

What We Learn From Lot's Wife

Introduction. In Luke 17 our Lord speaks of the past judgments of God. When He said, "Remember Lot's wife" in v. 32, He gave a warning that will haunt all those who refuse to listen to it. Sodom and Gomorrah were such monumental examples of judgment that they are used a dozen times in the Bible.

The account of Lot and his wife is an ancient one. In Genesis 19:1-26, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were doomed to destruction because of the vile lifestyle of the inhabitants. Lot and his wife were told by angels to "escape for your life" (v. 17). Fire and brimstone literally fell from the sky and ignited the asphalt and sulfur pits around the cities of the plain, and they were consumed. Lot and his wife were escaping from the cities and that is when she disobeyed God (vv. 25-26).

The historical records of the Canaanites show that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah now lie under the southwest end of the Dead Sea. The utter absence of the slightest trace of animal and vegetable life in its waters are a striking testimony to this catastrophe. The morning after the destruction of the cities, Abraham went to a place where he had stood the day before, interceding with the Lord for Sodom, and he saw how severe a judgment had fallen on the entire plain (vv. 27-28). There are four pivotal lessons from Lot's wife; lessons that can help us in our walk with God.

I. She Perished Even Though She Was Married To A Righteous Man

- A. Lot made many mistakes in his life, and yet the divine record calls him a "righteous" man (2 Peter 2:4-8). So many are blessed with godly mates, but that is not enough for someone to get into heaven (Romans 14:12; Revelation 20:12).
- B. However, Lot could've done more to lead his wife. We all know the power of a good example and also of a bad example (1 Corinthians 15:33).
 1. His first big mistake was "pitching his tent toward Sodom" (Genesis 13:10-13).
 2. And although while living in Sodom, he opposed their conduct and they spoke evil of him (Genesis 19:9), the city and its inhabitants were still a source of evil influence on them.
- C. None of us are righteous enough for ourselves (Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 3:10, 23-26). We need the sacrifice of Christ to take away our sins. Beyond that, each of us have to work out our own salvation.

II. She Perished Even Though She Was Warned Of The Danger

- A. A message from God Himself warned Lot and his wife to leave the city immediately. A clearer message could not have been given.
- B. Christ also warns us of danger (Matthew 7:21-23). Did you know He spoke more about hell than all the apostles? What are some of hell's characteristics?
 1. Outer darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12).
 2. Furnace of fire with wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:42, 50).
 3. Everlasting fire and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:41, 46).
 4. The worm does not die and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:44, 48).
 5. Place of torment (Luke 16:28; Revelation 14:11).

6. Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
 7. Chains of darkness (2 Peter 2:4).
 8. Blackness of darkness (Jude 13).
 9. Lake which burns with fire and brimstone and second death (Revelation 21:8).
- C. The thought of the judgment day can't be pleasant for a wicked man. On the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached the first sermon ever given in the name of the risen Lord, he told those who believed that they had to repent and be baptized, and save themselves from a "perverse generation" (Acts 2:38-41). When Paul had the opportunity to speak to governor Felix, Luke records that Felix looked for a more convenient season (Acts 24:25).

III. She Perished Even Though She Made Some Effort

- A. Her doom is rendered even more memorable when we consider the factors. She almost escaped. She went out of the city with him, but only so far. She didn't have the Lord in her heart; she had the city in her heart. She was convinced, but not converted — seeking safety with divided desires and interests.
- B. On one occasion a disciple asked Christ about the number of people who were going to be saved. Jesus ignored the basic question and preached that we have to strive to get to heaven (Luke 13:23-30). There is a lesson here for Christians: don't look back (Luke 9:62; Philippians 3:13; Hebrews 3:7-19).
- C. Paul reminded the Hebrew Christians that even though they had left Egypt and were on their way to Canaan that along the way it was possible to sit down to rest, and while resting, die (Hebrews 4:1). It is nothing more than a neglect of your precious salvation (Hebrews 2:1-3).
 1. If you are negligent in your service to God, remember that time in your life when eternity was brought near, your false confidence was dispelled, and you "fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before you" (Hebrews 6:18).
 2. At that time you really studied your Bible and your prayers were earnest pleadings before God. But now, maybe the immediate cause of your fear has faded away and you are becoming lukewarm.
 3. Stop for a moment and reconsider your former earnestness. Recall the thoughts you used to have during the Lord's Supper. Remember the blessings of your salvation, how precious and dear they really are.

IV. She Perished Even Though She Committed Only One Sin

- A. In our day, we have a tendency to minimize and downplay sin and its consequences. We hear talk of "sins of weakness" and "sins of ignorance" as though they are not as bad as "sins of intention" (cp. 1 John 3:4).
- B. But all sin stems from weakness and ignorance. Our ignorance of hell and its consequences and our weakness due to a lack of study of God's word contribute to our violating the law of God, which is an abomination (Proverbs 6:16-19).
- C. No doubt Lot's wife had a better moral life than others in Sodom. But if you can, picture that day of destruction in Sodom. The sun rose as it had before, and

there she was in an attractive house, she had friends in that town, and there were no visible signs of danger.

- D. Yet, she is told by angels of God that she must leave at once, even though she had daughters in the city. She paused, and the pause was a pause of death. She was guilty of the sin of unbelief (cp. Deuteronomy 34:1-7).

Conclusion. In Matthew 9:27-29, the blind men were healed “according to their faith.” Our lives are lived “according to our faith” (2 Corinthians 5:7). “According to your faith” will be your contribution, your attendance, your study habits, your prayer habits, and your efforts to teach and influence others.

One with great faith will not have to be begged to attend, work, give, etc. We degrade the glorious gospel when we take the best we have and lay it at the feet of swine (Matthew 7:6). When faith needs to increase, it can only come from exposure to God’s word (Romans 10:17).

Our continued salvation lies not in the past, but in the present. Lot’s wife perished, not because she turned back, but because she looked back. It was a sign of where her real interests were (cp. Hebrews 10:39). Learn a lesson from Lot’s wife, but don’t learn it the hard way. Don’t look back; look to Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2).