

Coastal Notes: Genesis 19:1-22

Title: (September 28, 2025)

1. Lot's Burden and Radical Hospitality

1 The **two angels** came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was **sitting in the gate of Sodom**.

When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed himself with his face to the earth

2 **and said, "My lords (my sirs), please turn aside to your servant's house and spend the night and wash your feet.**

Then you may rise up early and go on your way."

They said, "No; we will spend the night in the town square."

3 **But he pressed them strongly;** so they turned aside to him and entered his house. **And he made them a feast and baked unleavened bread,** and they ate.

1. Lot: was NOT called by God to go to Canaan

a. Lot was a burden to Abraham

- **Abram was to leave Father's Household**, including Lot
- **The Land could not sustain both**

b. Lot's Presence brought Abraham Conflict

- He and Lot had to separate to avoid family and herdsmen conflict.
- Abraham had to rescue him in the war of the kings when Lot moved into Sodom
- Sodom was a wicked city and was on the verge of being destroyed, so Abraham had to intercede for him.

2. Chose Sodom of the Plain (Small Compromises)

a. Small Compromises Affect Others

- **He Pitched his tent Near Sodom** (curiosity)
- **He lived in Sodom** (War of five Canaanite kings)
- **He is part of the City Gate.** This is where the elders and leaders of the city make decisions

b. Led by his eyes (Like the Garden of Eden and Egypt (Flush), Lot chooses the fertile plain.

c. Radical Hospitality

- **Hospitality was the cornerstone of an ancient society.** How it was practiced was a key component when it came to the character of a city.
- **Lot shows hospitality and invites the two men (he does not recognize them as angels) and wants them to spend the night at his place.** When the angels decline the offer, Lot strongly encourages them to stay the night at his place, which signals trouble will reach them

should they stay the night in the City Street. I have wondered if the men of the city wanted to know Lot when he first moved there.

- **The components.** Spending the night. Washing their feet. Providing good rest until they leave early morning. Preparing a feast. Baking unleavened bread.
- **It is hard for us today to understand the seriousness men like Abraham and Lot had for strangers when it came to hospitality.** If you think about, the judgment of Sodom would be correlated to how they fared with regard to hospitality.

2. The Wickedness of Sodom

4 But before they lay down,
the men of the city, **the men of Sodom**
both **young and old, all the people to the last man,**
surrounded the house

5 And they called to Lot,
“Where are the men who came to you tonight?
Bring them out to us, **that we may know them.**”

6 **Lot went out to the men at the entrance,**
shut the door after him, 7 and said,
“I beg you, my brothers, **do not act so wickedly.**

8 Behold, **I have two daughters**
who have not known any man.
Let me bring them out to you,
and do to them as you please.
Only **do nothing to these men,**
for they have come under the shelter of my roof.”

a. The Wickedness of Sodom is connected to their hospitality toward strangers.

- **I do not think the men of Sodom knew that Lot's guests were angels.** The text makes this clear in several ways:
- **The angels appeared as ordinary men:** 19:1 says "two angels came to Sodom in the evening," but verse 5 shows the men of Sodom referring to them simply as "**the men** who came to you tonight." There's no indication they recognized anything supernatural about them.
- **Their demands were typical of the violence Sodom was known for:** The men of Sodom demanded Lot bring out his guests "so that we may know them" - this appears to be **their usual pattern of violence toward strangers, NOT** a specific response to divine beings.

b. Lot's Plea:

- **Lot shuts his door** and meets the men at the entrance and begs them not to act wickedly against his guests.
- **This indicates a moral judgment by Lot.** He considers their hospitality wicked and pleads for them to stop.
- **In my view, this is most likely the reason why the book of Hebrews describes Lot as a righteous man.**
- **Impulsive and Repulsive Offer:** However, just as you want to praise Lot for standing up to these wicked men; in his next statement he offers his daughters as a replacement. He is saying my daughters are virgins, why not “know them instead.”

c. How could Lot offer his daughters?

- Keep in mind that all the text does is record what happened without endorsing Lot's actions.
- Ancient hospitality customs:** In the ancient Near East, protecting guests was considered a sacred duty that took precedence over almost everything else. Some scholars argue Lot was following extreme hospitality codes, though this doesn't make his offer morally acceptable.
- Many scholars see this as highlighting the moral corruption of Sodom and showing how even the "righteous" Lot had been influenced by the city's depravity.** The story may be demonstrating how far moral standards had fallen.
- Desperate calculation:** Lot may have been making a desperate attempt to prevent what he saw as an even greater violation of hospitality and divine messengers, possibly hoping the crowd would reject his offer.
- Patriarchal context:** The story reflects the extremely low status of women in that patriarchal society, where daughters were often viewed as property of their fathers.

