

Get Out of Sodom!

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Scripture: Genesis 19:12-13

¹² Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—take them out of this place! ¹³ For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the Lord, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it.”

Introduction

Everywhere we look, we see warning signs. From those posted on private property telling us to “Keep Out: Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted” down to the labels on our coffee cups that say “Caution: Contents Are Hot,” there is a foreshadowing of impending consequences should we choose to ignore the warnings. In other words, the signs tell us, turn from your present course or judgment will come.

The Bible is also full of warning signs.

- From the very beginning, God warned Adam, *saying, “Of every tree of the garden [of Eden] you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die”* (Genesis 2:16-17).
- The Israelites were also warned of the dangers of rejecting God. In Deuteronomy 28, God details the blessings on obedience and curses on disobedience. *“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil”* (Deuteronomy 30:15). Throughout their history, we can read in Scripture how they were blessed during times of faithfulness and cursed (judged) during times of rebellion.
- Before they were ultimately carried off into Babylonian captivity, many prophets warned the Israelites of impending judgment (e.g., Hosea, Zephaniah).
- Jesus also warned of the dangers of an eternity in hell for those who insisted upon staying in their sin: *If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— where ‘Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched’* (Mark 9:43-44)
- Jesus also warned about the end times and being ready for His return: *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until*

the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Matthew 24:36-39;44).

- Galatians 6:7 - *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*
- In Genesis 19:13 it says that *“the outcry against [the people of Sodom and Gomorrah] has grown great before the face of the Lord.”* The Hebrew word means it was like a shriek. So, the warning was being issued to Lot that it was time to get out of Sodom!

Point 1 - We don't end up in Sodom by accident

Finding ourselves in situations or predicaments from which God would be calling us to come out of don't happen overnight or by accident. It's going to take a series of choices or patterns of behavior that lead us to our “Sodom.” Before there is a predicament to get out of, we first have to find our way into it. This was also Lot's case.

- Genesis 13:8-13 - *⁸ So Abram said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. ⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left.” ¹⁰ And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. ¹¹ Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. ¹² Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. ¹³ But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.*
 - Abram (Abraham) deferred the decision of which area to live in to Lot, and Lot seemed too eager to make the choice first, desiring the region near the plain of Jordan despite the wickedness of the people living there.
- Genesis 19:1 - *Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom.* What this means is that Lot had become an elder of the city and sat in a position of a judge or decision maker. Unfortunately, this position of authority was not (or could not be) used to make a positive impact on the culture, rendering Lot an impotent leader.
- This brings to mind the idea of the “slippery slope,” which is the concept that sin, left unchecked, will lead to a downward spiral of worsening behavior. It's a gradual (or not so gradual) slide down to greater sins, as sin always desires more.
 - “Sin always promises more than it can deliver, and always delivers more than you bargained for.”

- Romans 1:18,21,24,28 - ¹⁸ *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who ^[d]suppress the truth in unrighteousness; ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²⁴ Therefore God also **gave them up** to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves; ²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.*
- In other words, God gave them “over” to their sin, not giving up on them, but allowing them to go deeper and deeper in as their hearts got darker and darker.
- Contrast this with the man from Psalm 1:1-2 - *Blessed is the man Who **walks not** in the counsel of the ungodly, **nor stands** in the path of sinners, **nor sits** in the seat of the scornful; ² **But his delight** is in the law of the Lord, and in His law **he meditates** day and night.* (Refer also to Joshua 1:8)
- Walk = going with the flow, “to each his own”; stands = agrees with the sinful act; sits = becomes a champion of the cause
- The blunt reality is that our choices have consequences, and a little compromise is just the start.
- "Show me your friends and I'll show you your future" - Dan Peña
- "Watch your thoughts, they become your words; watch your words, they become your actions; watch your actions, they become your habits; watch your habits, they become your character; watch your character, it becomes your destiny." Lao Tzu (ancient Chinese philosopher)

Point 2 - When God says go, don't linger!

