

Lot's Family and Rescue

By Bob Vincent

Bible Text: Genesis 19; 2 Peter 2

Preached on: January 6, 2008

Grace Presbyterian Church

4900 Jackson Street

Alexandria, LA 71303-2509

Website: <http://www.rbvincent.com>

Online Sermons: <http://rbvincent.sermonaudio.com>

Turn with me, in your Bibles, to 2 Peter, chapter two, 2 Peter chapter two, as we continue this study in Lot. Last week we thought about Lot's city and we saw something of the nature of what was going on in this city historically. 2 Peter chapter two—page 1895, page 1895—2 Peter chapter two.

Keeping in mind what we just read about Lot I find it striking, don't you, that Lot followed a custom of his day. In the ancient Near East no duty was greater than the duty of protecting people who came into the sanctuary of your home. In order to protect your guest, in the custom of the ancient Near East, you had to be willing to lose your own life and lose everything that was dear to you for there was no social obligation to other people greater than protecting people who had come under your protection. Nevertheless, one is struck with the fact that Lot was willing to sacrifice his virgin daughters to the depraved desires of a mob.

So, in that light, what we have read in Genesis 19, hear the Word of God and God's commentary on it—page 1895—2 Peter 2:4, "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell..."¹ that is, to *ταρταρος* (tartaros), the Greek word that was used as the abode of the titans in Greek mythology, sent them to *ταρταρος* (tartaros).

"...putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot [now, notice, three times] a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment."²

¹ 2 Peter 2:4 (All Scripture references are from the New International Version of the Scriptures unless otherwise indicated).

² 2 Peter 2:4-9

Notice that last clause in verse nine, “while continuing their punishment.”³ Death is not the end. Death brings us either into the presence of the Lord or into another place.

But that isn’t the final state. Scripture speaks of the second death. What is the second death? The second death is described for us in Revelation chapter 20. The second death is when people who die without knowing the Lord, who die in their rebellion and lack of repentance are cast into what is called the lake of fire. That is called, in Scripture, the second death.

That hasn’t happened yet. That occurs when we stand before God and when the world stands before God at the great white throne.

So there is, we see here in verse nine, that last half of that verse, “...and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment.”⁴ It is kind of like a person being arrested and being in jail and their trial has not yet come, but they can’t make bond. They are in prison. They are awaiting the judgment. And that is the case here. People are being held for this future judgment.

But notice that last clause, “...while continuing their punishment.”⁵ That is a sobering thought, isn’t it? People experiencing things in this life and dying and then going to a place of punishment while awaiting a final sentencing and a final judgment in the lake of fire. Sobering words.

But the reason I have us look here at 2 Peter chapter two isn’t because of the judgment, as such. It is because of what it tells us about Lot. Notice, three times, verse seven, Lot is called a righteous man. Verse eight, Lot is called a righteous man. And at the last part of verse eight we are told that his soul was righteous. Isn’t that a striking thing? When you think about Lot would you ever call him a righteous man?

I don’t know about you, but I wouldn’t call him a righteous man. Think of Lot for a moment. Lot was the nephew of Abraham. Lot had been taught the precepts of the Word of God that had come so far into the world. At a point there was a conflict because Lot was a very wealthy man. There was a conflict between Lot’s servants and Abraham’s servants and so they decided to part company because they were squabbling going along...going on between their servants. And so they part company.

Abraham, magnanimously, offered to Lot, “Lot, you choose where to go and wherever you go, I will go the opposite direction.”

Lot looked around him and Lot, focusing on the things of this life and this world, saw a fabulous city. It was magnificent. And it was surrounded by a lush garden. In fact, the Scripture tells us that the land around that city was like the Garden of Eden it was so lush with vegetation. It was a magnificent city. It was a trade city. It was a place where peo-

³ 2 Peter 2:9

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

ple accumulated great wealth. And one might imagine, though this is a bit speculative, as Lot looked at this city he thought of the advantages that would come to his children.

You know, we think of people who live in other countries. “Oh, if my son would marry the daughter of a duke or if my daughter would marry a prince...”

We think of people who are called high born and called noble. But if you really study the lives of the nobility you discover they are pretty ignoble. Some of the craziest people in the history of the world were kings and princes. They were some of them as mad as hatters, seriously. I mean, you think about the heir to the British throne. He isn't exactly the kind of person that you would want in your family. He isn't, it seems to me, as I have studied his life, completely all there, if you will. It is just the way of things. And yet we look at people who have money, people who have power, people who have influence, people who have culture and we think, “Well, we want to be like them. We want these advantages for our children.”

