

Following the Biblical Stream:

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Part LXXXIX

In our last segment we made it to the point where Lot and his family was headed to Zoar, and after making it there God brought the destruction upon the rest of the cities and valley He told Abraham, and the angels had told Lot God would bring. We also covered how Lot's wife looked back and turned to a pillar of salt, which Lot and his daughters had no choice but to leave behind. In all this discussion we talked a lot about the difference between forgiveness and salvation. Lot had been forgiven for asking to go to Zoar instead of just following God's will that he go to the mountains, but if we are going to continue to walk in faith we must each choose to allow God to mold us no matter what mistakes God may have forgiven us for in the past. All this brought us through Genesis chapter 19 verse 29, and we are ready to pick up at that same verse here.

One point we did not have space to really cover about verse 29 in our last segment is the fact we touched on many times, about how Abraham was the real reason Lot was shown this grace by God. It was Abraham's righteousness that led to Lot being warned, but as we talked about, it was still each individual's decision as to if they would listen. This is shown predominantly in the fact Lot's wife did not make it to Zoar with her husband and two daughters! Lot had attempted to warn other family members who did not even leave with them to begin with, and, of course, were lost. However, in spite of the fact Lot's wife had gone with him in leaving Sodom, her disobedience to the instructions they were given still resulted in her death. This meant Lot and his daughters would enter Zoar just the three of them. Due to the righteous intervention of others, we may be warned in cases when we would not have been, but only those who obey God's voice will be saved!

Now, verse 30 is where the chronological sequence of Lot's life gets jumbled from the surrounding story line of Abraham. This is due to something we have talked about before but haven't covered for a while now, and that is the fact God's Word was written not so everything is chronological but so all the important facts get covered in a clear manner. This causes us to see places, such as we have here, where verses may reach out and cover quite a bit of time just to finish a story line, the bits and pieces of which would be confusing to insert later in a more chronological way. Thus, what verse 30 tells us is Lot went up or out of Zoar. In other

words, he left Zoar, which is important to understand because we need to be clear he and his daughters did make it to Zoar, and in time not to be consumed during the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the surrounding area. However, how long he stayed is totally unclear. On the other hand, why he left is told to us, and that fact was because he was afraid to continue living there. We can look at this different ways. We can say that in seeing the destruction God brought to the valley, Lot was shaken because it was greater than he expected. In witnessing this, he might have realized just how serious God was about the corruption in these cities and decided he would be better off living where God told him to go in the first place, which was the mountains.

One could also say that in seeing the power of the destruction, what we talked about last time came into the matter, and Lot realized a life in a city where all the surrounding agriculture and supporting industries had been destroyed was not going to be as comfortable as he thought. The problem with this second thought is the fact we are told Lot was afraid. It was not just comfort or the lack there of that caused Lot to leave. Thus, if we go with the first explanation, the "fear" Lot felt would be fear of God on the basis of the fact he had been told why this would come before the destruction ever came! This would be the best thought in that it would tie into what we talked about concerning salvation. Lot had a change of heart and repented of the sin of even asking to come to this place to live, and attempting to serve God in fear and trembling, Lot chose to turn back to what God told him was right. (Phili. 2:12)

As much as I'd like to accept that and move forward, I have to say there is little in Lot's past character that might imply he would make such a move. This in no way means it's untrue, but it seems a little strange God didn't mention anything in the text about this fear being a fear of God. There is no indication this was done out of a heart of repentance, service, or obedience to God in anyway. Not only that, but the following words give us a fairly grim picture of Lot's life in the mountains, which would indicate he did not continue to follow God and be blessed once again as he had been before. I'm not saying God would necessarily bless Lot, because the blessings of this life are not a guarantee for those who follow God. However, it would seem Lot had, either during the destruction or before it, lost a great amount which there was not time or a way to save from the destruction. We should remember the fact

he and Abraham parted ways and Lot chose to go into the valley because not just Abraham, but both Lot and Abraham had so many cattle, servants, etc. they could not stay in the same location without conflict arising.

The way this conflict ended was by Lot moving not just his family, but more importantly his household operations to the valley. It was not important in any way for Lot to leave Abraham's side and not return and/or commune on a regular basis, only that their herdsmen did not have to strive over the same wells of water, grazing land, and the like. However, Lot did leave Abraham behind in the hills, and this is one of the main factors in the words here jumping over time and wrapping up the details of what became of Lot's life. Lot's more immediate family members would not predominantly interact with Abraham and his immediate family. Due to this, it would not be until much later when Lot's descendants, as well as Abraham's, were better described as nations that we again see important interaction between the two families. All this would indicate Lot's fear was not based on getting his life on track for serving The Lord. If it had been, why did he and Abraham not seem to cross paths or have anything worth mentioning happen between them again?

