

## Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2023 10 am

### Grieving the Spirit - Lessons from Lot

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Welcome to all.

Opening Scripture and prayer

Hymn MP 41 - At the Name of Jesus

Scripture Psalms 111, 112 (page 613)

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Notices Prayer and Bible study attendance and timing  
Pray for camp, see the names

Children's talk Father's Day

Chorus MP 128 – Father God

MP 133 – Father I place into your hands

Mission focus

Prayer and share time

Reading Genesis 19:1- 11, 12-29 (Page 19)

Hymn MP1024 - All my days I will sing this song of gladness

Sermon Grieving the Spirit – Lessons from Lot.

Hymn MP 22 - All the way my saviour leads me.

Closing Prayer

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### Prayer and Exordium

Here is a true account from WWI. Two men go over the top, one is shot and lies wounded, the second decides to go in front of his comrade and lying down becomes a human shield. He is hit several times by the enemy and dies of his wounds. The first wounded man is able to gradually crawl back to the trench and subsequently recovers and survives the war.

Some years later the mother of the man who died decides search out the one who was kept alive. After much searching she finds him. He is a tramp, a drunkard, a delinquent and unkept. She confronts him but he is indifferent, uncaring and abusive. She says 'My son gave up his life that you might live and look at you, you ungrateful man'.....

How should he have been? How should he have lived? Ever mindful of the sacrifice made on his behalf? Of course. How about those of us saved from the terrors of Hell – shouldn't we be similarly, equally mindful of the Lord who sacrificed himself to free me? Shouldn't our lives be filled with constant appreciation and love? The Lord had saved Lot, but Lot lived as if He hadn't. Let's meet Lot, - and let us and learn the lessons from Lot.

**Sodom was a city of sexual perversion.... and God's Judgment was coming.**

We saw before in Gen 18 Abraham asking God, "If there are just a few Godly people in the city will You still destroy it? Will not the **Judge of all the earth will do right**? Yes he will punish the wicked - and Yes He will save the godly, is the answer. As Peter says: **the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment,** 2 Peter 2:9

This is what we see here in Gen. 19. Amidst the just punishment of the City - Righteous Lot is rescued. The Lord will definitely punish the wicked - but he will definitely save the righteous from it. While this world all seems mixed up – it is not for God, he rightly divides, no-one one will end up going to the wrong destiny - even if you find yourself in the wrong camp.

And here is a man in the wrong camp. Lot, though saved, is living as though he is unsaved. Look at his life and you wouldn't have thought he was a Christian.

**Yes, Lot was included in the covenant of grace**

Twice in two verses Peter speaks of Lot as a **righteous man** 2 Pet 2:7,8.

Lot was Abraham's nephew. Lot was under the covenant that declared a man righteous through faith. This is not self-righteousness but the righteousness that comes from God and is by Faith. It is the same way anyone anywhere is saved.

Abraham, a sinner like us all here this morning – was made righteous in God's sight. **Cross** is the way God declares the guilty innocent and free of Judgment.

This is not just for Abraham - but for all who will leave their own life and put their trust in the Lord Jesus.

Lot was called out, along with Abraham, to **walk before the Lord and be blameless.** Gen 17:1. They lived in tents, this world was not their home, they were merely passing through on their way to the eternal city.

We see Lot's character revealed in Gen 13. Abraham offers him the choice of the land and Lot seeing that **the plain ... was well watered, chose for himself** x2. He then **lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom.**"

1v1-12

It says **he looked up and saw** - what he didn't see, or want to see, was that the men of Sodom were **wicked and sinning greatly against the Lord.** Gen 13:13

Lot had his eye on material advantage. This overruled any concern for his soul or the Lord's honour. Maybe he thought he could handle the temptations of the world and keep the evils of the city at bay. Here is a man who did not know himself. Here is a man with a dim view of the Holiness of God. *Lot chose by sight, not faith.* Soon he has moved into the city – and became imbedded in it.

**Lot seems to forget his calling.**

He soon had his share of troubles. Life's troubles are there to throw you onto the Lord. Lot is captured by eastern marauders and his possessions are taken. Shouldn't that have thrown him back on Abraham and within the Lord's fold? Why didn't the hardships bring him to his senses as with the prodigal son?

Though rescued by Abraham he didn't learn the lesson. This warning ought to have been enough to drive Lot from Sodom, but no, he returned to dwell in that guilty city. While Abraham would not accept so much as a shoelace from its king, Lot is next seen sitting in the gate of Sodom, the place of power and judgment. He is soon hopelessly bound up with the moral fabric of the city, he settled in, found a wife there, and raised his family.

✚ **He has forgotten his calling to be separate and Holy**

He had not considered the consequences for God's honour, for himself and his family. Lot still knew he was saved – but though Lot was saved he'd forgotten why he was saved, to what end.

