

## Genesis 19:1-38

We ended last week's lesson up on the Plain of Mamre.

There in the highlands, Abraham could live a separated life.

Oh, he wasn't ignorant of current events.

On the contrary, he had a very good idea of the world around him.

For instance, he had a much better grasp of the real situation in Sodom than the worldly-wise of that city.

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One day, as Abraham sat in his tent door, the LORD Himself, no doubt the pre-incarnate Christ, accompanied by two angels, visited him and announced the soon arrival of the promised son.

After their visit, **"Abraham went with them to bring them on the way,"** and the LORD took that opportunity to enlighten him concerning Sodom.

Genesis 18:20-21 **"---Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; 21: I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know."**

And then something very amazing happened.

Having received this startling news, Abraham begins to intercede for Sodom, and, of course, for his nephew.

Yes, as he stood before the Lord in that lonely country road, Abraham, the father of many nations, became Abraham the intercessor.

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And you know Abraham's great zeal is a strong reminder of our own responsibility to pray for others.

Because we belong to the bride of Christ, and because we are part of His spiritual body, we have an audience with God.

And also, because our minds have been enlightened by God's word of prophecy, we enjoy a comprehensive worldview of the future that the world knows nothing about.

And not only do Christians have these special advantages, but we also have some very special responsibilities.

No, we cannot escape the fact that God has said **"---unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."**

So we should be intercessors.

Yes, we should pray for our unsaved neighbours, our brothers and sisters who are enduring persecution, and for those who have wandered away from their Shepherd.

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This week we must leave the lofty Plains of Mamre and go down into the well-watered Plain of Jordan. This fertile plain once contained five cities.

Earlier in Genesis, we were given the names of these cities.

Genesis 14:8 **"And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim. "**

Sodom and Gomorrah were situated at the southern end of the Jordan Plain, while Admah and Zeboiim were located in the northern end of that area.

And in the middle of that well-watered plain, between her four larger neighbours, we would have found the little city of Zoar.

Materially speaking, the Plain of Jordan had been blessed of God, but that would soon end.

You see, the wicked inhabitants who had no regard for God had finally sinned away their last day of grace.

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Genesis 19:1 **"And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up**

**to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground."**

Lot was as hospitable as his uncle, but in all other respects, they were as different as night is from day.

God's angels found Lot sitting in the gate of the city.

His involvement in the affairs of Sodom had come about gradually.

In Genesis 13, we find that Lot had originally **"pitched his tent toward Sodom,"** despite the fact that **"--the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."**

Later, in Genesis 14, we noticed that Lot now **"dwelt in Sodom."**

And he had moved from a tent to a house.

He was no longer a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth, if indeed he had ever been one.

Now he was a full citizen of Sodom.

And we find him sitting "--**in the gate of Sodom.**"

To be perfectly fair to Lot, I must admit that we don't really know why he was sitting in the gate.

He might have been there to hear the news of the city, but the very fact that he was sitting in the gate seems to imply much more than that.

Yes, it seems probable that he was one of Sodom's officials.

If that were true, then he would have been personally responsible for protecting their laws and evil way of life.

It seems that Lot's God had become power and  
prestige, and the pursuit of wealth.

So, in spite of the spiritual light he had  
enjoyed during his years with Abraham,  
he now blended very well into that  
wicked society.

And it would have been quite easy for him to  
do so.

He had the right connections, being the  
nephew of Abraham, a man of  
considerable wealth and power.

And the residents of Sodom had found it a  
very profitable relationship in the  
past.

Yes, for Lot's sake, they had been saved  
from a life of slavery.

So Lot enjoyed prestige and power, but at a  
very great cost, for his conscience  
bothered him daily.



In fact, 2 Peter 2:7-8 tells us that he was  
"--vexed with the filthy conversation  
of the wicked:

8: (For that righteous man dwelling  
among them, in seeing and hearing,  
vexed his righteous soul from day to  
day with their unlawful deeds.)"

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But in spite of Lot's innermost feelings so  
clearly described in 2 Peter, we will  
be hard-pressed to find any evidence of  
Lot's righteousness in the chapter  
before us.

Although God had given him some of the same  
opportunities that he had given  
Abraham, Lot had sunken to unbelievable  
depths of *compromise*.

I think we can safely say that as Abraham  
was an example of the man of faith, so

Lot was a picture of the backslidden Christian.

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V 2 **"And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night."**

Even though Abraham and his nephew were both wealthy, Lot's home was quite different from his uncle's.

As we have already noticed, Abraham still lived in a tent, but Lot owned a house. Abraham was a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth, while Lot was a respected citizen of Sodom.

And yet, in spite of Lot's more comfortable surroundings, the angel's response to his hospitality was not at all favourable.

When Abraham had invited the LORD and the two angels to dinner, they accepted without hesitation.

Lot's offer was flatly refused.

