

GENESIS 18-19

A CONTRAST OF BELIEVERS

Last week we talked about how God appeared to Abram to change his name and also to confirm his covenant with him. God gave Abraham the sign of circumcision to separate his people from those around him. It also symbolized the circumcision of the heart as we read later from the Apostle Paul.

This week we will read of another encounter Abraham had with God. So let's get to it shall we?

Gen 18:1 *Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day.*

Gen 18:2 *So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground,*

Gen 18:3 *and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant.*

Gen 18:4 *Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.*

Gen 18:5 *And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said."*

Gen 18:6 *So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes."*

Gen 18:7 And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it.

Gen 18:8 So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

If you want to picture Abraham you need to imagine a rich bedoin. That is a man with very large herds of cattle and goats with hundreds of men working for him. They all live in tents and move regularly in order for the herds to graze. Around noon the sun is so hot that the tents are too warm to stay in, therefore they will sit in the shade of the door. There is sort of a little awning that comes off the front of the tent under which you can sit. This is where we find Abraham.

Then he looks up and there are three men standing in front of him. In verse 1 we see the word LORD, all caps. This is the Hebrew word Yahweh or Jehovah. In verse 3 we see Abraham call Him Lord, or Adonai, meaning emphatically, MY Lord. So it is clear that this is what we call a Christophany. That is, a manifestation of God in physical form - Jesus. Later we will see that the other two "men" are angels.

Abraham begs them to stay. This was common. You were to always look after strangers. We would call it hospitality. So Abraham has his wife make some bread and a servant kill a calf to eat. He also has someone bring some milk and butter, or possibly buttermilk.

In a very literal sense Abraham is serving the Lord. He wants to commune with God. We see that God didn't necessarily have to talk to him in the morning or before he went to bed. This time it appears to be

at high noon. Sometimes we pick the time to talk with God, other times He picks the occasion.

SHARING THE WEALTH

If we look at this situation and the hospitality involved from our modern, western mindset, some might take offense that Abraham “told/ ordered” Sarah to make some cakes. Some may be tempted to read this as if Abraham ran into the tent and yelled, “Something to eat, woman!” But that isn’t the case at all. Abraham then ran to the field, chose a calf (veal) and “ordered” a servant to clean it and cook it. But once again, we would do so to our detriment. Abraham isn’t barking orders to poor servants or running roughshod over his wife as if she were a doormat. To the contrary, he is involving others in ministry.

D.L. Moody put it this way. He said, ***“I would rather put ten men to work than do the work of ten men.”*** And that is how we should look at it. If we see serving the Lord as we truly should, then we will see it as an honor to pursue rather than an obligation to fulfill or worse, as something from which to run.

If an artist is commissioned to paint the portrait of a king or president, he sees it as an honor. If a chef is asked to cook a meal for a king or president, she sees it as an honor. Why then, when we are asked to serve, we would phrase it as “plugging in”, do we see it as an inconvenience? The answer is that we don’t have a servant’s heart. And that is sin.

We can see from this part of the text that Abraham served the Lord:

- Abraham served the Lord personally. (Initiated things himself and took part in the ministry)

- He served the Lord speedily. (ran around)
- He served the Lord cooperatively. (Included and delegated)
- Abraham is called a “Friend of God.” Friendship involves ministry. Ministry involves hospitality, among other things. Hospitality is an important part of the Christian life. That can go unobserved in the days of hotels and restaurants.

1 Peter 4:9

9 Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. ESV

At any rate we need to see that Abraham is familiar enough with God to recognize Him. Now we don't have God manifesting to us like this nowadays. We have the Holy Spirit that inhabits us and speaks to us, but the question is still similar. Do we recognize God when we hear Him? Do we recognize His hand moving in our lives when we see it? You have to be familiar with someone in order to recognize them.

At any rate, Abraham stands and watches them eat. This is a way to make sure that they get all they want to eat before you sit down to eat.

