

Genesis 19 Bible Study

In Genesis 19 we see the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the rescue of Lot and his family. As you read this chapter, recall the parting of Lot and Abraham. Lot chose the urban life, while Abraham took what was left over, the promised land. Lot's suspect choices continue to show up in this chapter.

"The two angels came to Sodom in the evening while Lot was sitting in the city's gateway. When Lot saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face toward the ground. He said, "Here, my lords, please turn aside to your servant's house. Stay the night and wash your feet. Then you can be on your way early in the morning." "No," they replied, "we'll spend the night in the town square." But he urged them persistently, so they turned aside with him and entered his house. He prepared a feast for them, including bread baked without yeast, and they ate." (Genesis 19:1-3, NET)

How is this meeting with the angels and hospitality of Lot different from Abraham's interaction in Genesis 18:2? (there are at least 3 differences)

Why do you suspect that the angels would say 'no' to Lot's request for them to stay the night at his home when they didn't resist Abraham?

Knowing what you know about Sodom, why do you think Lot would urge them to stay with him?

Let's see what happens next: *"Before they could lie down to sleep, all the men—both young and old, from every part of the city of Sodom—surrounded the house. They shouted to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so we can have sex with them!"*" (Genesis 19:4-5, NET)

Sleep would ordinarily follow a meal like this one, but instead we see who surrounding the house?

The fact that we see both young and old shows that this type of sin had become generational. As we saw in Ezekiel 16:49 last week, the Sodomites were prideful and did not help the poor and needy but instead insisted upon hurting them. In order to protect his guests, Lot tries to reason with the men:

*“Lot went outside to them, shutting the door behind him. 19:7 He said, “No, my brothers! **Don’t act so wickedly!** 19:8 Look, I have **two daughters** who have never had sexual relations with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do to them whatever you please. Only don’t do anything to **these men**, for they have come under the **protection of my roof.**” 19:9 “Out of our way!” they cried, and “This man came to live here as a foreigner, and now he dares to judge us! We’ll do more harm to you than to them!” They kept pressing in on Lot until they were close enough to break down the door. (Genesis 19:6-9)*

Lot tries three tactics with the men. *What are they?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

It goes without saying that the second tactic of Lot, to give the men his daughters, is disgusting and sinful. This kind of behavior would have been detested by Israel. It was expressly forbidden in Leviticus 19:29, “*Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, so that the land does not practice prostitution and become full of lewdness.*” *What does this tell us about Lot’s moral compass?*

Even though Sodom seems to have affected the moral compass of Lot, we see that the girls are always kept inside, protected behind the door. The door symbolically becomes a boundary between the saved and the condemned, as we will soon see. Remember, the angels of God are inside the house, behind the door as well, and they serve as protection for Lot and his family.

What was the men’s reaction to Lot’s attempt to smooth things over? (see verse 19:9)

Now let’s see the power of these angelic visitors:

So, the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house as they shut the door. ^{19:11} Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, from the youngest to the oldest, with blindness. The men outside wore themselves out trying to find the door. ^{19:12} Then the two visitors said to Lot, “Who else do you have here? Do you have any sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or other relatives in the city? Get them out of this place ^{19:13} because we are about to destroy it. The outcry against this place is so great before the Lord that he has sent us to destroy it.” (Genesis 19:10-13)

It turns out the angels didn’t need Lot’s protection. *How many times have you tried to protect God and found yourself failing?*

The fact that Lot thought he needed to protect these ambassadors of God shows how little he understands the power of God. *What does verse 11 tell us the angels did to the men?*

What do the visitors reveal to Lot in verse 13?

How do his sons-in-law react to Lot’s news? Let’s take a look:

“Then Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law who were going to marry his daughters. He said, “Quick, get out of this place because the Lord is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was ridiculing them.” (Genesis 19:14, NET)

What does this reaction say about Lot’s status in the eyes of his sons-in-law?

At dawn the action takes a turn as the angels prepare Sodom for its destruction by removing Lot and his family.

^{19:15} *At dawn the angels hurried Lot along, saying, “Get going! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or else you will be destroyed when the city is judged!”* ^{19:16} *When Lot hesitated, the men grabbed his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters because the Lord had compassion on them. They led them away and placed them outside the city.* ^{19:17} *When they had brought them outside, they said, “Run for your lives! Don’t look behind you or stop anywhere in the valley! Escape to the mountains or you will be destroyed!”* ^{19:18} *But Lot said to them, “No, please, Lord!* ^{19:19} *Your servant has found favor with you, and you have shown me great kindness by sparing my life. But I am not*

able to escape to the mountains because this disaster will overtake me, and I'll die. 19:20 Look, this town over here is close enough to escape to, and it's just a little one. Let me go there. It's just a little place, isn't it? Then I'll survive."
(Genesis 19:15-20)

Why was the city being judged, punished?