**"Nay; but we will abide in the street all night."**

However, Lot insisted, for he knew only too well how they would fare in the dark streets of Sodom.

V 3 **"And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat."**

But the wickedness of Sodom was not so easily shut out.

V 4-5 **"But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:**

**5: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them."**

Personally, I would have been quite happy to skip this chapter, but since we are studying the Book of Genesis, and God has put this chapter here for a reason, I will teach it as discreetly as I can.

The words in verse five, **"that we may know them,"** indicate a desire for sexual relations.

We know this, because this phrase is used elsewhere in scripture, and always indicates sexual intimacy, but in those cases, it was always between a man and a woman.

For instance, in Luke 1:34, when the angel told Mary she was to have a son, she asked--"**How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?**"

Again, in Matthew 1:24-25, we are told that even though Joseph went through with the marriage, he abstained from any sexual relationship with Mary until after Jesus' birth.

**"Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:**

**25: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son."**

So these words in Genesis 19:5, "**that we may know them,**" are unmistakable, and also disgusting.

The "**men of Sodom**"--"**both old and young**"-- were demanding that Lot deliver his two male guests to be homosexually abused. Their demands were insistent and unashamed, and give us a clear picture of the fate of any stranger who visited that wicked city.

No wonder the LORD had said "-- **the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great**--", and "**their sin is very grievous.**"

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V 6-8 "**And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, 7: And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. 8: Behold now, I have two daughters**

which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof."

It is shocking in the extreme to see how *low* this man would go to protect his guests.

And he even calls this howling mob

"brethren."

V 9-11 "And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.

10: But the men put forth their hand,

and pulled Lot into the house to them,  
and shut to the door.

**11: And they smote the men that were at  
the door of the house with blindness,  
both small and great: so that they  
wearied themselves to find the door."**

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In Jonah's day there was another wicked city  
that had been perilously close to  
judgment.

However, before God actually destroyed  
Nineveh, He sent Jonah to warn its  
citizens.

As a result of Jonah's message, they  
repented of their sins, and God spared  
them.

But there was no Jonah to warn Sodom.

I believe that God did not warn them because  
He knew there would be no repentance.



Their hearts were thoroughly set within them to do evil, and we can see that amply demonstrated here.

You would have thought that when they were struck with blindness they would have repented and cried out for God's mercy, but they did not.

Instead, they doggedly pursued their path of lust, and **"wearied themselves to find the door."**

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V 12-13 **"And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:**  
**13: For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great**

**before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it."**

So apparently there was not even 10 righteous in Sodom to stay the hand of judgment.

However, for Abraham's sake, God had decreed that Lot and his household were to be rescued.

V 14 **"And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law."**

As he ran through the dark street, dodging the blind men who had threatened him, he was intent on his mission of mercy. He was thoroughly convinced that judgment was imminent.

But his sons-in-law, who no doubt were citizens of Sodom themselves--for who else would his daughters have married--took no heed of his warning.

So in the end, poor Lot was powerless to save his own daughters.

They were under the authority of their husbands, and their husbands had no use for Lot or his silly religion.

No, as far as they were concerned, his warning was just a joke.

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No doubt Lot slept very poorly that night, but it was still hard to get him out of bed in the morning.

I don't think he was especially anxious to face a new day.

But a new day had arrived, and as he well knew, it was a day for judgment.

V 15 **"And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city."**

It was time to run for their lives, but instead of making haste, Lot and his wife and his daughters dawdled.

I think they just didn't want to leave their possessions and the good life behind.

So in the end, the angels had to forcibly remove them.

V 16 **"And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city."**

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I wonder what the reaction will be when the  
Lord returns for His bride?

How many believers will He find anxiously  
looking for His return, and how many  
will He find clinging to comfortable,  
compromising lives?

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Well, Lot was out of Sodom, but not out of  
danger.

V 17-20 **"And it came to pass, when they had  
brought them forth abroad, that he  
said, Escape for thy life; look not  
behind thee, neither stay thou in all  
the plain; escape to the mountain, lest  
thou be consumed.**

**18: And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so,  
my Lord:**

**19: Behold now, thy servant hath found  
grace in thy sight, and thou hast**

magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

20: Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live."

The angels had said, "Escape to the mountain," but Lot thought he knew better.

"I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die."

So here we have another petition going up to God, but unlike Abraham's intercessory prayer, Lot's request lacked any real trust in God's care.

Although he readily admitted that God had showed mercy to him and had saved his

life, he was not willing to believe that God could keep him safely in the mountains.

Yes, Lot feared the very place that God had designed for his protection.

Instead of accepting God provision, Lot's affections were centered on Zoar, one of the cities under judgment.

And I'm sure Lot knew full well that it was a wicked city, but, after all, **"is it not a little one?"**

That had been the theme of Lot's life.

He had allowed one compromise after another to rein in his life, always with the lame excuse, **"is it not a little one?"**

But the compromises had grown larger and larger, and, in the end, his ill-gotten riches were to go up in smoke.

