

Genesis 13 - Abram Returns from Egypt; Abram Separates from Lot; Abrahamic Covenant Reaffirmed

II. Epilogue: Patriarchal history (Gen 11:10—50:26)

(1) Life of Abraham (Gen 11:10—25:11)

(B) Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1—25:11)

(a) Establishment of the covenant (Gen 12:1—17:27)

(ii) Preparation for the covenant (Gen 13:1—14:24)

(a) Abram's separation from Lot (13:1-13)

(b) Promise reaffirmed (13:14-18)

Genesis 13

(ii) Preparation for the covenant (Gen 13:1—14:24)

(a) Abram's separation from Lot (13:1-13)

1 So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, he and his wife and **all that belonged to him, and Lot with him.**

1 So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, he and his wife and all that belonged to him, and Lot with him.

1 Abram traveled from Egypt, along with his wife and everyone who belonged to his household—including Lot—to the Negev.

1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

- After the debacle in Egypt, Abram and his clan return to the land of promise, first moving into the Negev, a place Abram was familiar with.

- "...all that belonged to him" - notice that even in disobedience, God continued to keep His promise of personal blessing (Cf. 12:2b) to Abram.

- "...Lot with him" - although the text doesn't mention Lot's name during Abram's time in Egypt, this verse confirms that Lot went with Abram and Sarai to Egypt.

2 Now Abram was very **rich** in livestock, silver, and gold.

2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold.

2 Now Abram had become quite wealthy in livestock, silver, and gold.

2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

- "...rich" - it seems that wherever Abram went, God blessed his wealth. It happened to him in Haran (Cf. 12:5) and while he was in Egypt (Cf. 12:16). These promises were necessary to launch this special nation that will mediate messianic blessings to the entire world.

— Notice that Abram is experiencing these blessings while not deserving them? Over and over throughout Abram's life, God blesses him when he doesn't deserve it. This demonstrates the unconditional nature of God's promises to Abram.

3 And he went on his journeys from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place **where his tent had been at the beginning**, between Bethel and Ai,

3 He went on his journeys from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai,

3 He journeyed by stages from the Negev to Bethel, the place where his tent had formerly been, between Bethel and Ai,

3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai;

- "...where his tent had been at the beginning" - why would Abram return to the same place he was originally? It's likely a recommitment to the Lord after a failure of faith.

— Abram did something God did not tell him to do, then he told a lie about it. He endangered his wife and his marriage. So God brought him back to where it all started in order to give him a second chance at obedience (Cf. Jonah 3:1).

— This is an example of God's grace. If God were dealing with Abram in justice, He would've forsaken him in Egypt and found someone else. But God doesn't deal with His children in justice, He deals with us in grace.

4 to the place of the altar which he had made there previously; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

4 to the place of the altar which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

4 where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the LORD.

4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

- This was the location in which Abram began public worship, and now public worship is resumed. Thus, Abram renewed his commitment to the Lord after his failure in Egypt.

5 Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents.

5 Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents.

5 Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks of sheep, herds, and tents.

5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

- The reason that Lot was wealthy was due to his association/relationship with Abram. Abram was directly blessed by God, and those blessings spilled over and benefitted Lot as well.
- The difference between Abram and Lot was that Abram owned possessions, but the possessions owned Lot. Abram was wealthy, but he held onto his possessions loosely. Lot was also wealthy, but he held onto his possessions tightly. This contrast demonstrates the difference in the spiritual caliber of these two men.
- There's nothing that reveals the heart of people more than a conflict. You can't ascertain someone's character when they're on a mountaintop, when everything around them is going well. But you can certainly tell someone's character when the trials and tribulations of life come their way.
- You can't decipher the state of your heart and love for God when things are going well. You ascertain your own heart toward God when you begin to walk toward difficulty.

6 And the land could not support *both of* them while living together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together.

6 And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together.

6 But the land could not support them living together, because they had so many livestock that they could not stay together.

6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

- A conflict now develops between Abram and Lot that reveals the different levels of spirituality and character of these two men.

