

Vs. 5, 6. *Lot also .flocks .herds .tents ;* sharing God's blessing on Abram, in fulfillment of ch. 12 : 3. Silver and gold are not mentioned in Lot's case. "Tents" means families of retainers. *Land .not able to bear them ;* that is, it was not able to provide pasture enough for their combined flocks and herds.

II. Sharp Strife, 7.

V. 7. *Strife between the herdmen.* The rival shepherds are naturally tempted to come to blows over the watering places and the grazing grounds,—the things upon which the life of both men and beasts were dependent. *The Canaanite ;* the people of the land who dwelt in the walled cities. *The Perizite ;* the "hamlet-dwellers" or inhabitants of the open villages and country. The presence of these people would intensify the difficulty about pasture and water. Abram and Lot had not the land to themselves.

III. A Generous Offer, 8, 9.

Vs. 8, 9. *Abram said.* It is the older man who, with "the magnanimity which springs from fellowship with God," makes peaceful proposals. The patriarchs were all lovers of peace and reasonableness (see chs. 26 : 12-23 ; 34 : 30). *Let there be no strife.* To Abram it is unbearable that there should be a strife between uncle and nephew, over the "thine" and "mine." *Thou .the left hand .I .right,* etc. This is a great concession, that the senior should renounce his prerogative in favor of the junior, and it brings out the conciliatory and self-sacrificing character of Abram.

IV. A Greedy Choice, 10-12.

V. 10. *And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld.* From Bethel, which lies on the top of a hill, a wide expanse of country may be seen ; in the southwest the brown mountains of Judea, in the southeast, the green valley of the Jordan (Gunkel). *All the plain of Jordan ;* literally, "the whole Oval of Jordan," the wide oval landscape into which the valley of the Jordan opens. This region was rich with vine, olive and fig. The Jordan is here mentioned for the first time. The name means, "Descender." The river, in its swift course of 200 miles falls 3,000 feet into the Dead Sea, one of the most remarkable depressions in the

world. The story assumes that the Dead Sea did not cover the district at that time, as at present. *Well watered every where ;* ensuring luxuriant pasturage and abundance of drinking places,—the essential requisites of a grazing land. *Sodom and Gomorrah ;* the cities of this plain (see ch. 19 : 24, 25), probably at the southeast of the Dead Sea. *Like the land of Egypt.* "Egypt appeared to the people of Canaan as the ideal of an abundantly watered, magnificent landscape." *Unto Zoar ;* a city at the extreme south of the Oval, marking the southern limit of the "well watered" region. But possibly Zoan in Egypt is meant, the centre of a garden land in that country through which Abram would pass on his journeys to and from Egypt.

Vs. 11, 12. *Lot chose .the plain of Jordan.* He showed himself to be selfish and grasping. He sacrificed principle for personal gain. The choice was a fatal one—as all such choices are. *Pitched his tent toward Sodom ;* literally, "moved his tent here and there as far as Sodom." *Men of Sodom .wicked and sinners.* Lot's choice placed him in a sphere of temptation.

Abram's unselfishness was amply rewarded. He received a fresh and emphatic repetition of the promises previously given (ch. 12 : 2, 7), and was encouraged to move about freely in the country designated to become the ultimate possession of his descendants. Abram fixed his abode "by the oaks (or terebinths) of Mamre" (v. 18, Rev. Ver.), a spot not yet fully identified, near Hebron. Vs. 13-18.

Light from the East

RICH—The principal form of wealth among nomadic people was cattle, including camels, the great public carriers of the desert ; oxen, valuable for ploughing, threshing, drawing carts and wagons ; sheep of the fat tailed variety, goats, and sometimes horses and asses. Job had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 2,000 oxen and 1,000 she asses, which must have been worth at least \$1,100,000, and would have required an enormous territory for pasturage. Silver and gold were the mediums of exchange from very early times. Neither of them were coined until compara-