

Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

Focus	Four Great Events								Four Great Persons				
Divisions	1	2	3	4	5	9	10	11	12	25:19	27	37:2b	50
	Creation		Fall		Flood		Nations (Babel)		Abraham	Isaac	Jacob	Joseph	
Topics	Primeval History of Humanity								Patriarchal History of Israel				
	Beginning of the Human Race								Beginning of the Hebrew Race				
Locations	East (Eden to Ur)								West (Canaan to Egypt)				
Time	2,000 + years (20% of Genesis)								About 286 years (80% of Genesis)				

Author: Moses

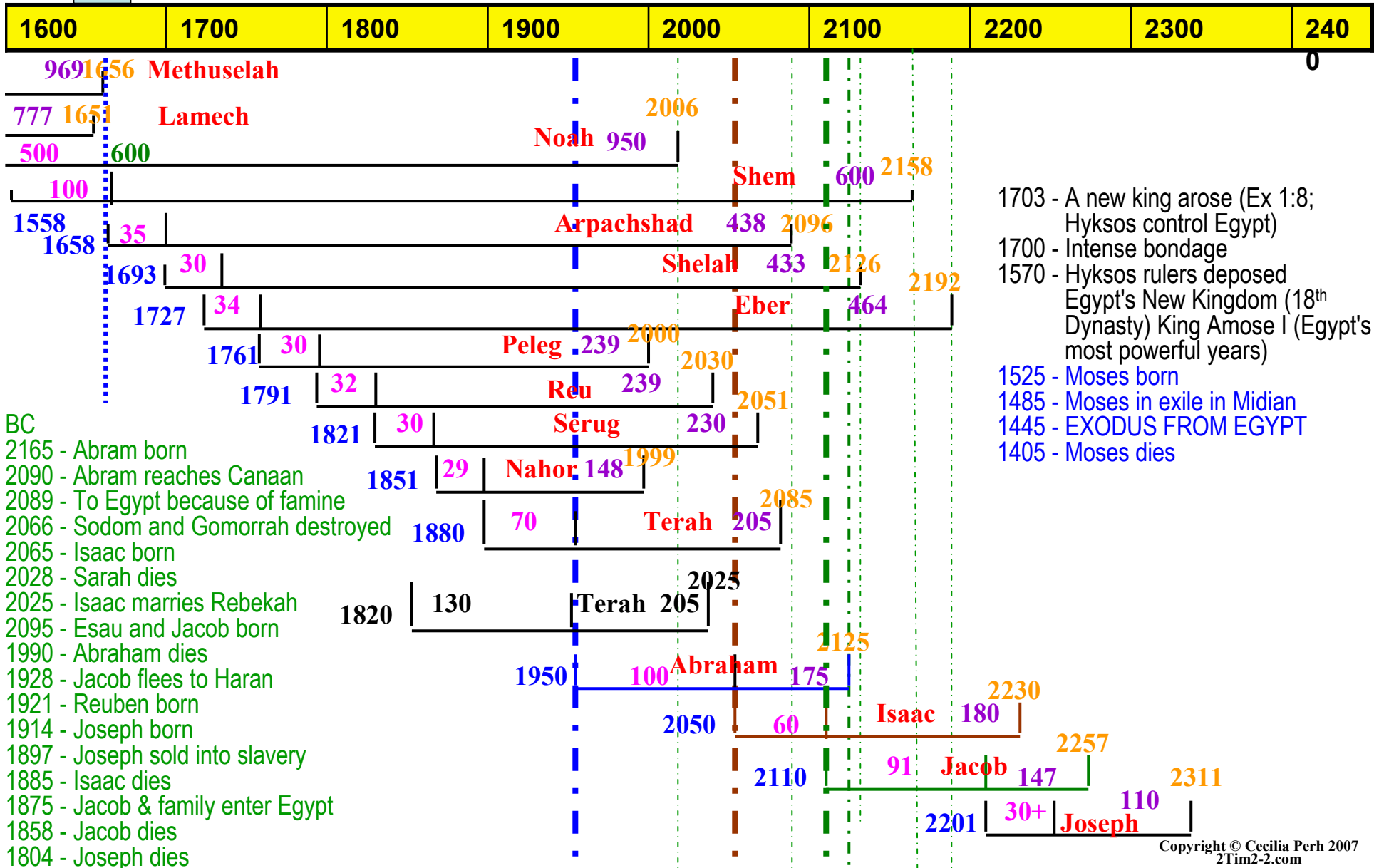
Date written: after 1445 BC

Theme: Israel's Origin & Early Years

Purposes: 1) to present the beginning of everything but God
 2) to record God's choice of Israel & His covenant plan for the nation
 3) to show how the sin of man is met by the redemption of God

Flood

The Generations of Shem and Terah (Genesis 11)



- 1703 - A new king arose (Ex 1:8; Hyksos control Egypt)
- 1700 - Intense bondage
- 1570 - Hyksos rulers deposed
- Egypt's New Kingdom (18th Dynasty) King Amose I (Egypt's most powerful years)
- 1525 - Moses born
- 1485 - Moses in exile in Midian
- 1445 - EXODUS FROM EGYPT
- 1405 - Moses dies

- BC
- 2165 - Abram born
- 2090 - Abram reaches Canaan
- 2089 - To Egypt because of famine
- 2066 - Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed
- 2065 - Isaac born
- 2028 - Sarah dies
- 2025 - Isaac marries Rebekah
- 2095 - Esau and Jacob born
- 1990 - Abraham dies
- 1928 - Jacob flees to Haran
- 1921 - Reuben born
- 1914 - Joseph born
- 1897 - Joseph sold into slavery
- 1885 - Isaac dies
- 1875 - Jacob & family enter Egypt
- 1858 - Jacob dies
- 1804 - Joseph dies

Genesis 16 – The Birth of Ishmael

- A. Abram and Hagar (16:1-4a)
- B. Sarai and Hagar (16:4b-6)
- C. Hagar and the Angel of the LORD (16:7-16)

The Birth of Ishmael (Genesis 16:1-16)

v1-4a Abram and Hagar

Princess exalted father

The man who gives in when he is wrong, is wise; the man who gives in when he is right, is married (See Gen 3: 6,17)

¹ Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no *children*, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was *wandering* Hagar. ² So Sarai said to

Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing *children*. Please go in to me, and I will bear *children* through her." And Abram

³ And *after* Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar her Egyptian maid and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife. *And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived;*

the Jews from hence have formed a rule or canon; that if a man marries a woman, and she has no children in ten years, he is obliged to marry another [Bereshit Rabba, ut supra. (sect. 45. fol. 40. 2.). Jarchi & Aben Ezra in loc.]

