

Lessons from lot

Genesis 18-19

From reading 1/2

Preached Sunday, 1/3 2021

Opening

Prayer of blessing over the new year

- Open with a time of prayer for the new year

Announce prayer meeting

- Gather at 6:30 nightly this week
- Prayer and seeking God in 2021

Introduction

How we got here

- First Sunday in 2021
- Welcome back!
- Re-reading Genesis
- I urge you to be in the word - even though we don't have a reading plan
- Read the story of Sodom and Gomorrah and found Scriptures that relate to the time in which we now live

Exegesis

Background

- Genesis 18, the Lord appears to Abram
- Announced that Sarai was going to have a child
- Then he announces his planned judgment
- It is with this announcement we want to begin

Judgment for sin

- **Gen 18:20-21 (ESV)** (20) *Then the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, (21) I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know."*

- Reading again Genesis, remember Able's blood cried from the ground
- God hears the cries for justice and pays attention
- Here - he prepares to investigate. He is a just judge, and will punish wickedness
- The same is true in our day - he is a just judge - and the sin and wickedness of this world will be judged
- He has not executed judgment - because He's not willing that any should perish.
- Peter reminds his readers that judgment will come. And also that scoffers who doubt that judgment will take place will arise in the church **2 Peter 3:9-10 (ESV)** *(9) The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (10) But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

Warning to Abram

- God lets Abram know of his intent. There is an outcry for justice. I'm going to check it out for myself. I will know!
- Why does he tell the righteous? So they might be ready and so that they can intercede
- **Question** Hasn't God been warning us that we are living in the last days?
- What are we going to do with that information?

intercession

- See how Abram responds.
- **Gen 18:22 (ESV)** *(22) So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD.*

- Abram remained in the Lord's presence. How we need this today
- We spend so much time doing other stuff... even good stuff, but who will tarry before the Lord!
- See his intercession: **Gen 18:23-26 (ESV)** (23) *Then Abraham drew near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? (24) Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you then sweep away the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? (25) Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" (26) And the LORD said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake."*
- **Note:** Abraham drew near!! He approached the Lord! He took his care and concern to the Lord. There are not enough of us staying in the Lord's presence and approaching him with our needs
- He appealed to the Lord on the basis of His character. Do we know the Lord well enough to do the same?
- He ascribes (rightly) to the Lord His attributes: righteousness and justice.
- The Lord says that he would spare the entire city for the sake of 50 righteous
- **Note:** The power of Abram's intercession. His prayers could have spared the city.
- See **persistence** as he repeats the cry (45, 40, 30, 20 and finally 10)
- The Lord is not annoyed, but each time says he will spare the people!
- Motivated by his love and concern for Lot, he pleads with God for the city.
- **What about us?** Do we believe judgment is coming? If so, are we interceding for the ones for whom we care?

Lots rescue

- Genesis 19 picks up the story with Lot's rescue
- They enter the city and stay with Lot - who pleads with them to stay the night with him.

- During the night this happens **Gen 19:4-9 (ESV)** *(4) But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house. (5) And they called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them." (6) Lot went out to the men at the entrance, shut the door after him, (7) and said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. (8) Behold, I have two daughters who have not known any man. Let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please. Only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof." (9) But they said, "Stand back!" And they said, "This fellow came to sojourn, and he has become the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and drew near to break the door down.*
- Take note. This is the direction we are heading. Sin becomes more depraved and more aggressive. See how a vocal minority has changed this nations laws, values, education system, etc.
- They warn Lot that judgment is coming, and tell him to get his family ready. **Gen 19:12-13 (ESV)** *(12) Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city, bring them out of the place. (13) For we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against its people has become great before the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it."*
- Truth: This is where we are living - God's judgment is poised over our nation for its sin. We need to gather in our loved ones
- Lot responds by going out to warn his future son-in-laws. **Gen 19:14 (ESV)** *(14) So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, "Up! Get out of this place, for the LORD is about to destroy the city." But he seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting.*
- See their response... he's only joking He was unsuccessful in reaching his own family. We know there were no righteous men in the city, and apparently Lot had not tried to convert them previously.
- See v15 - dawn approaches - Lot returns having tried to complete them to come.

- This urgency should grip our hearts as well. See **Luke 14:23 (ESV)** (23) *And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.*
- The angels compel Lot to flee. Judgment is coming, and they are trying to save his life!
- **Gen 19:15-17 (ESV)** (15) *As morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Up! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city." (16) But he 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. (17) And as they brought them out, one said, "Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away."*
- See God's mercy! He forces Lot to leave (back to a praying uncle!)
- In v16 - *But he lingered!* Lot should have been fleeing God's judgment, but he was lingering in Sodom. His story is an interesting one. He camped outside the city originally, but eventually became a resident - and now in the moment before her destruction - Lot is lingering there.
- Church wake up - let's not linger here for the Lord is about to bring judgment!

Gods faithfulness

- One more portion of this story to share
- Lot flees, and the Lord rains down fire from heaven. **Gen 19:24-25 (ESV)** (24) *Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven. (25) And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.*
- Judgment is coming! God will destroy sin
- Abraham looks down on it **Gen 19:27-28 (ESV)** (27) *And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD. (28) And he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land*

of the valley, and he looked and, behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.

- Abraham saw the smoke rising - realizing his intercession "failed"
- But God didn't fail. See **Gen 19:29 (ESV)** (29) *So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had lived.*
- The Lord had mercy on Lot because of Abraham's intercession

Applications

What are we to take away from this story?

Judgment is coming

- I've preached this truth repeatedly
- We are living in a time where judgment is hanging over America
- I know that God will spare us - His people
- But the sin of our nation: abortion, promoting every kind of sexual immorality and the forsaking of the God who made us great - these will be judged

We have the responsibility to intercede

- God makes the believer aware so that we might intercede
- We should be praying for our nation: for the sake of our loved ones
- We have *advance notice* so that we can pray
- See how Abraham's prayer impacted Lot (and potentially the whole city)
- God is a merciful God

- And like Lot - we should be telling our lost loved ones of a coming judgment. They may not believe us, but we can compel them to come in!
- They may not listen, but we should definitely tell!

We should be wary of lingering

- In the moment before judgment fell - Lot wanted to stay
- His wife's heart never left, and she looked back
- Too many Christians have become too comfortable here - and this earth will be destroyed
- Be careful saints!