

# The Daze of Lot

What an amazing story! Here's this guy who's got it all – a righteous standing in God's eyes, great wealth, a lovely family... but it's not enough. When given the choice, he wants more of what the world has to offer. And so, he chooses the "valley of the plain"; not any ordinary valley though – he gazes upon the lushness of the area surrounding Sodom and he's captivated.

I've always thought it one of the biggest tragedies in the Bible that Abraham and Lot split up because of their riches. They had too many herds to stay together and too little appreciation of the eternal value of godly fellowship to simply 'down-size'. Now, some could claim that Abraham in suggesting this departure to Lot was finally fully obeying the Lord's original command to leave his family. However, the scripture specifically says, "...*their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.*" (Genesis 13:6) So it isn't clear that obedience was on his mind.

This is reminiscent of another passage in the book of Revelation, chapters two and three, which describe seven churches that many Bible commentators take to represent not only literal churches of the first century but messages of a personal and prophetic nature as well.

The last church mentioned is Laodicea and it is frequently used by the Lord to personally convict the

self-satisfied Christian as well as to prophetically picture part of the church, generally speaking, in the 'last days' (that is, at the end of the 'Church Age' – today!) See Rev 3:14-22. Of course, no one wants to consider themselves a part of the Laodicean congregation personally or prophetically, nevertheless, we'll take a sober look anyway. But first, back to Lot...

In Luke 17, Jesus used two illustrations to characterize the generation in which we live. He used Noah and the flood as a picture of the Jewish people during the tribulation and He used Lot as a picture for the church. Noah, you see, was saved in the midst of God's judgment while Lot was saved out of God's judgment. We won't study the first one in this article, however, there are strong comparative links between what we read about Lot and Laodicea. And as they both cast shadows upon the 'last days' environment, we do well to study them.

Interesting, that Jesus describes Sodom in Luke 17:28 without any reference to sexual immorality. Rather, He says, "*They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built.*" – a picture of normal everyday life which is exactly His point. For many people, life will be going on without any awareness on their part of impending judgment. But He specifically chose "the days of Lot" as His 'type' or prophetic picture so let's consider him and those days.

In Genesis 18, word had reached heaven, so to speak, that Sodom had become a wicked place, so vile that it deserved utter annihilation.

The Lord, of course, already knew this and so He sent a couple of angelic messengers there on a mission of mercy.

You see, years earlier Lot and his family had left the highlands to the west. He had left his Uncle Abraham when he chose the lush valley pastures of the Jordan plain. The scriptures never indicate that he gave any thought to his family in this decision let alone the will of God – only his cattle, his business, his pursuit of the materially abundant life.

Genesis 13:12 indicates that he left the hardship of living in tents for the comfort of the cities. He chose to have plenty rather than a pilgrimage if you would. But as is almost always the case, he did not go directly to Sodom, rather he seemed to have dwelt in other cities first with a gradual movement closer and closer to the sinful epicenter. He also seems to have used his tent to camp out on better and better territory before giving in to the urge for the 'condo' in town. In other words, it was a slow but deadly seduction.

Thus, when the two angelic emissaries arrive at the city in Genesis 19, we find Lot firmly fixed in Sodom. He now owns a house and resides in the city; at least two of his daughters have married Sodomites and Lot is himself, sitting in the city gates which indicates he had become a real 'player' in the community.

2 Peter 2:8 says that Lot, though personally righteous, "...*tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing (the Sodomites') lawless deeds.*" So

when Lot saw the angels, something clicked – he bowed, addressed them as "lords" and virtually begged them to stay under his roof. He knew what they would observe elsewhere in the city and one can't help but think that he may have been trying to 'cover up' his sinful surroundings as well as to protect his visitors.

You know the story – that night, the house is surrounded by every male in the city and they demand to have sexual relations with these visitors. Then, in a desperate effort to protect the angels, Lot offers to the crowd his two daughters to brutally rape. With this, the mob goes ballistic and is about to 'have their way' with Lot when the angels strike them all blind, grab their stumbling host and pull him inside his house.

At this point, they tell Lot that they are about to utterly destroy the whole place and that he should convince all of his relatives to leave immediately. Consequently, he runs to the homes of his sons-in-law and says, "*Get up, get out of this place; for the Lord will destroy the city! But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.*"

Can you fathom what's probably going through Lot's dazed mind?? He now realizes that his long ride with seduction is crashing. His slide into carnal surroundings (which he may have even thought were 'God's blessings') was about to end very abruptly and his comfort zone is about to radically shrink. But tragically, by this time, his family is almost totally corrupted.

