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GENESIS 13:1 Abram went up out of Egypt: he, his wife, all that he had, and Lot with him, into the South.

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Abram and his family return out of Egypt to Canaan, Gen 13:1, Gen 13:2. He revisits Beth-el, and there invokes the Lord, Gen 13:3, Gen 13:4. In consequence of the great increase in the flocks of Abram and Lot, their herdsmen disagree; which obliges the patriarch and his nephew to separate, Gen 13:5-9. Lot being permitted to make his choice of the land, chooses the plains of Jordan, Gen 13:10, Gen 13:11, and pitches his tent near to Sodom, while Abram abides in Canaan, Gen 13:12. Bad character of the people of Sodom, Gen 13:13. The Lord renews his promise to Abram, Gen 13:14-17. Abram removes to the plains of Mamre, near Hebron, and builds an altar to the Lord, Gen 13:18.

Verse 1

Abram went up out of Egypt - into the south - Probably the south of Canaan, as In leaving Egypt he is said to come from the south, Gen 13:3, for the southern part of the promised land lay north-east of Egypt.

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GENESIS 13:2 Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.

Verse 2

Abram was very rich - The property of these patriarchal times did not consist in flocks only, but also in silver and gold; and in all these respects Abram was **מאד דבד** cabed meod, exceeding rich. Josephus says that a part of this property was acquired by teaching the Egyptians arts and sciences. Thus did God fulfill his promises to him, by protecting and giving him a great profusion of temporal blessings, which were to him signs and pledges of spiritual things.

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GENESIS 13:3 He went on his journeys from the South even to Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai,

Verse 3

Beth-el - See Genesis 8.

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GENESIS 13:4 to the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first. There Abram called on the LORD's name.

GENESIS 13:5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

GENESIS 13:6 The land was not able to bear them, that they might live together: for their substance was great, so that they could not live together.

Verse 6

Their substance was great - As their families increased, it was necessary their flocks should increase also, as from those flocks they derived their clothing, food, and drink. Many also were offered in sacrifice to God.

They could not dwell together - 1. Because their flocks were great. 2. Because the Canaanites and the Perizzites had already occupied a considerable part of the land. 3. Because there appears to have been envy between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. To prevent disputes among them, that might have ultimately disturbed the peace of the two families, it was necessary that a separation should take place.

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GENESIS 13:7 There was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite lived in the land at that time.

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Verse 7

The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land - That is, they were there at the time Abram and Lot came to fix their tents in the land. See the note on Gen 12:6.

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GENESIS 13:8 Abram said to Lot, "Please, let there be no strife between me and you, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are relatives.

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Verse 8

For we be brethren - We are of the same family, worship the same God in the same way, have the same promises, and look for the same end. Why then should there be strife? If it appear to be unavoidable from our present situation, let that situation be instantly changed, for no secular advantages can counterbalance the loss of peace.

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GENESIS 13:9 Isn't the whole land before you? Please separate yourself from me. If you go to the left hand, then I will go to the right. Or if you go to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

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Verse 9

Is not the whole land before thee - As the patriarch or head of the family, Abram, by prescriptive right, might have chosen his own portion first, and appointed Lot his; but intent upon peace, and feeling pure and parental affection for his nephew, he permitted him to make his choice first.

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GENESIS 13:10 Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw all the plain of the Jordan, that it was well-watered everywhere, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as you go to Zoar.

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#### Verse 10

Like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar - There is an obscurity in this verse which Houbigant has removed by the following translation: *Ea autem, priusquam Sodomam Gornorrhamque Do minus delerit, erat, qua itur Segor, tota irrigua, quasi hortus Domini, et quasi terra Aegypti.* "But before the Lord had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, it was, as thou goest to Zoar, well watered, like the garden of the Lord, and like the land of Egypt." As paradise was watered by the four neighboring streams, and as Egypt was watered by the annual overflowing of the Nile; so were the plains of the Jordan, and all the land on the way to Zoar, well watered and fertilized by the overflowing of the Jordan.

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GENESIS 13:11 So Lot chose the Plain of the Jordan for himself. Lot travelled east, and they separated themselves the one from the other.

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#### Verse 11

Then Lot chose him all the plain - A little civility or good breeding is of great importance in the concerns of life. Lot either had none, or did not profit by it. He certainly should have left the choice to the patriarch, and should have been guided by his counsel; but he took his own way, trusting to his own judgment, and guided only by the sight of his eyes: he beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered, etc.; so he chose the land, without considering the character of the inhabitants, or what advantages or disadvantages it might afford him in spiritual things. This choice, as we shall see in the sequel, had nearly proved the ruin of his body, soul, and family.

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GENESIS 13:12 Abram lived in the land of Canaan, and Lot lived in the cities of the plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom.

GENESIS 13:13 Now the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinners against the LORD.

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#### Verse 13

The men of Sodom were wicked - רעים *raim*, from רע *ra*, to break in pieces, destroy, and afflict; meaning persons who broke the established order of things, destroyed and confounded the distinctions between right and wrong, and who afflicted and tormented both themselves and others. And sinners, חוטאים *chattaim*, from חטא *chata*, to miss the mark, to step wrong, to miscarry; the same as ἀμαρτανω in Greek, from α, negative, and μαρτανω to hit a mark; so a sinner is one who is ever aiming at happiness and constantly missing his mark; because, being wicked - radically evil within, every affection and passion depraved and out of order, he seeks for happiness where it never can be found, in worldly honors and possessions, and in sensual gratifications, the end of which is disappointment, affliction, vexation, and ruin. Such were the companions Lot must have in the

fruitful land he had chosen. This, however, amounts to no more than the common character of sinful man; but the people of Sodom were exceedingly sinful and wicked before, or against, the Lord - they were sinners of no common character; they excelled in unrighteousness, and soon filled up the measure of their iniquities. See Genesis 19.

