

16 When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. 17 Then the Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? 18 Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. 19 For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.”

The verse seems to indicate the Lord is indecisive and ask for a suggestion from the two angles. The Lord is never indecisive. This verse is to help the person, reading the scriptures, understand the relationship the Lord has with Abraham. Abraham is not only a person who will be blessed and fulfil prophesy, but the Lord sees Abraham as his friend.

God again lets us know that He has blessed Abraham. God has promised to make Abraham’s name great; to make him the head of many great nations; to bless those who bless him; to curse those who curse him and to bless the earth through him.

God gives us a little insight on why he chose Abraham. God chose him, because he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing right and just. God knows Abraham will lead his family and household to follow the ways of the Lord. God wants us who will walk in righteousness. This can only be done when a man spends time with the Lord. As a man (or woman) learns to walk with the Lord, the experience changes them. They begin to see things as God sees them. They notice things in their lives, that are not pleasing to the Lord. As a man becomes convicted of things in his life, he begins to walk away from them. Many times, he will not even realize the change is happening, but those around him will see the difference. This is how a Christian matures, by walking with the Lord. Abraham is not perfect, but Abraham has faith in God.

20 Then the Lord said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous 21 that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know.”

There has been a great outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah. It appears many travelers have gone to the cities to find rest and food. Instead they found horror and evil.

Again, the Lord is not going down to determine the great sin of the people of Sodom and the surrounding cities. The Lord already knows what is going on and how He will deal with it. For Abraham’s sake, he brings Abraham into the trust of what is going on in Sodom and what he intends to do about it. Abraham knows his nephew Lot is in the city and wants to save Lot and his family. God gives Abraham a small amount of hope, for Lot’s sake. God even knows the

question Abraham is about to ask. For the sake of the people, such as you and me, God's gives Abraham the opportunity to ask God about mercy. The following scriptures come to us, because of this opportunity given to Abraham to question God.

22 The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord.

The two with the Lord (scripture reveals the two are angels) walk away toward Sodom. Abraham knows the great power of the Lord, he has seen it. Abraham went against five kingdoms to save his nephew Lot and the Lord allowed him to overtake and destroy all the five armies. These were armies of many thousands of men and Abraham only brought a little over 300 men, but God gave them over to him. Now the Lord is sending two special men, not against mighty armies, but against cities. Abraham realizes Lot is in grave danger and pleads to the Lord.

23 Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Here is the question Abraham and many people today have. Will God sweep away the righteous with the wicked?

Look at our own cities in the USA. Look at the sin of Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York or Washington DC. Any lustful sin you can think of you can find in these cities. They are full of godless people. They are full of idol worship, lust, pornography, adultery, murderers, thieves and any other sin you can think of. Idol worship is found in greed of men, who can't get enough. They have more than they will ever need or use, but always want more. They worship gold, silver, diamonds and riches. You can see lust spread out over the movie screens and even brought into our individual homes through television, computers and now it is even on the phone devices we use. Our youth of today, spend almost every moment of their time looking at a small screened computer, we call a phone. They entertain themselves by constantly viewing godless entertainment as the world passes them by. With this new entertainment they bring in pornography, sex, violence and any other godless activity to the palm of their hand. They have become so use to viewing godlessness, that they don't even realize the difference between good and bad anymore. They are getting where they no longer remember how to communicate face to face with anyone.

God could take almost any city, around the earth, and blot them off the face of the earth and be justified. God puts up with the sinfulness of the cities, because there are still some righteous

people in them, and he holds back his great wrath until it is time. There will be a day of judgement. Even today the USA and other nations, around the earth, are feeling the judgements of God. It may be God holding back the rain; great sweeping fires, earthquakes or hurricanes. Many cities are still there, because God will not sweep away the righteous with the unrighteous.

26 The Lord said, “If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”

27 Then Abraham spoke up again: “Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, 28 what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five people?”

“If I find forty-five there,” he said, “I will not destroy it.”

29 Once again he spoke to him, “What if only forty are found there?”

He said, “For the sake of forty, I will not do it.”

30 Then he said, “May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?”

He answered, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”

31 Abraham said, “Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?”

He said, “For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it.”