Sadly, what the more likely explanation of Lot's fear was that he feared the people in Zoar, and there were some real reasons for this. First off, Lot was not a total stranger in this region. As we covered in talking about the earlier verses, Lot was one of the men who sat at the gate of Sodom. It is highly unlikely Lot was not known by many people in Zoar, especially those who came to do business in Sodom. If Lot continued any time period after leaving for the valley to hold on to the wealth God had blessed him with, Lot would be even better known, because doing business with a man in the area who had such wealth would be widespread. The fact Lot sat at the gate of Sodom also means those in Zoar knew Sodom, not Zoar, was Lot's home. The fact he and his daughters show up just before the destruction of everything else surrounding the city is a fact that could not have gone unnoticed by the people of Zoar! They may or may not have known that Lot was spared specifically or why, as we do not know how much he or his daughters ever told about their experience. However, there they were, the only survivors of the destroyed region!

This fact, no doubt, did not set well with many people in Zoar. They did not have to know he was

specifically spared by God to look at him with despise. Many times we see people ask the question of why did this person survive a certain event and not my family member or someone I cared about? It seems to be just human nature to ask this, and it is another indication we all know there is a God. Why? Because so many have that immediate feeling that there was some kind of higher power who either guided the outcome to be what it was, or it, at the very least, failed to act and make it come out differently! You can say there is no God or that you don't believe The God of the Bible is The True or Only God, but having the feelings that lead to asking such a question shows you want to reach out to some higher power. It does not matter whether you want to reach out due to anger and hate, or for comfort and answers, it's all the same when it comes to the argument we recognize and all know there is, in fact, a God!

Because God does not guide every event in a finite way like some people believe (and don't be fooled, more people than will admit it believe, whether consciously or not) bad things do happen, even to good people. We have talked about this many times. God put the world in motion, and if sin had never entered the world God would be in every step we took to guide and protect us. However, once sin came into the picture, God was pushed away from such an intimate walk, and the only way to experience it now is to do all we can to clean our lives of the sin that keeps Him away. The only way to do this is to constantly seek Him, for there are no magical ceremonies that bring Him; and even if we do all we can, we must still understand we live in a world filled with sin where God, outside of taking on human flesh as Jesus did, cannot walk with us so closely. Even The Holy Ghost cannot be constantly with us in the way God intended in the beginning, but this is why worrying about death is not something we need to do. God has made a way for all those who seek Him to be gathered to Him in a place where all this will be possible once again. We just have to want to make it to that place, for that reason, and we show we want to go for that reason by our constant seeking of it in the here and now! (Matt. 6:33)

Getting back to Lot's situation, again there is no indication in these or later verses that Lot moved to the mountains for this reason or that he continued to care about the things of God in his life. There is one small reference in the New Testament to the fact Lot was a righteous man, but in the context of that verse this is little more than a way of pointing out an individual, who is a good person, is going to have their good nature

vexed on a continual basis by those around them when they live among sinful people. (II Pet. 2:6-22) This is not saying Lot sought God in all he did by any means, and considering Lot did not have to stay in such a place, just the opposite is indicated. Thus, what we are told is that out of fear Lot and both his daughters, who were very clearly still unmarried, went up and lived in a cave, and the most plausible explanation for this is that they feared the people left in the valley!

Living in a cave is remarkable for a man who wanted the comforts of a city; so one small point I will stop to also make here is that when evolutionists point to the idea that men living in caves is proof of an earlier state of human evolution, it's laughable. Lot was a man very accustomed to the good life, and while this was no doubt a step down in his mind, it shows how even a man like him did not take the time to try and build a house or the like in these mountains. This was true even in light of the fact Lot had two daughters to take care of. Simply put, there were/are plenty of caves in the mountains of this region very suitable for living in. Lot found one he liked or felt would be a convenient place to live and used it as their home.

Because these verses only reach out through the time line to show us those events important to the main story line of the history the Bible is giving us, we are not told how Lot's life ended. As far as we know Lot lived the remainder of his life in that cave. One thing we know for certain is that unlike the prodigal son, he did not return to Abraham. (Luke 15:11-32) This would seem to be a dismal state for Lot, but he simply accepted the circumstances his life choices had led him to. This is further enforced by the fact that in the next verse Lot's daughters agree in the thought the older of the two verbalizes. That, being the idea no man was ever going to marry them. This attitude probably had a lot to do with the facts of why they had left Zoar as well. These two women did not believe their father had any connections left that would arrange for them to be given to any man in the region. This is just another sign they did not commune with Abraham, who could no doubt have helped in this matter; this led the two to believe their father would die without an heir to his name. As we talked about, we do not know how many children Lot might have had, but since none of them followed Lot in leaving the cities that were destroyed, the daughters knew all the rest of the family was gone!