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GENESIS 13:14 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot was separated from him, "Now, lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward,

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#### Verse 14

The Lord said unto Abram - It is very likely that the angel of the covenant appeared to Abram in open day, when he could take a distinct view of the length and the breadth of this good land. The revelation made Gen 15:5, was evidently made in the night; for then he was called to number the stars, which could not be seen but in the night season: here he is called on to number the dust of the earth, Gen 13:16, which could not be seen but in the day-light.

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GENESIS 13:15 for all the land which you see, I will give to you, and to your offspring forever.

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#### Verse 15

To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever - This land was given to Abram, that it might lineally and legally descend to his posterity; and though Abram himself cannot be said to have possessed it, Act 7:5, yet it was the gift of God to him in behalf of his seed; and this was always the design of God, not that Abram himself should possess it, but that his posterity should, till the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. And this is chiefly what is to be understood by the words for ever, אד עולם ad olam, to the end of the present dispensation, and the commencement of the new. עולם olam means either Eternity, which implies the termination of all time or duration, such as is measured by the celestial luminaries: or a hidden, unknown period, such as includes a completion or final termination of a particular era, dispensation, etc.; therefore the first is its proper meaning, the latter its accommodated meaning. See the note on Gen 17:7. See the note on Gen 21:33.

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GENESIS 13:16 I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then your seed may also be numbered.

GENESIS 13:17 Arise, walk through the land in its length and in its breadth; for I will give it to you."

GENESIS 13:18 Abram moved his tent, and came and lived by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.

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#### Verse 18

Abram removed his tent - Continued to travel and pitch in different places, till at last he fixed his tent in the plain, or by the oak, of Mamre, see Gen 12:6, which is in Hebron; i.e., the district in which

Mamre was situated was called Hebron. Mamre was an Amorite then living, with whom Abram made a league, Gen 14:13; and the oak probably went by his name, because he was the possessor of the ground. Hebron is called Kirjath-arba, Gen 23:2; but it is very likely that Hebron was its primitive name, and that it had the above appellation from being the residence of four gigantic or powerful Anakim, for Kirjath-arba literally signifies the city of the four; See note on Gen 23:2.

Built there an altar unto the Lord - On which he offered sacrifice, as the word מִזְבֵּחַ mizbach, from זָבַח zabach, to slay, imports.

The increase of riches in the family of Abram must, in the opinion of many, be a source of felicity to them. If earthly possessions could produce happiness, it must be granted that they had now a considerable share of it in their power. But happiness must have its seat in the mind, and, like that, be of a spiritual nature; consequently earthly goods cannot give it; so far are they from either producing or procuring it, that they always engender care and anxiety, and often strifes and contentions. The peace of this amiable family had nearly been destroyed by the largeness of their possessions. To prevent the most serious misunderstandings, Abram and his nephew were obliged to separate. He who has much in general wishes to have more, for the eye is not satisfied with seeing. Lot, for the better accommodation of his flocks and family, chooses the most fertile district in that country, and even sacrifices reverence and filial affection at the shrine of worldly advantage; but the issue proved that a pleasant worldly prospect may not be the most advantageous, even to our secular affairs. Abram prospered greatly in the comparatively barren part of the land, while Lot lost all his possessions, and nearly the lives of himself and family, in that land which appeared to him like the garden of the Lord, like a second paradise. Rich and fertile countries have generally luxurious, effeminate, and profligate inhabitants; so it was in this case. The inhabitants of Sodom were sinners, and exceedingly wicked, and their profligacy was of that kind which luxury produces; they fed themselves without fear, and they acted without shame. Lot however was, through the mercy of God, preserved from this contagion: he retained his religion; and this supported his soul and saved his life, when his goods and his wife perished. Let us learn from this to be jealous over our own wills and wishes; to distrust flattering prospects, and seek and secure a heavenly inheritance. "Man wants but little; nor that little long." A man's life - the comfort and happiness of it - does not consist in the multitude of the things he possesses. "One house, one day's food, and one suit of raiment," says the Arabic proverb, "are sufficient for thee; and if thou die before noon, thou hast one half too much." The example of Abram, in constantly erecting an altar wherever he settled, is worthy of serious regard; he knew the path of duty was the way of safety, and that, if he acknowledged God in all his ways, he might expect him to direct all his steps: he felt his dependence on God, he invoked him through a Mediator, and offered sacrifices in faith of the coming Savior; he found blessedness in this work - it was not an empty service; he rejoiced to see the day of Christ - he saw it and was glad. See note on Gen 12:8. Reader, has God an altar in thy house? Dost thou sacrifice to him? Dost thou offer up daily by faith, in behalf of thy soul and the souls of thy family, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world? No man cometh unto the Father but by me, said Christ: this was true, not only from the incarnation, but from the foundation of the world. And to this another truth, not less comfortable, may be added: Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no-wise cast out.