

Scripture Reading: Genesis 19

“23 The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. 24 Then Jehovah rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from Jehovah out of the heavens. 25 So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before Jehovah. 28 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. 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. 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. 31 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. 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." 33 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. 34 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." 35 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. 36 Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 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.

"The Legacy of Lot"

This morning we will complete our study of this 19th chapter of the Book of Beginnings...

Lord willing we have taken away several very important lessons from this chapter along the way and have grown in our understanding of the work of Jesus as our Savior.

- **We saw God as the friend of Abraham and how Jesus calls us friend.**
- **We saw God judge Sodom as a picture of the final judgment where Jesus is the just judge of all the earth.**

We have seen the contrast between the faithfulness of Abraham and the worldliness of righteous Lot reminding us of the importance of building on the foundation of Jesus Christ with gold, silver and precious stones, the works of faith and not wood hay or stubble, the works of the flesh that will be burned away.

- **This morning we will return to that over-arching lesson and add to it a better understanding of how God is in control!**

Now things seem to be pretty out-of-control in our text this morning, but that is not surprising because such is always the case when people are using their own wisdom and working in the power of the flesh.

- **Our comfort is that God is always in control of history and that it will go where He determines in the end!**

I did ask for your prayers this week as I prepared to deliver this message on the Sunday that the men of our church make a special dinner for our ladies! And I appreciate those prayers because believe it or not about half of the commentaries that I have been consulting in this series simply ignored this portion! In fact the publisher of the Calvin's commentaries that I have in my library chose to leave his comments out with just a foot note about the names given to the children.

Well one of the joys and challenges of expositional preaching is that we deal with the text as it comes to us!

- **So what are we to make of this final event and of course how do we see the work of Jesus in the midst of what can only be called grievous sins.**

In our text we first see the sins of Lot continuing. Remember that Lot was the one who followed Abraham in God's call to the Promised Land and who soon had so many goods and cattle that they could not share the same ground with Abraham.

- **Lot began his decline when he chose the better land for the wrong reasons and was soon taken in by the worldliness of Sodom.**

We were not given all the details but this formerly prosperous man ends up living in the city with only his wife and two daughters and perhaps a few servants and some possessions.

- **We will see in a moment that they had plenty of wine to drink!**

Despite his procrastinating the Angels deliver them from Sodom and try to send him into the mountains for safety. Lot again argues for the city life, which God allows him to have and now we see him going to the mountains anyway! We are not told why he is afraid but it reminds me of the people of Israel who were at first frightened by the nervous spies who were afraid of giants in the land and then after God said, fine turn back to the wilderness, said OK NOW we will go & fight & it turned out badly.

- **I don't think God was sending Lot & his family into the mountains to live in a cave, but that is now where we find him & his daughters.**

So before we consider the actions of his daughters we need to see clearly that Lot is in this mess of his own making because he refused to simply obey God AND now because of pride or fear or shame he is willing to remain in a cave rather than to return to the love and protection of his Uncle Abraham.

- **This in no way excuses the actions of Lot's daughters, but it does provide a bit of background to understand their motivations and actions.**

Whether for Godly or worldly reasons I am sure these sisters did not want to live out the rest of their days alone in a cave! Why they thought they could not find husbands is open to some speculation but I suspect that if Lot was refusing to return to Abraham and they were hated by the surrounding culture because of their involvement with the destruction of the cities of the plain, one could see how they saw no way out from a human perspective.

- **And of course that is always the position we find ourselves when we look to our own strength rather than trusting and waiting on God.**

In addition to not wanting to be alone, I think these daughters also understood the importance of continuing the family line which was their stated purpose for their actions.

- **This of course has its beginning with the promise that the seed of the woman would one day come to crush the head of the serpent.**

This is why we see the attention to the details of genealogies in the Scriptures and I would posit is the basis of much of the ancestor worship that we see in cultures that wandered further and further from the truth in Asia or Africa or Northern Europe and even here in the Americas.

- Whatever their motives the result was a lack of faith and putting their trust in their own ways rather than God and this is the legacy of Lot.

A prosperous man who now sees even the little he had left destroyed as his wife is turned into a pillar of salt on the way out of Sodom and his daughters participate in some of the most scandalous sin we find anywhere in the Scriptures! Although these unnamed daughters of Lot are fully responsible for their sins, they certainly had been given plenty of opportunities to learn all the wrong lessons.

