



Don't Look Back

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Have you ever considered country living? There is a time coming as we near the close of this earth's history when God's people would be safer to leave the cities. The big cities are becoming dangerous to dwell in: All one has to do is watch the news: crime is on the increase, violence on every hand and so on and on it goes. But the greatest danger of all is the very real threat of losing our children to the city influences. One of the greatest tragedies that could come into our lives is for our children to turn away from the Truth, to seek pleasure and worldly enjoyment, and then to find that their salvation is in jeopardy.

The Bible gives clear and solemn warning to those living in the last days. Jesus actually gives this solemn warning to every parent to every young person that have ever named the name of Christ. Luke 17:28-30 says, " Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

Now this is a warning to those living in our day just before Our Lord returns. Jesus is basically saying here 'You who are living down in the Last days, you had better sharpen up your memories. As the end gets nearer it will benefit you to read all about Lot and his wife. Especially 'Lot's Wife.'

There are two important "Remembers" that Jesus tells us to keep in mind. Remember the "Sabbath." Remember "Lot's wife." Yes, God is urging us to pay special attention to the experience of Lot and his wife, and He wants us especially in these days to take notice of this unfortunate experience. First of all let us take a look at Sodom. It was a city situated in a very rich and fertile plain. As a matter of fact it was a great big oasis. It was actually called the "Garden of Jehovah."

Genesis 13:10 says, " And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." Lot chose to live in this city for he was greatly attracted by the abundance of water, the beautiful surroundings, and lush growth. But it was selfish considerations that decided his choice.

In Ezekiel 16:49 we read, "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." Pride, ease of living, and idleness! Idleness is the greatest curse that can fall upon man. Isaac Watts once made a statement that is so very true - "For Satan finds some mischief still For idle hands to do."

We see it right through the Bible, great men such as David and Gideon, men who were truly great in action, fell into disgrace and almost lost the kingdom through idleness. Genesis 18:20, 21 says, "And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." I like this verse. It gives me great comfort. God does not act on hearsay. He makes a thorough investigation before He brings judgment upon people or an individual.

And now we turn to Genesis 19:1 says, "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground." Did you notice that Lot sat in the gate? In all probability he was a judge or magistrate, however, there is no question that he was a person of authority, for we find that King David sat in the gate to show himself to the people. (2 Sam 19:8)

Now there were quite a number of things that Lot showed in his character that were not particularly good traits, but one thing in which he did shine was hospitality. Paul even mentions it, in Hebrews 13:2, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Oh yes Lot was hospitable, there is no doubt about that. He was ever ready to help the friendless and the poor. It was something that he had learned from Abraham, and of course it was part of his religion.

I'm reminded of a quote for E.G. White in the book Conflict and Courage - "Many a household in closing its doors against a stranger has shut out God's messenger who would have brought a blessing and hope and peace." What did the men of Sodom do when they realized there were two strangers in their midst? They wanted to molest them! Genesis 19:5 - "And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them."

These people were terribly corrupt. We may even say today that it is incredible that these men could be so corrupt and vile, but Jesus is saying "You had better remember Sodom because that is how it will be in the Last Days."

Genesis 19: Verse 12 continues. Here the two angels are talking, "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place." The Angels warn Lot 'If you want to save your children then you had better get them out of here. Verse 14, " And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law."

Here is a warning message from God. What was the response? So used to the city and its evil inhabitants were Lot's children, that when Lot warned them of the impending destruction, it says he seemed as one that mocked. They could see no evidence of danger. They had good homes, good jobs and every prospect of advancement. The environment of the city blinds men and women to sin. And it is a picture of the world today. Have you been warned of the impending disaster that is soon to come on this earth of ours? Are you warning others through God's Word?

In every big city this warning message is being sounded but Satan has blinded the minds of men and women so that they will not listen and cannot comprehend. Lot thought to himself, "My children will get a better education in the city, I will only have to work a forty hour week, and it will be a far better job than Abraham's of minding herds of sheep and goats." We can

build a nice home have all the conveniences of city life, and give our children every advantage. But at what cost? Lot should not have been in Sodom to begin with. Why? Because Sodom caused the ruin of Lot's children. 2 Peter 2:7 says, "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked."

