

LOT'S COMPROMISE WITH THE WORLD AND HIS DEPRAVITY

GENESIS 19:01–11

Introduction

Remember Lot. He had every advantage imaginable to know the *Lord* and to live life to the fullest.

- => He was taken in and reared by Abraham when Abraham first trusted God and began his journey of faith. But he apparently paid little attention to the testimony and witness of Abraham (Gen 12:4-5).
- => He was given the first choice of land by Abraham, but he chose selfishly and settled close to Sodom (Gen 13:5-18).
- => He was rescued from enslavement when captured by the invading army of kings from the East (Gen 14:12-16). But instead of returning with Abraham, he chose to return to Sodom.

Lot loved Sodom and the opportunities the city offered him both for business and personal pleasure. Lot coveted the city's bright lights, the opportunity for wealth, possessions, pleasure and position. Scripture gives a graphic picture of Lot's love for Sodom, the declining stages he went through in moving closer and closer to Sodom and its carnal and wicked way of life:

- => Lot first of all *lifted up his eyes and looked upon* Sodom and the rich, fertile valley of the Jordan in which the city sat (Gen 13:10-11).
- => Lot then chose to move, *pitching his tent toward* Sodom (Gen 13:12-13).
- => Lot later *moved into* the city (Gen 14:12).
- => Lot finally is seen *sitting at the gate of Sodom*, which meant that he was most likely some city official (Gen 19:1).

Lot began the pilgrimage to the promised land with Abraham. But once there, he saw the bright lights and business opportunities of Sodom. Instead of focusing upon the heavenly city — the promised land — he looked and looked at Sodom until the attraction of the city consumed him. Eventually, Lot became one with the city and its ungodly people. Lot's life is a graphic picture of backsliding, a dangerous threat to us all. Lot was saved, genuinely saved, Scripture says so:

2 Pet 2:7-8 And if he [God] rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives [behaviour] of lawless men (For that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) —

But Lot fell back, lived a carnal, fleshly life. He was right at home with the sinful and wicked of the earth. A disheartening picture. Nevertheless, a picture of warning, a graphic

picture that warns us of the coming judgment upon all the backsliding believers and the wicked of this earth.

Henry Morris says this:

What a perfect picture Lot exhibits of a modern-day carnal Christian! He thinks he has the best of both worlds — the eternal benefit of knowing the Lord as Saviour, but also all the temporal benefits that result from worldly influence and possessions, together with acceptance by and fellowship with men of the world. Their gross wickedness may vex his soul a bit, and he may not wish to enter into quite all of their activities, but in general he gets along with them just fine, and is quite pleased with himself that he does. A day of reckoning will come, however.
(Henry M. Morris. *The Genesis Record*, p. 346)

- I. Picture 1: Lot's compromise with the world (vv. 1-3).
- II. Pictured: Lot's depravity (vv. 4-11).

I. *Genesis 19:01–03 Compromise and Worldliness*

The first picture of backsliding is Lot's compromise with the world. Remember, the Lord had stayed behind with Abraham. Only the two angels went to Sodom. They arrived in the evening. Note two facts.

- a. Lot sat in the gateway of Sodom. He was there for one of two reasons.
 - => Lot was either the mayor or a city official responsible for city government and for settling disputes between citizens. City officials, acting as judges, sat at the gate for that purpose (see Deu 21:19-21; 22:15; Ruth 4:1; Prov 31:23). Abraham had saved Sodom from foreign conquest (see Gen 14:1-24). Perhaps the citizens had honoured Lot, making him a city official because of what his uncle had done for them.
 - => Lot had compromised his values and was now living with the worldly. Perhaps he was at the gate, the public gathering place, either to conduct business or just pass the time away with the worldly. He was "walking in the counsel of the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners, and sitting in the seat of the scornful" (Psa 1:1; see Psa 69:12; 2 Pet 2:8).
- b. Lot was a believer, consequently there was some inner goodness within him. There was more to Lot's invitation than just Eastern social tradition and kindness. There was an urgency, an anxiety in his invitation: he insisted, "pressed...greatly" upon them to accept his invitation (v. 3). He knew the city and the people, the moral degradation. He knew the threat and danger to the strangers — the threat and danger that in fact happened (vv. 4-11). Note that a spiritual awareness, an inner goodness, is still seen even in the midst of Lot's carnality and failure.