Lot looked at this great cultural Mecca, this great economic Mecca, this place where there is abundant food, where there is great beauty and he chooses to pitch his tent towards Sodom the Scripture tells us when he and Abraham part company.

And yet as we read this description of Lot in 2 Peter chapter two, these descriptions of this righteous man, we see something about him. We see that in the course of time he moves into the city we will see in a few moments. And what is his reaction? We see the reaction in verse seven. “He rescued Lot, a righteous man, [notice], who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men.”⁶

Two words stand out there, I think, that are important about the people he was dealing with. They are called lawless people. They are people without principle. They are people who have abandoned the social mores and customs of the world around them. They are people who have abandoned the basic tenets of morality. They are people who have turned their back on the moral law of God. They are people without a foundation of right and wrong.

And the second word that I think is striking, it is called the “filthy lives.” Literally the word isn't filthy, it is a word that is best translated, “unbridled sensuality.”⁷ We all like to have our senses titillated. We all like pleasure. We like...I love on a cold night to turn on the electric blanket and open up the back of the house and sleep with the door not only unlocked, but wide open and get that air, that cold air in. And I tell you it is a wonderful

⁶ 2 Peter 2:7

⁷ ἀσελγεία (Roman font) aselgeia: "lack of self-constraint which involves one in conduct that violates all bounds of what is socially acceptable, self-abandonment" [Frederick William Danker (ed.), A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature. Third edition (BDAG) (based on Walter Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur, sixth edit. Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 2000.), p. 14] "unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence" [Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti, 1889, in loc.]

feeling to lay the pillows across the blanket about 15 minutes before you go to bed and to take those pillows off and in a cold room with cold air to put yourself into a nice warm bed. That feels good. That is sensually pleasurable. Not all things that are sensually pleasurable are wrong. Sensual pleasure is good as long as it is with boundaries, as long as it is with limits.

Nothing wrong with a good meal, nothing wrong with listening to beautiful music that titillates our sense of hearing, nothing wrong with looking at beautiful things. But what we have here is sensuality gone awry. We have sensuality that is unbridled. There is no moral principle holding back. There is no sense of shame. They have forgotten how to blush.⁸ And therefore they have given themselves over to unbridled sensuality. Those are two words that strike us in verse seven.

And there is a third word that strikes us and it is that Lot was, in verse seven, distressed by the filthy lives of these lawless people. He was distressed.

The Greek word also has within it the meaning of being worn down, of being oppressed.⁹ You know how things can just get to you after a while, an annoyance, a nuisance, an irritability or something that grieves you, something that makes you sorrowful, something that wounds your spirit and hurts you. And it doesn't just hurt you, but it begins to wear you down. You begin to feel worn down with it to the point where you lose your sense of resisting it anymore. It isn't that you give yourself over to, it isn't that you yourself begin to commit these things, but it is that you begin to just wring your hands and say, "What is the use? Why struggle? Why fight this?" It is like looking at a city and seeing things there that are corrupt.

And what the use there was, a leaked email that was in the Baton Rouge paper the day before yesterday and in our paper today. And in there the person said something to the effect, "It's just politics as usual. You fight. You invest money. You invest time. You work hard to try to see something put right. And in spite of that it is put wrong because there is always that chicanery, there is that underhanded deal, there is that bribe, there is that influence, there is that telephone call, there is that wink." You know how it works.

And you become weary and you say, "What am I doing fighting it anymore?"

And that is the sense that we have here of Lot, not only distressed by what is around him, but worn out by it.

We read further in verse eight, "For that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard."¹⁰

⁸ Jeremiah 6:15; 8:12

⁹ καταπονέω (kataponeō) "to cause distress through oppressive means, subdue, torment, wear out, oppress" [Danker, op. cit., p. 525].'

¹⁰ 2 Peter 2:8

What is your reaction when you see injustice in the world? What is your reaction when you see people taken advantage of, when you see people deprived of their basic needs and rights, when you see people destroying the lives of other people?

Lot experienced it as an inner torture on his own soul.

So we have this picture of Lot, Lot an intercessor, Lot a man of grief, Lot's uncle an intercessor. In fact, as we read the account in Genesis 19, we discover what? We discover that the cry against this city had gone up into the presence of God.

