

# WHY LOT LINGERED IN SODOM

## Genesis 19

When we live without intention, we will be shaped by our environment. The cultural winds in Sodom molded the people who lived in her midst.

### God handed Sodom over to itself

Sodom was driven by sensuality.

Sensualism = life is about experiencing pleasures through the senses; a celebration of indulgence and the satiating of appetites. This is often set against the arenas of the intellectual or spiritual.

There are two central problems with sensuality:

- i. What happens when the satisfaction of my appetites comes at the expense of others? Sensualism entails using other people as a means to my pleasure.
- ii. A life of continued indulgence leaves us feeling empty.

“Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. They were haughty and did an abomination before me, so I removed them when I saw fit” (Ezekiel 16.49-50).

Paul described a similar progression in Romans 1 where people “exchanged the truth about God for a lie”, eventually falling into sexual immorality (Romans 1.21-32).

Sexual sins are the result of the debased human mind.

Our culture responds to Sodom in extremes. On one side, some have normalized same-sex attraction and celebrated it as a lifestyle. These are churches that advertise as “open and affirming”. On the other side, some treat same-sex attraction as a particularly vile sin that justifies maltreatment of this community.

The biblical view is that when a society is given over to sensuality, that encourages all kinds of sexual behaviors outside God’s design (homosexuality, pornography, adultery, polygamy, pedophilia).

Sodom had been “handed over” to itself. This explains why Lot prostitutes his own daughters and those same daughters commit incest with their father’s complicity (Genesis 19.8; 30-38).

## **The sinful human heart is drawn to Sodom's pleasures**

If we follow the movement of Lot in Genesis, he first selected the land where Sodom was (Genesis 13.10-12). He then made his dwelling in Sodom (Genesis 14.12). He then appeared at the city gate (Genesis 19.1). Lot moved into the arena of sin.

We have the interesting detail that Lot "lingered" in Sodom (Genesis 19.16). He even negotiated the terms to stay closer to Sodom rather than escape to the hills (Genesis 19.15-22).

Lot's wife also "looked back" (Genesis 19.26). Jesus used this as an example of desiring the ways of the world (Luke 17.32).

Even when Lot and his daughters were outside Sodom and the city had been destroyed, they behaved as those who had been shaped by the city.

## **God rescues Lot from the fallen city of man.**

Given Genesis 19, we are astonished to see Peter's reference to "righteous Lot" (2 Peter 2.6-10). God did not rescue Lot because he was a fantastic person. He rescued Lot as a free act of His grace.

We see in Lot an extreme version of Luther's teaching that the Christian is "simultaneously justified and sinner" (*Commentary on Galatians* 2.11). We are sinners by nature, but God declares us righteous when we receive the Lord Jesus.

In God's rescue of Lot, we see a picture of our redemption in Christ.

## **Key Idea: Recognize the struggle with the culture of Sodom**

### **Application Questions:**

Why do Lot and his wife want to stay in Sodom? What does this tell us about the nature of sin and its interaction with the human heart?

What truths about divine judgment do we learn from this chapter?

Why does Jesus reference Sodom and Gomorrah in Luke 17.22-37? What point is he making?

In what sense is Lot righteous (2 Peter 2.7)? How does this inform the nature of salvation?