The two angels probably refused the invitation at first because they had come to investigate the wickedness of the city or else out of politeness, not wishing to inconvenience Lot.

Thought 1. J. Vernon McGee gives a descriptive picture and application of the conversation between Lot and the angels:

*They had brought out something when they said, "We'll stay on the street and just sleep in the park," and Lot says to them, "You don't do that in Sodom. It's dangerous! Your life wouldn't be worth a thing if you did that." May I say that may be Los Angeles ought to change its name to Sodom. It would not be safe for you to sleep on the streets of Los Angeles; in fact, it is not safe at all to be on the streets of Los Angeles at night. Many women who live alone will not come out to church at night. One dear saint of God told me, "I just lock my door at dark, Brother McGee, and I do not open that door until the next morning at daylight. It's not safe in my neighbourhood to even walk on the street." The days of Sodom and Gomorrah are here again, and practically for the same reason. Lot says, "No, men, do not stay on the street. It wouldn't be safe for you." When he "pressed upon them," they came in. (Vernon McGee. *Thru The Bible*, Vol. 1. pg. 81)*

II. *Genesis 19:04–11 Depravity, Immorality*

The second picture of backsliding is Lot's depravity. The scene pictured here is shocking. It shows how utterly depraved the human heart can become. But it also shows how far believers can backslide, how carnal and fleshly-minded they can become. These verses give a graphic picture of Lot's depravity, as well as the depravity of the Sodomites.

- a. Lot had chosen a godless, depraved environment when he moved to Sodom (vv. 4-5). Note that a mob of people from all over the city surrounded Lot's house. Both young and old burned with *unnatural lust*: they shouted out their desires for sex, for homosexual sex. The mob was not acting in secret; they were shouting aloud their cravings and sexual preference. They were out to commit homosexual rape against Lot's visitors.
- b. Lot had made his home with the depraved and wicked of the earth, becoming one with them (vv. 6-7). What a tragic picture of backsliding! Note that Lot went outside to meet the mob and called them *brothers, friends* (v. 7). Lot knew these people: they were his day-to-day friends, acquaintances, neighbors, and business associates. He had lived among the worldly too long; he had no testimony before them. In their minds, he was like them, one of them: loving the world and the things of the world. Thus they expected him to grant their wish.
- c. Lot had become consumed with selfishness and compromise (v. 8). This is a horrible, unbelievable scene. Lot offered to give his daughters to the mob in exchange for the guests. How could he do this?

=> Was he trying to save his own life, standing there face to face with the mob, fearing their threats?

- => Was he so threatened and so fearful that he was in a confused state of mind?
- => Did he know that his guests were angels, and he was willing to sacrifice his two daughters to save them?

Scripture does not say, but whatever the case, Lot was only substituting one sin for another sin, the giving up of his daughters to satisfy the evil lusts of the mob. No doubt, being forced to have sex with so many men would have killed his daughters, and Lot would have known this. He was engulfed by a spirit of selfishness and evil compromise.

- d. Lot had lived a hypocritical life: he had sat at the gate, judging and reproofing the citizens of Sodom for their injustices while living a compromising and worldly life (v. 9). Scripture actually tells us this:

2 Pet 2:8 *For that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard.*

Lot had attempted to influence his fellow citizens for good: he had sat at the city gate as one of the ruling officials of the city, judging and censoring many; but he had lived a worldly, compromising life. Note that the mob actually accused Lot of living a hypocritical life, shouting that they would tolerate it no more. They began to attack him.

