

## Destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah (Genesis 19:1-38)

Grace Chapel August 5, 2009 Dr. John Niemelä

### REVIEW

12:1–9 After Terah died in Haran, God told Abram to leave his father's house & household; God would make him a great nation & bless him so that he would bless others, so Abram went to Canaan & He revealed Himself again & gave the land to Abram, who then built altars to the Lord & worshipped Him thruout the land that the Lord gave him (claiming it for the Lord)

12:10–20 A severe famine caused Abram to sojourn in Egypt; he told Sarai that her beauty would cause Egyptians to kill him, but to spare her alive; she was to say that she was his sister, so that he would be blessed & live; Pharaoh took her into his house & bestowed a great dowry on Abram, but Pharaoh's whole household (other than Sarai) became quite sick; Pharaoh rebuked Abram for the evil resulting from saying that she is his sister, because it created the possibility that intimacy could have occurred; Pharaoh gave Sarai back & deported Abram, w/ Sarai, & all that belonged to Abram

13:1–18 Abram left Egypt w/ Sarai, Lot & wealth; returned to Bethel & called on the Lord; Abram & Lot's herds overtaxed the land, so strife arose between their herdsmen while Canaanites looked on; Abram ended the strife because he & Lot were relatives (letting Lot choose land); Lot chose the Jordan valley w/ much water; so they separated; Abram dwelt in (the uplands of) Canaan, but Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain (even wicked Sodom); God reaffirmed the promise of innumerable seed; God invited Abram to investigate the land; Abram settled near Hebron and built an altar (to worship the Lord)

14:1–24 Eastern kings fought the western kings who stopped paying tribute in the 13th year; the next year, the eastern kings attacked the Rephaim, the Zuzim, the Emim, the Horites, the Amalekites, the Amorites; then they attacked 5 kings near the Dead Sea; some western kings fell into tar pits around the Dead Sea; others escaped to the mountains; the eastern kings pillaged Sodom & Gomorrah, taking Lot captive before going northward; an escapee told Abram in Hebron (dwelling w/ his Amorite allies); Abram armed his 318 men & went to Dan; after dividing forces, Abram attacked, pursuing [survivors of the initial attack] to Hobah; thus, Abram rescued all of the booty, Lot, & other captives; after Abram returned from defeating Chedorlaomer, Sodom's king met Abram near Jerusalem; then Melchizedek (king of Jerusalem) brought Abram bread & wine & blessed both Abram & God Most High, the creator, who granted Abram victory; then Abram gave Melchizedek a tithe of [Abram's] whole portion; Sodom's king had offered Abram all Sodom's booty if Abram returned the people to him; Abram said that his loyalty is to God Most High, the creator, so he will not be enriched by the king of Sodom (lest he claim to have enriched Abram), but Abram does not speak for his allies nor for the food eaten by his own men

15:1–21 In a vision the Lord told Abram not to fear, because He is his guardian & benefactor; Abram feared that God had not fulfilled the promise, so his servant (Eliezer of Damascus) might be his heir, but the Lord assured him that his own son (not a servant) would be his heir & his seed would be innumerable (Abram had already believed in the Lord, so He accounted it to him for righteousness); the God who promises is the same One who led Abram to give him this land; Abram requested tangible evidence of God's guarantee, so God told him to prepare animals for a covenant ceremony, which he did; Abram saw himself going into deep sleep as the sun was setting; God said that his seed would be afflicted strangers & servants in a foreign land for 400 years, but would leave that land with many possessions; Abram would die peacefully at an old age; the fourth generation will return to Canaan, when the iniquity of the Amorites is complete [when they are ready for judgment]; the Lord unilaterally ratified the covenant, guaranteeing the fulfillment of the promises; the Lord specified the boundaries of the land and the peoples who would be displaced.