Surprisingly, God accepted his petition, for what can you do with a man who does not seek the higher ground?

V 21-25 **"And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. 22: Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. 23: The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. 24: Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; 25: And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants**



**of the cities, and that which grew upon  
the ground."**

So the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah in  
the southern end of that well-watered  
plain, and He destroyed Admah and  
Zeboiim in the north.

However, because Lot just could not live  
without a little piece of this wicked  
world, Zoar survived.

There, because of Lot's petitions, it still  
remained like a festering sore,  
polluting God's world.

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V 26 **"But his wife looked back from behind  
him, and she became a pillar of salt."**

The angels had removed Lot's wife bodily,  
but her heart was still in Sodom.

All her nice things were there, and her  
married daughters were still there.

It was her home, and she could not think of leaving it.

So, in spite of the angels' warning, she looked back longingly to Sodom, and became a pillar of salt.

That pillar was a memorial to Lot's wife, but not a lasting one.

Time and weather would soon cause it to fade from memory.

However, there is another monument to this lady's love of the world, and it will endure forever.

It is a monument set up by Christ himself to warn those who would hazard their lives to preserve their earthly possessions.

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In Luke 17:29-33 Jesus said, "**But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven,**

and destroyed them all.

30: Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31: In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff (that is his earthly possessions) in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32: Remember Lot's wife.

33: Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."

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Returning to Genesis 19:

V 27-28 "And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

28: And he looked toward Sodom and

Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."

Early in the morning, Abraham stood **"before the LORD."**

It was his usual place, the place of morning prayer.

And unlike his nephew, Abraham did not need to be yanked out of bed by an angel.

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Up on the Plain of Mamre, his livelihood was unaffected, but Abraham certainly was.

When he saw the smoke, I'm sure his first thoughts were, *Sodom is gone, so Lot is gone also.*

But such was not the case.

You see, God's mercy was even greater than Abraham could have imagined.

V 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 the which Lot dwelt."

We don't know how long it took for Abraham to get the word that Lot's life was spared.

After all, it was good news and bad news. Although he was safe physically, his life was in a shambles.

V 30 "And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters."

Lot had chosen Zoar because he feared the mountains, and then he chose the mountains because he feared Zoar!

As is always the case, faith is a better guide than fear.

And, unfortunately, although they had escaped the wickedness of Zoar, their hearts carried the wickedness of Sodom to their place of refuge.

V 31-35 **"And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:**

**32: Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.**

**33: And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went**

in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

34: And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our Father.

35: And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose."

A number of sins, all of which had been learned in Sodom, raise their ugly heads in this mountain refuge.

The eldest daughter's world had been so wrapped up in worldly Sodom that marriage seemed impossible when that city was destroyed.

Her sisters had married men of Sodom, and, so far as she was concerned, her only hope for a husband rested with that society.

No, her faith was not in God, but in Sodom.

And her statement, "**Come, let us make our father drink wine,**" revealed the fact that she was well aware that her father could be easily led into excessive drinking, at least in times of stress.

And his daughters did not show a great deal of respect for their father, and indeed, why should they?



Why should they respect a father that had  
been willing to sacrifice them to the  
wicked men of Sodom?

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And so Lot's daughters, having been raised  
in Sodom, and seemingly with no moral  
conscience, engaged in incest.

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This is the last we hear of Lot.

He exits the pages of scripture as a  
destitute, drunken, dishonoured man.

It is a sad commentary on a life of  
compromise.

Yes, for worldly gain, Lot lived the life of  
a compromiser, and ended up in a cave.

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V 36-38 **"Thus were both the daughters of  
Lot with child by their father.**

**37: And the firstborn bare a son, and**

called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. 38: And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day."

And so, through drunkenness and incest, the world was left with Lot's two sons. They in turn fathered the Moabites and the Ammonites, both of whom became the bitter and persistent enemies of Israel.

And yet, even in Lot's dismal legacy, God brought forth some blessing.

Yes, Ruth, who clave to Naomi and to Naomi's God and was included in the lineage of Christ, was a Moabite.

So you see, it matters not what our background is, God can bring blessing

into our lives, and God can make us  
*over comers.*

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Next week we will be back with Abraham, and  
we would certainly hope to have better  
things to think about.

But, unfortunately, Chapter 20 is a downer  
also.

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In the book of Hebrews Chapter 11, we find  
Abraham listed with the heroes of  
faith, and indeed he deserves to be  
there.

But he was still a man, and his pathway to  
great faith included some very serious  
detours.

Chapter 20 is one of these detours.

Yes, Abraham floundered greatly at times,  
but like King David, he had a heart for

God, and he did learn from his  
mistakes--not always the first time,  
but eventually he learned.

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So next week we will be travelling with  
Abraham once again, and we can expect a  
rough ride.