- The reason the land could not support both Abram and Lot, and their tremendous wealth, is because there were Canaanite cities strewn throughout the entire land (Cf. 12:6; 13:7). So there wasn't enough land to accommodate the native Canaanites along with Abram and Lot's huge herds.

7 And there was **strife** between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. Now the **Canaanites** and the **Perizzites** were living in the land at that time.

7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. Now the Canaanite and the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land.

7 There was strife between the herdsmen in charge of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen in charge of Lot's livestock. Also, at that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land.

7 And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

- The problem between Abram and Lot was not personal; it was among their herdsmen, who were responsible for maintaining their large herds of cattle.

- "...strife" - *merivah*, the same Hebrew word used to describe the strife during the wilderness wanderings (Cf. Ex 17:7; Num 20:13,24; 27:14; Ps 81:7; 95:8).

— In Exodus, Numbers, and the Psalms, the word *merivah* became a technical name for a specific place in the Sinai wilderness, but here the word is used merely as a descriptive term for what is going on.

— We often view conflict as a negative, and much of the time it is. But there are times where God uses conflict between believers to further His purposes. One example is the "sharp disagreement" between Paul and Barnabas about taking Mark with them on their second missionary journey (Cf. Acts 15:39). Because of this disagreement, there were two missionary teams instead of just one.

— What is happening here to Abram was not pleasant, but it was actually a blessing to him. God was separating him from someone who would most likely drag him down. Abram could not have become the man he became in God had this separation not taken place. This conflict was necessary for Abram's sanctification and spiritual maturation process.

— We shouldn't always think that conflict in our lives is bad; God will sometimes/oftentimes use conflict for His purpose, to separate us from people or situations that would be detrimental to what God wants to do in me. Sometimes it's a gift to say "goodbye."

— This is a normal part of our progressive sanctification. Abram and Lot had no personal animosity between them, they were just on a different page as far as spiritual maturity goes. So God used this conflict to separate Abram from Lot so that God could work in Abram's life.

— God knew that Abram could not become what God wanted him to become, including receiving the Abrahamic Covenant, with Lot involved. Abraham would've never gotten to a relationship of obedience with the Lord that he would be willing to sacrifice Isaac, his only son, if Lot had remained with him.

- "...Canaanites" - through Noah's son Ham came a group of people called the Canaanites (Ham's fourth son). The term "Canaanite" refers to a number of different people groups:

- Sidon
- Heth
- Jebusites
- Amorites
- Girgashites
- Hivites
- Arkites
- Sinites
- Arvadites

- Zemarites
- Hamathites
- Perrizites

— After the Flood, Ham and his sons populated the Mediterranean coast from Egypt to Turkey, most of present day Egypt and southward, and the western half of the Arabian Peninsula.

— Because of the presence of these people-groups in the land, there was not adequate pasture land for the huge herds of both Abram and Lot to dwell together.

- "...Perizzites" - one of the people groups included in the general term "Canaanites" (see list above). The reason this particular people group is mentioned is likely because that was the specific group inhabiting the land between Bethel and Ai where Abram and Lot were (Cf. 34:30; Deut 7:1; Judges 1:4; 3:5).

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 **relatives!"**

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.

8 So Abram told Lot, "Please, let's not have strife between you and me, or between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, since we are relatives.

8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

- "...Abram said to Lot" - Abram took the initiative to resolve this issue

- "...relatives" - Abram was Lot's uncle; Lot was Abram's nephew. Lot was the son of Abraham's brother Haran.

9 Is the entire land not before you? Please separate from me; if *you choose* the left, then I will go to the right; or if *you choose* the right, then I will go to the left."

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."

9 Isn't the whole land available to you? Let's separate: If you go to the left, then I will go to the right; if you go to the right, then I will go to the right; if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."

9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

- This verse indicates a maturity in Abram compared to Gen 12. Abram is completely stepping out on the basis of faith. Here, he is not fabricating stories; he is not attempting to

manipulate circumstances. He obviously learned some spiritual lessons on faith from his Egyptian sojourn and now he is much more walking by faith.