God had promised him a seed, but as yet he had none, which was a trial of his faith; he had been married many years to Sarai his wife, she was his wife when they came out of Ur of the Chaldees, and how long before cannot be said; they stayed and dwelt some time at Haran, the Jews (Seder Olam Rabba, p. 2) say five years, and they had been now ten years in the land of Canaan, Gen_16:3; and were advanced in years, the one being seventy five, and the other eighty five, so that there was no great probability of having any children, wherefore the following step was taken:

Gill on Genesis 16:1

and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar; no doubt but she had many, but this was a principal one, that might be over others, and was chiefly entrusted with the care and management of family affairs under her mistress; she might be the daughter of an Egyptian, born in Abram's house, as Eliezer was the son of a Syrian of Damascus, born there also; or she might be one of the maidservants Pharaoh, king of Egypt, gave to Abram, Gen 12:16; the Jews (y) have a tradition, that she was a daughter of Pharaoh, who, when he saw the wonders done for Sarai, said, it is better that my daughter should be a handmaid in this house, than a mistress in another, and therefore gave her to Sarai; others say (z) she was a daughter of his by a concubine, but neither is probable: **from her came the people called Hagarites, 1Ch 5:10, and Hagarenes, Psa 83:6**; and there were **a people in Arabia called Agraei**, both by Strabo (a) and Pliny (b); and the latter speaks of a **royal city in that country called Agra**, which seem to have their names from this person. Melo (c), an Heathen writer, speaking of Abram, says, that he had two wives, one of his own country, and akin to him, and the other an Egyptian, a servant; of the Egyptian he beget twelve sons, who, going into Arabia, divided the country among them, and were the first that reigned over the inhabitants of it; as to her twelve sons, he mistakes, for these were not Hagar's sons by Abram, but her grandsons, the sons of Ishmael, see Gen 17:20.

(y) Targum Jon. & Jarchi in loc. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 45. fol. 40. 2. (z) Pirke Eliezer, c. 26. (a) Geograph. l. 16. p. 528. (b) Hist. Nat. l. 6. c. 28. (c) Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 19. p. 420, 421.

The Birth of Ishmael (Genesis 16:1-16)

2080 BC

v4b-6 Sarai and Hagar

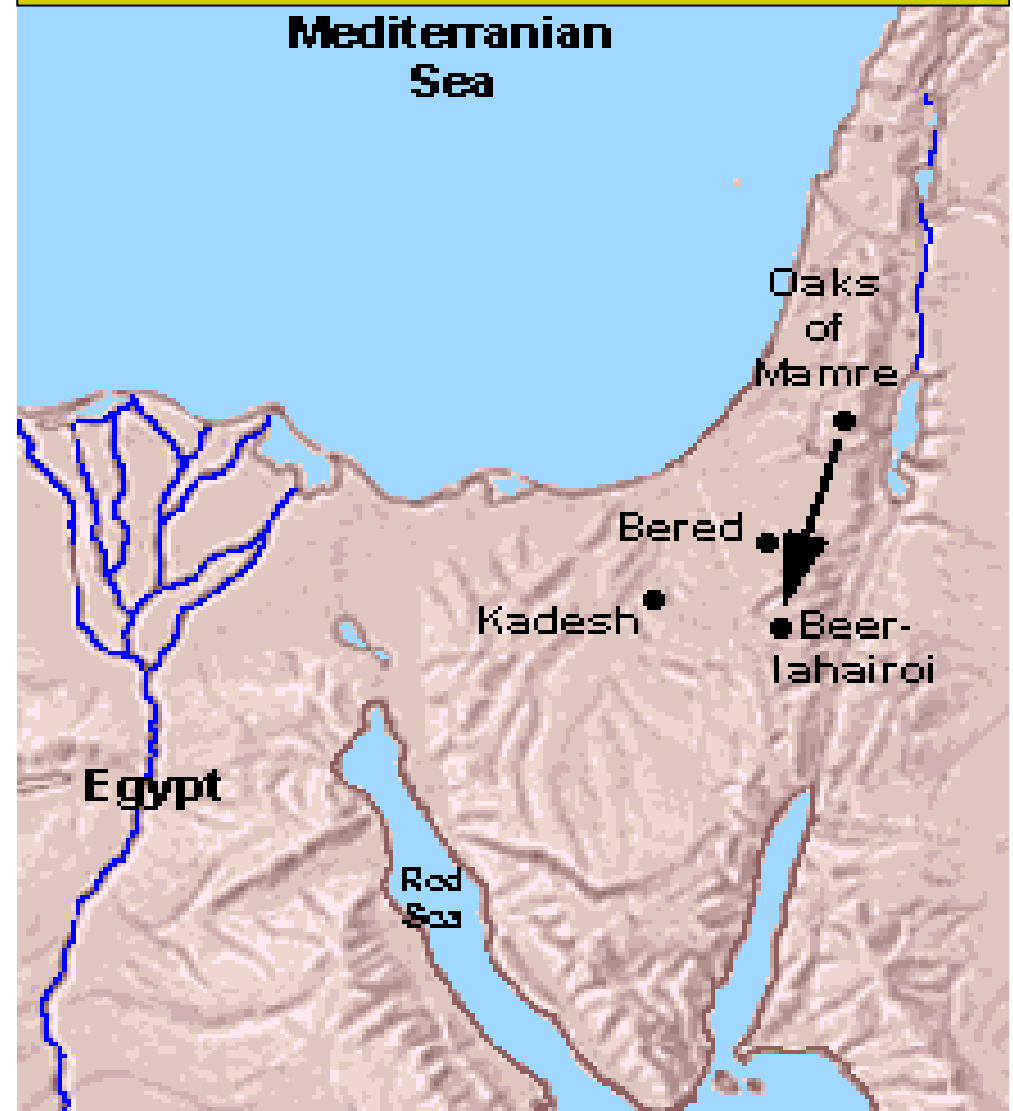
and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight. ⁵ And Sarai said to Abram, “**May the wrong done me be upon you.** I gave my maid into your arms; **but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me.**” ⁶ **But** Abram said to Sarai, “**Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight.**” **So** Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.

