

Genesis Chapter 19

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;"

“Two angels”: These were the angels who, with God, had visited Abraham (18:22). They had taken human form (verse 10); called “men”.

“Lot sat in the gate”: Since city officials and other prominent citizens conducted the community’s affairs at the gate, Lot was a leader in the city, possibly a judge (verse 9; 34:20).

Genesis 19:2 "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."

“Turn in, I pray you, into your servant’s house”: Lot’s invitation to the two angels (verses 1-3), to partake themselves of his hospitality was most likely not just courtesy, but an effort to protect them from the known perversity of the Sodomites.

One thing we need to note right here, is that even today, perverted sex of any kind is called sodomy (taken from Sodom). In this passage above, they were spoken of as angels. I believe these were heavenly messengers sent of God. Lot must have realized they were messengers.

Lot wanted to get them safely in his home and out of town, before evil came their way. When lot called them lords, it was not capitalized meaning they were not the Lord. They were sent to see if the evil was as bad as had been reported, so they wanted to stay out in the street.

Genesis 19:3 "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."

“Pressed upon them greatly”: Such was Lot’s concern for these strangers that their stated preference to pass the night in the town square could not be permitted. Lot knew what might happen to them if they did not stay with him.

I believe in this unleavened bread that Lot fed them, he was saying, I am free of sin. "Leaven" means sin.

Genesis 19:4 "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:"

“The men of the city ... all the people”: Both the size of the lustful mob of men boisterously milling around Lot’s house and the widespread nature of Sodom’s moral perversion received

emphasis both from the additional qualifiers used (“all the people from every quarter”; and both old and young”), and the request made (verse 5), “that we may know them”.

Even acknowledging legitimate exaggeration in this use of “all”, would not detract from this emphasis, this was indeed a wicked city!

Genesis 19:5 "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."

“That we may know them”: The word “know” is to be interpreted in the light of (Genesis 4:1), as carnal or sexual knowledge, here referring to homosexuality. We are given a glimpse of the unspeakable possibilities of human depravity.

They sought homosexual relations with the visitors. God’s attitude toward this vile behavior became clear when He destroyed the city (see verses 23-29).

See (Lev. 18:22, 29; 20:13; Romans 1:26; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10), where all homosexual behavior is prohibited and condemned by God.

The Scripture clearly denounces homosexuality as an abomination, “sin”. Later, the law would make homosexuality a capital offense, grouped with incest and bestiality.

You see, this city was so evil and perverted that they participated in group sex. God was showing these two angels that all of this city was involved in this lasciviousness, except perhaps Lot's immediate family. This "know", in the verse above, means to participate in an abominable act with them. Male rape, if you will believe it.

Lot’s response betrayed tension in his ethics; his offer to gratify their sexual lust contradicted his plea not to act “wickedly.” Such contradiction made clear also the vexation of spirit under which he lived in wicked Sodom (2 Pet. 2:6-7).

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

"And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him”: The door of the passage to his house, the courtyard door, for another word is here used; unless the one was properly the door, and the other a hatch.

However, this precaution of shutting it was used to prevent the men of Sodom rushing in, and taking away the men by violence; and that Lot might have some opportunity of trying what he could do by arguments, to prevail upon them to desist from their attempt.

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

The wicked violence of the citizens displays itself. They compass the house, and demand the men for the vilest ends. How familiar Lot had become with vice, when any necessity whatever could induce him to offer his daughters to the lust of these Sodomites (in Gen. 19:8)!

We may suppose it was spoken rashly, in the heat of the moment, and with the expectation that he would not be taken at his word. "Stand back." This seems to be a menace to frighten Lot out of the way of their perverse will.

This account justifies the character given of this depraved people in the preceding chapter (Gen. 18:20, and Gen. 23:13). As their crime was the deepest disgrace to human nature, so it is too bad to be described; in the sacred text, it is sufficiently marked; and the iniquity which, from these most abominable wretches, has been called Sodomy.

Lot hoped to win his neighbors, and to persuade them from pursuing their unlawful measures, for which purpose and that alone he used it, saying to them: do not so wickedly; as to use ill a man's guests, to abuse strangers, to break the laws and rules of hospitality, and especially to commit that unnatural sin they were bent upon.

