

## **Genesis 19 – First Abraham now God rescues Lot, and Sodom’s sin leads to destruction.**

THEME: The angels visit Lot; destruction of the Cities of the Plain.

The preceding chapter was a picture of blessed Christian fellowship with God. But now the picture changes: We leave Hebron on the plains of Mamre where Abraham dwells and we go to the city of Sodom where Lot dwells. In this chapter Lot leaves Sodom with his wife and two daughters, and Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed. Lot's wife turns to a pillar of salt, and then we have Lot's awful sin with his two daughters.

In chapter 19 we have a picture of that which is “the blasted life.” Don't forget that this man Lot happens to be a righteous man. It is hard to believe that; if I had only this record in Genesis, I wouldn't believe it. But Simon Peter, in his epistle, says of Lot, “... that righteous man ... vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds” (2Pe\_2:8). Lot lived in Sodom, but he never was happy there. It was a tragic day for him when he moved to Sodom, because he lost his family—he lost all of them if you look at the total picture. It is tragic.

There is many a man today who may be a saved man, but due to his life style or where he lives, he loses his family, his influence, and his testimony. I have been a pastor for quite a few years, and I know Christians like Lot. Not too long ago, the son of a leader in a church which I served said to me that all he was doing was waiting for his dad to die in order to repudiate the Christian life. He thought the whole thing was phony; all he could see was hypocrisy. Of course, all he was doing was telling about his home. What a phony his dad must be! That man has lost his son, and he has lost his influence in other places, I can assure you. But I would not question his salvation. I think the man trusts Christ, but you would never know it by his life. Poor Lot! How tragic this is! This is one of two very sordid chapters in the Book of Genesis.

***Gen 19:1-2 Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. And he said, "Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." And they said, "No, but we will spend the night in the open square."***

These two angels visit Lot in Sodom to announce judgment. Notice that Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. I cannot let that go by without calling attention to the fact that the ones who sat in the gate of a city were the judges. This man Lot not only moved to Sodom, but he also got into politics down there. Here he is, a petty judge sitting in the gate.

These two men must have had dirty feet. Of course, if you had walked from the plains of Mamre down into Sodom wearing nothing but sandals, your feet would need washing, also. Again, I call your attention to this custom of that day which was practiced by those who extended hospitality to strangers.

Lot was a hospitable man. When these strangers came, he invited them to his home, and they came in. At first, however, they were reluctant. “And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.” In other words, they said, “We'll just stay outside. We don't want to inconvenience you.” And they said this for a purpose, of course.  
– McGee

***Gen 19:3 But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. Then he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.***

Now these men have another feast. They had a feast with Abraham; they now have a feast with Lot.

They had brought out something when they said, “We'll stay on the street and just sleep in the park,” and Lot says to them, “You don't do that in Sodom. It's dangerous! Your life wouldn't be worth a thing if you did that.”

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May I say that maybe Los Angeles ought to change its name to Sodom. It would not be safe for you to sleep on the streets of Los Angeles; in fact, it is not safe at all to be on the streets of Los Angeles at night. Many women who live alone will not come out to church at night. One dear saint of God told me, “I just lock my door at dark, Brother McGee, and I do not open that door until the next morning at daylight. It's not safe in my neighborhood to even walk on the street.” The days of Sodom and Gomorrah are here again, and practically for the same reason. Lot says, “No, men, do not stay on the street. It wouldn't be safe for you.” When he “pressed upon them,” they came in. - McGee

***Gen 19:4-5 Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally."***

This is a sickening scene which reveals the degradation of this city—the city of Sodom. The name that has been put on this sin from that day to this is sodomy. Apparently, there was no attempt made in the city of Sodom to have a church for this crowd and to tell them that they were all right in spite of the fact that they practiced this thing. May I say to you that the Word of God is specific on this, and you cannot tone it down. Sodomy is an awful sin.

When this man Lot had gone down into the city of Sodom, he did not realize what kind of city it was—I'm sure of that. He got down there and found out that perversion was the order of the day, and he brought up his children, his sons and daughters, in that atmosphere. When he earlier had pitched his tent toward Sodom, he had looked down there and had seen the lovely streets and boulevards and parks and public buildings. And he had seen the folk as they were on the outside, but he had not seen what they really were. The sin of this city is so great that God is now going to judge it. God is going to destroy the city.

Let's draw a sharp line here. There is a new attitude toward sin today. There is a gray area where sin is not really as black as we once thought it was. The church has compromised until it is pitiful. In Southern California we have a church made up of those who are homosexuals, and, lo and behold, they all admit that the pastor of the church is one also! May I say to you, the lesson of Sodom and Gomorrah is a lesson for this generation. God is not accepting this kind of church.