**If you are saved, the Lord has done so that you will Glorify Him in your life x2**

Lot had become spiritually dulled, he'd lost sight of God in his Holiness – and so he did not shudder at the fate of the lost to everlasting torment. x2

**Lot had forgotten that he was saved so as to witness salvation to those around.**

The church is a body of called out people, we are call out of the world. Not to leave the world, or hide in the world and become monastic or live like a hermit.

**Come out from her my people do not share in her sins** says Rev 18:4,5 We are called out of / we do not belong to the 'worldly way', the mindset and values instilled in those around by the god of this age. We are called out of it – to be sent back into it – to witness to it, Godly words backed up by a Godly life. Jo 17

Lot could easily have been in Sodom as a bright light to shine in the dark sin of that city, and as salt to hinder its further corruption. The Lord sends His people everywhere, - to the darkest places the world - to be a beacon for him!

2a

■ Read Jacqui Pullinger's book 'chasing the dragon' in the dens of Hong Kong and you will see what I mean, one of many books.

Has the Lord called you? Then He has placed just where He wants you to serve Him - and to witness for Him – along with others, in your area, this area.

That is how we understand the Lord's will. People sometimes say to me: "I don't know where the Lord wants me to serve" - the answer is here x2. This is where He wants you to serve Him, this is where he wants you to stand for Him, to speak for Him, to live for Him. When he wants you to move somewhere – when the cloud lifts, then he will lead you – until then it is where you are now.

■ When people come wide eyed to BCM with a view to be 'greatly used of the Lord' the first question we ask is "what are you doing now"? If you are not serving now, your heart won't be in serving later, no matter how glamorous the scene is.

No-one called of the Lord just goes off to pursue their own interests, to live on the coast, to retire to that 'perfect place'.

■ We had a couple who visited hear a few times, they were travelling around on canal boats, they didn't do it witness and save some from out of the canal boating 'community' no they did it because they just like canal boats and to while away their God given time - chugging around.

✚ **No saved person lives their life here as if it is one long holiday!**

Sadly Lot did not go to Sodom out of deep concern to witness to a Holy God and warn them of the judgment to come, no he went there because the grass was greener, literally. It suited him, it suited his pocket and his comfort.

So what was going on in Lot?

He knew the Lord had done a work in him, He knew he had been made righteous and he knew he had received the gift of the Holy Spirit. He had Jesus in him. Peter looking back at the OT speaks of those with **the Spirit of Christ in them** who **predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.** 1 Pet 1:11 The Holy Spirit in Lot produced in him a deep aversion at the sin all around. Do you feel that? Are you bothered?

Joyce reacting against the TV filth, the Spirit of God in her

Yet the same time his flesh, his selfish heart prevailed, it was not continually put to death, it held sway. If you are a Christian then living out that life is a partnership between you and the Lord's Spirit within you. Living that out is something Lot did not do. He made fleshly choices and grieved God's Spirit.

✚ **The last episode of CE has the title "Come and die" - Lot wouldn't !**

2b

Was it weakness? Yes, Was it disobedience? Yes. The Lord will never call you to obedience - without enabling you to obey x2.

The result was a compromised Christian. Lot shows us the life of a compromised Christian. Someone who has lost his saltiness. The sort of Christian that the Lord says He wishes to spit out of his mouth.

■ Beware - those here who know what to do - but don't act, just leave it.

If you are saved you too are called to be a witness for the Lord - not to settle down and live comfortably at home. Lot as we have seen was motivated by 'self'. No believer is to be motivated by self, how then can I honour and serve the One who made me - and died for me? The Lord says His people “mingled with the nations and adopted their customs.” Ps 106:35

Why wasn't Lot another Jonah? Jonah repented of his sin and after the Lord's disciplining returned and obeyed, going to the wicked city of Nineveh to warn them of judgment to come. As Sodom was known for its sexual perversion, so Nineveh was known for its violence and cruelty. Through the faithful witness of Jonah, Nineveh was saved from Judgment. When Lot preached - the city laughed – and Judgment came.

### *Judgment*

18:20 The LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous.

The time had come, the angels have arrived in the city. There's but one good man in Sodom and these heavenly messengers soon found him out. They have a two-fold purpose – to rescue those who belong to Lord - and to exercise His judgment on those who don't. So it will be angels work when the Lord returns.

✚ They come into the city to show how wicked it really is – and how deserving of judgment - so that no-one can accuse God of being unjust.

So we have the details of the sin: **Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them."** Gen 19:4-5

Sodom was a city in which sexual perversion reigned. A sickening sin had taken hold of the city, it was not here and there in pockets just among a few - it had pervaded the whole city, everyone, everywhere, they were all wicked. It had become universal and public. Here were the old and young from every quarter engaged in this sin; the old were not too old, and the young not too young. The leaders it seems rather than restrain - were aiding and abetting.

✚ God is patient - but there comes a time when there is 'no remedy'. For Sodom that time had come. We have it all here in technicolour as a warning.

There are strong forces in our land doing all they can to normalise this sin. What was once considered a perversion is now proudly paraded as something good. This is how the ungodly world works.

✚ The historian Paul Johnson says no society that has continued with sexual perversion unchecked has survived.

