A NEPHEW AND A CITY | GOD’S GOOD PURPOSE

WEEK 8: GENESIS 13-14; 18-19

ANCHOR PASSAGE.

Consider using this passage as the underpinning for your group’s conversation. Encourage your group to read and pray through this Scripture passage prior to your group meeting and in the days following.

**Genesis 13:12-13**

**12**Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. **13**Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.

**Genesis 18:20-26, 32**

**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.”

**22**So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the Lord. **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.”… **32**Then he said, “Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.”

**Genesis 19:1, 4-11, 15-17, 23**

**1**The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed himself with his face to the earth…

**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. **10**But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them and shut the door. **11**And they struck with blindness the men who were at the entrance of the house, both small and great, so that they wore themselves out groping for the door…

**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.”…

**23**The sun had risen on the earth when Lot came to Zoar. **24**Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

**Helpful Passages:**

* 2 Peter 2:4-10
* 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
* Luke 17:32

THEMES.

The following themes trace the high-level movement of this week’s Scripture passage. They may help you begin to frame the direction of your group’s conversation.

1. The foolish man does what is right in his own eyes, and sin leads to destruction. (Gen. 13:11-13; 19:4-26, 30-38)
2. God judges sin. (Gen. 18:20-19:29)
3. God is merciful, kindly helping the helpless and rescuing the godly. (Gen. 18:20-33; 19:15-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-10)

QUESTIONS.

Feel free use any, all, or none of these questions as you facilitate your group. Their purpose is to be an aid to you as you consider how to teach the implications of the week’s Scriptures.

1. How was Sodom and its inhabitants described in the Genesis 13-19? Check Gen. 13:13 and 18:20.
2. Considering Sodom’s reputation, what is striking about Lot’s activities in Gen. 13:12, 14:12, and 19:1?

*Hint*: Lot’s movement and activity exposes a man fraternizing with sin. By 19:1, Lot is sitting in the gate of Sodom, indicating he held influence in the city. One commentator described Lot’s activity this way: “He had originally set up his tent close to Sodom (13:13) but was soon resident within the city (14:12), hence the capture of Lot and his family by invading kings. Even after that warning he remained in Sodom, where he became one of the city fathers.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. What sins do you ignore or even engage in? Do your actions give the impression of acceptance?

There is a difference between being *friends with sinners* and being *friendly with sin*. “While there is certainly nothing wrong with gaining influence in a city full of sinners (in fact, we should aim to do this more today), nothing in the text indicates that Lot was working to reform the city for the kingdom of God.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. Contrast: what is the Abraham’s posture toward Lot and the city of Sodom? (12:5, 13:8-13, 14:14-16, 18:22-33)
2. Consider your personal mission. Who are you praying for? Evangelizing? Where has God placed you to be a light?
3. God is both kind and just, giving mercy and exercising judgement. Often, mercy and judgment appear in the same passage. What are some examples of God’s mercy and judgement in Genesis 19? (19:16, 29)

Consider the cross. On the cross, judgement against believers’ sins was executed in Jesus’ death. This act of judgement was mercy for believers, as Jesus took sin’s penalty instead of us. All who reject gospel still face God’s judgement.

1. What are some examples of God’s mercy in your life? Has he rescued you from certain destruction?

PRAY.

* Thank God for his mercy. Ask God for his wisdom and guidance.
* Based off of question 5, pray specifically for the names you have shared that they would receive the gospel.

1. Joyce G. Baldwin, *The Message of Genesis 12-50*, The Bible Speaks Today. (Downer’s Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986), 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Chris Bruno, *You Asked: How Could Sinful Lot Have Been Righteous*?, The Gospel Coalition, February 7, 2012, Retrieved from https://www.

   thegospelcoalition.org/article/you-asked-how-could-sinful-lot-have-been-righteous/. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)