The account remains one of the most ethically challenging passages in Genesis for

contemporary readers. In my view Lot's offer really highlights the effect of how dangerous it is to associate with wicked people. In one breath, he begs the leaders not to have sex with the angels; while with that same breath, offers his virgin daughters in exchange as a sex compromise. At some point, close association within a wicked environment will "rub off" in how you think and view the world.

3. When Enough is Enough

9 But **they said, "Stand back!"**

And they said, **"This fellow came to sojourn, and he has become the judge!**

Now we will deal worse with you than with them."

Then they pressed hard against the man and drew near to break the door down.

10 **But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them and shut the door.**

11 And **they struck with blindness** the men who were at the entrance of the house, both small and great,

so that they wore themselves out groping for the door.

a. The Sodomite men said, Stand Back!

- Translation:** Move away from the door! Who do you think you are, you immigrant? You're not our judge.
- We are Your Judge and Jury:** You think what we were going to your guests is bad, wait till you see what we will do to you. You ain't seen nothing yet!
- From there, they basically bull-rushed him to break down the door.** Again, the wickedness of the men here is completely on display. This was the test for these men, they failed it.

b. Divine Intervention: The men, who are now revealed to be spiritual beings, grab Lot, shut the door, and blind the men of Sodom. The shutting of the door is reminiscent of what happened to the ark in the days of Noah. On that occasion, Yahweh shut the door, signaling the beginning of the flood to destroy the known world.

- c. **Noah's Ark Imagery:** They shut the door. The angels have turned Lot's house into an ark that offers protection against the wicked humans outside who will die. In the process, the angels here, not Yahweh shut the door to keep Lot and his family protected. There is a biblical melody that we become familiar with the more we reflect on familiar themes such as these. Interestingly, the flood that will come to Sodom will be fire.

4. The Final Warning

12 Then **the men said to Lot,**
"Have you anyone else here?
Sons-in-law, sons, daughters,
or anyone you have in the city,
bring them out of the place.

13 **For we are about to destroy this place
because the outcry against its people
has become great before the LORD,
and the LORD has sent us to destroy it."**

14 So **Lot** went out and said to **his sons-in-law,**
who were to marry his daughters,
"Up! Get out of this place,
for the LORD is about to destroy the city."
But he seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting.

- a. **Lot discovers that his guests are spiritual beings.**
- **He witnessed them not only save him;** but supernaturally blind the Sodomites.
 - **He is given Divine Instruction:** They Tell Lot to grab the remaining family members, including in-laws. They tell Lot their mission (To destroy Sodom) because of the outcry of its people has become great before the Lord. It is obvious that Abraham's intercession was being accomplished when it came to Lot and his family.
- b. **The wickedness in this city was systemic.** The Lord told Abraham for the sake of ten righteous people; he would not destroy the city. Well, there weren't even ten that were righteous, so the City had to be destroyed. The totality of the wickedness had reached the point of no return.
- c. **Lot is instructed to go to those who are a part of his family to spare their lives,** including any in-laws. The two son's in-law thought Lot was joking and were not interested escaping what they felt was a fake warning.
- d. **Have you ever witnessed to anyone about Jesus and they look at you like you are way out there?** Have you ever had anyone laugh at your warnings or say no thanks, I am not religious? Have you ever had anyone laugh at you and not take you seriously? If so, you can relate to what Lot was going through. Like a flight attendant demonstrating how to survive in the middle of a plane emergency, the people just weren't listening or taking the warning seriously.

5. Lingerin Lot

15 As morning dawned,
the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up!
Take your wife and your two daughters who are here,
lest you be swept away in the punishment of the
city.”

16 But he lingered.
So the men seized him
and his wife and his two daughters by the hand,
the LORD being merciful to him,
and they brought him out and set him outside the
city.

17 And as they brought them out,
one said, “Escape for your life.
not look back or stop anywhere in the valley
Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away.”