The idea today seems to be that you can become a child of God and continue on in sin. God says that is impossible—you cannot do that, and this city of Sodom is an example of that fact. Paul asks the question: “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” And the answer is “God forbid,” or, Let it not be (see Rom\_6:1-2). The idea that you can be a Christian and go on in sin is a tremendous mistake, especially to make light of it, as I judge is being done in this particular case.

This is what they were doing in Sodom and Gomorrah—and God destroyed these cities. Don't say that we have a primitive view of God in Genesis but that we have a better one today. Don't argue that, after all, Jesus received sinners. He sure did, but when He got through with them, He had changed them. The harlot who came to Him was no longer in that business. When she came to God, she changed. That is the thing that happened to other sinners. A publican came to Him, and he left the seat of customs. He gave up that which was crooked when he came to the Lord. If you have come to Christ, you will be changed. Many people write and try to explain to me that we are living in a new day and I need to wake up. My friend, we are living in a new day, but it just happens to be Sodom and Gomorrah all over again. – McGee

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***Gen 19:6-7 So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly!"***

The men of Sodom were outside the door, asking that these guests in the home of Lot be turned over to them. Lot said, "I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly." That is the way Lot looked at it, and he had been down there in Sodom a long time. It wasn't new morality to him; it was just old sin. - McGee

***Gen 19:8-9 See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof." And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door.***

When a man entertained a guest in that day, he was responsible for him. Lot was willing to make this kind of sacrifice to protect his guests! "And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: ..." You see, Lot was advancing in the political arena there. – McGee

***Gen 19:10-11 But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door.***

If Lot's guests had not done this, both they and Lot would have been destroyed, because that was the intention of the men of Sodom. – McGee

***Gen 19:12-14 Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—take them out of this place! For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it." So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.***

Lot is in a very bad situation. He had spent years down in the city of Sodom. He had learned to tolerate this sort of thing, although he calls it wickedness. He had seen his sons and daughters grow up, and they apparently had married among people with those ethical standards. When the time came that Lot got this word from the Lord to leave the city, he went to his sons-in-law and said, "Let's get out of here. God is going to destroy this city." They laughed at him. They ridiculed him. I suppose they knew that the week before Lot had invested a little money in real estate there. He had lived so long as one of them, without any real difference, that they took his warning as big joke. This man was out of the will of God in this place, and he had no witness for God. He did not win anybody for the Lord in this city. The same principle is true today: when you go down to their level, my friend, you do not win them. I think that that is being clearly demonstrated in this hour.

Frankly, I would agree with Abraham that this man Lot wasn't saved, but remember what Peter said: "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)" (2Pe\_2:6-8). I tell you, Lot never enjoyed it down there in Sodom. Now

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that he is going to leave the city, he cannot get anyone to leave with him except his wife and two single daughters. - McGee

***Gen 19:15-16 When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.***

Here is a man who was God's man in spite of everything. If I only had the Book of Genesis, I am not sure I would believe that Lot was saved, but since Peter calls him a righteous man, we know that he was. Lot had become righteous because he had followed Abraham—he believed God, and he had offered the sacrifices. God extends mercy unto Lot, and he now believes God and gets out of the city. – McGee

***Gen 19:17-23 So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed." Then Lot said to them, "Please, no, my lords! Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live." And he said to him, "See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore, the name of the city was called Zoar.***

Even Lot didn't want to leave. He would get out of the city, but he couldn't make it to the mountain.

This city was a little place called Zoar, and that is where Lot went. You see, this man came out of Sodom, but he did not come clean even out of there. And, of course, he got into a great deal of trouble at that particular time. - McGee

***Gen 19:23-26 The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So, He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. But, his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.***

I think this verse (26) has been greatly misunderstood. Why in the world did Mrs. Lot turn and look back? I think that the reason is twofold. First of all, she turned and looked back because she did not want to leave Sodom. She loved Sodom. She loved Lot, too, but it was a lot of Sodom that she loved. And she didn't want to leave it. She was probably a member of the country club, the sewing club, and the Shakespeare club. In fact, there wasn't a club in town that she was not a member of. She just loved these little get-togethers in the afternoon. I'm not sure but what they met and studied religion in a nice little religious club also. She was right in the thick of it all, my friend, and she didn't want to leave. Her heart was in Sodom. Her body walked out, but she surely left her heart there.

This is a tremendous lesson for us today. I hear a great many Christians talking about how they want to see the Lord come, but they are not living as if they mean it. On Sunday morning, it is difficult to get them to leave their lovely home. And on Sunday night, they are not going to leave their lovely home because they love television, too. They have a color television, and they are going to look at the programs on Sunday night because there are

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some good ones then. But when the Lord comes, my friend, you are going to leave the television; you are going to leave that lovely home; you are going to leave everything. I have just one question to ask you: Will it break your heart to leave all of this down here?

