

Genesis

Chapter 18:22-19:3

✠ **Gen 18:22-33** ²² *Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD.* ²³ *And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"* ²⁴ *"Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?"* ²⁵ *"Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"* ²⁶ *So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."* ²⁷ *Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord:"* ²⁸ *"Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?"* *So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it."* ²⁹ *And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?"* *So He said, "I will not do it for the sake of forty."* ³⁰ *Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?"* *So He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."* ³¹ *And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?"* *So He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty."* ³² *Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?"* *And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten."* ³³ *So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.*

I recently bought a car. And this kind of reminds me of a how we finagle our way into the price we want when we try to purchase something. But this was more than just the purchase of a car or even trying to get the best deal at a yard sale. This was people's life Abraham was talking about. I could just imagine Abraham right now as he started out possibly thinking of the people he knew in Sodom and Gomorrah. Starting off with fifty people and eliminating each one as he thought about them until he got down to ten people and may have said, "Forget it, I don't even know of ten righteous people in Sodom and Gomorrah."

God knew this, and He still was showing that He had compassion on the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

"But He destroyed that wicked town, how can you say He had compassion on it?" You may be thinking. God was willing to have as little as ten people be there to be a witness to the people. Remember Noah and how for a hundred years he preached to the people.

† **2 Peter 2:5 (NLT)** *And God did not spare the ancient world--except for Noah and his family of seven. Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment. Then God destroyed the whole world of ungodly people with a vast flood.*

Even here with Noah, there were less than ten people; in fact there were only eight that were saved from the flood. God was patient for a hundred years with the people on the earth. And He gave them a hundred years to repent as Noah was preaching to them the whole time.

"But God is so unfair" people say. *"He doesn't really give people a chance or warn them."* If people think that way, think about this.

† **Luke 16:19-31 (NLT)** *Jesus said, "There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed and who lived each day in luxury.²⁰ At his door lay a diseased beggar named Lazarus.²¹ As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man's table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores.²² Finally, the beggar died and was carried by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried,²³ and his soul went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Lazarus in the far distance with Abraham.²⁴ "The rich man shouted, 'Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in these flames.'²⁵ "But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish.²⁶ And besides, there is a great chasm separating us. Anyone who wanted to cross over to you from here is stopped at its edge, and no one there can cross over to us.'²⁷ "Then the rich man said, 'Please, Father Abraham, send him to my father's home.²⁸ For I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them about this place of torment so they won't have to come here when they die.'²⁹ "But Abraham said, 'Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read their writings anytime they want to.'³⁰ "The rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will turn from their sins.'³¹ "But Abraham said, 'If they won't listen to Moses and the prophets, they won't listen even if someone rises from the dead.' "*

So what, you may be thinking. How does this show that God is really giving anyone a chance? We are not done yet.

† **John 11:17 & 39-44** ¹⁷ *So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.*

This is speaking of Lazarus.

³⁹ *Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"⁴¹ Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.⁴² "And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."⁴³ Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"⁴⁴ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes,*

and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

"So what", you still may be thinking.

I believe that this Lazarus is the same Lazarus spoken of in Luke 16. I say that because this is the only parable where a person is mentioned by name. So let's say that this is the same Lazarus. That means he was sent back from the dead to warn others about hell just as the rich man asked, Right? *The rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will turn from their sins.'*

But what was the response of the people?

† **John 12:9-11** *⁹ Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.*

God sent one back from the dead and what was the response of the people? They wanted to kill him, and Why? Because of him people turned to Jesus. Sounds just like the world today, where if anyone, or anything speaks of Jesus they want to destroy it.

The world wants prayer out of school, the Ten Commandments out of the court houses, they even want a TV show banned because it says GODS name without using it in vain.

But the world is without excuse. They can think of all the reasons in the world. But when they are before the throne of God there is only one thing they will be able to do.

