

Genesis 19-20 – Thursday, January 24th, 2008

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.

- Two angels of the Lord come to Sodom at night, and find Lot sitting in the gate of the city. When he sees them, he bows to meet them.
- Notice that Lot is a leader in Sodom now. He's made a name for himself there, and is a recognized leader within the city gate.
- The gates of the city represented the collective wisdom of the city. Interesting that Lot is now on the "community board," so to speak.

Lot's progression of compromise:

1. He looked toward Sodom (Genesis 13:10)
2. He pitched his tent toward Sodom (Genesis 13:12)
3. He is living in Sodom (Genesis 14:12)
4. He is a civic leader in Sodom (Genesis 19:1)

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.

- As is the custom, Lot is hospitable and invites them to spend the night in his home. They tell him they'll stay in the open square instead.
- Lot strongly insists that they don't sleep in the open square because he knows it's not safe for them, so they agreed to stay with him.

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. **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."

- The men of Sodom both old and young from all over the city surrounded the house and wanted to have sex with these male angels.
- This is the sin of homosexuality. It is important to understand that God loves homosexuals, but has to judge the sin of homosexuality.

QUESTION: Are you saying that homosexuality is a sin?

No, I'm not saying that homosexuality is a sin; the Bible is saying that homosexuality is a sin.

Ezekiel 16:49-50 **49** Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. **50** And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit. NKJV

Leviticus 18:22-23 **22** You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. **23** Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion. NKJV

Leviticus 20:13 If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them. NKJV

Romans 1:26-27 **26** Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. **27** 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. NIV

1 Timothy 1:8-11 **8** But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, **9** knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, **10** for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, **11** according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. NKJV

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 **9** Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, **10** nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. NKJV

QUESTION: Are homosexuals born that way? While there is presently no solid biological research that would support that, even if there was, the Bible teaches that we are all born with a predisposition to sin and approximately 2% of the population expresses this predisposition in a homosexual desire.

6 So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, **7** and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly!

- So Lot is now begging them and pleading with them to not pursue homosexual sex with these men, who are really angels.
- Did you catch verse seven? Notice when Lot pleads with them to not do such wickedness, he calls them his "brethren."

8 See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof."

- Lot does the unthinkable and offers his two virgin daughters to these men sexually. This is unspeakably shameful.
- One has noted that Lot is negotiating with evil, and one should never do that. Flee evil, don't negotiate with evil.
- To sort of explain but not excuse this; in the Middle-Eastern culture, you put the protection of your guests above your own family.

9 And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. 10 But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. 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.

- When the men tried to force their way in, the angels of the Lord strike them with blindness.
- What is utterly unimaginable is that even after this supernatural blinding of all the men, they still kept trying to find the door.

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! 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."

- The angels of the Lord tell Lot to get all of his family members out of this place because they are going to destroy it.
- It's interesting that before judgment comes, the Lord has the angels take Lot and his family out first.

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.

- Notice the response of his sons-in-law when Lot tries to tell them to get out of Sodom. They didn't take him seriously.
- They must not have had any respect for their father-in-law Lot because of his lukewarm compromise.
- Also interesting to note that Lot must have had more than two daughters in order to have "sons-in-law." They aren't saved.

15 When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." 16 And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.

- The angels of the Lord have to literally grab Lot's hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters to take them out.
- Notice that the reason they have to do this is because Lot "lingered," or hesitated. He really didn't want to leave Sodom.
- One has noted that he had too much of the world to be happy in the Lord, and too much of the Lord to be happy in the world.

17 So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed." 18 Then Lot said to them, "Please, no, my lords! 19 Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. 20 See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live." 21 And he said to him, "See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. 22 Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

- Lot begs them to let him go to a small city called Zoar which apparently was also going to be subject to God's judgment and destroyed.
- Again, we would be grossly remiss to miss how the Lord "cannot" bring the judgment until Lot and his family arrive safely in Zoar.

23 The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. 24 Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. 25 So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

- Sodom and Gomorrah were so thoroughly destroyed that nobody is really sure where their exact location is.
- Some have speculated that it was so completely destroyed that it is buried under the Dead Sea, which would make sense.

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

- Lot's wife looking back would seem to indicate that she knew God in her mind and believed in Him but didn't have Him in her heart.
- Her heart was still in Sodom even though she witnessed God move in her life. Perhaps that's why Jesus said; "remember Lot's wife."

Luke 17:30-35 - 30 "It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. 31 On that day no one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. 32 Remember Lot's wife! 33 Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34 I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. 35 Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left." NIV

27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD. 28 Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace. 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 which Lot had dwelt.

- Abraham sees smoke from Sodom rising like a furnace and realizes that God had to bring His judgment on their wickedness.
- He was actually hoping God would spare Sodom if there were at least 10 righteous, but knows that God did at least save his nephew.
- This is as fascinating as it is encouraging because it tells us that God saved Lot for Abraham's sake and answered Abraham's prayers.

30 Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave.

- Lot is probably so terrified by what he's witnessed with Sodom and his wife that he's afraid to stay in Zoar so he hides in a cave.
- He has lost everything and is homeless now. To think that before he moved to Sodom he was so wealthy when he was with Abraham.