10 Lot **raised his eyes and saw** all the vicinity 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 going toward Zoar**.

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.

10 Lot looked around and noticed that the whole Jordan plain as far as Zoar was well-watered like the garden of the LORD or like the land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

- "...raised his eyes and saw" - this verbiage is intentionally designed by the Holy Spirit to contrast Abram's offer in v9. Abram had the security of faith and believed God's promise. The entire land was promised to him anyway, so he didn't care what portion Lot chose. It all belonged to Abram and his descendants.

— Lot, on the other hand, was not at the spiritual maturity level of Abram and thus only judged by his sight. The decision Lot will make here is designed to parallel the decision made by Eve when she "saw" that the tree was good for food, and that it was delightful to the eyes, and that it was desirable to make one wise.

— God wants Abram to get to the point where he's willing to embrace the full plan and program of God by way of faith, but you can't do that while he was unequally yoked to someone who was walking by sight.

- "...the garden of the LORD" - to Lot, the vicinity of the Jordan looked like the Garden of Eden

- "...the land of Egypt going toward Zoar" - the Nile River delta (Goshen) in northern Egypt

11 So Lot **chose for himself** all the vicinity of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward. So they separated from each other.

11 So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other.

11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan plain. Then Lot traveled eastward, and they separated from each other.

11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

- Abram was concerned about Lot and Abram; Lot was only concerned about Lot (Cf. Phil 2:3-4).
- "...chose for himself" - notice that God is respecting the choice of carnal Lot
- One of the worst things that can happen in a believer's life is that God gives you what you want. What we want is not always the best thing for us. Many times when we're operating in our flesh and we want something so bad, God says, I'm going to go ahead and give it to you.
- When Lot chose the best land for himself and his herd, Abram likely felt like he was getting jipped. Probably that he had made a poor decision to give Lot first choice. These are the same things that go through our minds when God calls us to make a godly choice.
- Satan loves to whisper in our minds about all the things that we're going to lose out on because of that godly decision. But the great paradox with God is that when we step out and make the right choice, we don't lose out on anything. In fact, Abram gained what Lot chose for himself, plus much more.
- God here is showing Abram (and us!) to not worry about the timing. We often don't like God's timing, but He promises that when we make godly decisions, even when by sight they don't appear to be the "best" decision, God will honor them (Cf. Matt 16:25; 19:27-29).
- At the time, the separation from Lot probably seemed like a negative to Abram, but time will clearly demonstrate that it was a huge positive.

12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the vicinity of the *Jordan*, and moved his tents as far as Sodom.

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.

12 So Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the plain, setting up his tent in the vicinity of Sodom.

12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

- "Abram settled in the land of Canaan" - Abram is now moving into his promises; he's realizing and appropriating the promises that God gave him. He's living in them.

- "...Lot settled in the cities of the vicinity of the *Jordan*" - the beginning of the end for Lot. While he didn't realize it at the time, this was his first poor choice in a string of poor choices that would eventually lead to a ruined life.

— Lot's bad choices eventually led to bad actions. His progression toward carnality went through five steps:

1. He looked toward Sodom and could see what good territory it was (13:10)
2. He chose the area of Sodom (13:11)

3. He pitched his tent near Sodom (13:12)
4. He lived in Sodom (14:11-12; 2 Peter 2:7-8)
5. He sat at the gate of Sodom, a position of leadership (19:1)

- Lot didn't wake up one day and begin to think, I'm going to become an immoral person. People don't think that way. But what people do do is they begin to make small compromises in their mind.

— As the saying goes: A thought reaps and action; an action reaps a character; a character reaps a destiny. Private thoughts will eventually lead to public actions.

— The Bible talks a lot about the mind—the power it has and how we need to protect it:

Prov 23:7a: For as he thinks within himself, so he is.

— This is why the Bible constantly tells us that what we need to be putting into our minds is the Word of God.

Joshua 1:8: This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but **you shall meditate on it day and night**, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will achieve success.

Ps 1:2: But his delight is in the Law of the LORD, And **on His Law he meditates day and night**.

