

Genesis Chapter 19 - Commentary By Mike Wells

Chapter 19 Overview:

In Chapter 19 we see the results of Lot's backsliding. God judged Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot lost his home, his business, his wife, and his daughters. Apart from the lessons of history, it is a lesson of the what will happen to men without a relationship with God. The chapter contains two sections: (1) the destruction of Sodom and the deliverance of Lot in verses 1-29. And, (2) the sin and disgrace of Lot in verses 30-38

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.*

- These two angels evidently were the two 'men/angels' who departed from Abraham and the Lord in Genesis 18 : 22.
- Why was Lot sitting in the gate of Sodom?
- Many believe Lot had become an official of the city, perhaps the mayor.
- Others believe he owned a place of lodging (hotel if you would) and was enticing guests
- He certainly knew the moral depravity of the city
- He also knew how the Sodomites in the city would prey upon unknowing visitors.

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.*

- Since he didn't know the two strangers traveling through, his offer of lodging may have been more commercial if he did own a hotel more than just a nice gesture
- The two angels declined his invitation.
- They said they would 'camp out' for the night in the *street*.
- The word so translated for street is (bxr *rekhope*) which can also have the idea of a 'plaza.
- Either way, they intended to spend the night in a public place.

Genesis 19 : 3 - *Lot 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.*

- He prepared a meal for them and "*they did eat.*"
- Again just like last chapter notice that the angels partook of physical food during their visit.
- They were obviously in the form of men

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.*

- Meanwhile, the men of the city having observed Lot's guests, surrounded his house.
- It is significant that those who came were "**both old and young.**"
- Apparently, those too old to participate in what they all knew was going to happen came to watch.
- I guess they wanted to vicariously be gratified as the younger men satisfied their perverted lust.

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.*

- The homosexuals of the city called for Lot for him to deliver the men to them they had seen enter his house that night “*that we may know them.*”
- The context makes it clear they were not interested in a mere social introduction.
- The word translated as **know** (edy *yada*) among other things means sexual intimacy.
- The Sodomites of the city planned to homosexually gang rape Lot’s guests.
- And Lot knew it.

Genesis 19 : 6-8 - *6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, 7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. 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.*

- We learn how deeply backslidden Lot has become.
- Lot may have also realized that the perverts at his door might do his family even worse harm as they threatened.
- He may also have perceived that his guests were heavenly and thus was especially considerate of them.
- Either way for him to offer his virgin daughters to men he knew were sexual perverts to be abused by them is despicable.
- He seemed more concerned about his social reputation of protecting guests than the integrity of his own family.
- If his home was a hotel, he may have feared that his business reputation would be tarnished in turning over guests to the sexual predators of the city.
- He was willing to sacrifice his daughters for a business reputation.
- Still, Peter refers to Lot as a “**righteous man**” and his “**righteous soul**” in **II Peter 2 : 28**.
- Lot must have been an essentially a righteous man who neither condoned nor cooperated in the sin of the city.
- However, when great pressure was put on him like this night, he certainly exercised poor judgment.
- It may also be that he knew how the Sodomites would react to his offer.

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.*

- The homosexuals of the city responded with threatening Lot with even worse if he did not cooperate with them.
- As a mob, they “*pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.*”
- There was no question of the severity of the crisis Lot faced.
- At that point, God intervened.

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

- The two ‘men’ (angels) pulled Lot back into the house, and slammed the door.

Genesis 19 : 11 - *They then 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.*

- God’s judgment had begun against them.
- He made them blind and they couldn’t see.
- Yet, even in their blindness, they continued to try and find the door to Lot’s house and could not.
- Even being blind didn’t stop them from wanting to satisfy their lusts

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.*

- As the riot continued in the street, the two angels got down to business with Lot
- If he had had any suspicion that his two guests were divine, it was now confirmed.
- They asked Lot whether he had any other family in the city.

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.*

- They ordered him to get them out of the city.
- Their purpose was simple.
- They intended to destroy the place.
- The reason was plain. “*The cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.*”
- The word translated as **cry** (hqe*u tasàqah*) has the sense of an ‘**outcry**’ or a ‘**cry of distress.**’
- What is implied is that the cry of those who evidently were being routinely raped had reached God.
- Sodom’s sin had come before God.
- The day of judgment had come for this wicked city-state.

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.*

- Once the riot in front of Lot’s house had subsided.
- He went to the homes of his married daughters and said, “*Up, get you out of this place: for the LORD will destroy this city.*”
- His sons-in-law were not impressed.
- They thought their father-in-law was a big joke.
- In fact, the idea of God’s judgment to them was something to be snickered about.
- One thing is for sure, and that is that Lot had such an inconsistent testimony before his own family, they only laughed when he came to warn of God’s judgment.
- They may have thought the ‘old-man’ had gone off the deep end on religion.
- Lot therefore went home.

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.*

- When dawn began to appear, “*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.*”
- Yet, Lot lingered.
- It may be, that his wife was dragging her feet also – Sorry I had to say that – Just picking!!

Genesis 19 : 16 - *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 angels pulled Lot and his family out of town.
- God’s showed extreme mercy on him.
- The angelic messengers could have washed their hands and done their deed.
- Yet, God’s mercy was poured out upon Lot and his family.
- Indeed, *His mercy endureth forever.*

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.*

- The angels urged them to “*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.*”
- It is noteworthy that Lot and his family were commanded to not look back.
- His wife ignored that command to her peril.