My wrong be upon thee - This appears to be intended as a reproof to Abram, containing an insinuation that it was his fault that she herself had not been a mother, and that now he carried himself more affectionately towards Hagar than he did to her, in consequence of which conduct the slave became petulant. To remove all suspicion of this kind, Abram delivers up Hagar into her hand, who was certainly under his protection while his concubine or secondary wife; but this right given to him by Sarai he restores, to prevent her jealousy and uneasiness. (Adam Clarke)

v7-16 Hagar and the Angel of the LORD

7 Now the angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. 8 And he said, “Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from and where are you going?” And she said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.” 9 Then the angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”

שׁוּר Shuwr, AV 6x, Shur = “wall” 1) a place southwest of Palestine on the eastern border or within the border of Egypt; the Israelites passed through the wilderness of Shur after crossing the Red Sea 1a) also 'wilderness of Etham'



Hagar flees to an area south of Beersheba

Adam Clarke on Genesis 16:7

The angel of the Lord - That Jesus Christ, in a body suited to the dignity of his nature, frequently appeared to the patriarchs, has been already intimated. That the person mentioned here was greater than any created being is sufficiently evident from the following particulars: -

1. From his promising to perform what God alone could do, and foretelling what God alone could know; “I will multiply thy seed exceedingly,” etc., Gen 16:10; “Thou art with child, and shalt bear a son,” etc., Gen 16:11; “He will be a wild man,” etc., Gen 16:12. All this shows a prescience which is proper to God alone.
2. Hagar considers the person who spoke to her as God, calls him אל El, and addresses him in the way of worship, which, had he been a created angel, he would have refused. See Rev 19:10; Rev 22:9.
3. Moses, who relates the transaction, calls this angel expressly Jehovah; for, says he, she called שם יהוה shem Yehovah, the Name of the Lord that spake to her, Gen 16:13. Now this is a name never given to any created being.

Adam Clarke on Genesis 16:7

4. This person, who is here called מלאך ה' malach Yehovah, the Angel of the Lord, is the same who is called המלאך הגאל hammalach haggael, the redeeming Angel or the Angel the Redeemer, Gen 48:16; מלאך פניו malach panaiv, the Angel of God's presence, Isa 63:9; and מלאך הברית malach habberith, the Angel of the Covenant, Mal 3:1; and is the same person which the Septuagint, Isa 9:6, term μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος, the Angel of the Great Counsel or Design, viz., of redeeming man, and filling the earth with righteousness.

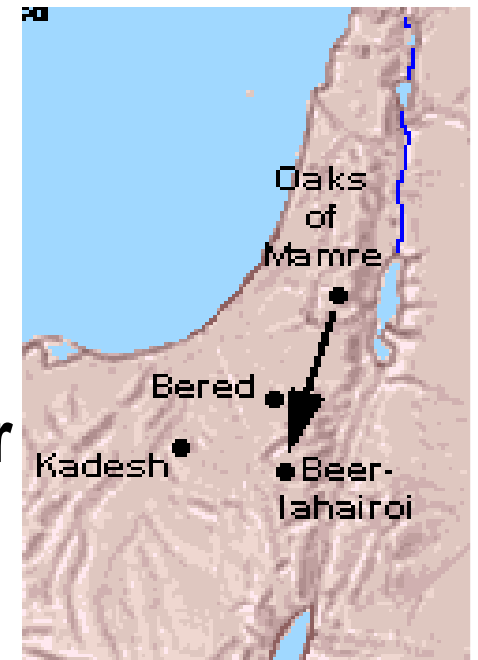
5. These things cannot be spoken of any human or created being, for the knowledge, works, etc., attributed to this person are such as belong to God; and as in all these cases there is a most evident personal appearance, **Jesus Christ alone can be meant**; for of God the Father it has been ever true that no man hath at any time seen his shape, nor has he ever limited himself to any definable personal appearance.

The Prophecy Concerning Ishmael (v10-12)

¹⁰ Moreover, the angel of the LORD said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they shall be too many to count.” ¹¹ The angel of the LORD said to her further,

“Behold, you are with child,
And you shall bear a son;
And you shall call his name Ishmael,
Because the LORD has given heed to your

¹² “And he will be a wild donkey of a man,
His hand *will be* against everyone,
And everyone's hand *will be* against him;
And he will live to the east of all his brothers.”



2079 BC

Gill on Genesis 16:12

And he will be a wild man,.... Living in a wilderness, delighting in hunting and killing wild beasts, and robbing and plundering all that pass by; and such an one Ishmael was, see Gen 21:20; and such the Saracens, his posterity, were, and such the wild Arabs are to this day, who descended from him; or "the wild ass of a man" (t); or "a wild ass among men", as Onkelos; or "like to a wild ass among men", as the Targum of Jonathan; wild, fierce, untamed, not subject to a yoke, and impatient of it, see Job 11:12; such was Ishmael, and such are his posterity, who never could be subdued or brought into bondage, neither by the Assyrians, nor Medes and Persians, nor by the Greeks nor Romans, nor any other people (u); and at this day the Arabs live independent on the Turks, nay, oblige the Turks to pay a yearly tribute for the passage of their pilgrims to Mecca, and also to pay for their caravans that pass through their country, as travellers into those parts unanimously report; wherefore Aben Ezra translates the word rendered "wild", or "wild ass", by חפשי, "free", and refers to the passage in Job 39:5. These people having been always free, and never in bondage, always lived as free booters upon others:

Gill on Genesis 16:12

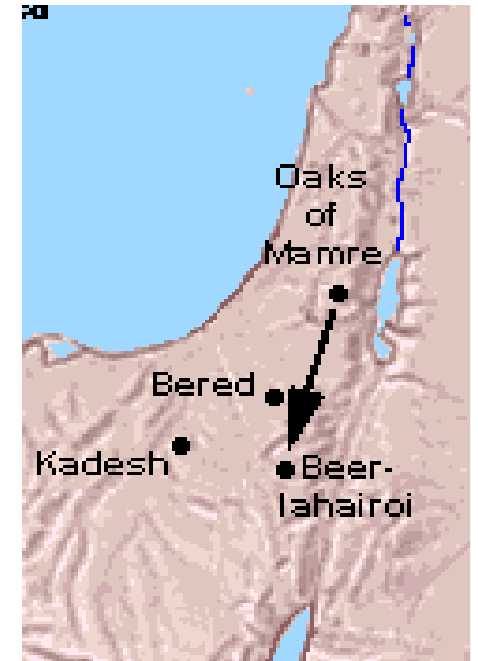
his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; signifying, that he would be of a quarrelsome temper and warlike disposition, continually engaged in fighting with his neighbours, and they with him in their own defence; and such the Arabs his posterity always have been, and still are, given to rapine and plunder, harassing their neighbours by continual excursions and robberies, and pillaging passengers of all nations, which they think they have a right to do; their father Ishmael being turned out into the plains and deserts, which were given him as his patrimony, and as they suppose a permission from God to take whatever he could get. And a late traveller into those parts observes (w), that they are not to be accused of plundering strangers only, or whomsoever they may find unarmed or defenceless; but for those many implacable and hereditary animosities which continually subsist among themselves, literally fulfilling to this day the prophecy of the angel to Hagar, Gen 16:12; the greatest as well as the smallest tribes are perpetually at variance with one another, frequently occasioned upon the most trivial account, as if they were from the very days of their first ancestor naturally prone to discord and contention.