Rom 12:2: And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Phil 4:8: Finally, brothers *and sisters*, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, **think about these things**.

— Satan's favorite target is the mind of a believer because he knows that if he can influence the way you *think* now, he can influence what you *do* in the future.

2 Cor 4:4: in whose case **the god of this world has blinded the minds** of the unbelieving so that they will not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Eph 6:17: And take **the helmet of salvation**

— What Lot did here, pitching his tent toward Sodom, probably seemed innocent at the time. Yet that mental activity influenced the physical activity for the rest of his life.

13 Now the men of Sodom were exceedingly **wicked sinners against the LORD**.

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

13 Now the men of Sodom were particularly evil and sinful in their defiance of the LORD.

13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

- This section closes with the divine evaluation of Sodom:

- "...wicked" - *ra*, describes external wickedness
- "...sinners against the LORD" - literally means "very sinners"; moreover, they were "very sinners" against the LORD, meaning that the LORD was offended by their sin.
- The last time the Bible used language like this, it was to describe the state of the world just before the Flood. Both before the Flood and here, God is concerned about the extreme wickedness (6:5; 8:21).
- And in both cases, God would completely wipe it out (Cf. 6:12-13; 19:13). And in both cases, it was one person and family that was spared.
- We're supposed to read this verse and think of the Flood, and how God dealt with the extreme wickedness there. It should show us that the destruction of Sodom was imminent because of the pattern of God in how He dealt with the world in the Flood.
- "Righteous Lot" was "oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked" and it "tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing their lawless deeds" (Cf. 2 Peter 2:7-8)
- Lot's move to Sodom sets the stage for the events of Gen 14; 18-19.

Lot's Path to Compromise

- Gen 13:10 - "...lifted up his eyes": he looked toward Sodom and could see what good territory it was
- Gen 13:11 - "...chose for himself" all the plain of Jordan
- Gen 13:12 - "...separated himself" from Abraham; he pitched his tent toward Sodom, home of "exceedingly wicked" sinners (13:13)
- Gen 13:12 - "...dwelt in the cities of the plain" - he lived near Sodom
- Gen 14:12 - "...he was living in Sodom" - he moved from outside the city into the city
- Gen 19:1 - "...sat in the gate"; Lot is now the "mayor" of Sodom
- Gen 19:4-6 - Lot offers his virgin daughters to the sodomites wanting to sodomize the angels
- Gen 19:14 - He lost his testimony completely; Lot's family thought he was joking when he tried to get his family to leave the city prior to it being destroyed. He had no credibility with them.
- Gen 19:30-38 - Lot committed incest with his two daughters while in a drunken steeper (Moabites/Ammonites)

However, Lot is called "righteous" [3x], but was vexed daily (2 Peter 2:7-8)

Abram vs. Lot

- Abram walked by faith; Lot walked by sight
- Abram: generous and magnanimous; Lot: greedy and worldly
- Abram: looked for God's city; Lot: home was a city destroyed by God
- Abram: "Father of all who believe"; Lot: perpetual infamy

- Abram: "Heir of the world" (Rom 4:30); Lot: dwelt in a cave (Gen 19:30); all possessions destroyed in Sodom.

(b) Promise reaffirmed (13:14-18)

14 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now raise your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward, and eastward and westward;

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;

14 After Lot had separated from Abram, the LORD told Abram, "Look off to the north, south, east, and west from where you're living,

14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

- "The LORD said to Abram" - this is the third of seven times that God speaks directly to Abram (see notes on 12:1).

- "...after Lot had separated from him" - after the Lord had providentially removed Lot from Abram's life, Abram was now in a position where God could speak to him directly, and Abram was in a position to understand what God had given him.

- "...raise your eyes and look" - this isn't a new promise to Abram. God here is reiterating the promise that He had already given Abram because now Abram had eyes to recognize it. — God instructed Abram to take a good look at the Land, shortly after Lot took a good look at the Land, from the same location that Lot looked over the land. Lot did it for his own self-interest; Abram was told to do so by God in order to realize His promise.

15 for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever.

15 for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.