Next we read of their conversation.

Gen 18:9 Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent."

*Gen 18:10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son."
(Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)*

Gen 18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.

Gen 18:12 *Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"*

Gen 18:13 *And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?'"*

Gen 18:14 *Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."*

Gen 18:15 *But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"*

The conversation starts with a question. Where is your wife Sarah? It was customary in that day for the women to not be present when men were discussing business or strangers were being entertained.

In verse 10 God, (capital G), gives Abraham a more focused timeline as to when his son will be born. In chapter 17 God told him that it would be a year until the birth of Isaac. Now He tells him that it will be approximately 9 months, or "the time of life."

Sarah was listening in and laughed in her heart. She felt that she and Abraham were too old to have a child. She had written God off as far as His promise went.

This brings to mind a song from the 70's by Charlie Rich: My Elusive Dreams.

Last week we talked about how, at least in this case God waited until they were this old. Now everyone would see it as a miracle. If Isaac were born to them at a younger age then it could be taken as just another birth. This way God can get all the glory. Which is what is supposed to

happen. It will also help Isaac in his part of God's plan. Knowing that he was born to Abraham at this great age will bolster his faith in God and God's plan.

But what do we say about Sarah? First of all she is living in her circumstances. She sees only the natural realm. She is neglecting the spiritual realm where God resides. Now God has visited them in the natural realm, but He starts His work in the spiritual realm and it manifests in the physical.

Let's be honest. Have you ever written God off as far as something you believe He told you or promised you? If we were honest, I would imagine that we all have. We, like Sarah tend to look only at the natural side of things and neglect or ignore the spiritual side of things. It is easy to ignore what you can't see.

Joh 20:29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

We all have doubts from time to time. Let's admit that even if Sarah won't.

Gen 18:15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

It isn't wise to lie to God. Sarah got caught in her doubt and then went a step further in that she lied to God about it when directly asked about it. You can't fool God, so just be honest. If you are having doubts, or you are tempted, be honest about it. God already knows. He just wants you

to come to Him with those issues. God is after the relationship. He wants the conversation. Sarah doesn't engage Him, she lies to Him.

At this point the visitors get up to leave.

Gen 18:16 *And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.*

Gen 18:17 *And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;*

Gen 18:18 *Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?*

Gen 18:19 *For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

Gen 18:20 *And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;*

Gen 18:21 *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.*

Gen 18:22 *And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.*

God is omniscient. That means that He knows everything. He is not just debating whether or not to let Abraham in on what is about to happen. God knows that Abraham has kinfolk in the city of Sodom.

Abraham has a part in this plan, therefore God is allowing him to be involved. We too should look for ways to be involved in God's work. We shouldn't run from it. Next we will see how Abraham is involved.

Gen 18:23 *And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?*

Gen 18:24 *Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?*

Gen 18:25 *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

Gen 18:26 *And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.*

Gen 18:27 *And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:*

Gen 18:28 *Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.*

Gen 18:29 *And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.*

Gen 18:30 *And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.*

Gen 18:31 *And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.*

Gen 18:32 *And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.*

Gen 18:33 *And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.*

Abraham is an intercessor! He is standing in the gap to help in order to help others. And look how he does it. He appeals to God's just nature. "Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Here Abraham appeals not to the mercy of God, but to the justice of God.

When it came to feeding his visitors, Abraham included others in ministry, but when it came to the ministry of intercession, he stood in the gap alone before God. How could he do this? He could do it because he was a friend of God.

In Gen. 18:19, God stated that He KNEW Abraham. And only those that know God are privy to His secrets.

Ps. 25:14

14 *The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.*

Amos 3:7

7 *“For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.*

Because of this friendship, Abraham can approach God and intercede not only for Lot and his family but for the other inhabitants of the five

cities of the plain. He humbly asks God to spare the city if He is able to find a small remnant of righteous within Sodom.

