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GENESIS 19:12-26

DRIFTING INTO DANGER



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Have you ever been floating on a raft in a lake, only to suddenly realize that you had drifted far away from the place you started? Our experience with sin can look a lot like that. We can get so comfortable with it that we don't even notice how far we've gone. We may even float into dangerous waters without realizing it! Today we'll read about Lot, a guy who started out as someone enjoying God's promise alongside Abraham but who slowly drifted from God because of his nearness to Sodom, a city famous for its sinfulness. Lot's family became numb to the dangers of sin, to the point that they struggled to believe God would actually punish sin, even when He sent angels to warn them. Sin is a dangerous, numbing force that God will always address—even while showing mercy.



CENTRAL **truth**

Sin is a dangerous force that God will always address—even while showing mercy.



EXPLORE scripture

GENESIS 19:12-26

GENESIS 19:12-16

12 Then the angels said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here: a son-in-law, your sons and daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of this place, **13** for we are about to destroy this place because the outcry against its people is so great before the LORD, that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.” **14** So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were going to marry his daughters. “Get up,” he said. “Get out of this place, for the LORD is

about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was joking. **15** At daybreak the angels urged Lot on: “Get up! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city.” **16** But he hesitated. Because of the LORD’s compassion for him, the men grabbed his hand, his wife’s hand, and the hands of his two daughters. They brought him out and left him outside the city.

GENESIS 19:17-22

17 As soon as the angels got them outside, one of them said, “Run for your lives! Don’t look back and don’t stop anywhere on the plain! Run to the mountains, or you will be swept away!” **18** But Lot said to them, “No, my LORDS — please. **19** Your servant has indeed found favor with you, and you have shown me great kindness by saving my life. But I can’t run to the mountains; the disaster will overtake me, and I will die. **20** Look, this

town is close enough for me to flee to. It is a small place. Please let me run to it — it’s only a small place, isn’t it? — so that I can survive.” **21** And he said to him, “All right, I’ll grant your request about this matter too and will not demolish the town you mentioned. **22** Hurry up! Run to it, for I cannot do anything until you get there.” Therefore the name of the city is Zoar.

GENESIS 19:23-26

31 The sun had risen over the land when Lot reached Zoar. **24** Then out of the sky the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah burning sulfur from the LORD. **25** He demolished

these cities, the entire plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and whatever grew on the ground. **26** But Lot’s wife looked back and became a pillar of salt.

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GENESIS 19:12-26
CONVERSATION

questions

▶ READ GENESIS 19:12-16.

.01 Look up Genesis 18:20. How does God describe Sodom and Gomorrah?

.02 Lot's future sons-in-law thought Lot was joking about the impending danger. What does that show about them, their view of Lot, and their view of God?

.03 Sin numbs us to the truth. What evidence do you see of this in today's text?



THEOLOGY

Sin is the opposite of God's life-giving design for the world. Consider the history of sin: Sin first occurred in Genesis 3, and its immediate impact was shame and separation. Genesis 4 contains the first description of sin, with God describing it as a hungry predator, ready to devour. By Genesis 6, every heart was focused on sin all the time, so to limit its power, God sent the floodwaters. Even after the flood, Abraham (who believed in God and was declared righteous) greatly harmed Hagar because of sin! Now we see Lot's family reveal that sin's power is intoxicating and disorienting! They were so numbed by sin that they couldn't see it was devouring them—and they couldn't fathom that God would actually address it. Imagine looking around at evil and thinking, "Meh. It's no big deal. I kind of like it here." Sin twists and turns our insides so that what is down seems up, and what is up seems down.

▶ READ GENESIS 19:17-22.

.04 Look up the following verses: Genesis 13:10-11; 13:12; 14:12; 19:1. Describe Lot's slow drift from God's promises to sin's promises.

.05 Lot might have seemed comfortable in Sodom, but what does 2 Peter 2:7-8 tell us about him?

.06 Why do you think the angels cautioned Lot and his family to not look back in verse 17?

▶ READ GENESIS 19:23-26.

.07 How is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah similar to the flood? How is it different?

.08 Look up Philippians 3:13-14. How do Paul's words here show us a better way than how Lot's wife reacted to Sodom?



CULTURE

This is a weird Bible story we need to be careful not to dismiss, especially because Jesus Himself said, "Remember Lot's wife! Whoever tries to make his life secure will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it" (Luke 17:32-33). What did Jesus mean? Bible teacher and author Jen Wilkin points out that at the time, salt was typically used not for flavoring but as a preservative. When Scripture says Lot's wife looked back, the word implies she was looking back with longing. She was preserving the memory of Sodom and sin in her heart—longing for it and refusing to believe it was actually bad for her. Wilkin believes this is often true for us, too, saying, "I am Lot's wife. I preserve deep within me a memory of sin savored in years past. I see my sin, but I do not hate it. I linger on the idea of re-engaging it, even in my newfound freedom. And I risk spreading it to the lives of those around me. God have mercy."³

³ Jen Wilkin, "Lessons from a Pillar of Salt," The Gospel Coalition, January 12, 2016, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/lessons-from-a-pillar-of-salt/>

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GENESIS 19:12-26
NOW
what?