15 because I'm going to give you and your descendants all of the land that you see—forever!

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

- "...all the land" - every square inch of it; all here means "all of it."

- "...see" - no exact boundaries are given here, but they are given later in Gen 15:15-21.

Everything that Abram saw, in all four directions, as well as the very area that Lot chose to go, now became Abram's by divine grant.

— Abram's vantage point was between Bethel and Ai, so while looking east he easily saw the land east of the Jordan River. Abram could also see the land that Lot chose.

— Lot made a choice (v11) of the land he wanted, and God honored that choice, but then God turned around and told Abram that the land that Lot chose will actually be given to him

(Abram) and his descendants.

- "...I will give it to you" - this is called a Royal Grant, no conditions attached. The Land is now promised to Abram individually, not just to Abram's descendants. Abraham himself will someday own this Land.

— Abram waited for God to give him the Land; Lot took it for himself.

- "...to your descendants" - reaffirming the promise already made earlier; it will not be given to Lot's seed, but to Abram's seed. This is a key phrase because when Abram dies (Gen 25), the only scrap of the land he was promised that he actually owned was Sarah's gravesite, the cave of Machpelah (Cf. 25:9-10).

- "...forever" - *olam*, in perpetuity; for eternity. This is the same Hebrew word that is used to describe the eternality of God Himself (Cf. Ps 90:2) and the eternal destiny of believers and unbelievers (Cf. Dan 12:2). It's also the same word used to describe the Noahic Covenant (Gen 9:12,16).

— Lot would get the temporary use of the best land for a short time, during his lifetime, but because Abram was walking by faith and trusting in God, God tells him that this land will be his forever.

— This promise for "forever" has yet to be fulfilled for even one second of history. Abram nor his descendants have ever possessed all of the land that Abram saw. Thus, this promise awaits a future fulfillment in the Millennial Kingdom, which will be inaugurated after the Second Coming.

— This statement specifically identifies the land portion of the Abrahamic Covenant, and deems it as God's unconditional gift to Abraham "forever":

- In Gen 12:1-3, God promised Abram to show him a land
- In Gen 12:7, God promised that Abram's seed would possess the land (he was childless at the time)
- In Gen 13:14-17, God promised that Abram would also possess the land, along with his seed. However, Abraham died never having possessed any part of the Land except for a few wells and a burial cave, which he had to purchase with good money.

— In order for God to fulfill His promise to Abram, two things must occur:

1. Abraham must be resurrected
2. The Land must be restored to Israel; same requirement for Isaac (Gen 26:2)

16 I will make your descendants **as plentiful as the dust of the earth**, so that if anyone can count the dust of the earth, then your descendants could also be counted.

16 I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered.

16 I'll make your descendants as plentiful as the specks of dust of the earth, so that if one could count the specks of dust of the earth, then your descendants could also be counted.

16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

- "I will make" - notice that God, unconditionally, will fulfill this promise of descendants

