

Vayera
Genesis 18:1-22:24

This portion can be divided into the following sections:

Abraham is promised a son by Sarah
Abraham intercedes for wicked Sodom
Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and protection for Lot
The Descendants of Lot
Abraham and Abimelech
The birth of Isaac
Hagar and Ishmael sent away
Abraham's faith confirmed

This Torah portion literally means, “*and He appeared*” from the opening words of “Then Yahweh appeared”.

I would like for us to consider the person Lot. Lot was Abraham's nephew. When Abraham and Lot had to part ways, Lot chose the fertile plain of Jordan, which included the Sodom and Gomorrah area.

Now Sodom was a very wicked city. I have often wondered why Lot would choose to stay in such a place and why he would want to allow his family to stay in such a place. The Bible calls him a righteous man in 2 Peter 2:7. However, Peter says that Lot was “vexed” or worn down, oppressed in spirit because of the wickedness that he had to live in day after day. He was tormented by the city's wicked inhabitants. It seems that he would have been righteous enough to take action and move him and his family away from that place, but he did not.

In Genesis 19:1 we are told that Lot was sitting in “the gate of Sodom”. In ancient times the elders of a city, those men who were considered to be judges over the people, would sit and make judgments in the gates of a city. Here it is **plausible to assume** that Lot was indeed considered to be a “judge” of Sodom. Perhaps that is why he stayed? Maybe he had arisen to a position that he was not willing to give up?

We are then told in verse 9 when the evil men come to Lot's house that they said about him that he is a sojourner in Sodom, not a native born, and that he acts as a judge, or probably in the Hebrew something like, “judging he will judge”. In other words the men were saying that Lot has taken up a place of judge amongst us and he calls things right or wrong amongst us and if we allow him to continue then it will be worse for us, so, they reason, we will take care of him in a worse way than we take care of the visitors in his house. We will not have him being our judge and telling us what is right and wrong.

Perhaps Lot was sitting in the gate so that he could watch out for strangers who were coming into Sodom so that they would not be harmed by its wicked inhabitants? Either way, Lot found himself in a very grievous situation that day.

I am further intrigued by the fact that Lot did not immediately take up his wife and daughters and flee for his life when first instructed to do so by the angels. Instead, He lingers and has to be led out quickly by the angels. Then when instructed to “flee to the mountains” he asks permission to go to another nearby city, Zoar. Now, if I had been him, I would have fled very quickly, exactly like the angels

directed.

Next, we find that his wife looks back to Sodom and is turned into a pillar of salt. This surely shows, at least to me, that her heart was still in Sodom. It is recorded that the Children of Israel kept longing to go back to Egypt from where they had been delivered. They kept looking back, because their heart was still in Egypt.

Then, his daughters commit incest with him. Surely, if he was a righteous father they would have known that this was an abomination to the God of their Father. Scripture seems to indicate that maybe they did this because they thought all men in the world were now homosexuals and did not desire women. (See 19:31-32) Either way, it would appear that their heart was not right before God either.

I have said all of this to say this one thing: Living with the enemy in close quarters will corrupt the best of us. It is apparent that Lot's wife and his daughters were not living correctly. As for Lot-well in verse 19:29 it states that "God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out..." Did Lot really have Abraham to thank for his preservation? We know that Lot was called righteous, as mentioned above, but how long would he have stayed righteous if he had continued to live in Sodom? Peter already states that Lot was "vexed" by the wicked conduct of Sodom's inhabitants.

There is an old saying, "Do not be deceived: bad company corrupts good morals"-Anonymous. In I Corinthians 15:33 we find a similar warning by the Apostle Paul, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners". (KJV)

Lot did not need to be in Sodom for his sake as well as for the spiritual welfare of his family.

Are you living with the enemy in close quarters? If so, you are in very serious danger of being corrupted by them and being led away into displeasing and disobeying God. Is the well being of your soul worth the risk?

Oftentimes I hear people say things like "they will change" or "they won't affect me" but "I will affect them". Well, that is not what scripture bears out.

Choose wisely. There is a lot at stake.

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