

# GENESIS

Why The Beginning Matters

Study 16

Lot with His Worldly Faith & Judgement

Genesis 19

Recap

In Genesis 13, Lot chose the fertile land near Sodom and Gomorrah.

A: Lot's Worldly Faith

Part 1 of 6: Is a matter of choice

Genesis 19:1

The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city.

**1) Discussion question. According to the video lecture, what is the significance of Lot being at the gate/gateway in the city?**

Lot probably had some high ranking role.

**b) Discussion question. According to the video lecture and Gen 13:10-13, what were the factors Lot had to consider before choosing the land?**

He still chose the seemingly fertile land despite the wicked people that lives there.

Quick Verse Reference

Genesis 13:10-13

Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.

**c) Reflection question. The major areas in our lives that will take up a lot of time, life and spirituality are our jobs/careers, spouse, friends and hobbies such as music taste. Do you think through the factors and involve God in these decisions or is it a matter of your choice?**

**d) Discussion question. According to Gen 18:20 and Ezekiel 16:49-50, what was the sin that made Sodom and Gomorrah evil and worthy of destruction in God's eyes?**

Quick Verse Reference

Genesis 18:20

Then the Lord said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous

Ezekiel 16:49-50 (English Standard Version)

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 it.

Part 2 of 6: Worldly faith makes us live against our conscience

**2) Discussion question. According to the 2 Peter 2:6-8, what do you think is the long-term effect of living among people who do not feel guilty about doing evil?**

Quick Verse Reference

2 Peter 2:6-8

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; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)

Part 3 of 6: With a Worldly faith, our Moral compass is skewed

Genesis 19:2-11

"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."

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

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. Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house.

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 went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, "No, my friends.

Don't do this wicked thing. 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.

"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.

But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. 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.

**3) a) Reflection question. It is shocking that Lot offered his two daughters to be raped instead of his guests, but that is the point of the story: Lot's moral compass was skewed. What are the ways that we can prevent our morals from being skewed or to identify skewedness in our moral compass?**

Being around a community who seeks God's will and God's moral through continuous examination of the scriptures. Being open to be corrected. Asking God to give us the humility and open hearts and eyes to hear from God Himself and others He sent to us.

**b) Discussion question. According to Isaiah 3:8-9 Sodom is not bothered to hide their sin, and the Oxford secular dictionary had removed the word 'sin' since 2008. This seems to be a war on language. Why is a definition of a word when describing something important?**

If no 'sin' then no need to 'repent'. If human issues of pride and greed etc is just a 'mistake', it just need 're-education', not something as extreme as 'repentance'.

If human issue of pride and greed is just a 'sickness', then it just needs 'medication therapy', not a total transformation.

Refer to the Kansas State Senate Minister Joe Wright's statement of prayer. An example is: "we've polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it 'freedom of expression' " (see the slides uploaded on the site)

Language is important because we can use it to change the narrative, to paint a story so it looks nicer, to redefine it to hide sin and the depravity of the human condition.

**c) Discussion question. Jeremiah 23:14 and Isaiah 1:10-11 refer to people who are religious and those who offer sacrifice as Sodom and Gomorrah, which means those terms does not only affect non-believers. Refer to the signs and symptoms in Jer 23:14 to help us identify modern Sodom and Gomorrah today.**

Quick Verse Reference

Jeremiah 23:14

And among the prophets of Jerusalem

I have seen something horrible:

They commit adultery and live a lie.

They strengthen the hands of evildoers,

so that not one of them turns from their wickedness.

They are all like Sodom to me;

the people of Jerusalem are like Gomorrah.”

Part 4 of 6: Worldly faith causes Loss of Testimony

Genesis 19:12-14

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, 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.”

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.

**4) Reflection question. Lot’s future son-in-laws did not believe in Lot. How do you think the people around you will react when you share the Gospel message and the effects of unbelief?**

Part 5 of 6: Worldly faith causes a person to be too embedded to let go

Genesis 19:15-22

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.”

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. 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!”

But Lot said to them, “No, my lords, please! 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. 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.”

