

January 19-Genesis 19

Have you ever been warned about something but not taken the threat seriously? Unfortunately, some of the most terrible tragedies in human history have taken place because dire warnings were not heeded. The Scripture records many such warnings and one of them is found in Genesis 19.

As God's angels enter Sodom they are immediately approached by the men of the city with the purpose of molesting them (v. 4-5). This affirms what we already know about the wickedness of Sodom. Sodom was a place that deserved judgment and unbeknownst to the people there, these guests of Lot are getting ready to usher God's condemnation onto the city and its people. As the angels communicate to Lot the fact that God is getting ready to destroy the city, Lot goes out and finds His sons-in-law to tell them the terrible news and look at how they respond. Verse 14 says that Lot "seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting". Isn't this terrible? Here is Lot trying to warn these men in good faith about what is coming and they simply disregard his words totally.

One of the unfortunate truths about people caught in sin is that they have a very deficient view of their current standing before a God who is not only loving and merciful but also powerful and just. Lot's family had no concept of the danger of their situation, and it almost cost them their lives. God's judgment was coming but the very people who were being judged would not heed God's message of warning through His messenger Lot.

Does this ring true to you today? Have you ever tried to share with someone the fact that Christ is coming again to judge the world only to be mocked or treated as if you couldn't possibly believe such a thing? We know from experience that people don't always respond well to warning. In fact, when it comes to God and His destruction, many people simply don't believe He is capable. However, the Bible is very clear that judgment will come upon the people of this earth quickly "destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape" (1 Thessalonians 5:3). Today, we are called to be the ones who warn the lost about this certain judgment. We must be aware that many will respond to us the way Lot's son-in-law's did to him thousands of years ago.

Shame and ridicule accompany our task of being Christ's witnesses; however Genesis 19 also gives us hope. Further into the story we read about Lot and his family just before the judgment. "But he (Lot) 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" (v. 16). God in His mercy saved Lot and his family from destruction. Let us not forget that our God is a merciful God who is mighty to save. He can save any "lingering" soul and He will very often through our proclamation of the Gospel which includes our warning of God's coming judgment.