Genesis 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."

"I have two daughters" was an absolutely amazing alternative to be offered by a believer.

"Do ye to them as is good in your eyes": The constraints of Eastern hospitality and the very purpose for which Lot had invited the visitors in verses 2-3, compelled Lot to offer his daughters for a less deviant (see notes on Rom. 1:24-27), kind of wickedness, so as to protect his guests.

This foolish effort shows that while Lot was right with God (2 Pet. 7-8), he had contented himself with some sins and weak faith, rather than leaving Sodom. But God was gracious to him because he was righteous, by faith, before God.

Why Lot had not moved out of this evil city before now baffles me. He knew how perverted they were. I really believe the reason Lot offered his daughters to these men in this Scripture was to show that sex sin between a man and woman (even though it is very bad), is not as bad as it is between two men.

God calls it an abomination. I believe that is very mild word for what it is truly. Just the fact that these girls were still virgins, showed just how perverted this city really was. Lot called these evil men brethren, which means a pretty bad thing.

He was either overlooking their sins and fellowshiping with them or he was involved himself. Either way, it was terrible. For a dad to offer his daughters to this evil bunch didn't speak too highly of Lot.

Genesis 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."

“Be a judge”: Their accusation suggests Lot had made moral pronouncements before, but his evaluation was no longer tolerable.

“Pressed sore”: Homosexual deviation carries an uncontrollable lust that defies restraint. Even when blinded, they tried to fulfill their lust (verse 11).

These men filled with lust would not listen to Lot. They even called him an outsider. One sin leads to another. They were about to break and enter Lot's home to get the men.

Verses 10-11: Lot was now being protected by those whom he had earlier sought to protect!

Genesis 19:10 "But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door."

"But the men put forth their hand": They came to the door, and opened it, and put out their hands, one on one side the door, and the other on the other.

"And pulled Lot into the house to them and shut to the door": and thus, they rescued Lot from the fury and rage of the men of Sodom, and prevented his daughters being exposed unto them, as he had offered.

This action showed them to be more than men, that they should open the door, take in Lot, and shut it so suddenly, that the men of Sodom could take no advantage of it, could neither retain Lot, nor enter the door when opened, and especially what follows.

Genesis 19:11 "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."

“And they smote the men ... with blindness”: This has been understood two ways.

(1) The angels, by the power which God had given them, deprived these wicked men of a proper and regular use of their sight, so as either totally to deprive them of it, or render it so confused that they could no longer distinguish objects; or

(2) They caused such a deep darkness to take place, that they could not find Lot's door. The author of the book of The Wisdom of Solomon was evidently of this latter opinion, for he says they were compassed about with horrible great darkness (Genesis 19:17). See a similar case of Elisha and the Syrians (2 Kings 6:18).

The men, spoken of here, were the angels who pulled Lot into the house. Just as punishment has fallen today on people who commit this terrible sin, God punished these with blindness.

Just as people today involved in this sin are not turning from their sins, neither did these men of Sodom. Lot's big mistake was in staying in this evil place. Separate yourself from people who are involved in this evil.

Genesis 19:12 "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:"

The visitors now take steps for the deliverance of Lot and his kindred before the destruction of the cities. All that are related to him are included in the offer of deliverance. There is a blessing in being connected with the righteous, if men will but avail themselves of it. The mercy of the Lord prevails. The angels use a little violence to hasten their escape.

"And the men said unto Lot": When they had got him into the house again, they began to make themselves known unto him, and to acquaint him with the business they came to do. "Hast thou here any besides?" Which they ask not as being ignorant, though angels don't know everything relative to men, but to show their great regard to Lot.

"Son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters": It should be rendered either "son-in-law, or thy sons, or thy daughters". If thou hast any son-in-law that has married a daughter of thine, or any sons of thine own that live from thee; or grandsons, the sons of thy married daughters, as Jarchi interprets it; or any other daughters besides those two we here see.

And whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place. That is, whatsoever relations he had, whether more near or remote. For as for his goods, whether in his own house, or in any other part of the city, there was no time for saving them.

Genesis 19:13 "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."