Have you ever thought about that when you pray, you may be bringing trouble on someone? Have you ever thought of that? You begin to pray for someone, someone you are burdened about, someone who is a concern to you, someone you love and you see that things are not right in that person's life and you passionately desire to see the Lord have first place in that person's life. And you begin to beg God and lo and behold what happens? Trouble and calamity and trouble often happens.

I submit to you that the prayers and intercessions of this righteous man, the prayers and intercessions of his righteous uncle went up before the Lord and that is the occasion of what we read in Genesis chapter 19, the judgment of God came down.

God, we read, totally destroyed this city.

Turn with me, if you will, back to Genesis chapter 19. Lot is in this city. He is moved there. No longer has he simply pitched his tent outside the city, but he is there.

And look at what he loses, verse 14—page 26—Genesis 19:14, “So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters.”¹¹ Or, I believe, should really be just simply translated, and not interpreted as having married his daughters. “He said, ‘Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!’ But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.”¹²

You know, people don't like sober things. Like you I enjoy a good joke. I want laughter and I want light heartedness. I don't like to come to a place and have a heart that is heavy and find it even heavier when I leave. It seems to me that the people of this city were people who did not take things seriously.

I am struck, as I think about it, that before God destroyed the city he sent five warnings to Sodom. Pay attention with me, if you will, to the five warnings.

The first warning that God gave Sodom is a warning that we read last week in Romans chapter one. You don't need to turn there. But Romans chapter one tells us that all men and women and children are born with an intuitive, instinctive awareness of the existence not simply of a supreme being, but of the true God. That doesn't mean that they know

¹¹ Genesis 19:14

¹² Ibid.

that true God savingly, but they know him at least in the back of their heads for who he is, the true God.

You see, because man does not simply look at the data around him and analyze it. Man doesn't simply know about God *a posteriori*, by experience, but God reveals himself to man before experience, apart from experience, *a priori*. Man knows God intuitively and instinctively according to Romans one, but people suppress that truth in unrighteousness.¹³

Furthermore Romans chapter two tells us that God has written his law on the heart of every man, woman and child.¹⁴ If you are a human being you know right from wrong. And it is not to be explained in the Freudian model of some kind of internalized parent, a super ego. You know right from wrong because you are human. If you are human you have God's law written on your heart. It is fragmented. It is distorted. It is gnarled. But you know it. You know right from wrong. That is why when you do something wrong you feel guilty. Guilt is not simply something in our imagination, guilt is real. I realize that people can feel false guilt and I realize that Christians who have confessed their sins can still feel guilty even though God has forgiven them. But nevertheless, make no mistake about it, guilt is real. Guilt is real. And when you do what is wrong you feel guilty. And people do that. They feel guilty because they know right from wrong and they know the true God.

So the first witness that we have here that God gave as a warning to Sodom is the law of God written on the heart of every man, natural law, the awareness of God, the awareness of right and wrong.

I want you to look at the second warning that God gave the city of Sodom. Turn with me, If you will, to Genesis chapter 14, Genesis chapter 14. The second warning that God gave the city before he destroyed it, page 19.

At this time Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim [that is, of the nations, of the Gentiles] went to war against Bera king of Sodom [and so on]¹⁵

And we read, further, in verse eight.

Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) marched out and drew up their battle lines in the Valley of Siddim against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills. The four kings seized all the

¹³ Romans 1:18-20

¹⁴ Romans 2:14, 15

¹⁵ Genesis 14:1-2

goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.¹⁶

Now, that is an interesting thing, isn't it? War. Listen to my words very carefully. The Bible does not forbid a Christian to serve in military service of his country. However, every single war is always a judgment of God. Let me repeat that again. God does not forbid the Christian to serve in the military service of his country, but every single war is a judgment of God. Why? Because "When a man's ways please the Lord he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."¹⁷

War is always a warning that something isn't right. It doesn't mean that a particular nation that is at war is doing wrong by fighting a war. I say, again, it isn't wrong to defend your country. But I am saying that there is in every case, when there is war, it is always a sign post of judgment to come, always.

You know, I was raised in a home that there was a name that was viewed with enormous opprobrium, "William Tecumseh Sherman." I was raised in a home where his name was hated. He was America's first great terrorist general. He took war away from military combatants and he made ordinary civilians suffer, that's terrorism. And it was a deliberate strategy designed, psychologically, to weaken the morale of the civilian population.