31 Now the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father."

- Some have suggested that Lot's daughters thought the whole world had been destroyed, but they would have seen people in Zoar.
- For them to conspire to do this with their own dad shows how living in Sodom had corrupted them. Also, where did they get the wine?

33 So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. 34 It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, "Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." 35 Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

- So they get Lot so drunk he doesn't know what they are doing and each take turns so they can get pregnant and preserve the lineage.
- It's ironic that Lot is doing the very shameful act he himself had suggested to the men in Sodom in having sex with his daughters.

QUESTION: "Why would God have this unthinkable perversion recorded for us in the pages of scripture?"

"It is far better for children to learn the facts of life from the Word of God where sin is condemned than from dirty words on alley walls, or from lewd stories. No one can escape knowledge of sin . . . these things are never mentioned without being accompanied by the stern warnings that God hates sin and punishes it." (Donald Grey Barnhouse)

36 Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day.

- Notice that this is the origin of the Moabites and the Ammonites, both of which will be a terrible influence on the Israelites.
- They will eventually lead Israel into idol worship and ultimately the worship of Molech.
- Look at what Lot's decision to move to Sodom did to his family and eventually the whole nation of Israel, all because he loved the world.

20:1 And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. 2 Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

- Here we go again, Abraham denies Sarah is his wife and Sarah lies that she is his brother. You would think they learned their lesson.
- They're doing the same thing they did in chapter 12, the only difference being that there's no famine this time, so why does he do it?
- Some have suggested that he left and journeyed to Gerar because he didn't want to live in the hills overlooking a destroyed Sodom.

QUESTION: Why would they have to lie again, was Sarah still that beautiful at age 90?

We should not ignore the idea of Sarah's attractiveness even in old age. "She had in some measure been physically rejuvenated, in order to conceive, bear, and nurse Isaac, and possibly this manifested itself in renewed beauty as well." (Henry M. Morris)

QUESTION: Supposing that Sarah was rejuvenated in her physical beauty, why would they do this again?

- There are certain areas in our lives that we are weak in and for Abraham it's fear that traps him into lying.
- Abraham is afraid of Abimelech and his fear of man is the trap.

Proverbs 29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe. NKJV

"The best of men; are men at best" F. B. Meyer

3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife."

- God uses a dream to communicate to this Pagan king, he would have used someone like Abraham but obviously He can't.
- God is quite serious about this when He says "you're a dead man," for taking Sarah, because she is Abraham's wife.

4 But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also? 5 Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this." 6 And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. 7 Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

- Abimelech actually has a good point here, and God agrees that he is innocent and it's not his fault because he was lied to.
- However, God also tells Abimelech that He Himself kept him from sinning with Sarah, but again warns him to return her to Abraham.

QUESTION: Why is God so serious about killing Abimelech if he doesn't return Sarah to Abraham untouched?

"Suppose Abimelech had taken Sarah and God had not intervened? Two seeds would have been at the door to Sarah's womb, and to this day an element of doubt would cling to the ancestry of our Lord." (Donald Grey Barnhouse)

8 So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid. 9 And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done." 10 Then Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?"

- Early in the morning Abimelech calls his servants and Abraham and confronts him with this lie asking him why.
- What's so incredulous about this is that Abimelech is right, and Abraham, the man of God is wrong and they both know it.

11 And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will kill me on account of my wife. 12 But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'"

- Abraham tells Abimelech that he did it because he thought they didn't fear God. In fact, Abraham isn't fearing God, they are (vs 8).
- Then he tells him that it was still sort of true because Sarah is actually his half-sister. A half truth, intended to deceive, is a whole lie!
- In verse 11 Abraham accuses them, in verse 12 he tells a half-truth about Sarah, but it's even worse in verse 13; he blames God!

"There is a terrible meaning in this verb *wander* which Abraham uses. The Hebrew word occurs exactly fifty times in Scripture and never in a good sense. It is used of animals going astray, of a drunken man reeling, or staggering, of sinful seduction, of a prophet's lies causing the people to err, of the path of a lying heart. Six other words are translated *wander*, any one of which Abraham might have used, but he used the worst word available. ...Abraham should have said: 'Forgive me, Abimelech, for dishonoring both you and my God. My selfish cowardice overwhelmed me, and I denied my God by fearing that He who called me could not take care of me. He is not as your gods of wood and stone. He is the God of glory. He is the living God, the Creator, the most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. He told me He would be my shield and my exceeding great reward, and supplier of all my needs . . . In sinning against Him, I sinned against you. Forgive me, Abimelech.'" (Donald Grey Barnhouse)

14 Then Abimelech took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him. 15 And Abimelech said, "See, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you." 16 Then to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; indeed this vindicates you before all who are with you and before everybody." Thus she was rebuked.

- It's interesting that Abimelech is giving gifts of restitution to Abraham and not the other way around as should have been the case.
- Also interesting to not is that Abraham accepts gifts from this King Abimelech when he wouldn't accept gifts from the King of Sodom.
- Notice that Abimelech says to Sarah; I have given your "brother" and not your husband, perhaps this is why she was so rebuked.

17 So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children; 18 for the LORD had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

- So Abraham prays to God for Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants and they bore children.
- What's interesting is that as badly as he messes up again, he is still praying, and more interesting is that God is still answering.
- Accounts like this one in the scriptures are not here to show us how bad Abraham is, rather, it's to show us how good God is.