16:1–16 Sarai who was barren (had an Egyptian handmaid) & blamed God for her barrenness; she told Abram that Hagar could produce a child for her, giving him Hagar as wife 10 years after reaching Canaan; Hagar then treated Sarai w/ insolence, so Sarai blamed Abram & asked the Lord to judge; Abram gave Sarai a free hand, so she was harsh w/ Hagar (who fled). the LORD found her by a water spring by the road to Shur; Hagar said she was fleeing Sarai; the LORD said to return to Sarai & to submit to her, promising a significant lineage thru the son she was to name Ishmael, because He heard her affliction; Ishmael (and his lineage) would be as a wildman (fighting w/ brethren) as they dwell near his brethren; she called on the LORD who spoke (You are a God who sees me) so the well (between Kadesh and Bered) is called *Be'er lahay rō'î* & she exclaimed that she still lives after seeing the LORD; Abram named Ishmael her son when he was 86

17:1–27 The Lord appeared as El Shaddai when Abram was 99, commanding him to walk blamelessly before Him as He entered into covenant w/ him; Abram fell on his face; God changed his name from exalted father to father of a multitude as a pledge that he would become the father of many nations; reiterated the promises of fruitfulness of seed & all of the land of Canaan under the everlasting (Abrahamic) covenant to Abraham & to his seed forever; commanded Abraham and his seed to circumcise each male child (+ Abraham) as a sign of the covenant; male children at 8 days, free & slave (even Gentiles) were to be circumcised at 8 days; those not circumcised would be regarded as Gentiles (cut off from the nation); God changed Sarai's name to Sarah as a pledge that she would have a son and would have nations and kings as progeny; Abe laughed; Abe interceded for Ishmael, but God said that Sarah's son, Isaac (and his seed), would be the one with whom He would establish His everlasting covenant, but God has heard the petition for Ishmael and will bless him; then the Lord departed; every male of the household (including servants) were circumcised that day

18:1–33 The Lord appeared to Abraham on a hot afternoon; Abe ran to meet them & bowed to the ground; he asked them to join him, gave water to wash feet, a shaded place, an appetizer; asked them to stay (which they did); he told Sarah to bake something & arranged slaughter of a choice calf, serving it w/ curds & milk (they ate); they asked *Where is Sarah?*, Abe said *In the tent*; the LORD promised to return in a year & Sarah would have a son; the aged Sarah heard the LORD's promise & laughed that they would become elderly parents; the LORD asked why Sarah laughed, saying *Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?*; the LORD asked *Is anything too wonderful Him?* & promised to return in a year, at which time Sarah would have a son; fear made Sarah deny laughing, but the LORD said that she laughed

## INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

**Time relationship between Genesis 17, 18, 19**

## NEW EXPOSITION

**(19:1) Lot welcomed his two eveningtime angelic visitors as he sat at the gate of Sodom**

They are called *angels* here & in v. 15, but are called *men* in 18:2, 16, 22; 19:8b, 10, 12, 16.

Other than *the Angel of the LORD* (Gen 16), this Moses' first use of *angel*. Why?

Gen 18:2 says that 3 men came to see Abraham, but here we only have 2 men. Why?

Note 18:22

This will help us confirm that the NKJV is right in translating verse 2 as *my lords*, rather than as *my Lord*. Some scholars argue against the pointed Hebrew being correct.

Pointed Hebrew reads אֲדֹנָיִם (*my lords*), not (אֲדֹנָי). Moses wrote it unpointed as אֲדֹנָי.

Exposition: **Lot welcomed his two eveningtime angelic visitors as he sat at the gate**  
Significance of being in the gate?

**(19:2) Lot offered hospitality to the two angelic visitors, but they initially refused**

**(19:3) Lot pressed them to stay, so they entered his home and he prepared a quick meal**  
 He *pressed* them to stay (פָּצַר). In v. 9 the Sodomites *pressed* against the door (פָּצַר).

Why did Lot *press* the angels? (verse 3)

Why did the Sodomites *press* Lot? (verse 9)

Who needed to *pull* Lot away from the Sodomites? (verses 10 and 16)

**(19:4–5) While it was still evening old & young men from every part of Sodom surrounded Lot’s home, inquiring about the whereabouts of his visitors**

**(19:6–7) Lot went out and attempted to talk them out of their wicked intentions**

**(19:8) In desperation, Lot offered his virgin daughters in a vain effort to shield his guests**  
 Lot had at least 2 sons-in-law. Unless he had at least 4 daughters, the 2 were not virgins.  
 The Sodomites would have known the marital status of his daughters.