So, as I say, that first leader of LSU whose brother was the author, Senator Sherman, of the Sherman Antitrust Act, was not a man held in high esteem in the home I was raised in. But Sherman said something, I think, that is striking. And I must agree with it. And it is this. "War is hell."

And I submit to you this. Of all the things that people experience in life, nothing is greater in our experience in this life to the agonies of the damned, than war. For war breaks not only the defeated, but the victorious.

One element in Posttraumatic Stress Syndrome is not simply what people see done to their friends, but it is the memory of what they have done that haunts them down through the years. And as I think about war as a judgment of God, I have to say of the Vietnam War, it was a judgment of God on America.

Think with me, if you will, about that war. My brother fought in that war. My brother was a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy. He was a B-52 pilot. America lost that war and my brother told me why America lost that war. America didn't lose the Vietnam war because soldiers were cowards. America didn't lose that war because sailors were cowards. America didn't lose that war because the airmen were cowards. America lost the war because of the politicians. And at the very end—and we think of all the pompous boasting—Lyndon Johnson realized he had a tiger by the tail and could not resolve it in a way that would be politically correct and so he chose not to run. And of all

¹⁶ Genesis 14:8-12

¹⁷ Proverbs 16:7 (King James Version)

those running in 1968 one man boasted, "I will end the war." And he ended it by giving up.

And I will tell you something else about Richard Milhous Nixon and his sidekick, Henry Kissinger, they knowingly left American soldiers who were prisoners of war in prison camps and lied to the American people.

"We are bringing them all home."

They lied. They lied. Nixon was a traitor. Johnson was a traitor. Kissinger is a traitor. And they lost the war. The politicians lost the war.

My brother told me of event after event where there were clear cut targets. They knew what to do. The Strategic Air Command had a clear cut policy and mission and it could be accomplished and at the last minute, again and again and again, orders were overruled. The politicians lost the war.

I don't know about you, but I remember seeing live pictures when Saigon fell. What a day of ignominy. What a day of shame. We tucked tail and ran. And we betrayed the Vietnamese people who trusted in us.

I remember Sandy and I in 1978 sponsored a Vietnamese naval officer of the Republic of Vietnam who finally escaped with his wife and children, Chung Van Hai. He stayed with the Ayres for a while. Mr. Hai, when we left, came under the control of Ho Chi Minh's people, of General Giap and sent to a reeducation camp.

I remember the pictures when the United States embassy finally, the last bastion collapses. People went on the roof. The helicopters come. All the Americans got out, except, of course, the prisoners of war that Nixon lied about. They were airlifted, some grabbing on to the skids of the helicopters out into the gulf, landed on the decks of aircraft carrier. And so we left. We lost the war.

Over 58,000 American men died for nothing. May I say it again? Because of the politicians, Republican and Democrat, over 58,000 American soldiers lost their lives for nothing.

Now, I want to tell you that just as when Chedorlaomer and the other kings went down and defeated the kings of Sodom and Gomorrha, the Vietnam war should be a warning to us in our history that God is not pleased with us, that we are not the great righteous nation, that we are not the bastion of goodness in the world, that, indeed, we have turned our back on God.

I say to you that every war, whether we win it or lose it, is a sign post of the future judgment of God on the world. But a war when you lose in shame and ignominy because of political betrayal at the top is especially a sign that God has turned a nation over to be governed by children and fools.

Mark my words. They are the words of God. God sent, as a second warning, to the city of Sodom, a war. You would have thought that the people of Sodom and Gomorrha would have repented. You would have thought when they had initially lost their homes and many, their lives, and all of them their freedom and they are being carried off captives that they would have said, "God, help us. God have mercy on us. We repent."

And who is it that God raises up to rescue them? It is this petty capitalist, Abraham, this shepherd, a wealthy man who had over 300 men trained in his own personal army. It is Abraham who forms a coalition to go and rescue his nephew Lot and, in the process, rescues all of the people of Sodom and Gomorrha.

You would have thought that they would have been grateful. You would have thought that they would have sat at the feet of Abraham and said, "Abraham, how is it that you, a small man, not a nation state, you a private citizen, not a king, were able to defeat all these great kings who defeated us?"

