

Bible Stories for Adults

Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis 18 - 21

Opening

Gathering: Tell of a choice you made that appeared right at the time, but turned out to be wrong.

Today's Focus: To recognize God's desire to protect us during our daily lives and to save us from the punishment we deserve.

Key Verses: *This is my prayer: that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ.* Philippians 1:9-10

*"Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked?" declares the Sovereign LORD.
"Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?"* Ezekiel 18:23

If He rescued Lot, a righteous man who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials. 2 Peter 2:7-9

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Uncle Abe (Genesis 11:31-13:5)

Who was Lot and how was he related to Abram?

Genesis 11:31 = Son of Haran, Grandson of Terah, Nephew of Abram

Why does Lot play a big part of the story of Abram?

Genesis 12:1, 4 = He went with Abram to Canaan when God called Abram

Why did Lot go with Abram instead of staying home in Haran?

Genesis 11:28 = His father Haran had died, Abram took him under his wing

How did God bless Abram during his first years in Canaan and Egypt?

Genesis 13:1-2 = With great wealth in livestock, silver and gold

What was a big part of God's purpose in blessing Abram?

Genesis 12:2 = Blessed to be a blessing

Was Lot blessed by being with Abram in Canaan and Egypt?

Genesis 13:5 = Yes, he also became very wealthy

Separate Ways (Genesis 13:6-13)

What caused Lot to separate from Abram?

Genesis 13:6-9 = Conflicts between herdsmen of large flocks and herds

Abram trusted God to provide when he gave Lot the choice. Did Lot trust God in choosing?

Genesis 13:10-11 = He picked what was appealing to his eyes

How can Lot's choice be a sign of a weak faith? = We need to look for God's guidance in what is right

Proverbs 16:2, 25 = What seems right to a man is not necessarily right to God

How did Lot's choice seriously challenge the faith he had?

Genesis 13:12-13 = He lived with the most evil and faithless men of the time

Bible Stories for Adults

Sodom and Gomorrah

Page 2

Uncle Abe to the Rescue (*Genesis 14*)

What happened to Lot while he was living near Sodom?

Genesis 14:3, 10-12 = He & his family were captured in a battle by the Elamites

How was Lot and his family saved from lives of slavery?

Genesis 14:14-16 = Abram and his trained men rescued them

How was God involved in this story?

Genesis 14:18-20 = He gave Abram and his few men the victory over four armies

God's Business (*Genesis 18:1-21*)

Why did God visit Abraham when he was 99 years old?

Genesis 18:10-11 = To announce the coming of the promised covenant child, Isaac

How did God appear to Abraham during this visit? = Do we recognize God in others?

Genesis 18:1-3 = Abraham recognized Him among 3 visitors standing outside his tent

Did God have any other places to go during this visit to earth in human form?

Genesis 18:16 = They were going to Sodom

Why was God going to Sodom?

Genesis 18:20-21 = To verify the wickedness of Sodom & Gomorrah

Why did God tell Abraham His plans?

Genesis 18:17-19 = God likes to reveal His purposes to his chosen faithful

Abraham Negotiates (*Genesis 18:22-33*)

Did God leave Abraham immediately after speaking of His judgment?

Genesis 18:22 = No, the two angels left, but God stayed for Abraham's sake

What did Abraham think about God judging the city where his nephew lived?

Genesis 18:23-25 = He asked God for mercy for the sake of 50 righteous

How did God respond to Abraham's bold request? = 2nd time Abraham defends his nephew & Sodom

Genesis 18:26 = He accepted Abraham's request out of grace

How did Abraham speak even more boldly with the Almighty Creator?

Genesis 18:27-28 = He negotiated for 45 righteous

How did God further show His patience with Abraham?

Genesis 18:29 = He accepted Abraham's further request for 40

Did this satisfy Abraham?

Genesis 18:30 = No, he negotiated further for 30

Did Abraham's boldness in trying to negotiate with God upset Him?

Genesis 18:31 = No, He lovingly listened to Abraham's request and graciously granted it

To what extent did God show His love to Abraham?

Genesis 18:32-33 = He agreed to save this most wicked city for the sake of 10 righteous

Note: Lot's family was at least 6 - Lot, his wife, 2 daughters, 2 sons-in-law (betrothed, not married)

Lot had a household of servants when he left Abraham

Abraham likely felt that Lot would be protected at 10

Bible Stories for Adults

Sodom and Gomorrah

Page 3

Men of Sodom (*Genesis 19:1-9*)

Was Lot just living near Sodom, or had he become a citizen of the city?

Genesis 19:1 = He was even a city ruler - City rulers sat in the gate to judge / govern

Did Lot show any of the hospitality of his uncle Abraham?

Genesis 19:2-3 = Yes, he urged them to stay with him and he fed them

How many days did the angels spend in Sodom before its evil was revealed?

Genesis 19:4-5 = That very night - *All the men from every part of the city*

How did Lot show his sacrificial service to these men of God? = Replace one wrong with another

Genesis 19:6-8 = Offered his own daughters in order to protect the men

Being a city leader, was Lot able to reason with the men?

Genesis 19:9 = No, they turned on him and called him an outsider

Guardian Angels (*Genesis 19:10-22*)

How did Lot find out that his two visitors were more than just men?

Genesis 19:10-11 = They protected Lot and blinded the men of Sodom

Besides saving Lot from the men, how else did the angels protect Lot?