Gill on Genesis 16:12

And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren; the sons of Abram by Keturah, the Midianites, and others; and the Edomites that sprung from Esau, the son of his brother Isaac; and the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob, another son of Isaac; and his kinsmen the Moabites and Ammonites, upon all which he and his posterity bordered, see Gen 25:18. It may be rendered, "he shall tabernacle" (x), or dwell in tents, as he did, and his posterity afterwards; particularly the Scenite Arabs, so called from their dwelling in tents, and the Bedouins, such were the tents of Kedar, one of his sons, Son 1:5; the same with them to this day: according to Jarchi, the sense of the phrase is, that his seed should be large and numerous, and spread themselves, and reach to the borders of all their brethren.

The Prophecy Concerning Ishmael (v10-12)

13 Then she called the name of the LORD who
spoke to her, “Thou art a God who sees”; for she
said, “Have I even remained alive here **after**
seeing Him?” **14** Therefore the well was called
the well of the Living One who sees me
Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and
Bered.



15 So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called
the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

16 And **Abram was eighty-six years old when**
Hagar bore Ishmael to him.

2079 BC

EL ROI - THE GOD WHO SEES

Principles Learnt

Gen 16 - name first mentioned to Hagar, Sarai's Egyptian maid, concubine

Hagar's Circumstances:

- ill-treated by Sarai
- discarded & abandoned by Abram
- not pitied
- not totally innocent – pride, insubordination

Questions asked in Bad Circumstances:

- Where is God? Does He see?
Yes - Ps 121:3-4 - **3 He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep.**

What God told Hagar to do:

- 1) Go back and deal with the situation
- 2) Realize that God in His sovereignty permitted it and trust in His name (Ps 9:10)
- 3) Submit to God's sovereignty. He saw it (Pr 15:3) and He will vindicate you.

When? 2 Th 1:5-10 – when Jesus returns to rule & reign

Truths about God to Cling to

- 1) Realize God's eyes are too pure to approve evil and He cannot look on wickedness with favor (Hab 1:13)
- 2) Realize He strongly supports those whose hearts are completely His (2Ch 16:9)
- 3) Rest on Ps 34:15-18 – God's promises to the righteous

Application

- Have you ever been the pawn in someone's game?
 - * forced to do something against your will
 - * mistreated
 - * abused sexually? emotionally? mentally?
- Our computer-like memory bank stores up bad situations and recalls it from time to time and pain & bitterness comes up again.

How to Deal with Bad Memories:

- 1) don't stuff it, bury it or ignore it
- 2) realize that healing is possible & it begins with the recognition that El Roi has seen it (Ps 139:7-12, 15-16, 23-24)
- 3) choose to forgive the person
aphiemi, to send away
keep sending the memory away
choose not to remember it (Jer 31:34)
- 4) deal with strongholds (2 Cor 10:3-5)
- 5) replace negative thoughts with godly thoughts (Philippians 4:8)

Illustrations

- if loved ones run away, cling to El Roi

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- 3) Rest on Ps 34:15-18 – God's promises to the righteous (15 The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. 16 The face of the LORD is against evildoers, To cut off the memory of them from the earth. 17 The righteous cry and the LORD hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles. 18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, And saves those who are crushed in spirit.)

EL ROI - THE GOD WHO SEES

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- 5) replace negative thoughts with godly thoughts (**Phil 4:8**)

Dealing with Strongholds

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

3 **For** though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 **for** the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, **but** divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, 6 and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, **if** there is any excellence and **if** anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

BREAK TIME

Genesis 17 – Covenant and Circumcision

- A. God's Covenant Established with Abraham & His Descendants (17:1-8)
- B. Circumcision, the Sign of God's Covenant with Abraham (17:9-14)
- C. God's Covenant confirmed with Isaac (17:17-21)

The Covenant and Circumcision (Genesis 17:1-27)

2066 BC

God's Covenant Established with Abraham & His Descendants (v1-8)

¹ Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him,

"I am God Almighty;
Walk before Me, and be blameless.

*The promise of kings to come from Abraham's seed; of a Kingdom where **CHRIST** will rule (Fulfilled - Gen 36:31 & I Sam 11:15 - II Ki 24:17,18 ; Rev 20:4,6)*

² And I will establish My covenant between Me and you,
And I will multiply you exceedingly."

Many Descendants

³ And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him saying

⁴ "As for Me, behold, My covenant

אַבְרָם

אַבְרָהָם

And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

⁵ "No longer shall your name be called Abram,

But your name shall be Abraham;

Change of Name

For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.

Adam Clarke on Genesis 17:1

I am the Almighty God - אני אל שדי ani El shaddai, I am God all-sufficient; from שדה shadah, to shed, to pour out. I am that God who pours out blessings, who gives them richly, abundantly, continually.

Walk before me - התהלך לפני hithhallech lephanai, set thyself to walk - be firmly purposed, thoroughly determined to obey, before me; for my eye is ever on thee, therefore ever consider that God seeth thee. Who can imagine a stronger incitement to conscientious, persevering obedience?

Be thou perfect - והיה תמים vehyeh thamim, and thou shalt be perfections, i.e., altogether perfect. Be just such as the holy God would have thee to be, as the almighty God can make thee and live as the all-sufficient God shall support thee; for he alone who makes the soul holy can preserve it in holiness. Our blessed Lord appears to have had these words pointedly in view, [Mat 5:48](#) : Εσεσθε υμεις τελειοι, ωσπερ ο Πατηρ υμων ο εν τοις ουρανοις τελειος εστι· Ye Shall Be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. But what does this imply? Why, to be saved from all the power, the guilt, and the contamination of sin. This is only the negative part of salvation, but it has also a positive part; to be made perfect - to be perfect as our Father who is in heaven is perfect, to be filled with the fullness of God, to have Christ dwelling continually in the heart by faith, and to be rooted and grounded in love.

6 “And I will make you exceedingly fruitful,
and I will make nations of you,
and kings shall come forth from you.

7 And I will establish **My covenant** between Me and you and
your descendants after you throughout their generations
for **an everlasting covenant,**
to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

8 And I will give to you and to your descendants after you,
the land of your sojournings,
all the land of Canaan,
for an everlasting possession;
and I will be their God.”

Land of Canaan
Fulfilled (Josh 11:23) (Promised Land)

Abraham fathered three different *nations*:
1) Arab (See - Gen 16:10,12 & 17:20 & 21:13,18),
2) Edom (See - Gen 25:23 & 36),
3) Israel (See - Gen 25:23).