But instead they go on their merry way. Sodom, after Genesis 14, returns to business as usual. They go back to commerce. And amazingly, amazingly, Lot, this righteous man, this man who knew God, Lot returns to the city. Lot returns to the city. Lot takes his wife and his children back to the city of Sodom, why? Why? It wasn't a happy place for him. It was a place where he is vexed. Why does he return? Why does he return to a place where already the sign posts of judgment to come has loomed up in a war where they were defeated?

Well, there are other sign posts that come. The third sign post that God gave to the people of Sodom that they were in difficulty was the sending of these angels.

Think about it for a moment. God sent two angels. They looked like men and yet they didn't. They looked like men and yet there was something about them that was not entirely of this world. So much so that the depraved people who were always looking for some new thing to titillate their sexual desires decided to pursue these two men and rape them. And a miracle occurred.

As the men of the city in their unbridled sensuality attempt to tear down the door to Lot's house, these two angels reached their hands out and pull lot in and strike the men with blindness.

Now, dear ones, that is a miracle. You know, when Jesus opened the eyes of the blind so they could see, that's a miracle. But God also closes the eyes of the seeing. That is a miracle. It is a warning. Surely one would have thought, have you been groping in the darkness, groping and unable to see. What is it? Where can I go? Young and old alike? In the darkness groping. Groping, not finding your way. Surely you would have said, "Help me, God. Help me. Help me." Surely this is a sign. Surely you are encountering

something that is not of this world. Surely you are seeing something that is miraculous. Surely we would call on the name of the Lord.

And they had the witness of Lot which was yet a fourth thing. And the fifth and final warning is in the wee hours of the morning these two angelic messengers physically grab the hands of Lot, his wife and the only two daughters that were living at home and dragged them out of the city. Surely there were people awake even in the wee hours of the morning.

You know how it is with a lot of people. They sleep by day and cavort by night. Surely someone would have seen them. Someone would have said, “Look. Lot is finally leaving our city. His wife and children are going with him and these strange men are leading them.” It is a fifth sign. Surely someone would have said, “I need to get out of here. I am going into my home and I am going to get my infant baby. I am going to wake him up and I am going to wrap him up and I am going to flee this city.”

But no one did. Five warnings, five warnings: the internal witness that all men have, the witness of a war that is always a sign that things aren’t right and a war where people are defeated, an even greater sign. And the witness of a miracle where people are struck blind. And the witness of Lot’s own life and words. And the witness of Lot fleeing with the angels.

And they are gone and we turn in our text, Genesis 19, and we read these words, verse 23, Genesis 19—page 27.

By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land. Then the LORD rained down burning sulphur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens. Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land. But Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.¹⁸

Is that true? Is that myth?

It is true. As long as Lot and his family were doing what God told them to do, they had an umbrella of protection over them. And God had warned them not to look back, not to look back, not to linger. And so his wife turns.

I can imagine what she thought. “I left my gold and silver, my beautiful jewels and the house, my musical instruments, my works of art, my paintings, my tapestries, my beautiful garden.”

And she turned in grief, longing to go back. And when she did, no longer under the umbrella of the protection of God, what is raining down out of heaven coats her. For this fiery sulfur that comes down was full of salt and I have been where Sodom and Gomorrah used to be as I visited the wilderness by the Dead Sea, the witness. This beautiful

¹⁸ Genesis 19:23-26

lush and lavish land of wealth and beauty gone in an instant when God rained down fire and Lot lost his wife.

But, sadly, the story is not over. Read down to verse 30 with me—page 27. “Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave.”¹⁹

I think of Lot. You know, both Abraham and Lot were wealthy men. But Abraham did not love money and Lot did. Think about that. Both Abraham and Lot were wealthy men, but Abraham did not love money and Lot did. And look what happens. In the end of Abraham’s life he dies old and full of days and he passes on a fabulous fortune to his descendants. And Lot is reduced to abject poverty. He lost everything. And now he and his two daughters live in a cave.

Verse 31. “One day the older daughter said to the younger, ‘Our father is old, and there is no man around here to lie with us, as is the custom all over the earth.’”

Verse 32, top of page 228.

‘Let’s get our father to drink wine and then lie with him and preserve our family line through our father.’ That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.²⁰

Verse 34:

The next day the older daughter said to the younger, "Last night I lay with my father. Let’s get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and lie with him so we can preserve our family line through our father." So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went and lay with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. So both of Lot’s daughters became pregnant by their father. The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab.²¹

Hebrew. The Hebrew letter מ (mem) means from and אב (av or ab) means dad or father. Abraham, father of a multitude. Moab, from father.