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

**5) Reflection question. Lot “hesitated” and “lingered” even though his life and his family’s lives are in danger but the Lord was merciful and pulled their hands out of danger. Are there areas in your life that is making you hesitate to obey God’s commands (which are for your good)?**

Part 6 of 6: Worldly faith affects all those around us

Genesis 19:23-26

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

**6) a) Discussion question. What made Lot’s wife turn her head according to the video lecture?**

Genesis 19:30-36

Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave. One day the older daughter said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man around here to give us children—as is the custom all over the earth. Let’s get our father to drink wine and then sleep with him and preserve our family line through our father.”

That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and slept with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.

The next day the older daughter said to the younger, “Last night I slept with my father. Let’s get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and sleep with him so we can preserve our family line through our father.” So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went in and slept with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.

**b) Reflection question. Lot’s choice in bringing his faith into a wicked city with a world faith affected his daughter’s moral compass which became skewed. What are the steps we should be doing for the future generation to prevent this?**

Genesis 19:36-38

So both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father. The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today. The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites of today.

**c) Discussion question. What is the significance of the Moabites and Ammonites? Are they an effect of Lot's worldly faith as well?**

Moabites and Ammonites are Israel's bitter enemies (Abraham's descendants) in the future, they also have evil practices where Ammonites have child sacrifices and Moabites worshipped fertility gods and practices sexual licentiousness and organized orgies (Num 25), so yes, even future generations are affected by the sin of worldly faith.

Genesis 19:29

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.

**d) Discussion question. If Lot's worldly faith is so bad, why did God bother to save Lot and pull his 'hands'?**

Because God 'remembered' his promise to Abraham (Gen19:29) and had mercy (Gen19:16).

B: God's Judgment

Part 1 of 3: God always judges evil

Genesis 19:27-29

Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood before the Lord. 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.

**7) Reflection question. How do you feel about the fact that God always judges evil?**

Part 2 of 3: In judgement, God exercises mercy

**8) Reflection question. God spared Lot's family and a town called Zoar. How do you feel about the fact that God exercises mercy?**

Part 3 of 3: Righteousness is not perfection, it is faith

**9) Reflection question. Lot was described as righteous and godly in 2 Peter 2:7-9 despite being influenced by worldly faith because he had faith in God. Reflect on 1 Corinthians 3:13-15 to see how this translates for Christians today. Share your thoughts on that passage.**

Quick Verse Reference

2 Peter 2:7-9

and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 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.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

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. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

### Take Away

A: Lot's Worldly Faith

Part 1 of 6: Worldly faith is a matter of choice

Part 2 of 6: Worldly faith makes us live against our conscience

Part 3 of 6: With a Worldly faith, our Moral compass is skewed

Part 4 of 6: Worldly faith causes Loss of Testimony

Part 5 of 6: Worldly faith causes a person to be too Embedded to Let go

Part 6 of 6: Worldly faith affects all those around us

B: God's Judgment

Part 1 of 3: God always judges evil

Part 2 of 3: In judgement God exercises mercy

Part 3 of 3: Righteousness is not perfection, it is faith

## Case Study

### Case 1 – Homosexuality in the Secular Environment

Both Mr. and Mrs. Maniam are in the Parents Teachers Association of the Sri Sinar private school where their two children attend. There has been quite a lot of activity recently as one of the parents Mick Ong campaigned for a place on the committee running as the chairman. Mick is a well-known TV personality and a practicing homosexual. He is living with another man and also has two adopted children in school.

There is a lot of folk against his running for the position and there are quite a few as well who are in support. Mr. and Mrs. Maniam are Christians and object to the appointment of Mick.

**1) a) Discussion question. What do you think is the usual argument in favor of Mick running for chairman?**

#### Model Answer

He should be given the same opportunity as any other person or parent. Why should there be discrimination? He should have the same rights as everyone else.

**b) Discussion question. What do you think would be Mr. and Mrs. Maniam's objections to Mick?**

#### Model Answer

Their main objection would be the worry that a practicing homosexual would be in a position of power in the committee and would be in a position to influence policy matters especially about teaching children on morality of homosexual relationships and practices. Whilst anyone can run for the job, the parents would prefer someone who reflects the common values of most parents in the school.

**c) Discussion question. What would be the Christian response to this whole episode and how should Mr. and Mrs. Maniam go about solving this problem?**

### Case 2 – Homosexuality in Church

Sally and Simone are a lesbian couple who have been quietly attending the 2nd Baptist church of Petaling Jaya. They are professing Christians and claimed to have accepted the Lord 3 years ago. They don't believe that homosexuality is wrong and their attraction to each other is based on a natural inbuilt sexual desire for the same sex.