God is just. He will only punish those that reject His grace. The people that go to Hell will be there because they wanted to go, or because they didn't want to be with God. We can see from the story that God waited awhile before He sent judgment. The cities of the plain were known for their sin. They had time to repent, but they wouldn't. A large group of like-minded people had built a city and a culture that preferred the most abhorrent lifestyle imaginable.

Unfortunately there were some in the city that wouldn't or couldn't bring themselves to leave.

- The sudden destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is used as an example of God's judgment several times in the Bible and Jesus used it as a warning for sinners in the end times.

A CONTRAST OF BELIEVERS

Our narrative now switches gears. The focus moves from Abraham, the friend of God to Lot – friend of the world. And it is here that we need to pay special attention to the contrast. This isn't a dichotomy between a believer and unbeliever. This shows us the difference between a believer that is a friend of God, privy to God's plan and His immediate actions as compared to "nominal" believer.

Gen 19:1 *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.*

Gen 19:2 *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."*

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.*

Gen 19:4 *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.*

Gen 19:5 *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."*

Gen 19:6 *So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him,*

Gen 19:7 *and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly!*

Gen 19:8 *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.*

Gen 19:9 *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.*

Gen 19:10 *But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door.*

Gen 19:11 *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.*

- The gates of the city were nerve center of the city in that day. The elders of the city and the most important men of the city would congregate there in order to conduct business as well hold a type of court and make judgments about disputes. They were also there to witness business deals. Whatever was witnessed was considered binding. It was the equivalent of a modern day contract.
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- Lot was sitting in the gate when the angels arrived indicating that he had gained some degree of status among the community. As we will see this can be a type of bondage to a man.
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- We also see another example of the Middle Eastern custom of hospitality. Lot could tell that the men were just passing through and would need a place to stay. As we get deeper into the story it is apparent that Lot also noticed that there is something else different about these men. He could tell that they weren't involved in the sinful culture of the city in which he resided.
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- At first the men turned down Lot's invitation and said that they would just spend the night in the square. Lot knew what would happen to them if they did that and convinced them to stay at his house.

The entire culture of the five cities of the plain can be described only as a bastion of sin and sensuality. Secular history tells us that it was the habit of people in the cities to take complete advantage of visitors in every way possible. They were robbed, conned and raped. There was also a crooked kangaroo court that saw to it no one was held accountable for their actions. Corruption ruled the day. The cities of the plain also gathered at a certain place a few times a year where they engaged in

parties and orgies. Wives and daughters were made available to any and all that wished to be with them. Husbands and fathers were said to look on at their wives and daughters with other men and never say a word.

In the last chapter, Jesus and two angels spoke with Abraham and let him in on the coming judgment. God promised He would spare the cities if as few as 10 righteous people could be found among them. Only four were delivered. We see this principle time and again in the Bible. God is long-suffering and allows a period of grace for people to repent. By granting this time He also allows wickedness to come to fruition. When He sees there are none willing to repent He brings judgment. He does this by allowing Israel to conquer the Amorites as well as the other Canaanite nations. Later, God uses foreign nations to discipline and judge Israel. We also see that God knows how to deliver the righteous from judgment. And that brings us to “Righteous Lot.”

If all we knew of Lot were what we have here, we would never think of him as righteous. However, he is listed in the NT as a righteous man.

2 Peter 2:6-8

6 if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked 8 (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard);

But how can Lot be righteous? Look at all the things he did. Look at how he lived among the heathen and was reluctant to leave.

The question to be asked is NOT how Lot can be considered righteous, but how can we be considered righteous? If we are comparing Lot to ourselves or vice versa, we aren't comparing either party to the right standard. God is the measuring stick by which righteousness is measured and we have all fallen short of the glory of God.

Lot was seen as righteous the same way we are. He was a man of faith, albeit, nominal faith. Abraham was a friend of God while Lot was a friend of the world. We can see from this story how he and his family were affected by living in Sodom.