"The Lord hath sent us to destroy it": With the wickedness of the city so graphically confirmed (verses 4-11), divine judgment was the only outcome, but Lot's family could escape it (verses 12-13. Jude 7).

Sudden destruction was to fall on this city. God would not put up with this sin. These angels had orders from God to call down fire from heaven. These angels were warning Lot and his family to get out.

Genesis 19:14 "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."

"Seemed as one that mocked": Lot's warning of imminent judgment fell within the category of jesting, so concluded his sons-in-law (or perhaps his daughters' fiancés).

Evidently Lot's testimony had degenerated to the point where even his family did not believe he was serious.

His sons-in-law had reprobate minds. They were so caught up in these sins themselves that they had never slept with their wives. (They were virgins). They did not know God, so why would

they believe a warning from God? When this city of men was struck blind, it was not only physical blindness, but spiritual, too.

Genesis 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."

"And when the morning arose": When it was break of day, for as yet the sun was not yet risen, nor did it rise until Lot got to Zoar (Genesis 19:23). He had now returned from his sons-in-law, and by this time it began to be light.

"Then the angels hastened Lot": urged him to get out of his house as fast as he could.

"Saying, arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here": Aben Ezra, and others, have concluded, it has been observed, that he had other daughters elsewhere, which they suppose were married to men of Sodom. But the phrase, "which are here", or "are found", or "are present" relates to his wife, as well as his daughters, and only signifies, that he should take all his relations that were present.

Genesis 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."

"The Lord being merciful unto him": This reason, elsewhere described as God having remembered Abraham (verse 29), is why, in the face of Lot's seeming reluctance to leave ("hesitated"), the angels personally and forcefully escorted him and his family beyond the city's precincts.

I cannot believe that Lot and his family were slow to leave, and had to be led away from this evil city by these two angels. The girls went without their husbands. They were better off without them, if they were caught up in homosexuality.

I do not find where Lot had made a stand for God in this city; the Lord showed mercy to him probably because of Abraham, and also, because he befriended the angels.

Verses 17-21: An urbanized lifestyle was apparently superior to a lonely one in the mountains and might be why Lot, playing upon the mercy already shown him, negotiated for an alternative escape destination, another city! The angels rely (verse 21), indicated that this city was included in the original judgment plan, but would be spared for Lot's sake.

Genesis 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."

When they had brought them forth, etc. Every word here is emphatic, "Escape for thy Life"; thou art in the most imminent danger of perishing; thy life and thy soul are both at stake. "Look not behind thee". Thou hast but barely time enough to escape from the judgment that is now descending; no lingering, or thou art lost! One look back may prove fatal to thee, and God commands thee to avoid it.

"Neither stay thou in all the plain", because God will destroy that as well as the city. "Escape to the mountain", on which these judgments shall not light, and which God has appointed thee for a place of refuge; "lest thou be consumed".

It is not an ordinary judgment that is coming; a fire from heaven shall burn up the cities, the plain, and all that remain in the cities and in the plain. Both the beginning and end of this exhortation are addressed to his personal feelings. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life;" and self-preservation is the first law of nature, to which every other consideration is minor and unimportant.

Lot and his family had to leave their home and their belongings, but they should have been very thankful to get out with their lives. In fact, the destruction was to be so widespread, that they were to run to the mountain for safety. The angel warned them not to look back.

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

"Lot said ... Oh, not so, my Lord": I cannot escape to the mountain. What a strange want of faith and fortitude, as if He who had interfered for his rescue would not have protected Lot in the mountain solitude.

Supposing three present, not observing that the two angels had left him that had brought him thither; though it is but to one of them he addresses himself, even to him who had bid him make the best of his way to the mountain, as appears by what follows: let me not be obliged to go so far as to the mountain.

Genesis 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:"

"Behold, now thy servant hath found grace in thy sight": In sending two of his angels to him, to inform him of the approaching destruction of Sodom. To pluck him out of it as a coal out of the burning and then to place him outside the city. And in directing and encouraging him to escape for his life.

"And thou hast magnified thy mercy which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life": He owns it was owing to the mercy of this illustrious Person, whom he knew and acknowledges, by what he says, to be a divine one, that his life was saved.

