

=EVENTS FROM GENESIS=

Lesson 9

Abraham and Lot

AIM: to teach my Christian pupils never to desire sinful company nor sinful ways.

POINT OF CONTACT: When the Christian gets on the slide called “turning from God’s ways,” it is a quick descent to the bottom. He begins the climb on the ladder to the slide when he decides to try the world’s ways for a while. A slide with a ladder could be drawn to illustrate this point.

INTRODUCTION: The story for this week was dictated by God to men of old so that we might have it for an example of what destruction follows after people have given themselves completely over to sin. Read Jude 7. The Bible story for this week is, of course, absolutely true. The entire Bible was inspired of God to men who faithfully wrote every word that He wanted written. We believe entirely the account around which our lesson is written for this week. Jesus Himself said that it really happened. Read Luke 17:28-36. Archeologists, through their findings, are also affirming the account. Our lesson for today is centered around the man named Lot.

I. LOT’S ASSOCIATION WITH ABRAHAM. See Genesis 11:31; 12:4; 13:1-11.

1. Lot was living with Abraham.

- 1) Lot was Abraham’s nephew. Lot’s father, Haran, was one of the two brothers of Abraham. Haran had died.
- 2) Lot moved with Abraham. When God told Abraham to leave his country, the Ur of the Chaldees, Lot went with him—first to Haran and from there into Canaan. In Canaan he traveled with him to Shechem, to the place between Bethel and Ai, to Egypt and back to Bethel.

2. Lot and Abraham decided to part company. (This was before Ishmael and Isaac were born.)

- 1) Abraham saw the need for this separation. It was as a result of the quarreling which broke out between the two groups of herdsmen who worked for Abraham and Lot. Abraham was a very wealthy man, owning many flocks and herds of animals as well as possessing much silver and gold. Lot also owned many flocks and herds. Both men had many people and tents in their companies. The quarreling broke out over what pasture land was to be used by each group of herdsmen and their animals. Abraham and Lot had a meeting over the dispute. There was no way found for Abraham and Lot to live peaceably together any longer.
- 2) Abraham gave Lot first choice concerning the direction which he would take. This act reveals Abraham’s loving, unselfish personality, while it also shows Lot’s selfish unwillingness to insist that his most kind, generous uncle, Abraham, who had been the very best of fathers to him, be the first to make such a choice. Lot chose to go to the east into the well-watered plains of the Jordan River. (Fresh water streams flowing from the mountains of Moab made possible rich culture in this area in the days of Lot.) Abraham thus remained in the hills and plateaus of Canaan, traveling into Hebron before going on to Gerar and Beer-sheba.

II. LOT’S SEPARATION FROM ABRAHAM. Read Genesis 13:12, 13.

1. Lot left the godly influence that had been upon his life. As the head of his household, Abraham was the spiritual leader. Notice Genesis 18:19.
2. Lot left the places where God was truly worshipped, at the altars of his uncle. Abraham had built altars in Shechem and in Bethel while Lot was with him. Where Lot was going, there were no altars to the true, living God. (Abraham later built altars in Hebron and in Moriah, but Lot did not go there either.)
3. Lot traveled toward wickedness. His tent was pitched to face in the direction of Sodom, an exceedingly wicked city. Whenever a Christian starts looking in the direction of wicked people, examining and desiring some of their ways, he begins to wonder whether he is being unreasonable about living a separated Christian life, and he soon joins the wicked in the activities. He might be bothered by their actions and their language, but he learns to tolerate them.
 - 1) Sodom was a very rich city. As one of the five cities of the plain (Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zoboim, Zoar), it no doubt gained much revenue from the copper-mining operations which were situated between the Salt (Dead) Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba. Military operations of

armies from southern Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq contains this area) had caused tribute from these cities to be paid to Mesopotamia.

- 2) Sodom was a very wicked city. There were not as many as ten saved people found in the city when God destroyed it; there might not have been any in it before he went to it. The only influence for good that there is in the world is God's influence through His people. The men were wicked—showing the condition of their hearts—and they were sinners, showing the acts that would be natural as a result of their unsaved hearts.
- 3) Sodom was located at the southern tip of the Salt Sea—later named the Dead Sea. The ruins of that city now lie under Dead Sea water which has since flowed over the area.

