

OVERCOMING THE DYSFUNCTIONS OF ISRAEL'S PATRIARCHS

VIII. Our Need To Avoid Contagiously Unholy Relatives

(Genesis 19:29-38)

I. Introduction

- A. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Israel's patriarchs and their respective wives and families, though blessed of God, were imperfect people who at times made huge mistakes that led to serious marital and family dysfunction.
- B. Thankfully, Romans 15:4 states that we can learn from whatsoever things were written in the Old Testament for our edification, and that includes our learning how to overcome the dysfunctions of Israel's patriarchs.
- C. We view Genesis 19:29-38 on our need to avoid contagiously unholy relatives for our insight and application:

II. Our Need To Avoid Contagiously Unholy Relatives, Genesis 19:29-38.

- A. Abraham's nephew Lot chose to live in the Jordan Valley near Sodom, a city that was noted for its great wickedness (cf. Genesis 13:11-12, 13).
- B. That choice led to serious problems for Lot and also for Abraham:
 - 1. The king of Sodom with five other kings of cities in the Jordan Valley then decided to rebel against king Chedorlaomer of Elam whom they had served, and Chedorlaomer gathered three other city state kings to make war with the five rebellious cities of the Jordan Valley. In the war, Chedorlaomer's coalition defeated the Jordan Valley cities, capturing Lot and his family, Genesis 14:1-12.
 - 2. When Abraham heard of Lot's trouble, he had to muster his fighting men and summon his allies to pursue Lot's captors, to defeat them and to deliver Lot and his family from captivity, Genesis 14:13-24.
- C. However, Lot's decision to associate with the wicked people of Sodom led to more than just this trouble of war, for it produced the moral deterioration of Lot and his family, Genesis 19:1-38:
 - 1. God sent two angels to get Lot to leave Sodom before God destroyed the city for its sin, Genesis 19:1-3.
 - 2. However, when the men of the city tried to capture these two angels to rape them, Lot offered to give them his two virgin daughters to gratify their lusts, but the angels of the Lord pulled Lot in from outside his house to protect his family from harm, Genesis 19:4-11. The moral depravity of Sodom had eventually corrupted Lot to where he was even willing to have his two daughters abused by Sodom's wicked men!
 - 3. When the angels took Lot, his wife and daughters out of Sodom, Lot's wife longingly looked back at Sodom in violation of the angels' word, so God turned her into a pillar of salt, Genesis 19:17-26.
 - 4. Lot and his two daughters escaped to the little city of Zoar near Sodom and Gomorrah while the Lord rained down fire and brimstone on the latter two cities, destroying them, Genesis 19:24-29.
 - 5. Apparently unsettled by the destruction of nearby Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot and his two daughters fled from Zoar into the mountains east of the Jordan Valley and there they dwelt in a cave, Genesis 19:30.
 - 6. However, while living in that cave, the depravity of Sodom that had corrupted Lot's family exposed itself in the form of incest, Genesis 19:31-38:
 - a. "The Sodom-tainted virgin (v. 8) daughters of Lot . . . fearing they would die childless, shamelessly committed incest with their father, using wine to make him insensible to their action." (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Genesis 19:31-38)
 - b. Lot's eldest daughter became pregnant with "Moab," meaning "from the father" (Gen. 19:32-33, 37; Ibid.) and Lot's younger daughter became pregnant with "Ben-ammi," meaning "son of my people," for the infant's father and mother were of the same family, Genesis 19:34-36, 38; Ibid.
 - c. Accordingly, the son of Lot's eldest daughter became the father of the Moabites who lived east of the Dead Sea, and the son of Lot's younger daughter became the father of the Ammonites who lived north of Moab, and both people groups became perpetual enemies of the people of Israel, Genesis 19:37-38.
- D. After God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah and Lot's daughters committed incest with him, Genesis 20:1 with Genesis 19:27-28 reports that Abraham left the place where he had pleaded with God not to destroy those cities if ten righteous people were in them, and he moved southwest away from the Jordan Valley down to Gaza (Ryrie, op. cit., fn. to Genesis 20:1). There is no more recorded contact between Abraham and Lot.

Lesson: *When Lot's choice to live in evil Sodom led not only to an unwanted war for Abraham, but to the moral decay of Lot and his family, Abraham stopped interacting with his contagiously unholy nephew and his family.*

Application: *Though we ought to love our relatives, if their unholiness becomes contagiously ungodly, we like Abraham need to withdraw even from those relatives for our own spiritual welfare.*