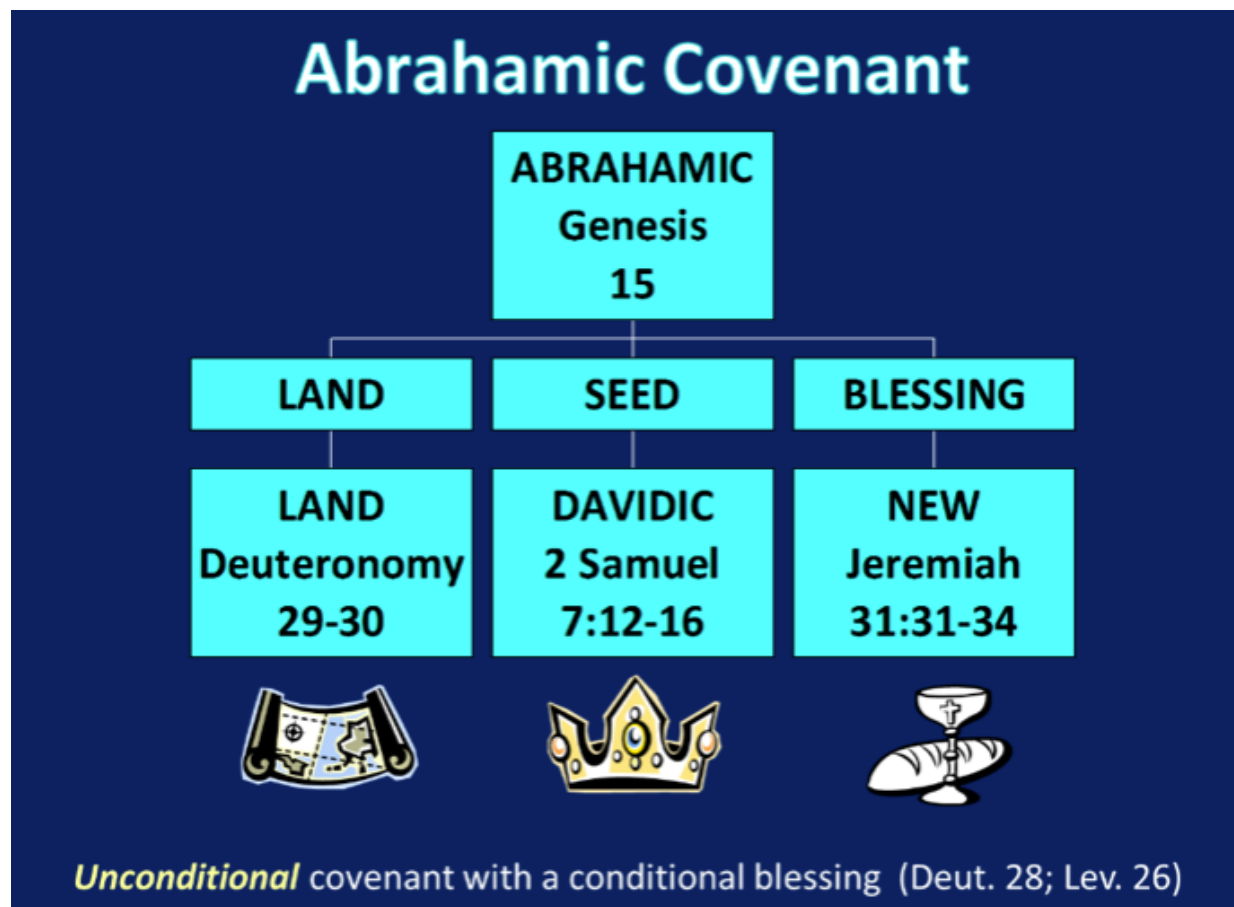
- "...as *plentiful as* the dust of the earth" - in 15:5, God analogizes Abram's descendants to the stars. God invites Abram to look at the stars and try to count them. God is showing him that just as dust of the earth or the stars of the sky cannot be numbered/counted, the same will be true for Abram's descendants.

— Abram was probably thinking...I'm north of 75 years old, and Sarai is north of 65 years old...how on earth is God going to give me innumerable descendants?

— God will use this promise of innumerable descendants in the same way He used the promise of the land...to grow and mature Abram's faith and dependence on Him.

— The result will be that Jesus Himself will ask Abraham: Is anything too difficult for the LORD? (Cf. 18:14).

— What the LORD is doing here is laying the foundation in Abram to give him the Abrahamic Covenant. At this point, God and Abraham are not in a covenant...Abram just has promises from the LORD. These promises are enough to ensure they come to pass, but God will take it a step further by putting these promises into a covenant with Abraham.



17 Arise, walk about in the land through its length and width; for I will give it to you."

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

17 Get up! Walk throughout the length and breadth of the land, because I'm going to give it to you."

17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

- God now invites Abram, once again, to walk, inspect, tour around the land that God promised to him and his descendants.

— We have to keep in mind that as Abram walked the land, it wasn't uninhabited vacant land. The land was filled with Canaanite city-states. This is why Abram and Lot had to separate—because there wasn't enough pasture land for both wealthy men and their huge herds because the land was filled with Canaanites.