- Genesis 19:15-16 - ¹⁵ *When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, “Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be **consumed** in the punishment of the city.” ¹⁶ And **while he lingered**, the men took hold of his hand, his wife’s hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.*
- Consumed = Strong's #H5595, sâpâ; to scatter, remove, or ruin; to *join* in the punishment
- Lingered = Strong's #H4102, māhah; to question or hesitate; to be reluctant
 - Lot was reluctant to leave, even though he was warned that we would join in the punishment of the city. Yet God was merciful, even in his reluctance to leave what would destroy him, by physically removing him and his family. How many times has God done that for us, removing us from destructive pattern of behavior via a health scare or maybe a jail cell to keep us from being “consumed?”

- Isaiah 30:18 - *Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him.*
- King David lingered, Joseph ran
 - 2 Samuel 11:1-3 NKJV- *It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. ² Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. ³ So David sent and inquired about the woman.*
 - Genesis 39:11-12 NKJV - ¹¹ *But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, ¹² that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand and fled and ran outside.*
 - King David succumbed to the three "L's" of falling: Look, Linger, Lust
 - Joseph knew that when the fire is raging and it's getting hot, you don't hang around!
 - Isaiah 30:21 - *Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," Whenever you turn to the right hand Or whenever you turn to the left.*
- Ron DiFrancesco, the last person to escape the WTC South Tower on September 11th, 2001.

Point 3 - When God says go, don't look back!

- Genesis 19:17,26 - ¹⁷ *So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed." ²⁶ But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.*
 - Escape = Strong's #H4422, mālat; to release or rescue; deliver
 - To look back is to long for what was, to hope, in a sense, to be back there. How it must break God's heart to see us yearn for something he delivered us from.
- Luke 17:30-33 - *Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, **let him not come down** to take them away. And likewise, the one who is in the field, **let him not turn back.*** **Remember Lot's wife.** *Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.*
 - Luke 9:62 - *But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

- To look back on your old life is the same as saying that you really don't appreciate or want your new life.
- Galatians 5:1 - *Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.*
- Romans 6:1-2, 7-12 - [1] *What shall we say then? **Shall we continue** in sin that grace may abound? [2] Certainly not! **How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?** [7] For he who has died has been freed from sin. [8] Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, [9] knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. [10] For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. [11] Likewise you also, **reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. [12] Therefore **do not let sin reign** in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.*
- To continue looking back (or going back into your old ways) is like being set free from prison but choosing to remain in your cell.
- II Corinthians 5:17 - *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Point 4 - What is the "Sodom" which God is calling you out of?

- Genesis 19:17 - *"Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed."*
 - Don't mess around and be "consumed!"
- A lifestyle?
- A bad habit?
- An addiction?
- A hidden sin?
- Complacency?
- Self-righteousness?
- A religion/religious mindset?
- Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV - [19] *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, [20] idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, [21] envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*
- I John 1:8-10 NKJV - [8] *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*

and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

- The “I’m okay” mindset is the worst place to be.
- I Peter 1:14-16 NIV - *¹⁴ As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”*
 - Be set apart!

Conclusion – Jesus is our escape!

- God told Lot, *“Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.”* Jesus is our escape route, and *He will deliver us from the wrath to come* (1 Thessalonians 1:10).
- *Psalms 121:1-2 NIV - I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? ² My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.*
- Proverbs 18:10 NKJV- *The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.*
- Isaiah 53:5 NKJV - *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.*
- Colossians 1:13-14 NKJV- *¹³ [God] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*
- 2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV - *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
- Romans 5:8 NKJV - *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
- James 4:7-8 NKJV - *[7] Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. [8] Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*
- All it takes is a heart of humble repentance (metanoia)
 - Psalm 51:17 NKJV - *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.*
 - Luke 18:13 NKJV - *And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’*
- Confess your sins (agree with what God says about your sin).
 - Romans 10:9-11,13 - *⁹ If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For*

with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."¹³ For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

- The religious elites of Jesus's day thought they had it all figured out.
 - John 8:32-36 NKJV - *And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* [33] *They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?"* [34] *Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. [35] And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. [36] Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*
- Are you ready to be free? Are you ready to get out of Sodom?