

The Rescue of Lot

Lot is rescued from the violent men of Sodom. The angels pull him back into the house ^㉑¹, and the men are struck by some kind of blindness ^㉒². Perhaps like the story in 2 Kings 6:18–20 it is not so much literal blindness as a confusion of mind that makes it impossible for the person to know where he is. It soon becomes clear that Lot has no influence on his family ^㉓³. When he tries to warn his sons they think he is joking. How can a man who has chosen to come to Sodom give anyone a warning about living there?

㉑¹ 19:10

㉒² 19:11

㉓³ 19:12–14

• Lot's attachment to Sodom

Lot is reluctant to believe that his beloved Sodom is going to be punished. He hangs around hoping that it might not be true after all and that he might be allowed to stay there after all. Perhaps God will change His mind! But Sodom is not Jonah's Nineveh! Jonah's Nineveh could repent; Sodom was beyond repentance. The angels have to drag Lot away ^㉑¹. Then they give a stern warning. 'Get as far away from Sodom as you can!', they say ^㉒². But Lot wants a little bit of the Sodom-life! There is a little town not far away. Please – he asks – can this little bit of the Sodom- area be saved just for me? 'Is it not a little one?' ^㉓³. Lot is deeply immersed in the life of a wicked city. He gets what he wants but it is not worth having ^㉔⁴.

㉑¹ 19:15–16

㉒² 19:17

㉓³ 19:18–20

㉔⁴ 19:21–23

• Reluctant to heed warnings

• Annihilation

Then God's judgement comes. It totally annihilates the city and the surrounding area ^㉑¹. Lot's wife looked back. She shares in the judgement of the city ^㉒². The next day when the annihilation is all over there is nothing left but the ascending smoke. The 'smoke of their torment' is going up even though the act of destruction is finished ^㉓³. The cities have been 'destroyed' ^㉔⁴. Abraham is safe. Lot has been 'saved through fire'. Lot's wife has not exactly shared in the fate of the doomed city but she has lost her life.

㉑¹ 19:24–25

㉒² 19:26

㉓³ 19:27–28

㉔⁴ 19:29

'Salvation by fire' – not an easy option

The last nine verses tell us of the end of Lot's story. He lives in fear. He never did live in his chosen Zoar although it was his 'intercession' for it that caused it to be spared ^㉑¹. He had lost everything, his wife, his home, his possessions, and was soon to lose his morality, his dignity and his reputation. Let it never be said that being 'saved through fire' is an easy option. The way of a transgressor is hard, and the way of a believing transgressor is worse. 'Righteous' Lot was certainly a believer and we shall meet him in heaven, but he ended his life in a terrible way. His daughters get him drunk ^㉒² and he commits drunken incest with his daughters ^㉓³. The Moabites and Ammonites were his offspring ^㉔⁴.

㉑¹ 19:30

㉒² 19:31

㉓³ 19:32–36

㉔⁴ 19:37–38

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

'Sodom and Gomorrah' is a sample of what God's judgement is like. 'As it was in the days of Lot... it will be like that on the day that the Son of Man is revealed' ^㉑¹.

㉑¹ Luke 17:28–30

1. A picture of eternal punishment

1. **It is a picture of eternal punishment.** God's fire and sulphur which destroyed Sodom is what will be used on the day of judgement. 'Sodom and Gomorrah', says Jude, '...serve as a sample by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire' ^㉑¹. Deuteronomy speaks of 'soil burned out by sulphur and salt, with nothing planted, nothing sprouting, and unable to support any vegetation, like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah' ^㉒². It was a foretaste of hell.

㉑¹ Jude 7

㉒² Deuteronomy 29:23

2. A picture of being saved by fire

2. **It is a picture of being 'saved through fire'.** Lot was brought through the fire and it was not allowed to destroy him in the way that it destroyed the others. Yet Lot will never have the honour that will come to those who have lived a godly life. I doubt whether Jesus will say 'Well done, good and faithful servant' to Lot.

3. An example of a believer losing her life because of extreme rebelliousness

3. It includes an **example of a believer losing her life because of extreme rebelliousness**. I suppose Lot's wife was a believer in the promises concerning Abraham's seed. Lot's wife was part of the family of Abraham that had in faith left Haran. She was willing, evidently, to move from Haran and travel with her husband to Canaan. But when Sodom was under threat she revealed that she had drifted a long way away from God. She wanted to be in Sodom, and was looking back grieving over what she had lost. She did not share the fate of Sodom; God rescued her. That makes it clear that she was one of God's people. Yet she was guilty of extreme rebelliousness in disobeying a clear instruction not to look back to Sodom. God took her life, not to send her to hell, but to mark out His extreme displeasure when His people look back to worldly ways. *'My soul takes no pleasure in anyone who shrinks back'* (Hebrews 10:38). Lot's wife lost her life. Even that does not prove she went to hell. She can be included with Ananias and Sapphira and the Christian brothers and sisters of 1 Corinthians 11:30 who were taken prematurely to heaven because God wished to show how He felt about the sin of hypocrisy (Ananias and Sapphira) or ill-treatment of the poorer Christian ^{☐1}, or an extreme fondness for the world and its ways. ^{☐2}

^{☐1} 1Corinthians 11:21-22, 29-30

^{☐2} 23:25

^{☐3} 23:25

• An encouraging story of an inconsistent believer getting to heaven

Strangely, there is something encouraging about the story of Lot. It is the greatest example of an inconsistent believer getting to heaven anywhere in the Bible. Peter is quite clear that 'righteous' Lot was rescued ^{☐1}. God did not save him from judgement and then send him to hell! Lot is in heaven now! There were not ten righteous men in the city, but Lot was a believer and that was enough for God to save him.

^{☐1} 2 Peter 2:7-9

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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