I have asked myself that question many times. To be honest with you, I am not anxious to leave. I would love to stay. I have my friends and loved ones whom I want to be with. And I have the radio ministry that I want to continue. I'll be frank with you, I hope the Lord will just let me stay here awhile longer. But I also want to be able to say that when He does call, I will not have a thing down here which will break my heart to leave—not a thing. I love my home too, but I would just as soon go off and leave it. How do you feel about that today? Mrs. Lot turned and looked back, and this is one of the explanations.

The other reason that she looked back is simply that she did not believe God. God had said, “Leave the city, and don't look back.” Lot didn't look back; he believed God. But Mrs. Lot did not believe God. She was not a believer, and so she didn't really make it out of the city. She was turned to a pillar of salt.

I want to conclude this chapter by looking at Abraham. What did Abraham think of all this? - McGee

***Gen 19:27-28 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD. Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.***

When Abraham looked down toward Sodom, I think his heart was sad. I am not sure whether or not he knew that Lot had escaped. He probably learned about it later on. When he looked down there, he probably was sad for Lot's sake, but Abraham had not invested a dime down there. When judgment came, it did not disturb him one whit because he wasn't in love with the things of Sodom and the things of the world.

Remember that we are told, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world ...” (1Jn\_2:15). I sometimes preach a sermon which I have entitled “Sightseeing in Sodom.” First, I look at Sodom through the eyes of Lot himself: he sure had a wrong view of it. And then of Mrs. Lot: she fell in love with it. You can also sightsee in Sodom with Abraham: he lost nothing down there. Finally, you can go through Sodom with the Lord and see it as He sees it. It is too bad that the church today is not looking at the sin of sodomy as God looks at it. I do not think it is any more prevalent today than it has been in the past, but there is a tremendous percentage of our population who are homosexuals engaging in perversion. We speak of it in a more candid manner than we ever have, and it is something that is right in our midst.

What is to be the attitude of the Christian toward homosexuality? Even Lot in his day said, “You are doing wickedly.” And God judged it. Isn't it enough for the child of God to know that he cannot compromise with this type of thing? This is a sin! The world indulges in it and then calls it a sickness. The same thing is said about the alcoholic. Sure, he's sick. Of course, he's sick. But what made him take that first drink and continue to drink until he became sick? Sin did it, my friend. Sin is the problem, and homosexuality is a sin. It is so labeled in the first chapter of Romans where God says He gave them up (see Rom\_1:18-32). Genesis 19 is a very important chapter for this present generation in which we are living today. – McGee

***Gen 19:29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.***

His backslidden life nullified his testimony when the crisis came. When the morning dawned, the angels escorted Lot, his wife, and daughters out of Sodom. Even then Lot temporized, preferring to stay in Zoar, one of the

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satellite sin cities. Not even ten righteous men were found in the city of Sodom, so God destroyed it. But Abraham's prayer was not unanswered, for God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow.

Though Lot's wife left the city, her heart was still in it, and she fell under the judgment of God. In the words "Remember Lot's wife" (Luk\_17:32), Christ held her up as a warning to all who trifle with His offer of salvation. – BBC

***Gen 19:30 Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave.***

***Gen 19:31-38 Now the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, "Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day.***

Leaving Zoar, Lot fled to a mountain cave. There his daughters made him drunk and enticed him to commit incest with them. The older daughter subsequently bore a son named Moab, and the younger . . . bore a son, Ben-Ammi. Thus began the Moabites and Ammonites, who became recurring thorns in Israel's side. It was Moabite women who later seduced the men of Israel to commit immorality (Num\_25:1-3) and Ammonites who taught Israel the worship of Molech, including the sacrifice of children (1Ki\_11:33; Jer\_32:35). We know from 2Pe\_2:7-8 that Lot was a just man, but because of his worldliness he lost his testimony (v. 14), his wife (v. 26), his sons-in-law, his friends, his communion (there was none in Sodom), his property (he went in rich but came out poor), his character (v. 35), his life's work, and nearly his life (v. 22). The depraved behavior of his daughters shows that they had been influenced by Sodom's vile standards. There is no escape (Heb\_2:3). – BBC

I am not going to go into the story of Lot's two daughters in verses Gen\_19:31-38. It is as sordid as it can be. Frankly, Lot did not do well in moving down to the city of Sodom. He lost everything except his own soul. His life is a picture of a great many people who will not judge the sins of their lives. They are saved, "yet so as by fire." The Lord has said in a very definite way to these folk who have put all their eggs in a basket like this that if they will not judge their sin down here, He will judge it. Apparently, that was the case in Lot's story. - McGee