- This is one of the major lessons that we should learn: Not only does a righteous man who builds with wood hay and stubble escape only with his life as one passed through fire, but he leaves his descendants with a very poor foundation on which to live, if any at all.

We must take our commitment to raise our covenant children in the fear and admonition of the Lord very seriously...

- And that requires that we live by faith and not by the power of the flesh.
- And trust me when I say, what we may see as just a little fudging here and there to help God along with some fleshly efforts, will likely be seen by our children as an open door to do things their way!

This sad series of events in this cave will be the end of what we hear or know of Lot and if Peter had not told us he was righteous Lot we would likely think he was in hell today. But not only do we know that he was a man saved as through fire, there is a legacy of Lot that continues on in history which is where we learn our lesson that God is in control.

So the daughters of Lot want the family to continue and thus hatch a disgusting plan...

- Let's get Dad drunk and have him get us pregnant!

Of course Lot does not get much sympathy here, since not long before he was willing to turn these same daughters over the mobs of Sodom to do with them as they pleased.

- However, the wicked plans of these daughters of Lot do give us an important reminder about why the Bible condemns drunkenness!

With both daughters, we are told that Lot was so drunk that he had no knowledge of either daughter entering his bed nor leaving it!

We teach here at Church of the King that the fruit of the vine is a gift from God and can be enjoyed with fine food and used in the midst of celebrations as we see throughout the Bible.

- Our own Lord Jesus produced fine wine late in the celebration at the wedding of Cana in Galilee.

However our same Lord gives very strong warnings against the sin of drunkenness and this account certainly illustrates why the writer of Proverbs gives this telling account:

Proverbs 23: "30 Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 35 "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?"

In Lot's case he was not unknowingly being beaten but rather he was taken advantage of by his daughters for their own ends. *[mention drunk driving case]*

- Even without any knowledge of what happened Lot is still fully responsible for what was done.

In a mystery that is difficult to explain both daughters are given the children they desired and I think we see more of their fleshly pride in the names that are chosen: Rather than feel any shame or remorse over a grievous sin by almost anyone's standards, the oldest names her son Moab, which means 'from the father.' Her sister chooses Ben-Ammi which means 'the sprout of the nation' or 'the son of my people.'

And yes, while there is no further mention of Lot or these daughters those sons do grow into two nations that we will see time and time again in the history of God's people.

- **It is here that I think we are to grasp the truth that God is in control of even very sinful and grievous situations as well as the results that follow.**
- **As Joseph explained to his brothers after his father's death, what they had intended for evil God used for the good of His people and the good of the world.**

Or as Peter explained on the Day of Pentecost: "22 'Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- 23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; 24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."

- **So two nations are birthed from the wicked actions in this mountain cave and God would now weave them into His story of salvation.**

They would at times be used to test and judge His people, and at one point we see them entering the line of Christ:

- **Something these daughters could hardly have imagined.**

Let's take a quick look at some of this to help us stand in awe before the tapestry that God is producing that is so hard to see from just this cave!

First we see in the second chapter of Deuteronomy another reminder that Lot was one of the elect who was called righteous by the Apostle Peter:

"...we turned and passed by way of the Wilderness of Moab. 9 Then Jehovah said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.'"

We are not given the details about how these nations grew nor how God assigned this land to them but we do see the Moabites and the Amorites interacting with God's people in many places.

- **Many of these will be familiar but perhaps we don't always notice that they are the sons of Lot!**

God's people obeyed the command to not trouble Moab, but it was not long before they were attracted to their women and much immorality broke out in Israel: Thus it should not come as a surprise that we find another of those graphic scenes from the Bible in Numbers 25 when Phinehas brings an end to God's judgment by running an Israelite and a Moabite woman through with his spear!

- **Later in the Book of Judges we see God disciplining His people over and over as every man chooses to do what was right in his own eyes.**

They spent eighteen years under the bondage of King Eglon of Moab, who was finally assassinated by one of my favorite Bible heroes, the left-handed Ehud!

We should all know the story of Jephthah's fateful vow that involved his daughter but again it was the Moabites that he was given a major victory over.

And while most of the time these nations are involved in testing or judging Israel, we do come to the time of the famine where Naomi travels to Moab with her husband and marries one of her sons to the Moabite woman Ruth. Here Ruth rather than being a stumbling block to the people of God as these nations often were... She converts and tells her mother-in-law that your God will be my God and your people will be my people and thus she goes on to marry Boaz and be included in the line of Christ given by Matthew in his Gospel account!