- a. **The Angel's Instruction:** Take your family and leave the city, otherwise you will experience the same fate as Sodom. Those are pretty simple commands. Run for your lives! It's about to go down. I don't know about you, but that's all the warning I need. If I were Lot, I would not even hesitate. It's pretty obvious the Lord sent them to destroy what is left of the city. However, Lot is not Kene; he is his own man. He is his own husband. He is his own father. So he does something that is uniquely Lot.
- b. **Lott lingers! He hesitates. He ponders.** Why? It is because Sodom was a part of Lot's identity. Keep in mind Lot has called Sodom home for 20-25 years. That is a long time. In other words, as wicked as Sodom has become, it was hard for him to say goodbye.
- **He had scaled his way up the social ladder to become a judge in the City.** He was part of a team that was a part of the City Council. He was a part of the process of helping that nation to flourish.
 - **Sodom was all that Lot knew as a home in the land of Cannan.** Besides the time in the beginning when he and his herdsman had to separate from Abraham because the land could not sustain them both, he had not lived anywhere else.
 - **I know what you are thinking, but “Pastor Kene, Sodom was a wicked City,”** by this point he showed now it, especially considering that the men young and old, wanted to do him harm. They would have succeeded had it not been for the two angels. All of that is true, but as they say about people's upbringing, you can take the man out of Sodom, but you cannot take the Sodom out of the man.
 - **Sodom was the place Lot prospered.** Sodom was the place he raised his daughters. Sodom was the place where he became something. Without Sodom, he has to start building his life over again from scratch. Him, his wife, and his daughters would have to leave their comfort zone.
 - **What was the result?** Lot hesitated. In the midst of knowing Sodom was going to be incinerated, he could not think about saving his life; he was stuck thinking about all that he would have to leave behind. There are times in our lives when you know you must leave your home, your job, your familiarity, your comfort zone, that no matter how bad a place might be, you hesitate.

- c. **The Angels response to Lot's hesitation:** Dude, do Not hesitate. This is serious business. The Lord has judged this city. "Escape for your lives! Do NOT Look Back. Escape to the hills now to get out of harms way. Otherwise, you will be swept away from this city. Surely, that is the only motivation Lot needed to get moving. Unfortunately, he wants to barter with the angels.

6. Lot Negotiates his Terms

18 And Lot said to them, "Oh, no, my lords.

19 Behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life.

But I cannot escape to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me and I die.

20 Behold, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved!"

21 He said to him, "Behold, I grant you this favor also, that I will not overthrow the city of which you have spoken.

22 Escape there quickly, for I can do nothing till you arrive there."

Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

- a. **Lot negotiates with the Angels.** This seems unbelievable. He disagrees with the angels' instruction and basically says, "Hey angelic gentlemen, that plan won't work for me. I just won't be able to travel that fast, the disaster will overtake me, but don't worry, I have a better plan. There is a little city nearby in the plain. Let me escape there and my life will be spared.
- b. **What's going on here?** Does Lot really believe he knows more than God's heavenly representatives on earth. It appears so as he makes his request. Keep in mind, of all of Lot's faults in this episode, one thing that he had established with the angels is clout, since he was a willing host and legitimately tried to protect his spiritual guests. He uses that "ace of spades" card in his pocket to merit favor.
- c. **Now, one has to wonder if Lot had other motives.** Keep in mind, like Sodom, the city of Zoar was about to also be destroyed. The initial decree by the LORD was that the cities of the plain, including Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Bela (the original name of Zoar), were all under God's judgment.

It is possible Lot concluded that he would be able to prosper more in Zoar than he would in the hills, since he was familiar with that region. In the end, he justifies that they should be spared by appealing to the small size of the city, implying that its wicked impact in the city will be minimal at best, due to its size. Ironically, the city's name changed from Bela to Zoar, to reflect it's "littleness" in size.

d. What made Lot "righteous" according to the Scriptures?

1. **He was genuinely distressed by Sodom's wickedness** - Unlike his neighbors, Lot never became comfortable with the sin around him. Peter says he was "tormented" by what he witnessed daily.
2. **He showed radical hospitality** - When strangers arrived, Lot immediately offered them protection and shelter, even at great personal risk.
3. **He attempted to protect the innocent** - However flawed his methods, Lot tried to shield his guests from the mob's violence.

4. **He had faith in God's messengers** - Once the angels revealed themselves, Lot (eventually) obeyed their instructions to flee.

In the end, Lot's righteousness wasn't about moral perfection but about his heart attitude. He was righteous **relative to his society** and in his orientation toward God, even though he made terrible decisions about where to live and how to navigate moral crises.