When Lot moved into town I don't imagine that he was this bad off, but if you lay down with the dogs you get up with fleas. Lot wanted to be someone. When given the choice by Abraham of where to homestead he made the practical business decision, but the wrong spiritual decision. Now he is paying the price. While he doesn't practice the sins of the city, he has become jaded and calloused to them. He is willing to sacrifice his daughters. He can no longer make a real stand against it. Lot was not respected by the community. He has no integrity and thinks more of himself than the people do.

1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

Lot attempted to negotiate with evil, not stand against it. You can't negotiate with sin/ evil. You have to avoid it.

Lot probably thought that he could affect Sodom minimally and also gain some status for himself. He thought that he could build a successful

business and be a nominal godly influence. Sadly, many Christians feel the same way. When it came time to take a stand Lot folded like a cheap chair and we will also if we aren't sold out for God. We can't straddle the fence.

The word compromise is one that can be taken a couple of different ways, according to the context of its usage. We often think of the word in a positive light because many times it is used that way, but there are times that compromise is a bad even an evil thing.

Compromise – *1 a settlement of differences in which each side makes concessions. 2 Anything resulting from such a settlement. 3 Something mid-way between different things or combining certain of their qualities. 4 A laying open to danger, especially one's reputation or character.*

1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

Second Peter tells us that righteous Lot was vexed (KJV) in verse seven by the filthy conduct of the wicked and that his soul was vexed in verse eight. The words are oppressed in verse seven and tormented in verse eight. (NKJV) Two different Greek words are used here. The word translated vexed in verse seven means, oppressed, to wear with toil. The Greek word in verse eight means, to torture, toil, pain, to torment.

And that is exactly what we get when we chase that which doesn't want for us. When we become a friend of the world as opposed to a friend of God, we become tortured. Think about it. Lot teetered between God and the world. He was worn down to the point that he compromised his faith. He might have even been compromising for the purpose of ministering

to others. Most likely, this scenario was used to justify his staying in Sodom.

Have any of us ever teetered that way, wanting what we shouldn't have? Wanting what is bad for us? Living a lie in order to satisfy the flesh? Lot did and he carried that baggage with him daily. It wore him down to the point that his testimony was destroyed, his business was destroyed, his world was destroyed, his family was destroyed and most of all his relationship with God was all but destroyed!

Do you carry that weight? Do you teeter on the brink? Are you worn down? Is your family being destroyed because of a double life? As Christians, we can exist in both worlds but we can't live for God and those we love in both worlds.

Look at the differences between Abraham and Lot. Look at the different outcomes. Look at the differences in their families. Look at the differences in their walk with God!

Even after being blinded, their anger and lust drove them to fumble around in the darkness. This was just a sign of their spiritual condition.

This is not your everyday run of the mill homosexual activity. The punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah was so severe because these men were crossing a line that couldn't be crossed. They were about to commit the same sin that brought about the flood in Noah's day.

** See addendum in my notes for more on the sin of homosexuality and its context here.*

Now back to the story...

Gen 19:12 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!

Gen 19:13 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."

Gen 19:14 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.

God, in his mercy is giving them warning to leave. But I want you to notice the reaction of Lot's sons-in-law. They think he is joking, or that he is talking crazy. They don't take him seriously. In their minds there is no way that this can be happening. They have been in Sodom for so long that the judgment of God is a foreign concept to them. It is not credible and Lot as the leader of the household is not credible.

I am afraid the same thing is happening in the USA. concepts such as the judgment of God are no longer credible, that is believable. And just as it started for Lot's family, that loss of credibility started with the head of the household. You may say, but Lot believes in this judgment. Well, he does now, but he has lived so close to the evil that he has even become jaded to it. His family, the next generation sees God and his judgment as

a totally foreign concept. We will see shortly the effect it has on his wife.

It only takes the space of one generation for a culture to lose its connection to God.