Although the angels mercifully grab a hold of he, his wife and his

two remaining daughters, literally leading them by the hand out of the city – at least two of his other children are destroyed along with Sodom. And if they had any children, they're killed as well. While Lot flees, his possessions are incinerated, his wife is morphed into a salt pillar and eventually, his two surviving daughters end up having sexual relations with him. Whoa!

In all of this, recall, Lot was a righteous man. So how did he come to this and what does it mean for us today? Remember, we are living in the time Christ referred to as being like the "days of Lot".

I'll suggest that it started with a bad choice birthed out of a misguided heart. The Bible says of Abraham, that he *"looked for a city with foundations whose builder and maker is God."* (Hebrews 11:9) The word here for "looked" in the original language means "to look for, to wait for with expectancy". That is, Abraham had the same heart attitude that is reflected in 2 Peter 3:11-14, *"Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless..."*

In a nutshell, Abraham looked for and anticipated heaven. And it influenced his whole walk as it will any believer. On the other hand, Lot, although he was a sincere and righteous man, was focused upon the treasures and comfort of this world. Contrary to Abraham, he looked for earthly foundations and they ended up being quite flammable. Therein, he found his ruin.

He tried to mix his desire for the things of this life with the values of the life to come, and that just doesn't work. Jesus said that although we are "in the world," we are not "of the world". (John 17) Even in Leviticus, in the Mosaic Law, mixture of livestock, seed and some fabrics was prohibited as a picture of what it means to value the heavenly so single-mindedly that the earthly absolutely pales by comparison. (See Leviticus 19)

This is not to advocate asceticism but a sincere and consuming attraction to Christ.

Lot wanted stuff – he wanted comfort, and Sodom offered that. In fact, contrary to what you might expect, Ezekiel 16:49 says that pride, fullness of food and abundance of idleness made up the iniquity of Sodom which led to its judgment, not sexual aberration. And this is the same criticism the Lord applies to the last days church of Laodicea. He says, "...you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy and have need of nothing...'"(Revelation 3:17)

So WHY would Lot stay there? He knew that what the people were engaged in all around him was absolutely wrong. Was he

hypnotically influenced by the abundance? 1Cor 15:33 says, *"Do not be deceived; 'Evil company corrupts good habits.'" Was he ensnared, stuck in the muck with too little spiritual 'chutzpah' to break out?*

Here's the rub – many, many dear Christians today are in Lot's sandals – righteous souls being tormented while going with the world's 'flow'; for some, the passionate pursuit of Christ has turned to a settling into 'new digs'; there's spiritual paralysis in worldly pleasure and as a result, many Christian families are becoming indistinguishable from the world.

Here's the deal – like Laodicea, we need zeal and repentance. Like Abraham, we MUST be heavenly minded in this world. Lot never changed Sodom; Sodom snared Lot. ***He was powerless to influence because he was focused on affluence.***

Likewise, Laodicea was/is a church in need of a split! To split the scene! Get outta town so to speak! Like Lot, Laodiceans need to wake up and dash for the highlands of God's help (and don't look back!) Psalm 121:1,2.

Lot was saved because of God's mercy and because Abraham prayed. He interceded for Lot and his family just as Christ is interceding for us right now.

You know, our God loves us relentlessly. He wants us to have an overcoming relationship with Him. And so, if you have closed off any part of your life to His Spirit, open the door now. He won't condemn, on the contrary, He'll dine with you.

(See Rev. 3:20) Listen quietly. Do you hear His knock?

To each church in Revelation 2 and 3, the Lord makes a promise to the overcomers, but only with the Laodicean church does He exhort them to overcome as He overcame. You see, Christ was in truth rich and in need of nothing, yet He humbled Himself because of a compelling love for His Father. He put aside unimaginable riches and power to be our Savior. When He beheld the vendors in the temple – those who were only concerned with making a buck He drove them out zealously. (See John 2:14-17) Thus, to the last days church He says, 'Follow My example.'

And so, may each of us hold fast to God's Word in these treacherous days and obey from the heart. Let us not be dumbed-down in the 'days of Lot' nor in the DAZE of Lot! May we, as the body of Christ, not be caught up in 'playing church' and may worldly pursuits take back seat as the family of Christ prepares sincerely for His appearing.

May you be filled with the fullness of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God bless you. Heaven's not far away.