32 Then he said, “May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?”

He answered, “For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it.”

The Lord will not destroy the cities, if there are 10 righteous people found in the cities.

33 When the Lord had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.

Abraham believes there should at least be 10 righteous people, even if it is only Lot, his family and a few of Lot’s friends.

The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, which included all the other cities and towns of that valley area were great. God was prepared to destroy everyone and everything in that valley to prevent them from corrupting the righteous in the land beyond them. The cities were sick with sin. Every

evil that could be devised was in the cities of Sodom to the point where there were not even 10 righteous people found. God was not simply going to destroy the cities because of his anger, they would be destroyed, because of his love.

Have you ever had a wild dog come near your family? A dog full of anger and disease, such as rabies. If that dog is not destroyed it might attack your family and greatly injure or kill them. If they are not killed, the animal will pass on the rabies and your family would be corrupted by the same evil disease and it would continue to spread. God sees the sin of Sodom as we see rabies. If not stopped it would spread to the righteous. God already knows what will happen if the spread of sin is not stopped. He has dealt with this before. There was a time, when the earth was overtaken by such sinful disease, in the time of God's servant Noah. It was so bad that not even 10 righteous people could be found. In the whole earth, there were 8 people found. God brought down judgement on the earth, before there were none left. God waited to the last minute, until there were less than 10 righteous souls found, before bringing on destruction.

GENESIS 19

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

NIV

1 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. 2 "My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning."

The morning is past. The angels spent the first part of the day in the pleasant surroundings, of the home of Abraham. Abraham had prepared them a good meal and had a good visit. They walked slowly toward Sodom and reached it in the evening, before the gates were closed. Abraham's Lord is not with the two angels.

Cities, at the time, were more secure than our modern cities. Sodom was surrounded by a wall. Outside the wall would be a mixture of farmland and pastures for livestock. In the evening, people would leave the fields and retire to their quarters, within the city walls. At night, there would be a guard at the gate. During the day, the gate to the city was not just some single doorway for everyone to pass through, it was a center for business. Many of the city administrators and businessmen would sit at the gate and conduct business. Lot was a man of business. He owned many sheep, goats, cattle, camels and donkeys.

When Lot met the 2 men, he knew there was something special about them. The bible doesn't say what it was, but Lot saw something and addressed them with respect (calling them his lords). The word lord here does not mean Jehovah, but is another word, Adonai. They were

messengers. I believe Lot could sense a righteousness about them. Something he never sensed from the people of Sodom. Lot may have sensed this in others, that had come to the city in the past. Before he was familiar with the great sin of Sodom, he failed to warn others. They may have spent the night in the public square and great evil fell on them. Lot couldn't help those, but he was going to try to protect these two men. He asked them to come to his home, to offer them respect and safety. Lot knew what Sodom was like at night and the city square was not a good place to be after dark, in fact it was dangerous.

“No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.”

3 But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. 4 Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. 5 They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”

Lot strongly insisted they not stay in the square. He knew the evil that went on continually, in the city of Sodom and surrounding cities. Sodom was a city that was given over to a sinful and evil lust for sex. No one was safe outside their doors after dark, from the perverted minds of the people. Many of the cities would have been consumed with sexually transmitted diseases. This was a result of denying the true God and worshipping idols, which led to the depravity of man.

See Romans 1:18 – 32

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural

relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. 29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31 they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. 32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

These are the men that were at Lots door, ready to force their way into Lots home and take the strangers whom Lot thought he was protecting.

6 Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him 7 and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. 8 Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

Lot goes out the door and greets the men, he calls them his friends. Lot knows many of the men. Some were possibly men he conducted business with, at the city gate. During the day, they may seem normal. At night, behind the city walls, they step out of their business identity and return to their heartfelt perversions. Sounds like a lot of people in the cities and town of today.

Lot does something I as a Texan can’t even identify with. He offers his two daughters to these sick and deprived men, in exchange for the safety of the guest in his home.

9 “Get out of our way,” they replied. “This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

They reject his offer. They mock him and let him know they are going to get his guest and have their way with them and Lot can’t stop them. If Lot never knew the depravity of his so-called friends, he knows it now.