— This meant that as God is giving this land promise to Abram, telling him to walk around the land that would be his, Abram had to receive everything that God was telling him by faith. This wasn't uninhabited land—there were exceedingly evil, wicked people who filled the land that God is giving Abram.

— As Abram is thinking, What about all of these "ite" people-groups throughout the land, and their exceedingly evil deeds, God is saying, Don't worry about them. Just believe what I'm telling you by faith and I'll take care of them. God is teaching Abram to rely on His promises and to look at things from God's perspective, not Abram's perspective, by faith.

- This verse, taken as it is written, is a huge problem for amillennialism. So how do amillennial theologians interpret this verse? That the "land" spoken of here refers to heaven.

— The only way to get to this interpretation from the text is to allegorize what the text actually says. If you are looking for a "higher spiritual meaning" than what is plainly given, you can just "make things up" to fit your preconceived interpretation or theology.

It is verses like this that become totally meaningless in the amillennial view of the end times, which interprets the Land promise as nothing more than a symbol of Heaven. Such a view, which denies that a literal 1000-year reign of Christ on the earth is prophesied in the Bible, renders verses such as 13:17 totally nonsensical. Is God asking Abram here to come up to Heaven and take a look around to see if he likes it because someday he is going to get to possess Heaven? This is hardly the meaning of the text. The text is so obviously talking about a piece of real estate upon which he was living at the time. He was told to walk around with his feet all over the Land, because someday he was going to possess it. A view like this cannot be spiritualized away in order to make it fit a preconceived theology. No doubt, the NT teaches that Abram also looked

for a city, a heavenly one; but one aspect does not contradict the other or cancel out the other. It is not "either/or" but "both/and." Abram was promised both a physical inheritance on earth as well as a spiritual one in Heaven. [Fruchtenbaum, The Book of Genesis, 258].

18 Then Abram moved his tent and came and lived by the oaks of **Mamre**, which are in Hebron; and there **he built an altar to the LORD**.

18 Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

18 So Abram moved his tent and settled beside the oaks of Mamre that are by Hebron, where he built an altar to the LORD.

18 Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

- "...Mamre" - based on 14:13, Mamre got its name because of Amorite influence. It will be from here that Abram will later plead for the sparing of Sodom (18:1).

- "...he built an altar to the LORD" - Abram worshipped the LORD, even when what God was telling him and promising to him made zero sense.

— Do we worship the LORD only when things are going well? Only when things are falling our way? Only when our prayers are answered in the way we want them answered?

— Abram worshipped God here when what God was telling him made no sense. Abram could not see how God was going to remove all of these people and their evil, and give him and his descendants the land. He saw no path for God to fulfill His promise...yet he worshipped the LORD anyway.

— Anyone can worship the Lord when life is under control. But can we worship the Lord when He's doing something we don't want, telling me something I don't want to hear, or leading me somewhere I don't want to go? That's what Abram is doing here...he's worshipping the Lord despite the fact that his eyes, and his common sense, are telling him something different.

— Abram built an altar twice in Gen 12...upon arrival in the Land (12:7,8). Now he's building an altar again in Gen 13. He continued to do so throughout his life (Cf. 22:9; 26:25; 33:20; 35:7). It's safe to say that worship for Abram was a lifestyle.

— He's also building an altar while surrounded by exceedingly evil people, in the heart of pagan territory. Abram is living like an ambassador (Cf. 2 Cor 5:20). An ambassador is someone who represents and promotes the values of their home country on foreign soil. He was being salt and light in the midst of an evil and unbelieving world (Matt 5:13-16).

This way, he would get to know the Land very well. As he walked through the Land, he took physical possession of the Land, prophetically speaking, since he did not get to

own the Land in his lifetime; but he will own the Land in the Messianic Kingdom...Here also: He built an altar unto Jehovah by the oaks of Mamre. Again, Abram built a true altar in a pagan worship place. By walking through the Land, Abram was prophetically taking physical possession of the Land; and by building these altars in pagan places, Abram was also taking spiritual possession of the Land. [Fruchtenbaum]