CENTRAL truth

Sin is a dangerous force that God will always address—even while showing mercy.

.09 In what situations or circumstances is it most difficult for you to stay connected to God?

.10 How can we guard ourselves against drifting from the things of God? How can we support one another?

.11 How can we respond if we notice ourselves “looking back” on past sins with longing?

.12 How can we train ourselves to notice sin’s danger rather than become numb to it?

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE LUKE 17:32-33

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about humans?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

GENESIS 18:16-33

DWELL

Remember last week when men came to visit Abraham, and it was clear Abraham knew they were from God? As these men left, they looked toward Sodom, and God shared with Abraham that he was going to destroy Sodom. However, first these men (God's angels!) would confirm that the sin of Sodom was actually as bad as it seemed. Abraham appealed to God's mercy, and God promised to spare the city even if only five righteous people could be found.



What does this passage teach you about God's character?



What does Abraham's conversation with God teach you about how you can pray?

MEMORIZE

Using colored pencils or pens, creatively write out Luke 17:32-33 on a piece of paper. Then, "take a picture" of it with your mind and try to say the verses to yourself a few times without looking.

PRAY

Praise God for His mercy! If there is a place where you need mercy, ask for it.

day 2

GENESIS 19:1-11

DWELL

When the men entered Sodom, Lot was sitting at the gate, indicating he was probably a leader in the city. He quickly took them to his home, and we soon learn why. The men of Sodom were horrifically eager to sexually assault these guests! If we had any doubt that Sodom was a sinful place in need of God's judgment, that doubt is gone. Terribly, Lot offered the men of Sodom his own daughters instead. This is an upsetting passage of Scripture, reminding us of the danger and destruction of sin.



How does this text help you make sense of God's desire to destroy the city?



How does Lot's drift into sin compel you to pray for your own alertness to sin?

MEMORIZE

Write out Luke 17:32-33 on a note card, and place it next to your bed. Make it a goal to read it five times before you go to bed and five times when you wake up.

PRAY

Ask God to help you remember the horrors of sin and to protect you against drifting away from Him.

day 3

GENESIS 19:12-17

DWELL

With the behavior of the city's men, it's clear the sin of this city was as bad as it seemed. God's judgment was coming! The men, whom we now know were God's angels, warned Lot, but their warnings weren't taken seriously. Lot's sons-in-law thought he was joking, and Lot himself hesitated. Eventually, the angels had to physically remove Lot, his wife, and his daughters from Sodom so they weren't destroyed.



What does this part of the narrative reveal about how sin impacts people?



How can the angels' warnings inspire you to warn others about sin?

MEMORIZE

Invent motions that match the words of Luke 17:32-33, and practice them while saying the words out loud a few times. It probably feels a little weird, but when something is weird, it helps us remember!

PRAY

Ask God to make you attentive to His warnings. Ask Him to equip you to warn others in a loving and humble way.

day 4

GENESIS 19:18-29

DWELL

The angels showed Lot even more of God's mercy by allowing him to run to a nearby city. Lot experienced so much of God's compassion! However, Lot's wife didn't see the events as an act of God's compassion. Directly violating the angels' warnings, she looked back with longing at her former home. She didn't want to be rescued—so she wasn't.

↑ What would you say to someone who thought this story taught that God is cruel?

← How do you think Lot's wife served as a warning to the original hearers, who may have been tempted to look back at their slavery in Egypt rather than toward God's promise?

MEMORIZE

Write down the first letter of each word of Luke 17:32-33 on a note card. At least five times today, see if you can say the verses just by looking at these letters.

PRAY

Praise God for His compassion for sinners! Ask Him to help you look ahead to His treasures rather than looking back to the deceptive joys of sin.

day 5

GENESIS 19:30-38

DWELL

Lot eventually made his way to the mountains, as the angels had originally instructed him to do when they were fleeing. It's here that his story gets even weirder. His daughters, who were raised in Sodom, didn't see any way they could have children and preserve their family line. So, unbeknownst to Lot, they each became pregnant by their father. It's a gross and weird ending for a family soaked in sin.

← Later on, God's people would hate the Moabites and the Ammonites! How does this story help you understand why?

→ Outside of God's will, things get gross and weird. How does this story help you believe that God's way is the life-giving way?

MEMORIZE

Tell a friend or family member that your memory verses this week are Luke 17:32-22, and explain what this passage means. Then, invite that person to randomly quiz you at some point today to see if you can remember the verses.

PRAY

Ask God to help you understand passages like these that feel so weird and icky. Praise Him for always pointing you in the way of life!