

Explore the Bible: February 25

Purged • Genesis 19:12-26

By Laura Lee Leathers



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Abraham's nephew, Lot, needed that counsel. He had a history of making poor decisions. He isn't alone. Lot's first decision was to choose the plain near Sodom, moving east, away from God (Gen. 13:11). Next, he pitched his tent (v.13) "even as far as Sodom."

When he was captured during the invasion of the kings (Gen. 14:1-17), Abraham came to his rescue, and rather than moving away, he returned to Sodom. Choices have consequences. As you study today's lesson, consider this statement: "Lot lost his ability to influence anyone for righteousness. He also lost his wife and any moral influence he may have had on his daughters" (Lifeway).

Take the time to read Genesis 18 – 19:11 to gain a better understanding of what has transpired before God's judgment on Sodom and the surrounding cities.

Urgency (Gen. 19:12-17, CSB) – The angels who visited Abraham with God are now in Lot's home. They have come to escort him and his family out of the city before it is destroyed. It means to ruin; the reference is the same in Genesis 9:11 – never to destroy the earth again by flood.

The warning: the angels are there to destroy the city. Then, Lot is instructed to warn "his sons-in-law, who were going to marry his daughters." But when he told them, they "thought he was joking" (v. 14). In other words, they didn't believe him or heed the warning.

At daybreak, urging Lot to take his wife and two daughters, the angels tell him it is time to flee. But what does Lot do? He hesitates.

“Lot had moved so far away from God that the pull of his adopted lifestyle was strong. As a result, he hesitated (v. 16), argued (vv. 18-19), and begged to go his own way (v. 20)” (Lifeway).

Do we see an attitude of gratitude from Lot for God sparing his family’s lives? No. But what we do see is God’s compassion (v. 16).

The angels grabbed the hands of Lot and his family and brought them outside the city. They are told to “Run for your lives! Don’t look back and don’t stop anywhere on the plain! Run to the mountains, or you will be swept away!” (v.17) And what does Lot do? He didn’t run (run is used five times; see vs. 17, 19, 20, and 22).

Bargaining (Gen. 19:18-22) – Did Lot not understand the urgency of God’s warnings? Instead of packing, Lot takes the time to converse with the angels, informing them he couldn’t run to the mountains. Their plan was not an option for him. He was fearful of disaster and the possibility of dying. He offers a shortcut for their consideration; he wants to go to a closer town.

“God had delivered him from the hands of the marauding kings (Gen. 14), and now God was protecting him from the coming destruction of Sodom. Yet, Lot couldn’t muster enough faith and trust that God would keep him and his family safe as they ran to the mountains...this period in Lot’s life appears to be dominated by fear rather than trust” (Lifeway).

His request was granted. The town of Zoar (Gen. 14:2,8) would not be demolished (the same word for “destroyed”).

Again, Lot and his family are told to “Hurry up! Run to it”

(v. 22).

Judgment (Gen. 19:23-26) – It is estimated that Lot did not reach Zoar until twenty-four hours later, “the sun had risen.” Judgment would not fall until they were out of the danger zone.

During Noah’s day, the judgment came from the earth, and the rain fell from the sky. God’s judgment would once again come from “out of the sky” (v. 24). But this time, “the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah burning sulfur” (v. 25). Notice the mention of “LORD” twice, verifying it was God’s judgment against the cities.

Look at Luke 17:20-37. Jesus is talking about the coming kingdom. He references the days of Noah (v. 26) and the days of Lot (v. 28).

Sadly, Lot’s wife did not heed the angel’s instructions (v. 17). She looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. In the passage from Luke, Jesus said, “Remember Lot’s wife,” a tragic outcome (Luke 17:32).

“Look, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me to repay each person according to his work . . . He who testifies about these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.’ Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:12-20).

Leathers is a member of First Church Lexington.