Why do you supposed Lot hesitates to run for his life to the mountains in verse 19?

What does he suggest he do instead of fleeing to the mountains?

The angel listened to Lot and agreed to do what he asked. 19:21 "Very well," he replied, "I will grant this request too and will not overthrow the town you mentioned. 19:22 Run there quickly, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there." (This incident explains why the town was called Zoar. (Genesis 19:21-22)

Once Lot and his family are safely in Zoar, the end of Sodom comes:

19:23 The sun had just risen over the land as Lot reached Zoar. 19:24 Then the Lord rained down sulfur and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah. It was **sent down from the sky** by the Lord. 19:25 So he overthrew those cities and all that region, including all the inhabitants of the cities and the vegetation that grew from the ground. 19:26 But Lot's wife looked back longingly and was turned into a pillar of salt." (Genesis 19:23-24)

Here we see an illusion to the great flood description in Genesis 8:2, "falling from the sky" with the words "sent down from the sky." *Why do you think there would be a connection between these two events?*

Take a look at Luke 17:26-30 where Jesus compares his own return to these two incidences.

"Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage—right up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot, people were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building; but on the day Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them

all. It will be the same on the day the Son of Man is revealed.” (Luke 17:26–30, NET)

It's a beautiful thing to see the Son of God in the Old Testament. The more we dive into the text the more we see that it all was just a preparation for the coming of Christ. Now let's dig back into Genesis 19:27:

19:27 Abraham got up early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the Lord. 19:28 He looked out toward Sodom and Gomorrah and all the land of that region. As he did so, he saw the smoke rising up from the land like smoke from a furnace. 19:29 So when God destroyed the cities of the region, God honored (remembered) Abraham's request. He removed Lot from the midst of the destruction when he destroyed the cities Lot had lived in.

So now we come full circle back to the place we first heard about the destruction of Sodom, and we see Abraham waking to smoke rising up in the distance. This idea of 'smoke from a furnace' is similar to the smoke from the furnace we see on Mount Sinai in (Exodus 19:18). *What do you think this tells us about who is responsible for the destruction?*

The idea of burning smoke often refers to the divine wrath and judgement of God in scripture. *In verse 29, what do we see about the reason for the salvation of Lot?*

“God remembered Lot” harkens back to God “remembering” Noah while he was in the ark. (Genesis 8:1) This idea of remembering points to a covenant obligation as the reason for God's divine intervention. We see that covenant in Genesis 12:3. God saved Lot because of his covenant with Abraham and Abraham's intercession on the behalf of Lot. It is a powerful thing to be in relationship with the God of the universe. This is one reason intercession is so important in the life of faith. We have access to the Lord where others might not. Praying for them, interceding on their behalf is a responsibility because of our relationship with God.

This next section is hard to stomach, but here we see Lot's sin of offering up his daughters turning on him.

19:30 Lot went up from Zoar with his two daughters and settled in the mountains because he was afraid to live in Zoar. So he lived in a cave with his two daughters. 19:31 Later the older daughter said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man anywhere nearby to have sexual relations with us, according to the way of all the world. 19:32 Come, let's make our father drunk with wine so we can have sexual relations with him and preserve our family line through our father."

19:33 So that night they made their father drunk with wine, and the older daughter came and had sexual relations with her father. But **he was not aware** that she had sexual relations with him and then got up. 19:34 So in the morning the older daughter said to the younger, "Since I had sexual relations with my father last night, let's make him drunk again tonight. Then you go and have sexual relations with him so we can preserve our family line through our father." 19:35 So they made their father drunk that night as well, and the younger one came and had sexual relations with him. But **he was not aware** that she had sexual relations with him and then got up.

19:36 In this way both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father.

19:37 The older daughter gave birth to a son and named him Moab. He is the ancestor of the Moabites of today. 19:38 The younger daughter also gave birth to a son and named him Ben-Ammi. He is the ancestor of the Ammonites of today." (Genesis 19:30-38)

Even though according to Lev 18:6–18 incest was deplorable, we still see the daughters of Lot taking charge of their future by doing the only thing they thought they could do in order to have children. This seen is reminiscent of Noah and his sons, only Noah knew what happened (see Genesis 9:24). Here Lot remains unaware of the situation as we see in verses 33 and 35.

This chapter truly reveals how much different from Abraham Lot was. Lot embraced the world and he chose his path from that worldly perspective, while Abraham led his life in pursuit of God and His will. Lot wasn't forsaken by God because of all his failure, his offspring were still granted special favors by the Lord, but they did live in continual hostility with the Israelites. Later, we will see a descendant of Lot, the Moabitess Ruth, become a grandmother of the greatest Israelite king, David. So even when it looks like God could not use failed people, He shows us that He can and does use the worst of us to fulfill His purposes.