Circumcision, the Sign of God's Covenant with Abraham (v9-14)

⁹ God said further to Abraham, “Now as for you, **you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.** ¹⁰ This is **My covenant**, which you shall keep, between Me and **you and your descendants after you**: every male among **you shall be circumcised.** ¹¹ And **you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin**; and it shall be the sign of **the covenant** between Me and you. ¹² And **every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations**, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of **your descendants.** ¹³ **A servant who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised**; thus shall **My covenant** be in your flesh for **an everlasting covenant.**

Circumcision was not only a mark of separation for an Israelite, but it was also a picture of the new nature that every Christian would receive upon salvation (See Col 2:11 & Deut 30:6 & Jer 4:4). *Circumcision* never did save anyone (See Gal 5:2-6 & 6:15).

14 But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”

God's Blessings on Sarah (v15-16)

15 Then God said to Abraham,
“As for Sarai your wife,
you shall not call her name Sarai,
but Sarah shall be her name.

Change of Name



16 And **I will bless her,**
and indeed I will give you a son by her.
Then **I will bless her,**
and **she shall be a mother of nations;**
kings of peoples shall come from her.”

Many Descendants

Gill on Genesis 17:16

- **as for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah her name *shall be***; her former name Sarai signifies "my princess", or rather "princesses", being to him in the room of many, and better than ten thousand; yet only a princess to him, and in his family, being sole mistress there: but Sarah signifies, as Jarchi observes, "princess" absolutely, because she was princess over all the princes and people that should come of her, as well as be the mother and princess of all female believers, who are called her daughters, 1Pe 3:6.

God's Covenant confirmed with Isaac (v17-21)

¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to **a man one hundred years old?** And will **Sarah, who is ninety years old,** bear *a child?*”

¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!”

NASB ¹⁹ But God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish **My covenant with him** for **an everlasting covenant** for **his descendants after him.**

NIV ¹⁹ Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

אָבַל ^ábäl particle adverb **1.** in older Heb. with an asseverative force, **verily, of a truth,** with slight advers. force, **nay, but.** **2.** in late Heb. as a decided adversative, **howbeit, but.**

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

**Fulfilled - The Arab Nation
(Gen 17:20; 21:13,18)**

21 But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year.”

Twelve princes shall he beget, etc. - see...Gen 25:12-16. From Ishmael proceeded the various tribes of the Arabs, called also Saracens by Christian writers. They were anciently, and still continue to be, a very numerous and powerful people. (Clarke)

Clarke on Genesis 17:20

“It was somewhat wonderful, and not to be foreseen by human sagacity,” says Bishop Newton, “that a man’s whole posterity should so nearly resemble him, and retain the same inclinations, the same habits, and the same customs, throughout all ages! These are the only people besides the Jews who have subsisted as a distinct people from the beginning, and in some respects they very much resemble each other 1. **The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are descended from Abraham, and both boast of their descent from the father of the faithful.** 2. **The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are circumcised, and both profess to have derived this ceremony from Abraham.** 3. **The Arabs, as well as the Jews, had originally twelve patriarchs, who were their princes or governors.** 4. **The Arabs, as well as the Jews, marry among themselves, and in their own tribes.** 5. **The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are singular in several of their customs, and are standing monuments to all ages of the exactness of the Divine predictions, and of the veracity of Scripture history.** We may with more confidence believe the particulars related of Abraham and Ishmael when we see them verified in their posterity at this day. This is having, as it were, ocular demonstration for our faith.” See Bp. Newton’s Second Dissertation on the Prophecies, and See note on Gen 16:12.

Abraham's Obedience (v22-27)

²² And when He finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. ²³ Then Abraham took **Ishmael his son**, and **all the servants who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's household**, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the very same day, as God had said to him. ²⁴ Now **Abraham was ninety-nine years old** when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ And **Ishmael his son was thirteen years old** when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ In the very same day Abraham was circumcised, and **Ishmael his son**. ²⁷ And **all the men of his household, who were born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner**, were circumcised with him.

Clarke on Genesis 17:23

And Abraham took Ishmael, etc. - Had not Abraham, his son, (who was of age to judge for himself), and all the family, been fully convinced that this thing was of God, they could not have submitted to it. A rite so painful, so repugnant to every feeling of delicacy, and every way revolting to nature, could never have sprung up in the imagination of man. To this day the Jews practice it as a Divine ordinance; and all the Arabians do the same. As a distinction between them and other people it never could have been designed, because it was a sign that was never to appear. **The individual alone knew that he bore in his flesh this sign of the covenant, and he bore it by the order of God, and he knew it was a sign and seal of spiritual blessings, and not the blessings themselves, though a proof that these blessings were promised, and that he had a right to them.** Those who did not consider it in this spiritual reference are by the apostle denominated the concision, Phi 3:2, i.e., persons whose flesh was cut, but whose hearts were not purified.

Clarke on Genesis 17:23

The contents of this chapter may be summed up in a few propositions: -

1. God, in renewing his covenant with Abram, makes an important change in his and Sarai's name; a change which should ever act as a help to their faith, that the promises by which God had bound himself should be punctually fulfilled. However difficult it may be for us to ascertain the precise import of the change then made, we may rest assured that it was perfectly understood by both; and that, as they had received this name from God, they considered it as placing them in a new relation both to their Maker and to their posterity. From what we have already seen, the change made in Abram's name is inscrutable to us; there is something like this in Rev 2:17 : To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and a New Name - which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. The full import of the change made in a soul that enters into covenant with God through Christ, is only known to itself; a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy. Hence, even men of learning and the world at large have considered experimental religion as enthusiasm, merely because they have not understood its nature, and have permitted themselves to be carried away by prejudices which they have imbibed perhaps at first through the means of ignorant or hypocritical pretenders to deep piety;

Clarke on Genesis 17:23

but while they have the sacred writings before them, their prejudices and opposition to that without which they cannot be saved are as unprincipled as they are absurd.

2. God gives Abraham a precept, which should be observed, not only by himself, but by all his posterity; for this was to be a permanent sign of that covenant which was to endure for ever. Though the sign is now changed from circumcision to baptism, each of them equally significant, yet the covenant is not changed in any part of its essential meaning. Faith in God through the great sacrifice, remission of sins, and sanctification of the heart, are required by the new covenant as well as by the old.

3. The rite of circumcision was painful and humiliating, to denote that repentance, self-denial, etc., are absolutely necessary to all who wish for redemption in the blood of the covenant; and the putting away this filth of the flesh showed the necessity of a pure heart and a holy life.

