

A handful of years ago I was watching a TV movie on the story of Noah. It started out pretty well, following the Word close enough to be respected. But then, as the ark was floating along the water, the camera pans out and there's a row boat with a man and a woman on it. It zooms in on them, and the man says, "when history tells this story, do you think they will even remember us?" The knock on the ark hull and a rope is lowered down. Noah says, "who are you?" "I'm Lot. And this is my wife." Haha. I stopped watching.

Why do people feel like the Historical events of the Old Testament need to be embellished or altered? When they do this (presumably because many think its all fiction anyway), they do two poor things: 1) they deface the accurate events that happened and that God preserved 2) they render any application or moral of their story useless, since it is not based on the Truth about God.

So, what should we do? We should read these stories. We should read them just as they are. We should read them as Historical Fact. And we should learn: about God and about us, His creation.

The Real Story of Lot – Genesis 19:1,12-13, 14-15, 16-17, 23-26

This story provides several different avenues of study. Early this year we emphasized verses before these to show how the progress towards WORLDLINESS works, even in good people. Lot let his eyes lead the way over his brain. He slowly moved his camp toward an evil city, and then into the city, and then even among the men at the gates. This created his present situation.

Today, our emphasis is on some other elements of this story. First:

- I. God hates sin so much, that He is willing to Destroy sinners He loves.
 - a. I want you to really think about that statement this morning.
 - b. God made us. He specially crafted each and every human being.
 - c. God loves mankind: all mankind. **Genesis 1:26.** Our lives are special to Him.
 - d. He put man in the garden, with no sin, with a plan to bless and sustain them.
 - e. With Adam and in Noah's day, sin forced the justice of God against them!
 - f. **Gen. 18:20, 19:13** – "Man's outcry" – Man's wickedness is an cry against God!
 - g. **Gen 19:15, 23-25** – So, God's justice demanded they be punished by death.
 - h. **II Thess. 1:7-9** – One day God will judge the world and many will die forever.
 - i. *Yes, "God is love." But God is justice. And God is NOT sin. We should remember that.*
- II. God loves man so much, that He is still willing to Save the sinner.
 - a. Though sin was chosen by man, God still reaches out to offer salvation.
 - b. **Gen. 19:12-13** – Lot's sin had brought him here, but God offered him safety.
 - c. Why Lot and not others? Lot was a man of faith in God, and a chance was given.
 - d. **Gen. 19:16** – Lot hesitated. Change was not easy. God was persistent and patient.
 - e. **II Peter 3:9-10** – He will do it, but He doesn't want to do it. Every day He waits!
 - f. **II Tim. 2:3-6** – Jesus came because God's grace lives on, even while sin is here.
 - g. God wants to save and bless you. Yes, even the sinner. He's done so much to prove it.
- III. Man's Love for God's Law will make all the Difference.
 - a. So if we all sin, and we all deserve death by justice, but God wants to save us...
 - b. Who gets to be saved? The one who fears God and keeps His commandments.
 - c. **Gen. 19:12,17** – That is not complex is it. It might be difficult, but it's not unclear. It is unfair? It is too cruel? It is too much? Not in order to live.
 - d. But there were varied responses to this law from God weren't there:
 - i. **Sons-In-Law – v14** – Did not understand and did not obey and they died
 - ii. **Lot's Wife – v26** – Understood the command but turned back and died.
 - iii. **Lot – v15-16** – Lot hesitated but he understood and obeyed.
 - e. In truth, these three sets represent most of us, right? Some don't believe and don't obey. Some believe and obey but just can't truly break free of the old life. Some, though it be difficult, follow through with the Lord's Law and Live.

Can you determine, right here and right now, which of the three you will be? **Firstly**, do you understand how God hates sin so much that if you have it in your life, He must destroy you? **Secondly**, do you understand how badly He wants to avoid that, even to sending Jesus? **Thirdly**, do you understand He will give you law and how you embrace that will tell the whole story?

Okay, assuming we all understand enough to chose to be Lot over the Boys or His Wife... let's test that position by seeing the parallel applications for us from the four instructions of **Gen. 19:17**.

1. "Escape For Your Life"

- a. Lot was forced to accept that his life was one of death and destruction in that place and that he had to walk away from it. It was the only way to be right with God.
- b. We need to see the new life in Christ as just that same thing – it is not a "better life" than where we were and who we were, it is LIFE instead of DEATH – GRACE instead of JUSTICE for our sins. An ESCAPE from the deserved judgment of God.
- c. **Ephesians 2:1-7** – This was the offer to Lot. And this is the offer to you.
- d. **Romans 6:2-7** – Baptism is not some act of faith or after salvation. It is escaping the old life, and putting on the new life, and choosing Spiritual Life over certain death.
- e. I was thinking of men like the Eunuch from last Sunday or Cornelius. When Philip and Peter told them about baptism to be forgiven, that was like an angel telling Lot to escape. It was bigger than a decision to do something, but escape for your life.

2. "Do Not Look Back"

- a. A reason is not given for why Lot's wife looked back. Most of us would reason she was attached to her home, her friends, her life, and leaving it was overwhelming.
- b. And while becoming a Christian does not mean absolute segregation from the old life, and the immediate death of all sinners left behind... it can carry that gravity.
- c. **Luke 17:28-33** – Likely Jesus is speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, but when it was time to go, you had to be willing to walk away, for good. If you want to keep that life and those relationships, it will cost you. But to leave that for Him – salvation!
- d. **I Peter 4:1-5** – (Lifestyle) Our old life of sin and sinful association is over. God will judge and I will not be drawn back in. That time is past. I have to let go.
- e. **II Cor. 6:14-17** – (relationships) – What we want is for them to serve the Lord and you serve the Lord and all be saved! Lot and his family wanted that for S & G. But it was the world that didn't want it for themselves. So she had to leave.

3. "Do Not Stay Anywhere in the Valley"

- a. This reads to me like there was a valley around the cities and the fire and brimstone would be so devastating and encompassing that it would burn the valley around the region as well. So, don't just get out, and not look back, but get WAY out.
- b. Firstly, let's make sure we get the impact of the command – FLEE. The Bible doesn't just tell us to leave the old life and emotionally detach from it, but to FLEE from it. Get as far away as we can: **I Tim. 6:11; II Tim. 2:22; I Cor. 10:14** - from "fugitive" it means to run far away!
- c. This means going *beyond the minimum*. It means being extreme in righteousness!

4. "Escape to the Mountain"

- a. Get to the place of safety. Interesting, **(19:27-28)**, he might have met Abraham there, had Lot not bartered to first stay in Zoar. His lack of instant obedience to the perfect commands may have led to circumstances with his daughter. But two final thoughts here:
 - i. Flee to the Mountain – Remember where aren't just running from something (death) to something (life). We aren't just running away from someone (unrighteous) but also to someone (CHRIST and HIS PEOPLE). Find the peace from your God there. Find your Abraham, the people who can help you there. **(Mark 10:28-30** – families there)
 1. *Paul called me on the phone – away from church, just lost his wife. What to do?*
 - ii. Sin may still show up – Until we get to heaven, mistakes may be made. Lot getting drunk. His daughters acting in fear and immorality – sin. That had to be dealt with and repented of, but they were alive with God and had the chance to do so. He could sin in the city or obey God and still at times fall short. In one you die, in the other there is hope to repent in God.

Conclusion - Well, who are you today? The sons in laws, Lot's wife, or Lot – a sinner who obeyed the will of God?