

## 26 ABRAM AND LOT

*Genesis 12:4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him...*

*Genesis 13:8-9 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren...Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."*

Lot typifies the religious and righteous person who is not godly. This is one who does not walk closely enough with God to care for the things of God where and when it matters. Remember Lot is described by Peter as *"righteous Lot"* (2 Peter 2:7-8). That he was oppressed and vexed in spirit by the gross ungodliness around him says nothing about his real spirituality – any morally upright man would have been.

When Abram departed from his native country, his nephew Lot followed him. Here is the first fundamental difference between them: Abram went because he heard and obeyed God's call. Lot jumped on the bandwagon and tagged along. Abram came to Canaan by faith in God's word. Lot was there because Abram was there. Lot enjoyed the blessings that came to Abram by being with him - *"Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold...Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents"* (Genesis 13:2, 5). There are some who are found in the company of the church crowd for the benefit of God's blessings upon His people. When a man prospers, it is not necessarily a mark of his godliness.

There came a day when separation was inevitable. The reason was more than just the fact that it was getting too crowded for comfort due to the abundance of herds and possessions between Abram and Lot (Genesis 13:6). It was not primarily the inadequacy of space but the incompatibility of spirit that made it increasingly intolerable to dwell together. That was what caused the strife between their herdsmen. The shortage of physical space merely served to highlight this underlying spiritual distance between them so that *"they could not dwell together"* (v6).

Separation was inevitable because *"the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another"* (Galatians 5:17). There is a basic antagonism that cannot be accommodated except by a parting of ways. This basic difference in disposition between them is further reflected in the choice of direction and destination, and how that choice was made. *"Lot chose for himself"* (v11), according to what he fancied and the dictates of his heart – *"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"* (1 John 2:16). Abram, on the other hand, relinquished the right to choose for himself. He was not afraid to graciously let his younger kinsman propose and let God dispose. The godly man does not need to assert his right to choose first. His is not a passive indecision but an entire submission to God's sovereign choice. It does not matter if he looks like the loser in the eyes of men. What matters most is choosing God's perfect will, as is so eloquently expressed in Faber's hymn:

"He always wins who sides with God; to him no chance is lost

God's will is sweetest to him when it triumphs at his cost"