4. As eternal life is the free gift of God, he has a right to give it in what way he pleases, and on what terms. He says to Abraham and his seed, Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and he that doth not so shall be cut off from his people. He says also to sinners in general, Let the wicked

Clarke on Genesis 17:23

forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; Repent, and believe the Gospel; and, Except ye repent, ye shall perish. These are the terms on which he will bestow the blessings of the old and new covenants. **And let it be remembered that stretching out the hand to receive an alms can never be considered as meriting the bounty received, neither can repentance or faith merit salvation, although they are the conditions on which it is bestowed.**

5. The precepts given under both covenants were accompanied with a promise of the Messiah. God well knows that no religious rite can be properly observed, and no precept obeyed, unless he impart strength from on high; and he teaches us that that strength must ever come through the promised seed. Hence, with the utmost propriety, we ask every blessing through him, in whom God is well pleased.

6. The precept, the promise, and the rite, were prefaced with, "I am God all-sufficient; walk before me, and be thou perfect." **God, who is the sole object of religious worship, has the sole authority to prescribe that worship, and the rites and ceremonies which shall be used in it; hence he prescribed circumcision and sacrifices under the old law, and baptism and**

Clarke on Genesis 17:23

the eucharist under the Gospel; and to render both effectual to the end of their institution, faith in God was indispensably necessary.

7. Those who profess to believe in him must not live as they list, but as he pleases. Though redeemed from the curse of the law, and from the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish Church, they are under the law to Christ, and must walk before him - be in all things obedient to that moral law which is an emanation from the righteousness of God, and of eternal obligation; and let it ever be remembered that Christ is “the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.” **Without faith and obedience there can be no holiness, and without holiness none can see the Lord. Be all that God would have thee to be, and God will be to thee all that thou canst possibly require.** He never gives a precept but he offers sufficient grace to enable thee to perform it. Believe as he would have thee, and act as he shall strengthen thee, and thou wilt believe all things savingly, and do all things well.

The Birth of Isaac Announced (Genesis 18:1-15)

¹ Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. ² And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when **he saw them, he ran** from the tent door to meet them, and **bowed himself** to the earth, ³ **and said**, “My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. ⁴ Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; ⁵ and **I will bring** a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant.” And they said, “So do, as you have said.”



2066 BC

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead *it*, and make bread cakes." **7** Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf, and gave *it* to the servant; and he hurried to prepare it. **8** And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed *it* before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

Abraham's Hospitality

a little water = curds & milk

a piece of bread = 3 measures of fine flour (9.3 gallons or 75 pints)

tender & choice calf

Exodus 23:19 "You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. You are not to boil a kid in the milk of its mother.

Exodus 34:26 "You shall bring the very first of the first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."

Deuteronomy 14:21 "You shall not eat anything which dies *of itself*. You may give it to the alien who is in your town, so that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner, for you are a holy people to the LORD your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

Hospitality

Hospitality, a Must for Overseers & Elders, Women on Church Support List

- 1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,
- Titus 1:8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,
- 1 Timothy 5:10 having a reputation for good works; *and* if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, *and* if she has devoted herself to every good work.

Hospitality to be Practised by Everybody

- 1 Peter 4:9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint.
- Romans 12:13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.
- Hebrews 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

2066 BC

The promise of Isaac's birth
(Fulfilled - Gen 21:1-3 - 2065 BC)

⁹ Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "Behold, in the tent."¹⁰ And he said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him.

¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. ¹² And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

¹³ And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?' ¹⁴ Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son."

¹⁵ Sarah denied *it* however, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh."

Genesis 17:17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"



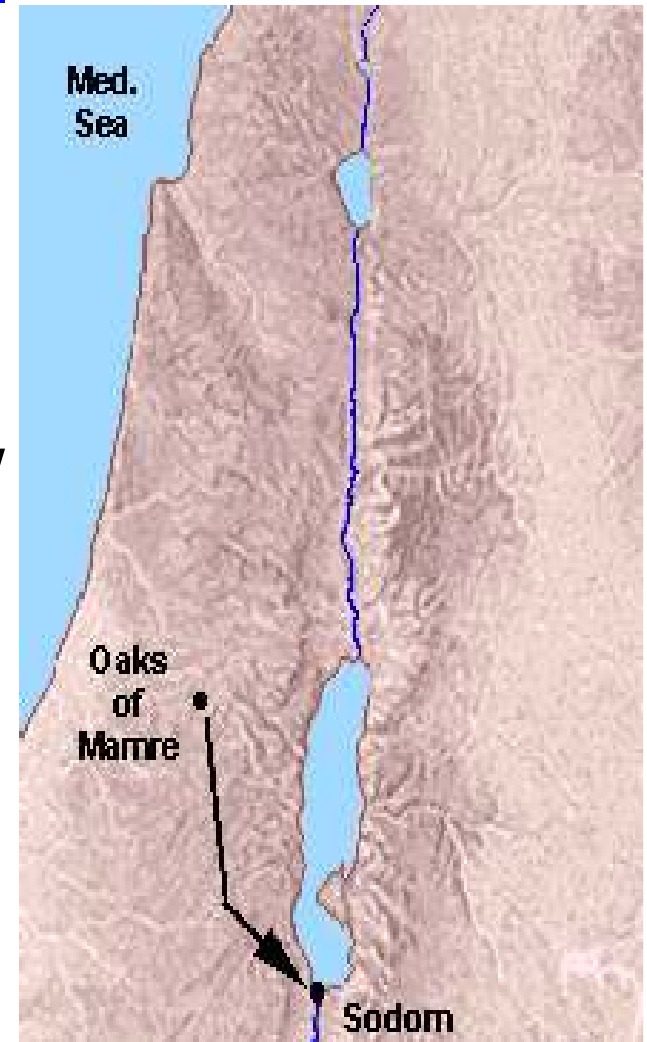
Bedouin tent with eastern side open

The Overthrow of Sodom & Gomorrah Announced (Genesis 18:16-21)

16 Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off.

17 And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, **18** since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? **19** **For I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; in order that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.**”

20 And the LORD said, “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. **21** I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”



2066 BC

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18:22-33)

22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the LORD. **23** And Abraham came near and said, “Wilt Thou indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? **24** Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; wilt Thou indeed sweep *it* away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? **25** Far be it from Thee to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from Thee! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?” **26** So the LORD said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place on their account.” **27** And Abraham answered and said, “Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am *but* dust and ashes. **28** Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, wilt Thou destroy the whole city because of five?”

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18:22-33)

And He said, “I will not destroy *it* if I find forty-five there.”²⁹ And he spoke to Him yet again and said, “Suppose forty are found there?” And He said, “I will not do *it* on account of the forty.”³⁰ Then he said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak; suppose thirty are found there?” And He said, “I will not do *it* if I find thirty there.”³¹ And he said, “Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord; suppose twenty are found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the twenty.”³² Then he said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once; suppose ten are found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the ten.”³³ And as soon as He had finished speaking to Abraham the LORD departed; and Abraham returned to his place.