They live exemplary lives in the community. They are a nice couple and have no children but

love kids. Recently they applied to be Sunday School teachers for the next semester as well as for church membership. Most people avoid them in church. They are fed up with the discrimination and demand to be included.

At the same time, they are fighting the management of the local steel plant where they work as accountants because they are in danger of being fired from their jobs since they have recently come out of the closet and declared themselves to be lesbians.

**2) a) Discussion question. How should the church deal with this couple? Discuss these statements from homosexual couples.**

Statement #1: “The church should not discriminate against homosexual couples, they have a right to full fellowship and acceptance, and love in the church. The church must show grace and receive homosexuals, like Jesus who spent time with tax collectors and sinners. In fact, Jesus came not to save the righteous but the sinners!”

Statement #2: “How can the church “judge” homosexual couples because Jesus in Matt 7:1-5 told the church not to judge when they have in the past ignored the sins of couples who divorce or commit adultery. Shouldn’t the church set its own house in order before condemning the homosexual couple?”

Statement #3: “The church of all organizations should recognize basic human rights and realize that homosexuality is a private matter between a loving consenting couple and not discriminate against them. Instead, the church should accept this alternative lifestyle.”

Response to each Answer

**Statement #1: The church should not discriminate against homosexual couples, they have a right to full fellowship and acceptance, and love in the church. The church must show grace and receive homosexuals like Jesus who spent time with tax collectors and sinners. In fact, Jesus came not to save the righteous but the sinners!**

Yes, Jesus spent time with Tax collectors and sinners, and homosexuals are no less such sinners or no more. However, he never accepted their behavior and in fact, stated his reasons for spending time with them saying that it is the sick who require a physician. He did not join them to be like them or to be morally sick with them, but to heal them.

And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:30-32 ESV)

His proximity to them was to demonstrate love and bring them back to spiritual health. Not to legitimize their sinful sickness. Paul stresses this in Galatians 5:18-21.

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God”(Galatians 5:18-21 ESV)

Being a Christian is more than theological in the sense that the couple says they have received Jesus as Lord and Saviour. They have to show the fruits of repentance that commensurate with their commitment to Jesus as Lord and in this case, neither of them has demonstrated this. They exhibit sexual immorality and this persisting sin of which they will not repent is evidence that they are not saved and are in danger of perishing.

In the Corinthians church, a man has sex with his father's wife.

“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.”  
(1 Corinthians 5:1-2 ESV)

Paul wants the person excommunicated or kicked out of the church for unrepentant immorality. If so, how can the present church accept them as members much less Sunday School teachers??

The church shows grace in showing love and care to the couple. However, they are applying for church membership to be an official part of the church community which will require a commitment to reflect the morality which God advocates for all human beings. The behavior of Christians must reflect God and His moral code.

**Statement #2: How can the church “judge” homosexual couples because Jesus in Matt 7:1-5 told the church not to judge when they have in the past ignored the sins of couples who divorce or commit adultery. Shouldn't the church set its own house in order before condemning the homosexual couple?**

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye.”(Matthew 7:1-

3 ESV)

The passage is about people judging from superficial outward appearances with double standards ignoring their own sins and magnifying the sin of others.

The 1 Cor 5 passage tells that it is well known that there is a man who has sex with his father's wife which is immoral and Paul instructs the church to excommunicate them. This means that there is an avenue for the church to act and judge fairly on evidence to preserve the sanctity of the body.

"I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. Purge the evil person from among you" (1 Corinthians 5:9-13 ESV)

Paul tells them they are to judge the ones inside the church to preserve the sanctity and witness of the church. The same strictness needs to be applied to other sins like couples who commit adultery and divorce their spouses for unbiblical reasons as long as they do not repent. The ones who do repent should not be cast out.

**Statement #3: The church of all organizations should recognize basic human rights and realize that homosexuality is a private matter between a loving consenting couple and not discriminate against them. Instead, the church should accept this alternative lifestyle.**

The church is a religious body and is governed by a standard that is based upon its own body of beliefs enshrined in the bible. It is on this biblical standard that the church is based. Once a person professes faith and joins the church, he or she is then subject to this body of belief and standard of behavior which will at times be at odds with what the people of the world deem as common human rights.