Once again:

1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

It is time for us as men, and parents to stop rubbing shoulders with evil. We should stop patronizing it. We should call it as the Bible sees it.

The next morning, God's plan continues:

Gen 19:15 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.

Gen 19:16 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.

Gen 19:17 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.

Gen 19:18 And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord:

Gen 19:19 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:

Gen 19:20 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.

Gen 19:21 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.

Gen 19:22 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

When the sun rose, God's judgment was evident.

Gen 19:23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

Gen 19:24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

Gen 19:25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

Gen 19:26 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Lot ran to Zoar to flee, but we wouldn't stay.

We see in verse 26 that his wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. The judgment was not enough to keep her moving away from the carnage. She was already missing her old life. She too had fallen prey to the lure of the city. Can you see how Lot's "practical" business decision

to move to the plain eventually led to the ruin of his family? And we aren't yet through with the casualties.

Gen 19:27 And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

Gen 19:28 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.

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 the which Lot dwelt.

Gen 19:30 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.

Gen 19:31 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:

Gen 19:32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

Gen 19:33 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.

Gen 19:34 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.

Gen 19:35 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.

Gen 19:36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

Gen 19:37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.

Gen 19:38 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.

Lot's sons-in-law stay behind to face the judgment. They were just too immersed in the nightlife of the city to comprehend living any other way?. Whatever the case, we can see how quickly one's own culture can change. Lot started out as a bedouin, a traveling rancher. He moved into the city where he became polluted with the lifestyle of the inhabitants.

We even see Lot bargaining with the angels in order to not have to move to the mountains. In his mind he can no longer see himself living his former lifestyle. He still wants to live around the sin that has put him in the place in which he now finds himself. Zoar was known to be nearly as bad as Sodom and Gomorrah. It wasn't just a citywide thing. It was the way of all the cities of the plain. A lifestyle saturated in leisure has a tendency to intoxicate us with the pleasures of this world. We see our time of rest as not only a time away from work, but unfortunately many of us also take it as a time away from God.

Lot's two daughters would now do the unthinkable. They would sleep with their father in order to have children. They had seen nearly their entire world destroyed. At the very least the number of potential

husbands was now limited. The only world they knew had been destroyed.

Parents, think long and hard about the world you create at home and in your community for your children.

There is no doubt that their upbringing in such a culture as Sodom led to them even being able to contemplate such a thing as they did. Incest was something they saw everyday. They didn't see anything wrong with it. The best we can say for Lot is that at least they had to get him drunk in order for him to participate. We can see from the names of their boys that they flaunt the lineage of their children. Both boys names mean that they came from the father of their mother.

Lot isn't mentioned again in the narrative. He is at this point lost to history. The nations that come from this ungodly union however will be heard from over and over again.

- Lot is in so deep that the ease of his life and his success has become a bondage to him.
- We should look for opportunities to minister to others. We should, at the very least be seen as hospitable.
- We can't get trapped into thinking of just the natural realm. We are Christians. Just as we read today, "IS anything too hard for God?"
- Let's admit that we have doubts, especially to God. He wants to help us, not flog us.
- We should be intercessors and trust that God is just!

- As children of God we need to remove ourselves from such influences.
- As parents we should make sure we insulate our children from as many of these things as possible.
- Lot thought he was living the good life but he eventually lost everything.
- It could happen to any of us in some form if we aren't careful to walk in the spirit.
- So, are you Lot or Abraham?

ADDENDUM: HOMOSEXUALITY AND THIS CONTEXT

Homosexuality has been around forever, as we see here but it tends to be something kept in the shadows. In the culture of Sodom it was a lifestyle that was lived out in the open. There was no attempt to hide it. There was no shame. They had reached the bottom of the slippery slope. The natural progression "tolerance" had run its course.

Homosexuals tend to feel picked on by Christians because they feel that Christians focus more on them than they do heterosexual sin. That may well be a valid point in some cases. However, we need to point out that there is a fundamental difference. Now sin is sin, but there is Biblical distinction made between the sin of homosexuality and the other heterosexual sins.

