Grace Evangelical Free Church February 26, 2023

**Genesis 13:12-13** Lot: Saved yet Lost

Much of Lot’s life is a picture of the consequences of greed and the negative influence of a sinful environment. Lot knew God, but he chose to live among people who would lead his family into sin and complacency. But Lot’s story is also an illustration of God’s great mercy—in spite of Lot’s poor choices, God saved him and his daughters from a violent end in Sodom and preserved his line throughout the ages.

**Genesis 13:12-13**: “**Abram lived in the land of Canaan, but Lot lived in the cities on the plain and set up his tent near Sodom. 13 (Now the men of Sodom were evil, sinning immensely against the Lord.)**”

* **Grammatical Usage:** “**evil**” or in the Hebrew, “ra'” meaning, “wicked” in the sense of volatile, unpredictable, frightening and destructive; “**sinning**” or “chatta” meaning, “offending”; “**immensely**” or “meod” meaning, “abundant force”.
* **Literal Interpretation:** “**Now the men of Sodom were volatile, unpredictable, frightening and destructive, offending in forceful abundance against the Lord.**”
* **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word. We begin with a word of warning, as we read and study the character of Lot. These scripture references **Genesis 12:1-5**; **13:1-13**; **14:1-16**; and **19:1-38** make very sad reading. They tell us about a man who was saved, as is made clear when he is referred to as “**righteous**” and “**godly**” in **2 Pt. 2: 6, 9**. In New Testament language, Lot was a saved man, but he was only just saved; he was a worldly Christian who had a saved soul but a lost life. He lived for self and was in bondage to the things of time and sense, and he became engulfed in and succumbed to the evils of his time. Here are main lines of teaching which we extract from the sad story of Lot:

1. Lot walked by sight and not by faith.

The true hallmark of the believer is that he walks by faith and not by sight (**2 Cor. 5:7**); but the worldly believer reverses the order (**Hab. 2:4**; **Rom. 1: 17**; **Gal. 3:11**; **Heb. 10:38**). Lot lived by sight, and this is most of all apparent in the selfish, carnal choice he made (**Gen. 13:1-11**; compare **2 Cor. 4:18**). The worldly Christian lays up treasure on earth and has little or no treasure in Heaven (**Mt. 6:19-20**); and the worldly Christian, walking by sight, is governed by the world’s wisdom and standards (**1 Cor. 2:2-7**; **1 Jn. 2:15-17**).

2. Lot made his home and reared his children in wicked Sodom.

He deliberately chose to do so, as we learn from **Gen. 13:12-13**. At first, Lot only pitched his tent towards Sodom, but later we find him living in Sodom (**Gen. 14:12**), a prosperous citizen of Sodom and holding a high position in the civic and social life of the city. Lot was a V.I.P. in Sodom, but how sad for a child of God! He called the wicked men of Sodom “**friends**” (**Gen. 19:7**) so he was one of them. Probably he never intended to drift into the worldly, sensual, God-dishonoring life of Sodom, but what Christian ever intends to get away from God and to dishonor Him? Before long, his wife and children were thoroughly imbued with the worldliness of Sodom - dance-mad, pleasure-mad, drink-mad, fashion-mad, sex-mad. This picture is surely up to date, though it happened with Lot and his family 4000 years ago! But God’s call is to separation (**2 Cor. 6:14 – 18**; **2 Pt. 2:20**).

3. Lot was out of touch with God.

* He lost the consciousness of the presence of God. Notice in **Gen. 13:14** the word “**after**”. How solemn! (See **Job 23: 3**).
* He lost the experience of the peace of God. In **2 Pt. 2:6-9** we are told that the wickedness of the Sodomites “**distressed**” the soul of Lot. Yes, his conscience was troubled and it “stung” him (**Is. 57: 20-21**). How could he know peace in his heart when he was enmeshed by the world and by worldly people?
* He lost the power of God (if he had ever had it!) Instead of being a power for God he had become a weak, worldly, failing, disobedient man. His case was rather like that of Samson (**Judges 16: 4-20**).
* 4. Lot had no influence for God.
* He did not look, walk or act like a man of God, and nobody ever dreamed that he was one. As a believer he should have exerted a powerful influence for the Lord, but because he was so weak and so worldly his influence for God counted for nothing at all.
* He had no influence with the men of Sodom. We learn this from **Gen. 19:1-11**, and particularly notice **vv.7-9** that they laughed him to scorn. The men of Sodom must have despised Lot, and the world despises a worldly, “make-believe” Christian.
* He had no influence with his children. We learn this from **Gen. 19:8**; this is a verse to make us shudder, but is there a sadder verse in the whole Bible than **Gen. 19:14**?
* He had no influence with his own wife. We learn this from **Gen. 19:26**, which tells the solemn story of her disobedience and her tragic end.

5. Lot went from bad to worse and he became hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

In **Gen. 19:15-16**, we read that Lot “**hesitated**” - which tells us that his conscience was seared (**1 Tim. 4:2**). How slow he was to obey God, even when God had warned him of impending judgment! **2 Thessalonians 1:7**; **9** are some of the most solemn words in the Bible.

6. Lot lost his honor and was involved in shame with his own daughters.

The awful story of debauchery, weakness, deceit, drunkenness and incest is told in **Gen. 19:30-38**. Scripture does not gloss over men’s sins. Let us be warned and take heed as we read this sad, sad story. The result was that two illegitimate children were born - Moab and Ammon - from whom came the bitterest enemies of ancient Israel - the Moabites and the Ammonites. Sin, if it is harbored, goes on working in the heart and in the life, and eventually it leads to shame and tragedy, even to members of one’s own family.

7. Finally, Lot was literally “**saved; yet so as by fire.**”

He was “**plucked out of the fire**” (**Zec. 3:2**; compare **1 Cor. 3:15**; **Jude 23**). Every believer will have to appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (**Rom. 14:10**). There, we shall either be rewarded for faithfulness, or we shall suffer loss because, like Lot, we have lived an easy-going, careless, worldly life. All believers will be saved, but some will be saved “**yet so as by fire**”; seriously consider **1 Cor. 3:11-15**.

* **Conclusion**: Many identify with the lot of Lot. Out of touch with God. The hold of our culture. The loss of one’s honor and influence, especially for God. A saved soul but a lost life. Yet, as the prodigal, God welcomes the repentant. Repent…and be restored.