



Study # 21

Genesis Chapter 19



Pillar of salt at the edge of the Dead Sea.



Key verse: “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 the which Lot dwelt.” Chapter 19:29

This text declares that Abraham had not prayed in vain. His intercession for the righteous in Sodom prevailed. God did not destroy the righteous with the wicked. The angels dragged Lot along with his wife and their two daughters out of Sodom. God acted righteously and attributed the mercy of God to Abraham’s intercessory prayer

Observations on this Chapter:

1. The society of Sodom, prior to God’s judgment, is a history of the madness of sin.

While the city appeared civilized and highly developed, yet the whole population was morally corrupt. The fear of God was lost so that every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Their intent to sexually abuse the two angelic visitors (men) who came to Lot’s home revealed the state of their minds and hearts. These sinners were given over to practice their sin of sodomy. The power of lust controlled their thinking and actions. “Both old and young, all the people from every quarter” (v4) were congregated around Lot’s house, seeking to gratify their lust. This was the state of things as God reported them to Abraham, “The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous” (Ch. 18:20). The apostle Peter gave his own commentary on the depths of corruption within the hearts of the people of Sodom (2 Peter 2:6-14). Peter noted two reasons why the people of Sodom perished: “their own corruption” (2Peter 2:12), and their “own deceivings” (2Peter 2:13). Their corruption of heart led to blindness to the truth. They would not interpret the facts correctly to know right from wrong, nor would they heed God’s warnings. Sin never makes sense. These sins are contrary to the will of God and contrary to nature. Those who practice them declare their defiance of God Himself, His truth regarding marital purity and God’s ordained family structure. The judgment that befell Sodom and Gomorrah has become a warning to all who live ungodly (2Peter 2:6).

How does this apply to me? As we face the dramatic rise in homosexual thinking and practice in our society we should realise that men’s choices are dictated by the state of their hearts. It is not a lack of truth, but a love of lust. Fallen man is totally depraved and capable of perverting God’s truth, to follow the dictates of his own corrupt nature and to pursue after unrighteousness. Isaiah warned of such perverted thinking, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20)! It is never right, even for a professing Christian to say, “follow your own heart”. The Lord Jesus warned, that great evils proceed out of the heart of man (Mark 7:18-23). We need new hearts to turn away from all forms of sinful practices.

2. Lot had no influence over the men of Sodom.

While Lot had some influence upon his wife and his two daughters, the men of Sodom showed no respect for Lot either as a guest, or as a citizen within their city. Lot’s reasoning with the men of Sodom (v8) fell on deaf ears and defiant hearts. Even the offer of his two daughters could not satisfy the lust of the mob that stood at his door. Right thinking people are at a loss to explain Lot’s reasoning for offering his daughters to such men. Perhaps, knowing the heavenly nature of his two guests he was willing to go to any lengths to protect them. The men’s refusal of that offer serves to reveal the extent to which these men of Sodom were given over to the practice of sodomy. They were headed for a just judgment.

Lot also lost influence over his sons-in-law, who were swept up in the societal lawlessness of Sodom. After he reasoned with them to, “Get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city,” The record states that Lot, “Seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.” (v14).

After living among the people of Sodom and sitting at the gate working alongside with the leaders of the city, Lot had zero influence on them. He saw not one resident of the city delivered from it’s destruction apart from his two daughters, while he lost his son’s in law and his own wife.

How does this apply to me? Christians delude themselves thinking they will win over the ungodly by acting like them and by fitting into their life-style. Lot is an example of a backslider who loses his testimony and power with God and men. The Lord calls His people to separate from the world in order to establish a clear testimony for God, so that the ungodly behold the witness of a truly Christian life-style. As Abraham was called to leave Ur of the Chaldees, it was not the will of God for Lot to dwell amongst the ungodly who grieved God continually. The account of Lot fleeing Sodom with not one soul out of the city to follow him should put an end to the argument that we will win sinners to safety by becoming like them. It never works, for God never works through compromise with worldliness.

3. Lot was reluctant to flee to safety.

Lot lingered (v16). The Lord extended great mercy in laying hold of Lot, His wife and daughters to “set him without the city” (v16). He had to be told, “Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed” (v17). He then requested to flee to Zoar, a little city, perhaps on the fringe of the plain. Could he not comprehend the extent of the judgment coming upon these five cities? Did he not believe that God would send such judgment that would obliterate the region? Did his wife influence Lot? So much was holding Lot back that he had to be literally dragged out of the city. He was asleep to the perils of God’s imminent judgment and needed to be awakened as one out of sleep.

How does this apply to me? The world has a strange and paralyzing grip upon the lives of men and women. Even when we are redeemed and regenerated, it takes the power of God to extricate us from worldly entanglement. We need the power of God to free our minds and hearts from attachment to this world. We are commanded to, “Love not the world...” Read 1John 2:15-17 to note how the operations of “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life” would keep us fixated upon the world. We must remember that at the fall of Adam into sin the love of the world got into man’s heart and made him a lover of this world so that it is attractive to him. This is because the spirit of the world operates within him. It takes the Holy Spirit to convict us of sin in order to deliver us from all forms of worldliness in our hearts. The eternal day will show that by God’s grace each Christian was dragged out of the world to be saved from its judgment.

4. Lot’s wife was overtaken by the power of the world.

She stands as a constant and timely warning to all who dare to despise God’s warnings about loving this world. The Lord Jesus used Lot’s wife as an example to any, who, on the day of Christ’s return to judge the world, would look back to gain material things (Luke 17:30-32). In giving this warning of Lot’s wife, the Lord upheld the historic account of her being turned into a pillar of salt, and in doing so upheld the account of God’s judgment upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. He warned men and women not to be distracted from the urgent need to prepare for eternity with God. To look back, or to go back to the world brings ruin to many souls.

How does this apply to me? We are, above all, to take the warnings of the Lord seriously. We must wholeheartedly turn from the world to save our souls. The Lord said, “Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it” (Luke 17:33). True repentance is to renounce the sin of this world and cleave to Christ alone for mercy. Those who show godly sorrow for sin must not look back to seek after the things of this world.

Things to do in light of this study:

- Research the geography of the Dead Sea.
- Look for the discovery of the ruins of five distinct ancient cities by archeologists.
- Look for reports of the discovery of bitumen, or oil in the region.