And that this appeared exceeding great in it, that he should spare him and his family, when such multitudes of souls would perish; and he might have perished with the rest, if he had not had timely notice in such a gracious manner.

"And I cannot": Or, "but now, I cannot"

"Escape to the mountain": It is too far for me; he signifies that his strength would not hold out through the fatigues of the night past, and want of sleep and rest. But this was owing more to the infirmity of his mind than of his body, for he could go to this same mountain afterwards.

"Lest some evil take me, and I die": Or "that evil", the burning of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, lest that should overtake him before he got to the mountain. Thus, he began to distrust the power of God to strengthen him to go thither, who had appeared so wonderfully for him in his present deliverance.

And he might have assured himself, that he that brought him out of Sodom would never suffer him to perish in the destruction of it.

Genesis 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."

The mountain was preserved by its elevation from the flood of rain, sulfur, and fire which descended on the low ground on which the cities were built. Lot begs for a small town to which he may retreat, as he shrinks from the perils of a mountain dwelling, and his request is mercifully granted.

This was a prayer of Lot to the Lord. Can you even believe that Lot would question God on this? He realized God had been merciful, but still wanted to alter the plans that God had made for his safety. It seemed, Lot did not want to live in the country where you have to work with your hands, he was a city dweller. Let's read on, and see if the Lord answered his prayer.

Genesis 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."

"I will not overthrow this city": That God not only spared Sodom until Lot was safe, but also spared another city (Bela), permanently because of his prayer, is one of the strongest Old Testament illustrations of eternal security of backslidden believers.

In spite of Lot's deep apostasy, the New Testament assures us that he was a "righteous man" (redeemed), and that his "righteous soul" was daily vexed with the unlawful deeds of his sodomite neighbors (2 Pet. 2:8). Doubtless, Lot will be among those who "shall suffer loss" but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. 3:15).

Genesis 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."

"Haste thee, escape thither": Seeing he had granted him his request, he is urgent upon him to be gone, and not to delay upon any account, or make other excuses.

"I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither". So, these heavenly messengers had the strictest commission to take care of Lot and his family. And even the purposes of Divine justice could not be accomplished on the rebellious, till this righteous man and his family had escaped from the place.

Consistent with the decree of God, that Lot and his family should be delivered and preserved, and with his promise made to him, that he would not overthrow that city; and therefore, the catastrophe which would befall all the cities at once could not begin until he was safely arrived there.

Therefore, the name of the city was called Zoar. In later times, and probably first by Lot, from his use of the word "little", which was his request, which Zoar signifies; it before was called Bela (see Genesis 14:2).

God answered Lot's prayer. It seemed this city, as well, had been set for destruction, but the Lord spared it for lot to dwell in. The name "Zoar" means little. The angel told him to hurry, so that he could carry out the destruction.

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

"And the sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar": Which is observed partly to point at the time of his entrance into the city, and of the burning of Sodom, which began at the same time; and partly to show what a fine morning it was, and what little appearance there was of such a tempest rising as quickly did.

So that the inhabitants of Sodom, who were up so early, little thought of so sudden a catastrophe, and those that were in their beds were at once surprised with it: it was a morning of light and joy to Lot, who was so wonderfully delivered, but a dreadful one to the men of Sodom and the rest of the cities of the plain, with whom the scene was soon altered.

Lot, instead of cheerfully obeying the commandment of the Lord, appealed to the great mercy shown to him in the preservation of his life, and to the impossibility of his escaping to the mountains, without the evil overtaking him, and entreated therefore that he might be allowed to take refuge in the small and neighboring city, Bela, which received the name of Zoar (Gen. 14:2).

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

Here the Lord is represented as present in the skies, whence the storm of desolation comes, and on the earth where it falls.

“Brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven”: When morning came (verse 23), judgment fell. Any natural explanation, about how the Lord used combustible sulfur deposits to destroy that locale, falters on the emphatic indication of miraculous judgment.

“Brimstone” could refer to any inflammable substance; perhaps a volcanic eruption and an earthquake with a violent electrical storm “overthrew” (verse 25), the area. That area is now believed to be under the south end of the Dead Sea. Burning gases, sulfur and magma blown into the air all fell to bury the region.

It may even refer to a meteorite shower that literally burned up the whole area or a combination of actions simultaneously.