Throughout the Bible Sodom is used as a warning of God's judgment – The name itself a by-word for perversion.

Sodom was a city overrun by the LGBTQ++.... And it had become the norm. For us we are seeing the consolidating of a new/old religion with its worship of self, and its parades and rituals. Its message of salvation is the exercise of behaviour that grossly distorts God's good design for men and women. It has its own language and woe to anyone who speaks against it. The proposed 'conversion therapy' ban, is a new blasphemy law criminalising anyone who denies the rightness of their creed. It must be resisted.

Here is Sodom they are sinning with a high hand, violent, arrogant and in open defiance, and as with serial sin - there is no shame! Isaiah 3:9.

When Lot tries to 'call it out' in the most reasonable way, to check the rage and fury of their lust, they were most insolent, rude and abusive to him. “**who made you ruler and judge**”. Yes they know Lot professed to belong to Yahweh the Holy Israelite God – and they know – as all men know the Holy law written on their hearts – and that they are deserving of death. Yet Lot wasn't different enough to be taken seriously. They weren't listening.

■ Pauline poor language at work tried to witness she was laughed at

✚ If you are not living a separated Holy life – No-one will be listening!

Lot is morally mixed up, so too his daughters for sadly his sin is faithfully recorded as he offers to sacrifice his daughters' honour to save his guests. Later those daughters sacrificing their father's honour - and their own.

### *Rescue*

The angels 10 **reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness.**

Sodom was in full swing and in the full enjoyment of its pleasures – but it was about to perish. <sup>15</sup> **With the coming of dawn, - another sunny cloudness day?** No The end had come - not by chance, but by divine punishment.

- **the angels urged Lot, saying, "Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished."**

<sup>16</sup> **When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them.** They leave the city before destruction comes.

So too everyone of God's people will at death be pulled like Lot into a house of perfect safety, and the door shut for ever against those that pursue them.

What of Lot's family?

Lot spoke to those pledged to be married to his daughters **"Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!" But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.** When the news of Judgment comes they just laugh.

Lot urged them **Hurry and get out of this place** destruction was just at the door. It is 'now or never' - they must make their escape. But they had seen Lot's ungodly life - and ridicule the thought of God acting.

■ **I have know many mockers, those who laugh at everything.**

Woe to those who make a joke of everything. Is there someone even here now who in your heart make jest of this warning. Many who are warned of their sin and the danger they are in - make a light matter of it, and think we are joking with them - They will perish, their blood upon their own heads.

Jesus uses this episode to warn us **"It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulphur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed."** Luke 17:28f

His daughters became the Moabites and Ammonites – stranger to the covenant.

What of Lot's wife?

<sup>26</sup> **But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.** She looked back, for she was inclined to go back. Jesus warns us against looking back and says of her motive: **On that day no-one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no-one in the field should go back for anything. Remember Lot's wife!"** Luke 17:28-32

We as Christians have renounced the world and the flesh, we have set our faces heaven-ward; we are in the plain, on the way, let us not turn back on our profession, let us not forget the Lord who saved us. Heb 4:1.

4a

The punishment of Lot's wife for this sin: she was struck dead in the place; yet her body did not fall down, but stood fixed and erect like a pillar, or monument A warning. God's judgments are there to promote Holy living. We don't like the motive of fear "Don't frighten people, no fire and brimstone" This passage says otherwise. To understand Justice is to understand holiness - and vice versa

✚ **Her looking back is the same as looking forward - towards hell**

Lot's wife, related, married to one of God's people, was close – but not close enough, it is never close enough, righteousness has to be your own. Each one must be able to say he is my saviour, my loving saviour.

**Finale - Judgment**

It was a judgment that laid waste all the cities, the plain and all the inhabitants. It was utter ruin, and irreparable. That fruitful remains dead, ...it has no living creature in it. The Greeks call it Asphaltites, from a sort of pitch which it casts up. It was a punishment that answered to their sin. Peter warns: **'he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;** 2 Pet 2:6

Burning un-natural lusts were justly punished with this burning. A warning to others as Jude says: **Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire."** Jude 1:7

**The lessons to learn** - God will Judge, but God will also rescue, even those who live thankless lives – for Christ's saving power and honour are at stake.

Yet for some it will be a shameful transition to Glory. Paul is clearly warning the church in Corinth who built their lives with the things of this world. They will be saved - but as one shamefaced escaping through the flames. 1 Cor 3:10f

■ **It is the cowardly life - Spurgeon speaks of the soldier dying with his sword left rusting in his scabbard**

The section ends with Abraham v26 looking on to see what the Lord would do with his prayer Hab 2:1. When you pray - look to see what He will do. Direct your prayer as if shooting an arrow - and then look to see whether it reach the mark, Psalms 5:3.

God delivered Lot. He is a solemn example to us as Christians of a righteous man dwelling needlessly amid gross wickedness.

How different from Abraham, let us live like him, a life of obedience.

No wonder he was called God's friend!

END

4b