Ezekiel 22:30-31 - ³⁰ "And I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. ³¹ "Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads," declares the Lord God.

[The Depravity of Sodom \(Genesis 19:1-14\)](#)

Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. **When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.** ² And he said, “Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.” They said however, “No, **but** we shall spend the night in the square.” ³ **Yet he urged them strongly,** so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

⁴ Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; ⁵ and they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us **that** we may have relations with them.”

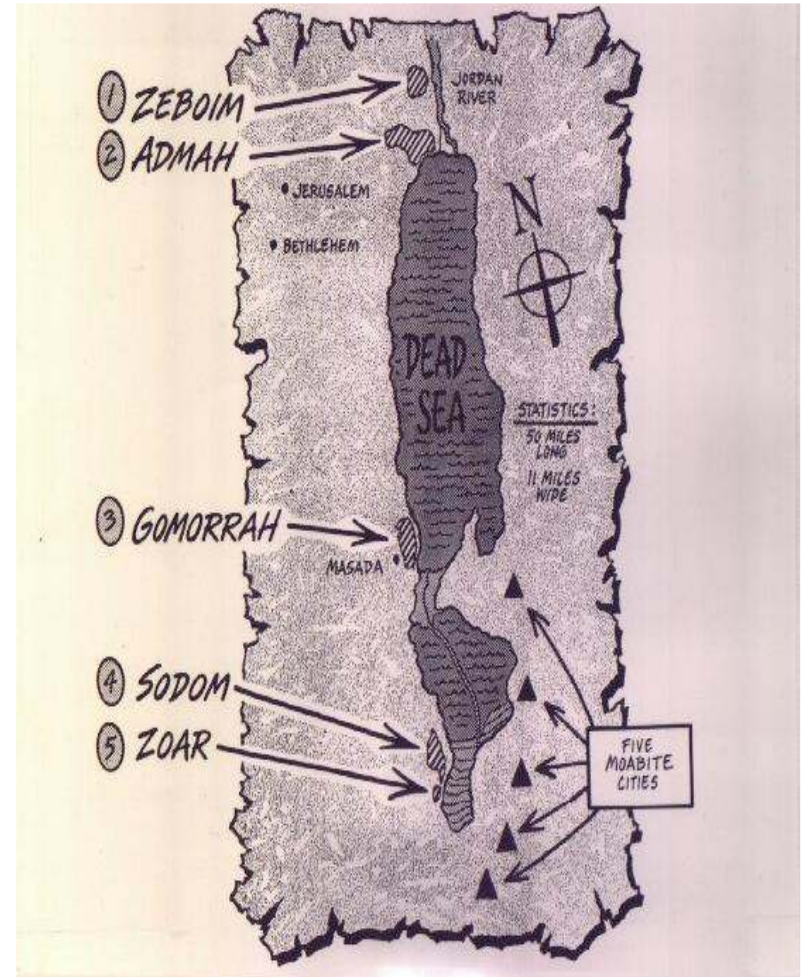
⁶ **But** Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, ⁷ and said, “Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly. ⁸ Now **behold**, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof.”

⁹ **But** they said, “Stand aside.” **Furthermore**, they said, “This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them.” **So** they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door.

¹⁰ **But** the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. ¹¹ And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway.

¹² Then the men said to Lot, “Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring *them* out of the place; ¹³ **for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.**”

¹⁴ And Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, “Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city.” **But** he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting.



The Escape from Sodom (Genesis 19:15-23)

¹⁵ And when your wife and daughters are away in the night, he seized his wife and daughters, and brought them out when they had no life! Do not

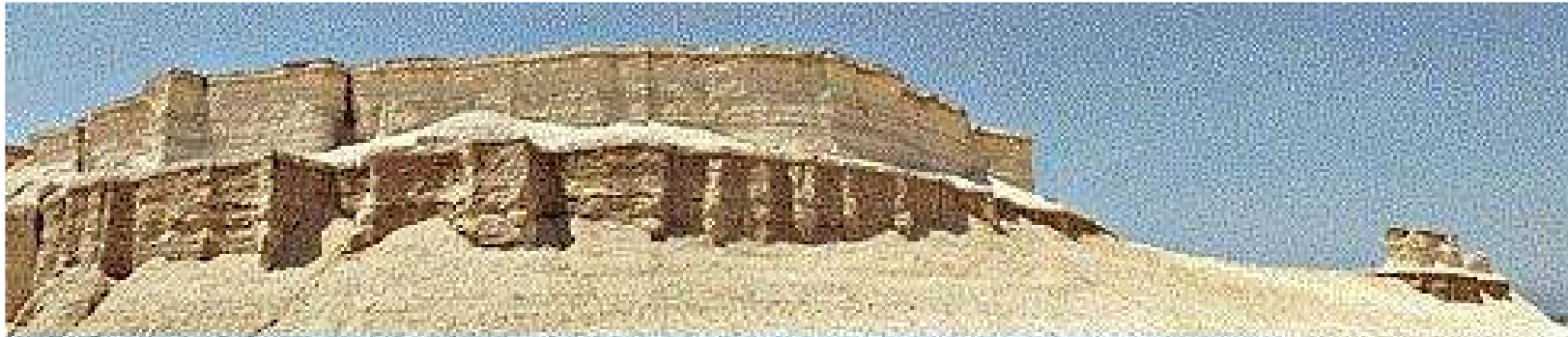
Early the next morning, when he delayed, they grabbed Lot, his wife, and his daughters by their hands and brought them out of the city (19:16). The final verb of this verse is interesting: it means literally "caused them to alight" (*yanichuhu*), like a bird. In other words, the angels didn't walk them out of the city--they flew them out!

Their escape from Sodom is a picture of the catching up of the believers when Messiah returns for judgment (1 Thess. 4:17). It may also describe how this catching up will take place: an angel will grab hold of one of your hands, and up you go!