- As I said what an amazing story God is telling as He prepares for Jesus to come and save His people from their sins!

There is certainly a warning for us to remember in these examples which Paul says are there for us, and that is to not allow ourselves to be entangled in the sins of others... Sadly we read in I Kings 11: “4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to Jehovah his God, as was the heart of his father David. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6 Solomon did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and did not fully follow Jehovah, as did his father David. 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.”

The various judgments brought on the children of Lot by the prophets would be too numerous to mention this morning but I think one in Jeremiah 48 should be noted because it so clearly reflects how these nations were founded: “20 Moab is shamed, for he is broken down. Wail and cry! Tell it in Arnon, that Moab is plundered... 25 The horn of Moab is cut off, And his arm is broken,” says Jehovah. 26 “Make him drunk, Because he exalted himself against Jehovah. Moab shall wallow in his vomit, And he shall also be in derision.”

And of course their final judgment in Zephaniah 2 brings us full circle to the judgment that God in his mercy had delivered Lot and his daughters from: “8 “I have heard the reproach of Moab, And the insults of the people of Ammon, With which they have reproached My people, And made arrogant threats against their borders. 9 Therefore, as I live,” Says Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, “Surely Moab shall be like Sodom, And the people of Ammon like Gomorrah...”

- Faithful Abraham has been a blessing to all the nations of the earth, but the legacy of Lot is one of mostly shame and judgment.

As I promised last week I do want to mention Lot’s wife as we sum up the Legacy of Lot... John Calvin in his commentary certainly puts her forward as a sober warning, but also argues that she could well have been saved:

“And although it is not lawful to affirm any thing respecting her eternal salvation; it is nevertheless probable, that God, having inflicted temporal punishment, spared her soul; inasmuch as he often chastises his own people in the flesh, that their soul may be saved from eternal destruction. Since, however, the knowledge of this is not very profitable, and we may without danger remain in ignorance, let us rather attend to the example which God designs for the common benefit of all ages.”

[listen carefully to John Calvin’s lesson from Lot’s wife...] “If the severity of the punishment terrifies us; let us remember, that they sin, at this day, not less grievously, who, being delivered, not from Sodom, but from hell, [who then] fix their eyes on some other object than the proposed prize of their high calling.”

And yes just as Lot’s unnamed wife stands as a pillar of salt to remind us about the cost of disobedience, we also have Sarah and her faithful children who we will also study: These stand as our examples of faithfulness! Sarah was certainly not perfect but she is put forward as the example that Christian women are to follow!

And on this weekend where our world celebrates love in all the wrong ways it is good for us to remember that love and sex and marriage and relationships are all gifts from God that enable us to demonstrate the great love of our Triune God.

We should cherish these gifts and not abuse these gifts in even the slightest ways...

- **No less in the ways that we saw in Sodom, or in this cave, nor on our Hollywood screens today!**
- **And just as the legacy of Lot was full of sin and corruption and judgment we are seeing more and more results today from our current rebellion against God's truth.**

Fully one third of our children have been lost to the sin of abortion.

We have wives among us today who have suffered at the hands of irresponsible men.

We have men among us who have born the burden of irresponsible women.

- **Thus we must encourage them to have the faith of Ruth: Being willing to face what can seem to be overwhelming difficulties in order to remain faithful to God!**

And for those of us in stable marriages or you young people who are looking forward to being married, let us not forget the example of Lot lest we find a legacy like Lot's in our future!

- **Lot had the same opportunity as Ruth in going with his faithful uncle: Claiming Abraham's God as His own!**

Sadly, while Lot began well, he built upon the foundation of that covenant with God using only wood hay and stubble and thus as we learned from the Apostle Paul, "If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

Rather, let us be those who walk by the power of the Spirit in the works that we were created in Christ Jesus to walk in and build with gold, silver and precious stones!

And men as we serve the ladies of Church of the King this Lord's Day, let us be thankful for those God has blessed us with, both young and old: And let us thank them and encourage them as they walk humbly before the Lord as the Apostle Peter encouraged them to do:

To the woman of God Peter said,

"3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror."

Communion Meditation: Proverbs 9

"Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars; She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table. She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city,

4 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him, 5 "Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed. 6 Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.

9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. 10 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