**(19:9) The Sodomites dismissed Lot as an outsider who tries to judge them and they threatened reprisals against both Lot & his visitors as they almost broke down the door**

**(19:10–11) The angels grabbed Lot, pulling him inside the house, and struck the whole mob with blindness, disorienting them**

**(19:12–13) The angels asked Lot if he had any other people (such as sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or others who associate with him), because they were all to leave Sodom, because the LORD has sent them to destroy the city (which has a great outcry against it)**

**(19:14) Lot told this to his sons-in-law, who treated it as a joke**

**(19:15) At dawn, the angels urged Lot to hurriedly take his wife and daughters to escape the destruction of the city**

**(19:16) When Lot dawdled, the angels grabbed the hands of Lot, his wife, and his two daughters (because the LORD was merciful to him) and they took them out of the city**

**(19:17) After they took them out of the city one angel commanded them to escape destruction by hurrying to the mountains without looking back or lingering**

**(19:18–20) Lot negotiated for what he called a little request (closer refuge in a little town, Zoar), thanking them for grace & *hesed*, but claiming inability to travel all the way to the mountains**

**(19:21–2) The angel promised not to destroy Zoar, but urged Lot to hurry, because the destruction could not start until Lot was in a safe place**

**(19:23–25) Lot reached Zoar in the late morning, then the LORD rained fire & brimstone on Sodom, Gomorrah (& the other cities of the plain), killing people & plants**

Last week, we saw a film documenting how burning sulfur balls rained upon the area

**(19:26) Lot's wife looked back (as they were leaving Sodom, before the fire & brimstone) and became a pillar of salt**

**(19:27) Abraham went out early in the morning to the place where he met the Lord**

**(19:28) Later, Abraham looked eastward and saw the smoke that filled the sky above the cities of the plain**

**(19:29) God remembered Abraham (and his prayer) when He destroyed the cities where Lot dwelt**

**(19:30) Lot and his two daughters went into the mountains from Zoar & dwelt in a cave**

**(19:31–32) The elder daughter suggested to the younger that their father was their only hope for children (since everyone was dead), so they should give him wine, so they can become pregnant with his seed**

**(19:33) On the next night, they gave Lot wine and the elder daughter slept with him & he cooperated w/ the plan (neither preventing it nor having second thoughts afterwards)**

**(19:34) The elder daughter reported that everything went according to plan**

**(19:35) They gave Lot wine and the younger daughter slept with him & he cooperated w/ the plan (neither preventing it nor having second thoughts afterwards)**

**(19:36–38) Both became pregnant by Lot; the elder named her son Moab (*from Father*)—the progenitor of the Moabites—and the younger named her son Ben-Ammi (Son of my kinsman)—the progenitor of the Ammonites).**

## CONCLUSION

Genesis 10 warned Israel about alliances with the cursed & sexually loose Canaanites, whose progenitor had not learned the lessons of the flood (uncovering his father's nakedness). Cf. Leviticus 18:8 for the correct definition of this. Ham did something sexually improper concerning his mother.

Lot should not have been in alliance with Canaanites of Sodom, as he was  
Neither should the Israelites (soon to enter Canaan). Hence Moses warned them.

Although Lot had a standing before the Lord as righteous (cf. 2 Peter 2:7–8), his alliance with Canaanites of Sodom put him in a situation where he needed deliverance, just as in Gen 14.

Clearly, Moses is warning the Israelites about allying with the Canaanites.

Though the soul of righteous Lot was vexed daily, he negotiated with Sodomites at the gate, the angels at the gate, with Sodomites who wanted to violate his guests, with the angels who instructed him to go to the mountains. He would even negotiate away his daughters.

Clearly, Moses is warning the Israelites about negotiating with the Canaanites.

He is also warning about thinking that one can negotiate with God (as Lot thought).

Lot probably thought that his negotiations had a positive effect on the people of Sodom. Instead, they were quite willing to destroy him and everyone associated with him.

Moses is giving a warning.

Lot probably thought that he had a strongly positive impact on his wife, his daughters, his sons-in-law. His wife longed for Sodom, his daughters conspired to use a little wine to overcome his inhibitions towards incest (and he did not wise up after the first occasion), and his sons-in-law regarded him as a buffoon.

Moses is giving a warning.

Lot probably thought that he was just fine before the Lord. He was better than the Sodomites. But God saw him as a compromiser who did not affect positively those around him, but was seen as a buffoon and who could be manipulated into doing what he knew was wrong—compromising his daughters publicly before the Sodomites and privately compromising his daughters in a cave.

Moses is giving a warning.