

Where Do You Pitch Your Tent?

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"... and Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly" – Gen. 13: 12, 13

It was truly a sad departure on the part of Lot. He separated himself, his house and all his servants and flocks and herds from Abram in the land of promise. This departure was a separating from the church of God and the hope of righteousness by faith. True, Abram had suggested that he and Lot separate from one another when their flocks became too many for the land and when the herdsmen of both Abram and Lot quarreled over the pasture and the water for the flocks. However, Abram did not say: you go out of the land, I will remain here and wait for the LORD'S promise. Not at all! He said: you go west, I go east, you go north and I go south. It was to be a separation of their dwelling-place within the promised land of Canaan. But here is something indescribably sad. Lot left the land of promise, never to return. His posterity, Moab and Ammon would be with the inveterate enemies of the seed of Abraham throughout the history of Israel in the land of Canaan. And that is sad when we remember that Lot was basically a righteous man. (II Peter 2:8). Lot is a tragic example of a Christian who is saved as a fire-brand plucked out of the fire, while his entire house perishes.

We read that Lot, after leaving Abram, pitched his tent toward Sodom. This was so appealing to the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. We read twice that there was a "lifting up of the eyes" in Genesis 13. We read that the Lord tells Abraham, when He shows him all the land of Canaan, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward. . ." (Vs. 14). On the other hand we read of Lot, " And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." In this "lifting up of" the eyes of Lot there was the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, it choked the word of God to him spoken by the prophets and patriarchs, so that it became unfruitful. The cares of life and the riches of the world were Lot's snare into which Satan tempted him to fall. Such is, indeed, the case with many a child of God, who lifts up his eyes, and sees the riches of this world and is ensnared. He fails to heed the word of Christ that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. My dear youthful reader, give heed to this warning of the LORD. Lot did not heed, but "he pitched his tent toward Sodom." He moved from step to step till he was dwelling in the very vicinity of Sodom itself, yea, within the wicked city. All the while his soul was wretched, his conscience accused him, he had no rest, and vexing his soul he sank down deeper into the mire of Sodom's pattern of life. It was the sin of worldly conformity.

Lot was like the man who was in the midst of the world; like the man who knows that things are going wrong with himself and with his family, but who became entangled so with the life of Sodom that he could not extricate himself. The trouble was that he had one thing in common with Sodom. That was the sin of "pride." He could see that his flocks would be fat there, the grass was green, the water plentiful in that beautiful Jordan delta. It would make him a great man of much riches. So his flesh reasoned. The land of Canaan had not proven to be such a boon after all. It really looked more like a questionable gift and blessing. Had he not accompanied Abram out of the land of Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Haran? And had he not then also once more accompanied him to Canaan, only after a short while to find himself in land of

scarcity and famine, so that they went down into Egypt to survive? Then they had returned with abundance of flocks, due to Pharaoh's gift and kingly generosity? But now they are back in Canaan once more, and again the land is not good enough to feed all the cattle of both Abraham and Lot. Lot had seen some real good pasture while in Egypt in the regions of Zoar. He had seen the Nile delta land. And now he lifts up his eyes and sees a similar sight, from the lofty heights of Canaan, in the Jordan delta near Sodom. And, lust conceived, bore sin, and, sin having been finished, bore death. And although his conscience accuses him, Lot goes to this rich plain near Sodom, never to return to the land of Promise!

What does he find here in Sodom? He finds here a people who were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly. What was the exceedingly sinfulness of their sin. It was their utter disregard of the LORD, who alone is great, Jehovah God they disregarded utterly. Their entire life was secularized; it was earthly, sensual, devilish. Man was the measure of all things. They would determine what is good and evil. They are a picture of our present world in which we live, young people. Know your times, both in the church and in the world.

First of all Sodom's sin was not limited to sexual depravity. The veil is lifted upon the night-life of Sodom, when the angels visit Sodom to take Lot, a righteous man, out of Sodom. It was the sin of homo-sexuality, the very sin which in Romans 1:26, 27 is depicted as being a manifestation of the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man. But this sin of Sodomy has a certain climate in which it thrives.

First of all man must be namelessly proud to thus live before the LORD, lifting and exalting one's self above all that is of God. We read in Ezekiel 16:49 "behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did they strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (we underscore)

There was affluence of everything. The land was good, the cattle were sleek and fat, men could eat their steaks and drink their wine, and their work days were short and few. They lived sumptuously and cared not for the poor.

In this kind of world we live too. We live in a world which is ripe for destruction, reserved in the power of God to be destroyed by fire. Where do you pitch your tent in this world? Are you of the world, laboring for abundance of riches? Or do you labor that you may have to give to the poor. Are you in the world, yet not of the world? Lot really was not of this world. He was known as that stranger in their midst. But the Lord will deliver him. He will leave that world without men- servants, sheep and oxen; yea, he will leave without wife or sons. He will only leave with two daughters, who have imbibed the spirit of the prince of this world which works in Sodom. A sad ending. The world passeth away and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

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