, Abram had the seniority and priority of rights in this matter, but he gave Lot the first choice. Abram was concerned that there not be a conflict or “strife” between him and Lot. They were close relatives, like *brothers* (kinsmen).*

Abram offered his nephew the choice of land, saying, *Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me.* However, part of the land was occupied by the Canaanites. Abram’s question reflects his early confidence in God’s promise of possession. He spoke as if the land were his to distribute to whomever he chose. Abram was not greedy. He had been promised God would give it to him and his descendants. Abram trusted his future to God, he walked by faith. Lot was given the first choice, and Abram would generously accept whatever Lot rejected, *If to the left, then I will go to the right; or if to the right, then I will go to the left.*

Lot lifted up his eyes and saw the valley of Jordan. Bethel is situated at an elevation that provides a magnificent view of the Jordan valley. Ironically, what appealed to Lot’s eyes would be short-lived and become a ruin for him in the long run. The lush land that Lot chooses will soon be consumed by fire, and Lot will lose his possessions, for *this was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah* ([Genesis 19:12-29](#)).

It was well watered everywhere, the Jordan valley at that time was fed by streams and brooks and therefore independent of seasonal rainfall for fertility. This whole area was very fertile, *like the garden of the LORD* before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. *Like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar,* which was irrigated by the Nile. This land in the valley of Jordan was figuratively like the ideal conditions of the garden of Eden, and like Egypt (and apparently Zoar) because of its abundant and dependable water supply ([Deuteronomy 11:10](#)). The beauty of the land attracted Lot but also distracted him from taking in to account the wickedness that was there. Afterward, it

became desolate ([Genesis 19](#)). This can be taken as an object lesson to not allow attractive surroundings to distract us from avoiding the influence of wickedness.

Lot chose for himself the lush and attractive pastures of the Jordan Valley. *All the valley of the Jordan* the region is believed to have been near the south end of the Dead Sea. This area is now very desolate. However, at the time Lot made his selection people lived in the valley, their crops grew well, and grazing was good. Lot thought he would have no problem finding pasture so *they separated from each other*. Abram's quick action ensured that the quarrel was settled without further incident. The separation of Lot, who was born to Abram's deceased brother Haran, completes Abram's obedience to the command God made to Abram while he still dwelt in Haran to depart from his relatives ([Genesis 12:1](#)).

Biblical Text:

⁸ So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. ⁹ "Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me; if *to* the left, then I will go to the right; or if *to* the right, then I will go to the left." ¹⁰ Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere—*this was* before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar. ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other.