Since their mother was gone and Lot himself was not only without connections to gain another wife

among the people here, but old as well, Lot had no hope of another child, specifically a son who could go out and make a life for himself, which these two women did not have the freedom to do in the culture of the day. These women believed they and their father were truly on their own out here, and the only thought they could come up with for how not to see their father's name simply die with him was to attempt to be the ones to bear him children. Rightly so, this thought is, or should be, repugnant to us today! However, this serves as an example of how a righteous person may believe they can live among very unrighteous circumstances and survive, but the question is not often asked, what will happen to the rest of my family? Lot's daughters did not seem to think this so wrong that it could not be done no matter what the consequence of them not doing it might be to their father's name. They did not find it so repugnant that they could not bring themselves to do such a thing. All this shows a way of thinking that was not just one which was more common in their time, but specifically due to the fact they had been raised in a place where sexual wrongdoing was part of the "norm," which caused God to destroy the place!

Now, in a related matter, I have been asked where Adam and Eve's sons got their wives from, and the obvious answer is that they took sisters for wives. Not only is this better in that it would be a sister, not a parent, but we must understand that at the start of things, Adam and Eve contained all the human genetic material that would create the diversity we know today! Not only was there a genetic diversity we can't fathom in these two beginning humans, but there was a purity we can't appreciate. One of the big reasons why you do not want to have children with anyone that is not far removed down your family tree (the basic rule is that you need to be beyond third cousins) is because of the combining of so much of the same faulty genetic material both parents would share. Adam and Eve did not yet have faulty genetics in them. They were not far removed from having access to the Tree of Life, which provided the ability to have no failure in the human structure to a point it would live indefinitely. This was so true that even in looking at the ages people lived prior to the flood, we see people lived hundreds of years in spite of having no access to the Tree of Life. While it's true God was The One Who choked our life span down to no more than 120 years, we are even further removed from the time of that being done than Lot's daughters. It should go without saying that the degrading of the human form in our time is very extensive, and to heighten that problem by marrying too close a family

relationship is nothing but ignorant!

All that said, at the time of Lot we should not accept that what these two women did should have been agreeable even in their day. However, we do see the marrying of much closer family members during the days of Abraham than we should today, and there is little to no evidence it created problems, especially not the very evident ones we would experience now. Getting back to the daughters' thoughts on this point, the truth this would not have been an acceptable plan in their father's eyes is clearly shown in the fact Lot's daughters understood they needed to get their father drunk before they attempted to carry out their plan. This they would do, and the first night the oldest daughter would go into her father. She would go in while he was enough out of his right mind so as not to remember her coming in, and she would leave before he woke up from sleeping off the alcohol. The second night they would do the same thing, but this time the younger of the two would be the one to go in and come out. In the end of it all, the plan would work for not just one, but both daughters would conceive a child.

If we look again at the point of chronology for these events, we have to notice the statement of the older daughter in pointing out their father was old. This obviously did not mean he was too old to have more children or they would not have expected their plan to work. At the same time, they knew Lot was getting to that point in life where he was not going to take another wife, even if there were women they perceived as available for that, and if he had a wife that was anywhere close to his age, she would not likely have been able to bear a child. In thinking about at what point all this might have happened, one needs to consider Lot was Abraham's nephew, not his brother, but this did not mean Lot was significantly younger than Abraham. It all depends on everyone's ages at the time Haran had Lot. What we do know is Abraham's father, who was Lot's grandfather, felt Lot was young enough he was still responsible for Lot as he left Mesopotamia with Abraham.

Even if Lot was significantly younger than Abraham, he still would have been fairly old because Abraham was going to turn 100 the year after Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. We know this because it was in the same conversation Abraham had with God and the two angels who would go on to warn Lot about all this, that Abraham was told it would be about the same time in the next year Sarah would be able to bear

a child once again. Thus, even if Lot was as many as 25 years younger than Abraham, that would make him almost seventy-five as they left Sodom. If Lot was closer to the same age, and indeed many believe he was born about the same year as Abraham, he was truly getting up there, and his daughters knew it. What this says is that it was not likely a long time after entering Zoar that they turned around and left for the mountains. It is also probable it was not long after that before his daughters took this action, we just don't know for sure. All we know is that the Bible records both daughters conceived, and there is little debate among scholars that these two women gave birth to Lot's children about the same time Isaac was born.