Can you imagine? I mean, you see the great thing in Sodom isn’t its sin. Every culture sins. It is they were brazen about it. It is that they were proud of their sin. Do you understand? There is nothing wrong, fundamentally with a society where there is sin as long as people have a sense of shame about sin and as long as people repent of their sin. But it is when people become proud of their sin that they become pregnant with the judgment of God.

¹⁹ Genesis 19:30

²⁰ Genesis 19:32-33

²¹ Genesis 19:34-37

I want you to see that God rescued Lot's two daughters out of Sodom, but he didn't get Sodom out of Lot's two daughters because not only are they both pregnant by their own father in an incestuous drunken thing, but they celebrate it. Moab, from daddy.

"What's your name, fellow?"

"Moab."

"Well, that's an interesting name. What does it mean?"

"Well, my granddaddy is also my daddy"

Moab, that is what it means. My granddaddy is also my daddy.

You see, outside of Sodom people hide things like that. You know, hypocrisy is a good thing, relatively speaking, because there are worse things than hypocrisy. At least where there is hypocrisy and a sense of shame and a hiding, there is still a consciousness of sin, a concern about it, a sense of shame. But when people have unbridled sensuality and throw off the yoke and restraint, they are proud of their wickedness. Moab, from daddy.

And the next girl names her boy, "Ben-Ammi."

Verse 38. "The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben [which means son in Hebrew]."²² And Ammi is my people, son of my people. In other words, there is no branch in the family tree. Ben-Ammi, son of my people.

I met my husband at my family reunion, Ben-Ammi, son of my people. He is the father of the Ammonites of today.

Concluding, as we think of the life of Lot, we have both a positive and a negative. On the one hand Lot was saved. You will see Lot in heaven. On the other hand, Lot won't see any of his family in heaven. Think about it.

Lot you will see in heaven. Lot won't see any of his family in heaven. Lot chose culture and wealth and advantage. And, in the process, lost his family. But the positive is this. Lot was saved.

Do you understand the implications of Lot being called a righteous man? It means that you, no matter what you have done, can be forgiven of your sins today. You see, if God saved a Lot, if God declared Lot a righteous man, that means that there is hope for you and me. I fail.

²² Genesis 19:38

I have come short. I realize as I think of myself that I am, without Christ, morally bankrupt. But Lot and his story and God's description of him, his epithet in 2 Peter two reminds me that salvation is not by my being good, but by my trusting in Christ.

When my children were young I tried to teach them this saying because it sounds so contradictory. "Good people go to hell. Bad people go to heaven. Good people go to hell. Bad people go to heaven."

What does this enigmatic statement mean? It means that people who feel good about themselves, people who look down on others, people who feel righteous about themselves, people who pat themselves on the back, they all end up in hell. And the amazing truth, I believe, after studying human nature as a preacher for 43 years is this. I'll bet those men of Sodom thought of themselves as good men. It is amazing how evil men can feel good about themselves.

But bad people go to heaven. What does that mean? It means that people whom come to grips with the fact that they cannot earn their way to heaven, that they can never be good enough to meet the demands of a holy God, but who come to the point of casting themselves on God's mercy in Christ, God declares them righteous.

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power? Are you washed in the blood of the lamb? Do you know the Lord Jesus? Because if you know the Lord Jesus Christ then you may rest assured of this great truth that no matter what happens, God who died for your sins on the cross in the person of his Son, will keep you saved through thick and thin. You can never lose that gift that you received by faith.

Do you know him? I pray that you do. If you don't, I would be so eager to share with you how you can know him. And if you know him my prayer for you is that you would not be like Lot who, looking for this for his children and that for his children, ends up losing his children. All that he counted dear he loses in the end and the last piece of the narrative in Genesis we find a drunken old man who has just gotten his two daughters pregnant. How sad. That could happen to you.

Let's pray.

Lord, as we read this chilling story that sounds like something that would be on Jerry Springer, Lord, we realize that we are all capable of that if you withdraw your hand. And so we pray you would have mercy on us and draw us to yourself. Lord, I want more power to live for Jesus. I want more love for you, Lord. I want more of you in my life. Lord, have mercy. Now pray for anybody here who has never made that decision.