The church does not and is not in any position to prohibit anyone from homosexual activity or adulterous activity in the community. Hence there is no question of breaching human rights here. It is put up as an argument merely to impose humanistic values upon a religious body to force it to comply.

The couple is applying to join the church and the church has a set of moral beliefs and codes to which the couple refuses to comply. Hence they are ineligible to apply as members simply

because they do not share the same beliefs. Hence just as they have a right to their own beliefs, the church too has a right to its set of beliefs and cannot have people outside the church force upon the church their own humanistic beliefs in the name of human rights.

### **Case 3 – Same-sex Marriage**

Harriet and James have a son called Brandon and he has decided to live a homosexual lifestyle despite the objections of his godly parents who are fervent Christians. One day Brandon announces that he is planning to get married to his boyfriend Fred. The country they live in had recently legalized same-sex marriage and they want to take advantage of this opportunity. Of course, Harriet and James have been invited to the marriage ceremony at the gay church the couple goes to.

**3) a) Discussion question. If you were Harriet or James, what would you do? Would you attend?**

#### Model Answer

No, we would not attend because first of all it would be celebrating a couple deliberately sinning. One might as well attend a bank robbery in progress as it is morally wrong as well or celebrate someone visiting a prostitute. Secondly, there is no such thing as gay marriage because marriage is between a man and a woman. Hence the ceremony is actually meaningless. Attending a meaningless ceremony would be endorsing it.

“But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate. (Mark 10:6-9 ESV)

Marriages are made in heaven and in the eyes of God, He has not joined these two together, hence it is not a marriage.

Thirdly, God designed marriage to reflect the love of Jesus and the church and homosexual marriage would defile that image that God has given to the world as a reflection of the gospel. Homosexual marriage would destroy that image and distort it.

Yes, they would risk the backlash from their son that they have abandoned their only son and lack love. But the fact of the matter is that their son has withdrawn himself away from the

family values in which he was raised, and abandoned his family, not the other way around.

Harriet and James can still show love to their son and his new spouse by visiting them and caring for them and many other ways, but must not acknowledge the position of Fred as a spouse. They can only accept him as a friend of their son. Fred is not their “daughter in law”.

**b) Discussion question. What if Brandon and Fred adopted a child, should James and Harriet acknowledge the child as their grandchild? How can they do this when they never acknowledge their marriage? If they are asked to help babysit the grandchild while James and Harriet had to work. What should they do?**

Model Answer

Technically the child is not the grandchild by virtue of the marriage of Brandon and Fred as it is not a marriage at all. The child would be on the other hand regarded as the adopted son of their son Brandon and in that sense, the child would be a grandchild. Harriet and James should help and love and look after the child.

**Case 4 – Compromised Faith**

Pauline is a single mother who has come to faith in Jesus for the past 3 years and has been struggling to come to church all that time. She has been busy at work starting her own business selling bagels at a new shop in Sunway Pyramid. She is still in a relationship with her non-Christian boyfriend who has consistently made it clear that he does not believe in God and probably never will. He is possessive and domineering, always complaining she does not spend enough time with him.

Pauline finds it hard to find time to read the Bible much less pray. Her circle of friends is her employees and fellow business people. Every spare moment is spent working out how to expand the business to other malls.

Her daughter Judy is now 8 years old and is often looked after by the maid from the Philippines who is nice and actually teaches Judy the parables. Pauline is upset with the maid telling her daughter all sorts of these “odd fairy tales” which is a term she uses for the parables as she herself is totally unfamiliar with the Bible.

Pauline runs an honest business in cutthroat competitive food industry, she makes good

bagels at reasonable prices.

**4) a) Discussion question. How is Pauline like Lot? Long-term what do you think will happen to Pauline and her daughter?**

Model Answer

Pauline is voluntarily putting herself in a position of compromise when she is constantly putting her business first and God a distant second. She does not take a stand on the priority of her spiritual life. She is will be in danger of backsliding to a dangerous extent and also endangering the faith of her child.

**b) Discussion question. What do you think about her relationship with her boyfriend? is that a help or a hindrance to her life?**

Model Answer

This will be a hindrance as he will not share her priorities in the spiritual growth of she and her child.

**c) Discussion question. What kinds of choices do you think Pauline ought to make if she wants to live a life bearing fruit for the Lord?**

Model Answer

Up for discussion.