Genesis 19 : 18 - *And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: 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.*

- Lot tried to talk the angels out of sending him to the mountains.
- Up in the mountains is where Uncle Abraham lived and was where he had come from.
- Either, He had come to love the world and the things in the world that much.
- Or maybe he was just unwilling to make the tough trek up into the nearby mountains.

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.*

- Lot begged to flee unto the small town nearby.
- His plea, “**is it not a little one?**” may have had the implication that in the smaller town there was no where near as much sin as the old town

Genesis 19 : 21-23 – *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. 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. 23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.*

- The angel accepted Lot’s plea.

- He promised to spare the small adjacent town which came to be known as **Zoar**.
- The name literally means ‘**insignificant**’ or ‘**small**.’
- By then, the sun was rising and Lot entered into Zoar.

Genesis 19 : 24 - *Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.*

- The word translated as **brimstone** (tyrpg *gophriyth*) is unclear in Hebrew.
- The English sense is of **burning sulphur** or of **burning stone**.
- It may well be that God rained some down upon Sodom and the cities of the plain.
- He may have also caused a volcanic eruption in the area to do the same.
- Though there are no active volcanoes in the region today, the dead sea valley is an active tectonic zone which could easily so erupt.
- There were also ‘**slimepits**’ in the area (surface pools of asphalt and petroleum)
- As we saw in the Gulf Wars ignited petroleum in the Middle East burns with a ferocity
- Whether God sent fire and brimstone from heaven, or used more natural means such as a volcanic eruption to shower down burning rock and fire upon those cities igniting the petroleum of the area, the result was the same.
- They were destroyed.
- Some believe that Sodom and Gomorrah along with its other neighboring cities actually were where the Dead Sea now lies.
- They believe that after God’s judgment the area sunk further and became the basin of what now is the Dead Sea.

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.*

- The other cities of the plain evidently included Sodom, Gomorrah, Zeboim, and Admah.
- See Deuteronomy 29:23.
- Not only were the cities destroyed but even that which grew upon the ground was destroyed.
- That region to this day is essentially a desert.

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

- Lot’s wife became a pillar of salt when she disobeyed God’s command not to look back.
- It is apparent, Mrs. Lot loved that world and the things which were in it.
- Implied is that she looked back evidently longing for what was there.
- She may as a mother have also longed for her perishing daughters and perhaps grandchildren there.
- Nevertheless, she in violation of the angel’s command did what she had been ordered not to do.
- Her judgment was swift.
- It may also be implied that she was the negative influence upon Lot who drew him continually deeper into the world.
- A carnal spouse can have a strong influence for the worse over a spiritual one.

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

- Abraham got up early that morning anticipating what might happen.
- Some believe that this place was the place where he had met the Lord the day before.
- Most believe that it was the regular place where he met the Lord in prayer each morning.
- Like Abraham, we should meet with God each morning at the beginning of the day.
- There is no better way to get your day started than in prayer.

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.*

- As he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham saw the smoke.
- It was the smoke of God's judgment rising up "*as the smoke of a furnace.*"
- He may have seen what the world saw in the Gulf War, the massive smoke ascending up toward heaven burning in the gas and oil pits.
- Abraham likely wondered if Lot and all his family had been spared and prayed for that.

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.*

- God remembered His promise to Abraham in sparing any righteous in Sodom.
- This may be why Peter later spoke of Lot as being righteous.
- Whatever righteousness Lot possessed must have been slight though.
- Lot may have been imputed righteousness by believing in God, but he surely didn't possess any great degree of personal righteousness.

Genesis 19 : 30 - *And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.*

- The once rich and proud Lot departed from Zoar after the judgment and dwelt in the mountain.
- He wound up going back to the mountains after all and dwelt in a cave with his two daughters.
- The extent of his backslidden condition was now being realized.
- Lot who at one time had flocks and herds similar in size to Abraham now had none.
- Lot who was once a prominent man in Sodom was now a broken man.
- He had lost his business, he had lost his wife, he had lost most of his family.
- Soon, he would lose even his own integrity.
- The backsliding of a Christian can have awful results.

Genesis 19 : 31-32 – *31 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.*

- Even though Lot's daughters were virgins physically, they were street smart.
- They were wise not in the Lord, but in the ways of the world.

- Some theologians believe it was the custom of Canaanites (i.e., Sodom) for a man to have children with his daughter if there was no other alternative.
- Like most of Sodom's and the Canaanites ways this too was wicked before God.
- Lot's daughters must have known such an idea would be fly with their father.
- However, they believed at this point that they would never have families of their own, after all they had known had been destroyed.
- So they concocted their scheme to get their father drunk and then each seduce him sexually.
- They also were knowledgeable in how to effectively seduce a man, just think about the world they had just come from.

Genesis 19 : 33-35 - 33 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. 34 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. 35 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

- Lot obviously didn't mind getting intoxicated.
- This shows how spiritually decayed he was.
- Each girl, after getting her father drunk, did what was necessary to arouse him and engage in intercourse with him.
- He being drunk did not realize whom he was being intimate with.
- Maybe in his drunkenness, he thought he still had his wife.
- The alcohol had dulled his ability to reason and think.
- Another lesson on the evil of alcohol and what it can do to you.

Genesis 19 : 36-38 – 36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. 37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. 38 And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

- Both girls became pregnant by their own father.
- Both girls had sons.
- The first was named *Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.*
- The other was named *Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.*
- Lot's backsliding had reached its full depth.
- His life had been one of compromise and placing personal gain before godliness.
- He reaped a bitter harvest.
- The Moabites and Ammonites (later the people of Jordan) have remained enemies to the Jews unto this day.