10 But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. 11 Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

The men inside, whom Lot does not know are angels from God, pull him into the house and strike the evil men with blindness. It was a miracle.

12 The two men said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, 13 because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.”

The two men (angels) tell Lot to get his family out of the city, because judgement is coming. They already knew there would be no 10 righteous men, found in the city. Lot is told the city is to be destroyed and because of what happened, at his door, he believes it. Lot realizes the men are from the God of Abraham. Lot believes and acts on his belief.

14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the Lord is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

It’s the same today. God has sent men into the world to declare men everywhere should repent. I believe the only reason many cities are not destroyed is because of the local churches. I’m not talking about the great buildings for worship service, but rather for the small congregations of righteous believers who meet in some of the buildings. The building is not the church, it is only a place for the church to meet. There are still a few righteous people living in our land. Being righteous doesn’t come from meeting as a church, it comes from coming to Jesus by faith, repenting of our sins, believing on His death on the cross; His burial and His bodily resurrection from the grave. Meeting as a church is a way to grow and learn and attempt to reach others. Most people love their evil lives and reject the message or believe it is a joke. Most don’t believe in God or at least they reject the true God and his redeeming Son, Jesus Christ.

15 With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.”

The fact that Lot believed the angels was not enough to save him and his family. He had to act on that faith. He had to turn away from the sinful city and obey God. God’s angels tell him to turn away from this evil place, God is about to judge it.

16 When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the Lord was merciful to them.

I believe Lot hesitated, because his wife and daughters didn’t want to leave. They were comfortable living with perversions. His daughters were not involved in the sexual perversions,

they were virgins. Lot and his family had lived amid perverted people so long they considered it as normal. The angels tell Lot, hurry.

17 As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, “Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!”

18 But Lot said to them, “No, my lords, please! 19 Your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown great kindness to me in sparing my life. But I can’t flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I’ll die. 20 Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small. Let me flee to it—it is very small, isn’t it? Then my life will be spared.”

21 He said to him, “Very well, I will grant this request too; I will not overthrow the town you speak of. 22 But flee there quickly, because I cannot do anything until you reach it.” (That is why the town was called Zoar.)

This is a small town, but it is still full of the perversions of Sodom, just on a smaller scale. God had intended to destroy everything in the valley, including Zoar. God spares it for Lot’s request. God wanted Lot to go to the mountains and make a new start. That would have required Lot to live by faith. Lot had been surrounded by evil for so long, he didn’t know how to live by faith.

The Bible says. 2 Peter 2: 4-9 NIV

4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment; 5 if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6 if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment.

23 By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land. 24 Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the Lord out of the heavens. 25 Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, destroying all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land. 26 But Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

Lot reached Zoar, he made it to the small town. The name Zoar, means insignificant, not important, useless. When he reached the Zoar, judgement came. The Lord rained down burning

sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah, which included all the valley cities in the area. They were destroyed, because they were infected with evil and the infection could have spread to the far corners of the world. Lot was no longer rich. His livelihood was destroyed with Sodom. Even the vegetation of the land was not spared.

As judgement came on the cities of the valley, Lot's wife looked back. This was not a woman who turned to glance at judgment. This is a woman who is heartbroken, because the land and the life she loved was gone. She was not a woman of righteousness. She was a woman who liked being identified with the land and life of Sodom. Many say the original language may indicate she turned to go back to Sodom. She was then judged with Sodom, because that's where her heart lay. Lot now wished he had gone to the mountains.

27 Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood before the Lord. 28 He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace.

Now even Abraham realizes God could not even find 10 righteous people in the entire land.

29 So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.

God saved Lot, because of his friend Abraham. Lot had survived but had lost everything. Can a Christian live amid unrighteousness and be saved? There will be saints in Heaven who accomplished nothing for the Lord in their lifetime. They will be saved because they put their faith in Jesus, but it wasn't a glorious faith. Rather than stand before the Lord and receiving their reward, they will stand as a person who has survived a fire, but lost everything, including his family.

1 Cor 3: 10 – 15 The apostle Paul says -

10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. 14 If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. 15 If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

How will you look when you stand before the judgement of the Lord? Will you receive a reward, or will you stand empty handed with the odor of smoke?