Genesis 19:12-13 = They warned him of impending destruction and told him to leave

How difficult was it for Lot to get his family safely out of Sodom? = Didn't want to leave it all behind

Genesis 19:14-15 = Sons-in-law refused to go, Lot & family still around at daylight

Where is Lot's great wealth and servants? = Lost in evil Sodom away from God's blessing?

How did the angels intervene again to save Lot and his family? = Lot resisted God's saving grace

Genesis 19:16-17 = They *led them safely out of the city* and gave instructions

What last way did the angels protect Lot and his family?

Genesis 19:18-22 = Allowed them to reach protection in Zoar instead of distant mountains

God Destroys Sodom & Gomorrah (*Genesis 19:23-29*)

How far out of town was Lot when God began destroying the cities? = whole plain wiped clean

Genesis 19:23-25 = God waited until Lot reached Zoar - God destroyed, not the angels

Did all of Lot's family make it to Zoar in time?

Genesis 19:26 = Yes, but his wife looked back longingly disobeying the warning by the angels

Had God saved Lot and his daughters because they were righteous?

Genesis 19:27-29 = No, He did it for the sake of Abraham

Edersheim - *The Dead Sea basin was examined and found to consist of two lakes: one 1300 ft deep and the other 13 ft deep. The shallow lake is likely the site of Sodom & Gomorrah, which were likely on the shore of the deep sweet-water lake. The chemical composition of the Dead Sea points to volcanic activity that may have destroyed, then submerged the area.*

Moabites and Ammonites (*Genesis 19:30-28*)

Did Lot stay in Zoar or did he go back to his uncle Abraham?

Genesis 19:30 = Neither, he and his daughters moved to a cave in the mountains

What problem did Lot's daughters have where they took matters into their own hands?

Genesis 19:31-32 = There were no men around to give them families

How did Lot react to their plan?

Genesis 19:33-36 = He didn't learn about it until after it happened

Why was this story important enough to be included in the Bible?

Genesis 19:37-38 = The children of this incest were ancestors to Moabites and Ammonites

Bible Stories for Adults

Sodom and Gomorrah

Page 4

Abraham's Trust (*Genesis 20*)

Had Abraham always exhibited a stronger faith and trust in God than Lot?

Genesis 12:11-13 = No, he had not trusted God to protect him and Sarah in Egypt

Did Abraham learn to better trust in God after years of closeness with God? = Sarah was 89-90

Genesis 20:1-2 = No, he took the same approach when he moved to Gerar (Philistia)

How did this lack of trust especially threaten God's plan? = Isaac to be Abraham's son, not Abimelech's

Genesis 18:10a = God had promised the birth of Abraham's covenant child within a year

How did God protect His plan despite Abraham's careless distrust? = Abe is first to be called a prophet

Genesis 20:3-7 = Kept Abimelech from touching her, Told Abimelech to return her

How did Abimelech respond to God's command?

Genesis 20:8-10 = He addressed the problem with Abraham immediately in the morning

Why did Abraham lie to Abimelech? = Not a full lie since she was his half-sister - Still a lie

Genesis 20:11-13 = He was afraid that God would not protect him in this place

Blessed to be a Blessing (*Genesis 20:14-18; 21:22-24*) = Will cover 21:1-20 next week

How did God bless Abraham in this incident despite his lack of trust? = Right to live anywhere in land

Genesis 20:14-16 = Abimelech gave Abe and Sarah lots of sheep, cattle, slaves and money

How did God allow Abraham to be a blessing to Abimelech?

Genesis 20:17-18 = Abraham prayed for Abimelech, God healed his household from infertility

How do we see that God began to make Abraham into a great nation and make his name great?

Genesis 21:22-24 = Abimelech found the need to make a treaty with Abraham

Abraham and Abimelech - Again (*Genesis 21:25-34*)

How was Abraham's view of Abimelech confirmed as a man of honor with a true fear of God?

Genesis 21:25-26 = Abimelech apologized for a well being taken that he didn't know about

What type of treaty did the two likely make? = See last week (*Genesis 15*)

Genesis 21:27 = A blood covenant involved sacrificing large animals and gifting to each other

What was done to help each other remember the treaty? = *Beersheba* means *well of the oath*

Genesis 21:28-31 = Abraham gave lambs to Abimelech as witnesses

What did Abraham do to thank God for blessing him with greatness so that he could be a blessing?

Genesis 21:32-33 = Planted a tree in the desert and worshipped God

Did Abraham return to the land of Canaan that God had promised to give to his descendants?

Genesis 21:34 = No, he stayed in the land of the Philistines for a long time

Closing Prayer

Response

1. Do I look for God's will in the decisions of my life? (*Genesis 13:8-13; 1 Kings 3:9-12; Psalm 119:133; Jeremiah 10:23; Luke 22:42; James 4:13-15; 1 John 2:17*)
2. Would God count me among the righteous in my community? (*Genesis 5:24; 6:8-9; 18:22-32; Job 1:8; Ezekiel 14:12-20; Luke 1:5-6; James 2:14-26*)
3. How would I treat God's angels if they came to me? (*Genesis 18:1-8; 19:1-8; Judges 6:11-13; 13:2-23; Hebrews 13:2*)
4. Do I obey God in the simple and seemingly minor instructions He gives? (*Genesis 19:17, 23-26; 1 Samuel 13:5-14; Luke 16:10-12; James 2:10*)
5. Do I trust God for protection, or would I lie to save my skin? (*Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-18; Proverbs 12:22; Nahum 1:7; John 14:1*)