† **Romans 14:11-12** *For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God."¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.*

God is so patient with the world. If He wasn't, it would have been destroyed a long time ago. Just as He was patient with Sodom and Gomorrah. How can I say that? Just look at the next verses.

✠ **Gen 19:1-3** *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. 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." 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.*

God could have told the angels to take Lot and his family out right away and He could have destroyed the town immediately. But still God was giving them every chance by sending two angels to warn them.

Another thing I notice about these verses is that Lot was sitting in the gate.

✚ **Deut 16:18 (NLT)** *Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in all the towns the LORD your God is giving you. They will judge the people fairly throughout the land.*

✚ **2 Sam 15:2 (NLT)** *He got up early every morning and went out to the gate of the city. When people brought a case to the king for judgment, Absalom would ask where they were from, and they would tell him their tribe.*

One of the study notes I read indicates those sitting at the gate like this.

The gateway of the city was the meeting place for city officials and other men to discuss current events and transact business. It was a place of authority and status where a person could see and be seen. Evidently Lot held an important position in the government or associated with those who did because the angels found him at the city gate. Perhaps Lot's status in Sodom was one reason he was so reluctant to leave

But the bible says this about Lot in the New Testament.

✚ **2 Peter 2:7-8** *and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)*

Peter says that Lot was a righteous man. But yet he was still in the city gates being a man of authority. Some people see this as a bad thing. But if Lot was a righteous man, was he really doing something bad or being like the people he was helping to judge?

Think of it this way.

We all have jobs and that are in the world. So because you work in a worldly job (so to speak) does that make you unrighteous? What if someone had a government job like a Mayor, or even the president, just because that person is now working for the government, does that remove his Christianity or faith in Jesus?

Paul tells us to:

✚ **Romans 12:2** *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

James also wrote:

† **James 4:4** *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

So we can have jobs in this world, be a part of the government, and even have friends of this world. But we are not to be like them. We are to be the light and salt of the world. How can a lamp light up a room unless it is in the room; or how can salt be used unless it comes in contact with the food?

So if Lot was a righteous man he may have been the only light and salt that was there. But it seems the people just wouldn't listen. And what does Jesus tell us to do when they just won't listen.

† **Matt 7:6** *Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.*

There is a certain point when it's time to stop telling someone about Jesus. It doesn't mean you stop praying for them or being that light for them to see. But your words no longer have an effect on them. What they may need is a new person to come along side them and continue the work that you were doing. This is something you should pray earnestly about and make sure God is telling you to stop! And if He is, then pray for God to bring someone else to that person.

Lot may have been praying for the city of Sodom and Gomorrah. But it seems they were just too wicked, and as we will see, that there was no hope for them at all. So how wicked were they?

† **Gen 13:13** *But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.*

† **Jude 1:7-8** *as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.*

These are just a few verses speaking of Sodom and Gomorrah, next week we will see just how wicked and perverse they really were.

I also have homework for you to do. This next week I want you to start observing what you see on TV, or what you read in the paper or magazines. Listen to the music on the radio, and listen to what others say. Then start writing them down.

"Every single thing I hear and see?" No, but I want you to pay attention to what the world is really like and how it has really separated itself from God. You will base your observations on these next verses.

† **2 Tim 3:1-5 (NLT)** *You should also know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control; they will be cruel and have no interest in what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act as if they are religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. You must stay away from people like that.*

You may be surprised out how much of this verse you will see in the world. We tend to forget how sinful this world is and we almost become dull of see and hearing because we see it so much everyday. Then when we speak against it, we are considered too religious. People (even some Christians) say, Come on this is the year 2019, you're to old fashioned. Everybody's doing it, it's OK. But God is never changing.

† **Mal 3:6** *For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*

† **Heb 13:8** *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

Jesus even warns us about getting to comfortable in this world.

† **Luke 17:26-29** *And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.*

Don't get comfortable in this world, because it's just about time to go home to be with our Savior in Heaven!