III. LOT'S RESIDENCE IN SODOM. See Genesis 14; 19:1.

1. Lot went to live in Sodom. He was making himself to become “a fish out of water.” He was going to a place where he did not belong. Read II Corinthians 6:14; I Peter 2:9; I John 1:6.
 - 1) Lot was bothered by the sin of the city because he knew better behavior than was exhibited there. He decided to live there, however, perhaps for material gain and for ease of life. Notice II Peter 2:7, 8.
 - 2) Lot was captured in battle. The kings of southern Mesopotamia came to make war on the kings of the plain cities, winning the battle, and taking Lot captive along with others. They completely looted the city at the same time. This battle took place because the plain cities, after 12 years of paying tribute, rebelled and stopped their payments to the four kings of southern Mesopotamia. (This was in the days of the city-states.)
2. Lot went the second time to live in Sodom. Lot was delivered from his captivity. An escapee ran to tell Abraham what had happened; Uncle Abraham sprang into action to free Lot from his trouble. We read that 318 men joined Abraham in pursuing the enemy. They attacked by night. He won the battle, bringing Lot, the other people and all the goods that had been stolen back to Sodom. (It seems as if Lot could have seen the contrast between the courageous, godly Abraham and the cowardly, sinful king and people of Sodom. The king of Sodom had run away from the enemy and had not even joined in the fight for his people; in fact, he did not make an appearance until after Abraham had won the battle for him. Lot had moved into Sodom; he could have moved out now, but he did not.)
3. Lot was given a position of responsibility and honor within the city. Genesis 19:1b, “Lot sat in the gate of Sodom.” (In the gate of the city, business was transacted, contracts were entered into, court cases were tried, and strangers were viewed and welcomed to the city. See Genesis 19:1; 23:10; 34:20; I Samuel 9:18 to read about a few examples.) Lot's duties included representing his city to strangers who came through the gates.

IV. LOT'S DELIVERANCE FROM GOD'S DESTRUCTION. See Genesis 19.

1. God decided to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. The wickedness of these two cities reached such a point that God could no longer tolerate their existence.
 - 1) God told Abraham of His plans. He had sent His angels to confer with Abraham, stating a definite time for Isaac's birth. At the close of that conversation, the angels told Abraham that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was so great that God would have to destroy them. See Genesis 18:20-33.
 - 2) God told Lot of His plans. God was displaying His mercy toward His own. Two of the angels who had visited Abraham came to Sodom. Lot was at the gate of the city, and he welcomed them to the city. He took them into his home to spend the night there. No doubt some of the men of the city were at the gate at the time of their coming, and the word spread that they were in Lot's home. The men of the city came to Lot's home, intending to get the visitors in order that they might commit sexual sin with them. (From the sinful practices of the city comes the term “sodomy.”) Lot attempted to protect the angels, but they had to protect him. He was then told to warn his family of the coming destruction of the city and to get all of them out of the city.
2. Lot prepared to leave Sodom.

- 1) He told his sons-in-law, but they laughed at him. Lot's testimony came too late to convince any whom he wanted to convince of God's truth.
- 2) He told the members of his immediate family. Lot had two daughters living at home, along with his wife and himself.
3. Lot and his family fled to Zoar.
 - 1) They had hesitated leaving. The angels had taken hold of their hands and led them out of the city.
 - 2) God had told Lot to run to the mountains. Lot was afraid to go to the mountains, so he asked the Lord if he might go to Zoar, instead. Lot's daughters accompanied him to Zoar, but Lot's wife looked back toward Sodom in direct disobedience to God's orders. Lot's wife was changed to a pillar of salt. (Here is something that might be interesting: Historians say that the pillar of salt was still visible into New Testament times.)
4. Lot and his two daughters went on to the mountains. He had become afraid to stay in Zoar.
5. Lot committed further terrible sin. He drank wine on two separate nights until he was drunk, and in that condition caused his daughters to become the mothers of his sons, Moab and Ben-ammi, from whom the Moabites and the Ammonites came.

V. LOT'S END. Lot's life ended on the very bottom of the scale. He was saved, yet so as by fire. He did nothing to lift anybody else from his or her sinful ways to walk with God.

CONCLUSION: Lot lost immeasurably because he sought to follow in the world's ways instead of the Lord's. He lost everything material that he had accumulated; he also lost his wife in the terrible destruction, besides failing to turn out sweet, godly daughters, and he lost the peace of mind that is a special gift of a Christian. He was inwardly disturbed by the sinful life which went on around him, and he became afraid wherever he went.