Lot was a good man and the Bible says he was a righteous man, but Lot should never have been there in that wicked city. Probably Lot felt that he was a good influence being a magistrate. You can always find a good excuse for being in a place where you shouldn't be.

Do you remember when you began your walk with Jesus. Remember in your workplace when co-workers used all forms of vile language and profanities. You were shocked weren't you? But after a year or two did you find unconsciously your attitude changing? Did you become accustomed to it and then it hardly seems to jar on your feelings? It happens friend. It is simply human nature to be dulled into a lethargic response when we actually should be repulsed!

Lot should never have been in Sodom, and now as he thinks of his beautiful home, his costly carpets, and all those things that he has worked and saved so hard for, all these soon to be burned. And then his heart aches for the children so soon to be lost forever. This was hard for Lot. But this is more than a lesson to Lot--it is a lesson to you and to me. Are WE building fine homes and laying up treasures in Sodom?

Lot and his wife found it difficult to leave all their possessions behind. Lot lingered, undecided, undecided as to what he should carry with him as he fled. However the Angels manifested no concern over Lot's possessions. We are told that they pulled the four of them away by force.

No wonder JESUS reminded us that we had better the experience of Lot and his wife and that we are not caught in the same condition as they were. Again, human nature is that way. Even a good man may become so infatuated with the world that he cannot tear himself away from it. Men who have been lost in a snowstorm have had that fatal numbness creeping up their limbs and experienced that

temptation to surrender to what they know is the sleep of death. They need someone to urge them on to a place of safety.

Now back to Lot. Christ meets them outside the city. He told them to escape for their lives. The need for Christ Himself to join the Angels in their appeal to Lot, suggests that he and his wife are even yet hesitant about leaving everything behind. Truly you could say that Lot was a brand plucked from the fire. God calls Lot a good man and yet here he is surrounded by evil and reluctant to leave it.

It is a picture of you and of me in this corrupt old world today. If Lot had of been allowed to tarry it would have been his destruction. He might have decided to remain. But his only safety lay in an immediate and complete break with those things that bound his heart to Sodom. The question we must ask ourselves is, Are we allowing our hearts to become so attached to Sodom that our only chance of safety will to be torn away. I hope not but it can so easily happen.

Genesis 19:17 says, "And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." God was going to test them out, to see if they were devoted to Sodom or devoted to God. If they were grateful to God or otherwise.

God was HOLDING back the fires of Sodom just for Lot and his family. God does great things for His people, doesn't He?

Genesis 19:18, "And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord." We find that Lot did not want to leave the cities, he did not fancy the prospect of living in the mountains. And that is what Sodom does. The more we fit into the pattern of this world, the harder it will be to flee when God sends the call. And what about Lot's wife? The sad thing is that the Scripture tells

us that his wife LOOKED BACK. Why? Because her heart was back in that wicked city. Her friends, her children, her possessions, her thoughts. She was walking to the hills, but every step away from Sodom was agonizing for her.

Genesis 19:26, "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." God turned her into a pillar of salt. What a lesson it is to you and to me. Our feet can be on the way to the kingdom but our hearts can be with and in this world. It is a perpetual reminder and warning to those who would like to be saved but are content with HALFWAY measures, who seem to forsake the world, but whose hearts are still in it.

Then again we find that Lot was a bad example to his wife. His influence was weak and he lacked determination. Greater firmness on Lot's part in heeding the Angels commands could very well have meant her salvation. Yes she chose to die, rather than to leave Sodom. We are sorry for Lot's wife but let us profit by her example.

But why a pillar of salt? Salt in the Scriptures signifies incorruption, durability. God did this to teach us not to forget it-- it was to be an everlasting memorial. REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE.. Three words, but what a message! There are Mrs. Lots today, have you heard them? "If my children are not going to be there, then I won't be there also. or, "My husband died an Anglican, my children are Anglicans, therefore I will die an Anglican." Of course this has been said regarding any denomination. This reveals base ingratitude. Mrs. Lot did not appreciate what God was doing for her. And of course, this type of

attitude can be found among the men as well. God calls us out of BABYLON, He expects us to obey His call. At the time of Christ the pillar of salt was supposed to be still standing according to Josephus, and Jewish historian. Whether it is still standing is doubtful but the lesson STILL REMAINS.