Rom 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Rom 1:27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

Rom 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Rom 1:29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

Rom 1:30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

Rom 1:31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

Rom 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Homosexuals often state that God or Christians don't love them since we condemn their lifestyle. If you are a parent you understand the fallacy of this statement. In raising a child we often have to take a stand against our children's choices. That doesn't mean that we have ceased to love them. In fact, it means just the opposite. It is because we love them that we take the stand.

Did God make them that way? No. We are all born sinners with certain proclivities towards certain sins.

There are those that claim that the sin for which Sodom was judged was not homosexuality but that of being inhospitable. They quote Ezekiel 16:49 in an attempt to prove this.

Eze 16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

In fact the context of Ezekiel's message has a much broader scope than this one verse, but Sodom was a very metropolitan place. People were very successful. They had plenty of time for leisure activities. They consumed their wealth upon themselves and did little of anything to help the poor. We see the same pattern today. Homosexuality thrives in the metropolitan areas. It is most visible in the wealthy countries where people have more time for activism. People in the third world are too busy just trying to get by to attempt to reprogram society to accept such abhorrent behavior.

Those that quote this verse fail to read the very next verse however:

Eze 16:50 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw *good*.

The abomination was homosexuality.

Lev 18:22 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it *is* abomination.

Lev 20:13 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.

At this point we are asked if we think that homosexuals should be put to death. The answer is no. Israel was a theocracy. America is a republic. Homosexuality is not a capital crime though most states still have laws against sodomy on the books even if they don't enforce them.

Adultery was also a capital offense as was disrespecting your parents.

They then attempt to make a comparison between America stating that most people, including teenagers would have to be sentenced to death. This is an unfair comparison. Under Israel's government and in that culture they would not have reached this point in the progression. If a nation was started that ran under Israel's laws it wouldn't take too many death sentences to quell the tide of these sins. Furthermore, Israel's culture was so permeated with the Law of God that they were surrounded by a Theocratic worldview. Every aspect of Jewish life was steeped in the Word.

God clearly didn't want homosexuality to get a toe-hold. We can see why that is. Once it is in the door you can't get rid of it.

1Ti 1:9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

1Ti 1:10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

1Co 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

1Co 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1Co 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

There is hope for the homosexual.... "And such as were some of you."

In verse 6 we see the Laws and customs of the middle-east kick in with Lot. You were obliged to take care of strangers. You were also obliged to do everything in your power to protect them once they came under your roof. This why Lot shut the door and attempted to negotiate with them.

Gen 19:6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

Gen 19:7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

Gen 19:8 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.

Gen 19:9 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.

Lot refers to the men of the city as brethren. We also see that Lot's status was important to him. He wanted to protect the angels, but he was willing to sacrifice his daughters to do so, so much for depending on his protection. The men of the city didn't see Lot as having as much status as he did himself.

Application:

1. **Heb 13:1** Let brotherly love continue.
Heb 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.
2. While homosexuality is in a category of unnatural affection we don't need to wink and nod at heterosexual sin either. God is a just God and He will not wink at either category.
3. We need to be honest with ourselves. Do we still go to some of the same old haunts to minister to our old friends or do we go there to just hang out? Some Christians have a tendency to think that they can change their friends by hanging out with them the way they used to hang with them. They will show them Christians are cool. This is wrong. We are to love them and show them how we are different, not how we are the same.
4. Lot thought he could change Sodom nominally while at the same time increasing his status in the community.
5. We can't compromise with evil. We have to take a stand against it.
6. If we don't take a stand, we won't have integrity with anyone.
7. **Mat 5:37** But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.
8. **2Co 6:14** Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?
9. **2Co 6:15** And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?
10. **2Co 6:16** And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
11. **2Co 6:17** Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,
12. **2Co 6:18** And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.
13. Don't straddle the fence.