Note: a hypocritical, compromising believer – a backsliding believer – will usually be ridiculed, mocked and eventually rejected, just as Lot was.

- e. Lot was delivered by the two angels (vv. 10-11), They struck the mob with some form of blindness and quickly opened the door and pulled Lot back into the house.

Thought 1. Henry Morris gives an excellent application of these verses to our day and time:

*The fact that the old men as well as the young were driven by these lusts, and that, rather than practicing them in secret, they shouted their desires aloud in the streets, adds still another dimension to the enormity of the thing. No wonder God had told Abraham that “the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and their sin is very grievous” (18:20). In these modern days, after two thousand years of Christian teaching to which the Sodomites never had access, what must God think of the current revival of homosexuality, manifest in “gay liberation” movements and political organizations, and even “gay” religious societies, not only among liberals, but even among some evangelicals? (Henry M. Morris. *The Genesis Record*, pp. 347-348)*

Jer 6:15 *Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush. So they will fall among the fallen; they will be brought down when I punish them,” says the LORD.*

Isa 3:9 *The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! They have brought disaster upon themselves.*

Jude 1:7, 14-15 *In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire... "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him."* ■

GENESIS 19:04 SODOM

Sodom was located at the southern tip of the Dead Sea, and its ruins are thought to lie under the sea today. The city was destroyed because of sin, especially the sin of sexual perversion (Gen 13:13, see 18:20; 19:13, 24). The sin for which Sodom is known is homosexuality; in fact, the sin of homosexuality was so common in Sodom that it has become proverbial (sodomy). Sodomy — homosexuality and other forms of sexual perversion — is referred to throughout Scripture when sin and judgment are the subject.

1. The following is said about the sin of Sodom.

a. It is a sin that made men very wicked and sinful.

Gen 13:13 *Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.*

b. It is forbidden by law.

Deu 23:17 *No Israelite man or woman is to become a shrine prostitute.*

c. It was a sin committed by some in Israel.

1 Kng 14:24 *There were even male prostitutes in the land; the people engaged in all the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites.*

d. It was one of the enslaving sins of the ancient world, a sin that led to "all forms of unrighteousness."

Rom 1:26-27, 32 *Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion....Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.*

- e. It was a sin that debased and cheapened religion.

2 Kng 23:7 *He also tore down the quarters of the male prostitutes that were in the temple of the LORD, the quarters where women did weaving for Asherah.*

2. The following is said about the judgment of Sodom and of sodomites, homosexuals.

- a. The land was judged, purified of the sin.

1 Kng 15:12 *He expelled the male shrine prostitutes from the land and got rid of all the idols his ancestors had made.*

1 Kng 22:46 *He rid the land of the rest of the male shrine prostitutes who remained there even after the reign of his father Asa.*

- b. The worship centre (house of the Lord) was purified of the sin.

2 Kng 23:7 *He also tore down the quarters of the male prostitutes that were in the temple of the LORD, the quarters where women did weaving for Asherah.*

- c. The judgment of Sodom is a picture of the future judgment — the judgment yet to come.

Mat 10:15 *“I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrhah on the day of judgment than for that town.”*

Luke 17:29-30 *“But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.”*

2 Pet 2:6 *If he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;*

Jude 1:7 *In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrhah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.*

3. The LORD Himself, however, gave great hope to the sodomites, the homosexuals of this earth. He said...

- that Sodom was judged and destroyed because of sin, but that it would not have been destroyed if its people had repented.
- that Sodom and its people would answer for much in the day of judgment, but not for having neglected and rejected Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Note: how much more judgment will fall upon sodomites (homosexuals) who are guilty of both sodomy (homosexuality) and of rejecting Christ.

But there is hope for every Sodomite: he or she can repent — turn away from their sin — and trust Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

Mat 11:23 *“And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.”*

Acts 2:38 *Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

Acts 3:19 *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*

Acts 8:22 *Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.*

Isa 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

Ezek 18:21 *“But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die.”* □