Genesis 19:23, "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar." Yes it was a beautiful day. The sun came up smiling, everything promised to be a really lovely day. Business opened as usual. The shopkeepers swept out their shops and made them tidy, ready for business. The postman's whistle could be heard as he began his morning round, the children went off to school. The hotel bars started serving their liquor, the customers were there with their idle gossip. The news soon spread. "You know that old religious freak Lot, well he has been putting around a story that Sodom is going to be destroyed".

Of course you could hear the laughter for miles. But their laughter was short lived. Genesis 19:24, "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven." Sodom was reduced to ashes. What once was a beautiful fertile plain, well watered, with luxuriant growth, became a barren, desolate, desert place. What a lesson for you and for me! 2 Peter 2:6 says, "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." Jude 7 says, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Sodom is a type of this world. The world we live in today! Sodom speaks of Judgment to the man and woman who follows the lust of the flesh.

But while telling us to REMEMBER Sodom Jesus tells us that although the sins of that ill famed city were bad enough, it is possible for people to commit a greater sin than what they did. Matthew 10:14, 15 explains, "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you,

It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city." Christ says that this is a greater sin, that of rejecting the TRUTH of GOD, than the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Friends there is a time coming and coming very soon when the LAST BIBLE study will have been given. There is a time when CHURCH, will be closed. There is a time coming when all those who are to be saved will have fled into the mountains for safety. Matthew 24:16 says, "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains."

Just before the Seven Last Plagues begin to fall God's people must flee away from the cities. Lot was told to go into the mountains. God does not want His people to lose out in entering the kingdom so He gives this warning. Luke 21:34 says, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Lot's children did this and they were destroyed with Sodom. God wants us to "Come out." Not only to come out from the defiling influence of the big cities but from anything that will hinder us from entering into the glorious city.

Now I'm going to repeat Luke 17 verses 28 and 29, "that text once again: "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them

all." And continuing on now in verse 31, " In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back."

REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE. Luke 17 and verse 32 says, "Remember Lot's wife."It is one of the most solemn warnings given in the Bible. Let me tell you about Mrs. Garcia. You see, Mrs. Garcia, her husband and children were members of the Seven-day Adventist church in a town situated on the west coast of South America. The family operated a drapery store. They were not wealthy, nor poor, just good substantial church members. They had been Adventists for quite awhile. They were waiting for Christ to come. One day a group of radio artists in their town decided to broadcast a supposed invasion from another planet. The script was planned and practiced to perfection. One night they transmitted the program. The townspeople listened for a few horrified moments to the realistic drama that poured from their radios. Then they swarmed into the street, frightened and hysterical.

The Garcias had finished a busy day and were sitting in their lounge in the quiet evening. The radio was on. They too listened in shocked amazement. Suddenly Mrs. Garcias jumped to her feet and cried "Why, Christ is coming! She believed it. She was positive of it. They quickly decided to run to the church and wait for Jesus there. Mr Garcia grabbed two of the children and rushed out of the door. Mrs Garcia hurried along behind. After several blocks Mr. Garcia suddenly realized that his wife wasn't following. He turned in time to see her running back toward the store. He shouted. She did not hear. He turned and hurried back. As he burst through the door he stopped in his tracks, eyes bulging in disbelief at what he saw. Mrs Garcia was filling her pockets with money from the till and grabbing some of the best rolls of cloth to take with her! "Mother, what are you doing?" he gasped. She looked up, confused and breathless, and said, "Why, we can't leave these behind.

Let us always Remember Lot's Wife. Friends remember the words of Jesus. (Luke 17:31) "In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back."

Let us always REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE. Yes, we need to do just that. We who are living in these last days should give heed to the solemn warning of the Saviour. May God help us to be ready and waiting.