Genesis 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."

“And he overthrew those cities”: The Lord rained brimstone and fire down from the skies."

You see, this was like an atomic blast, but it came from the LORD Himself. This was judgment. Sometimes, God uses people and nations to bring judgment, but in this case, He took care of it Himself. He explained that not only the cities were destroyed, but the people, and the trees, and all living things.

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

“His wife looked back”: Lot’s wife paid the price of disregarding the angelic warning to flee without a backward glance (verse 17).

In doing so, she became not only encased in salt, but a poignant example of disobedience producing unwanted reaction at judgment day (Luke 17:29-32), even as her home cities became by-words of God’s judgment on sin (Isa. 1:9; Rom. 9:29; 2 Pet. 2:5-6).

“She became a pillar of salt”: Jesus used this incident as a warning to others not to look back (Luke 17:21-33). Lot’s wife apparently lingered behind, continually and longingly looking back on her beloved possessions, and was buried by the explosion that resulted from the destruction of the city.

Disobedience to God can bring instant, sudden destruction, as it did to Lot's wife, The Bible says, even now when you put your hand to the plow, do not look back.

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

"And Abraham got up early in the morning": Perhaps he had had but little sleep the whole night, his thoughts being taken up with what was to befall the cities of the plain; and especially being in great concern for Lot and his family.

"To the place where he stood before the Lord": Genesis 18:22; to the very spot of ground where he had stood the day before in the presence of the Lord, and had conversed with him, and prayed unto him.

Here he came and stood waiting for an answer to his prayers; and perhaps this place was an eminence, from whence he could have a view of the plain of Jordan and the cities on it; and so it appears from (Genesis 19:28).

Genesis 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."

"And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain": To see how it fared with them. Very probably the Lord had hinted it to him, that the destruction would be that morning, and therefore he rose early, got to the place early, and being on an eminence, looked to see if he could observe any sign of it.

"And beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace": After the fiery shower was over, and the cities burnt down, the smoke ascended toward heaven, as the smoke of mystical Babylon will do (Rev. 19:3). Like the reek of a boiling cauldron; or, as Jarchi stated, like the smoke of a lime kiln always burning.

Genesis 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."

"The cities of the plain": The best archeological evidence locates Sodom and Gomorrah at the south of the Dead Sea region, i.e., in the area south of the Lisan Peninsula that juts out on the east (see note on 14:10).

"God remembered Abraham": 18:23-33.

You can see in all of this, that God remembered Abraham and saved Lot, his nephew. I do not see, in any of this, that it was from righteous living of Lot that saved him. It was by grace, and in remembrance of Abraham. The description of this great destruction would be very similar to hell. The only difference is this happened and was over. Hell is continuous.

Genesis Chapter 19 Questions

1. Who went to Sodom and saw Lot at the gate?
2. What did Lot invite them to do?
3. What is a word used today for perverted sex?
4. Why did they want to stay in the street?

5. What did Lot serve them?
6. What does "unleavened" stand for?
7. Who surrounded Lot's house that night?
8. Why?
9. What did Lot offer them, instead of the angels?
10. What did "know" mean in verse 5?
11. Where did Lot talk to the men of the city?
12. What word did Lot call them, that indicated he fellowshiped with them?
13. What does God call homosexuality?
14. Why would the men not listen to Lot?
15. The angels saved Lot how?
16. What happened to the men trying to break into the house?
17. Did Lot have other members of his family, besides his wife and two daughters?
18. When Lot tried to get them to leave, how did they react?
19. What two kinds of blindness are meant?
20. When did the men tell Lot to leave?
21. Did he leave immediately? Explain.
22. What 2 reasons were probably why God saved Lot?
23. Did Lot go where God sent him?
24. Where did he go?
25. What was the name of the place where Lot went?
26. What does the name mean?
27. How did God destroy Sodom and Gomorrah?
28. This was like what?
29. What 3 ways does God bring judgment?

30. What, besides the cities, were destroyed?
31. What did Lot's wife do wrong?
32. What happened to her?
33. Disobedience brings what?
34. When Abraham looked, what did it look like toward Sodom?
35. Who did God remember in all of this?
36. This destruction reminds us of what?