One can only imagine what Lot must have thought because it's an obvious truth his daughters could not have hid the fact for long that they were both pregnant. That truth is why they gave themselves the best chance at it working for at least one of them, in taking the two nights in a row approach. If their father had had time to get any idea of what had happened, he would have been far more on his guard from ever allowing them to pull such a stunt again! In the long run, if they did not eventually admit to what they had done, then who was the father(s) of their children? If there was another man in their lives, why had they not told their father about it? Again, we are given no details, but there seems to be no trouble with Lot and his daughters continuing to live together as a family. Why can we say this with a great amount of certainty? Well, considering that the daughters' concern was to carry on their father's name, if they did not admit these were his children then the only scenario for explaining how their offspring went on to be a people is that Lot simply took them in as his own.

If the daughters had been cast out by Lot for having children out of wedlock, there is little reason to believe these children would have amounted to much of anything, not having a family, in particular a father's name, to go forward with. In the culture they lived in, there would not have been much of a life waiting for any woman who was pregnant without a husband. Due to this, it is reasonable to believe that if Lot accepted them being pregnant under any circumstances, he, at the very least, gave these children his name and what honor that carried. It is that, which explains their ability to go forward in life and have the success of becoming whole nations in later times. The fact they did go forward to become people important to the chosen nation's history is exactly why we are told not just about Lot's life, but

specifically that in the end, no matter how messy it came about, Lot had these children.

Whether directed by God or simply as it turned out, both daughters would give birth to sons. This was also very important to carrying on the family line. Even if the daughters had found husbands, their children would have been considered the house of their husband's not their father's, but even now if they had given birth to only girls there would have been little to nothing accomplished toward their goal. In any case, both had sons, and I for one can't help but think the fact it worked out this way is directly tied to the scripture that tells us, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Romans 11:29 It also speaks to the power of God in general. Many people will make great arguments as to Lot's righteousness, and indeed what ultimately became of Lot is between him and God alone. However, there is no doubting Lot's survival was not due to Lot's righteousness. Lot was blessed in a large part because of an overflowing of blessings that God put on Abraham in general!

God wanted the land to be surrounded by many who came from Abraham's seed or original house before Israel was brought into the promised land in later times. However, God will not force anyone to serve Him or His plan. God uses those who seek Him, and this is clearly seen as God continually speaks to Abraham even when he and Sarah doubted or took wrong turns at times. God was specifically directing Abraham's path because Abraham desired to be used of God, and that is clear. When looking at Lot, there is little indication Lot sought anything more than what there was to gain in this world. At the same time, we see him experience the blessings of God just by being around and connected to Abraham. This happened because just as it is a truth there is negative results in surrounding yourself with unrighteous people, there is a positive effect in being around those who serve God and seek His righteousness. Aside from all the physical leading by example ways this can be true, there is a deeper spiritual truth to this.

As with many things, what we're talking about here is not mysticism but the truth we are all God's children and He wishes to see all of us follow Him. Thus, what God gives us is opportunities depending upon which ways our lives can best be used for His kingdom, and that is what Lot was being given. Just remember it is not God's will that any should perish but all come to repentance, which emphasizes how much it

is not true that being around those who follow God will save you or is necessary. We must seek God for ourselves. What I'm simply trying to point out here is what an advantage even someone who does not take the time to seek God for themselves can have just because they are close to those who do, but we should not let that fool us into believing we are where God wants us to be!

In spite of how it had come about, Lot ended up with two sons to carry on his name. The oldest daughter would give birth to a son and name him Moab, which very appropriately means "from father," and speaks to the debate of whether Lot ever knew the truth or not. This son would go on to be the father of the Moabites, who lived in the region to the east of the Dead Sea and Jordan River in a land that came to bear the name Moab. The younger daughter would have a son and name him Benammi, which means "son of my kindred." This also speaks to the debate of Lot knowing. This son's name would also be simply known as Ammon, and he would go on to be the father of the Ammonites, who also lived to the east of Jordan. Both these nations would be people the chosen nation of Israel would deal with as they returned from Egypt. In spite of the trouble they caused Israel upon their return, Israel was specifically told they would not be given certain land because it was held by Lot's descendants.

These nations would also figure predominately into the future history of the chosen nation, and though I know I took the space to mention it not to many segments back, I can not help but point it out again here. One of Moab's descendants named Ruth would have a tender heart toward God and His chosen nation. In continuing to hold onto this even after her Israelite husband had died and her sister-in-law had turned back to Moab, Ruth not only married once again into the chosen nation, but became the great grandmother of King David. In doing so, she also became a direct part of the line that leads from Abraham right down to The Messiah - Jesus Christ The King of Israel and all the earth!

Until next time, Shalom!