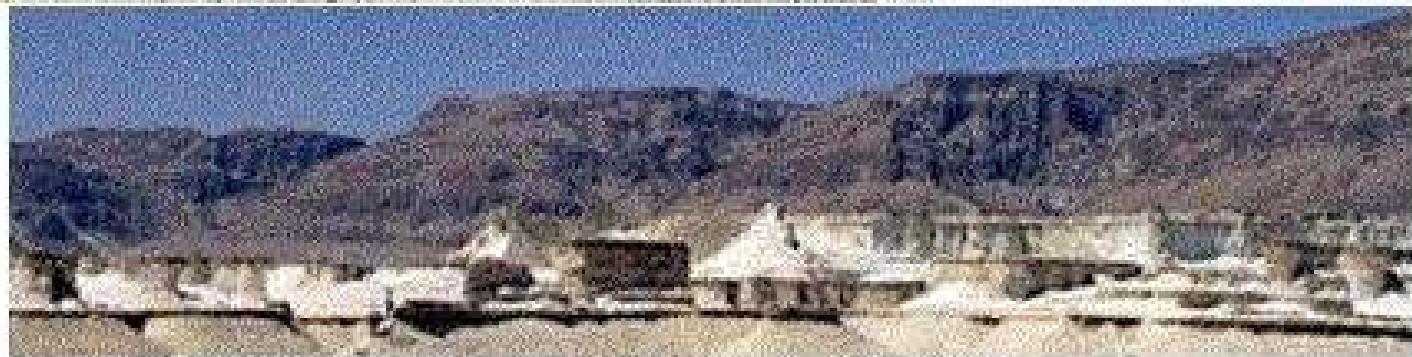
escape to the mountains, lest you be swept away.

¹⁸ **But** Lot said to them, "Oh no, my lords! ¹⁹ **Now behold**, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest the disaster overtake me and I die; ²⁰ **now behold**, this town is near *enough* to flee to, and it is small. Please, let me escape there (is it not small?) **that** my life may be saved." ²¹ And he said to him, "**Behold**, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken. ²² "**Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.**" **Therefore** the name of the town was called Zoar. ²³ The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

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Sodom
&
Gomorrah



Zoar



Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven (Genesis 18:24)

The Destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24-29)

24 Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, **25** and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. **26** But his wife, from behind him, looked back; and she became a pillar of salt.

27 Now Abraham arose early in the morning *and went* to the place where he had stood before the LORD; **28** and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, **the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace.** **29** Thus it came about, **when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.**



These sulfur balls are mostly golf ball sized, and they have burn marks all around them!

Analysis of the brimstone and ash
Each of the cities of the plain contain evidence of brimstone which God rained down upon the cities to destroy them. The brimstone is composed of 96-98 percent sulfur, with trace amounts of magnesium which create an extremely high temperature burn. This is the only place on earth where you can find pure sulfur in a round ball. This brimstone is NOT from any type of geo-thermal activity as there is no evidence of such in the area, and geo-thermal sulfur nodules are only 40 percent pure sulfur.





Sodom:

Sulfur balls prove to be 95.7% pure in laboratory tests

■ Continued from page A-1

The ash is layered. This, Wyatt contends, is the result of thermal ionization that takes place when objects are burned at an extremely high temperature. Substances burned with sulfur leave an ash that is actually heavier than the original material, thus explaining how these buildings have survived for nearly 40 centuries, he says.

Some of the outer ash crumbles easily to the touch, he says, and many spots around the two cities show the effects of wind erosion. The brittleness makes exploration tedious and prevents the Tennessean and his crew, including his wife, Mary Nell Wyatt, from entering some of the buildings.

Wyatt also is convinced that several large outcroppings are the remains of ziggurats. He believes they were used in the promiscuous worship rites that brought God's wrath down on the two cities.

"It was this behavior that caused God to destroy them with fire and brimstone," he says with conviction.

Several of the outcroppings also look like the remains of sphinxes, he says.

But it is the sulfur that most

fascinates Wyatt and convinces him that he has found the two doomed cities.

"When the burning sulfur rained down upon the cities, everything was set ablaze. As the cities burned, these balls of flaming sulfur were smothered out by the ashen remains.

"A capsule was formed around the remaining sulfur which preserved it all these years," he explains.

The substance from these capsules has proven to be 95.7 percent sulfur in tests conducted at Galbraith Laboratories in Knoxville.

Like nowhere else in the world, the sulfur from these capsules was ball shaped. "This is an indication that it passed through the atmosphere," Wyatt says.

When Wyatt returns next month to continue his exploration, he will be using electronics "to locate some empty rooms and that sort of things." He hopes some of them contain furniture and decorative items.

"We have a subsurface interface radar system that we used on Noah's Ark. We want to use that to look for uncollapsed chambers and that sort of thing.

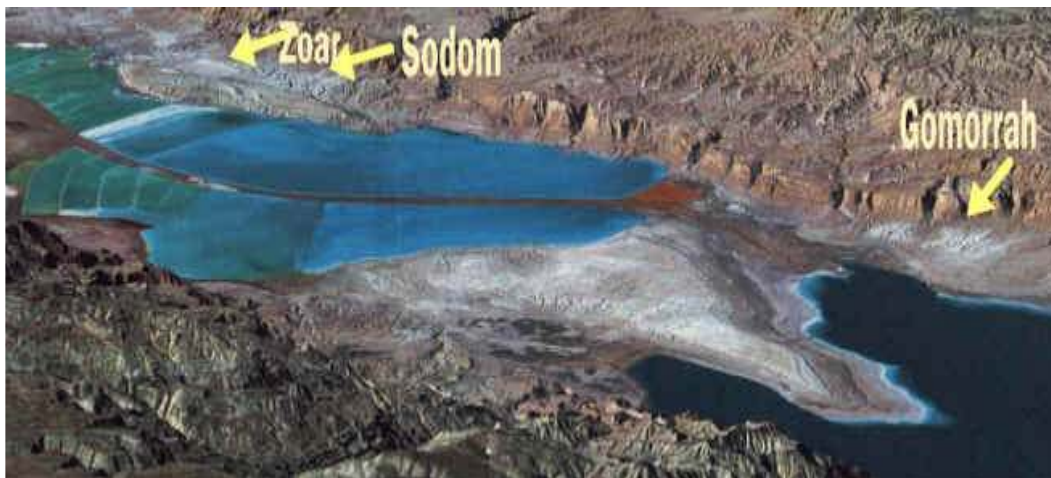
"What we also have is fiber optics. When we locate these chambers below the surface, we will bore a hole about an inch in diameter and then introduce these fiber optics with a light source, and that will give us the ability to video and photograph the interior of these chambers."



Notice each of the cities stand out from the surrounding terrain because of the white ash contained within them. The city of Zoar was a "little one" or a newly built city that was square. As cities grew or expanded they quickly lost this square shape.



Above - The northern end of the Dead Sea, looking southwest



Above - looking southwest at the southern end of the Dead Sea



(Satellite 3-D images copyright Rohr Productions, The Holy Land Satellite Atlas. June 1995 National Geographic)



A. Northern lobe of Dead Sea, B. Southern lobe, now partly dried out

1. Bab edh-Dhra (Sodom), 2. Numcira (Gomorrah), 3. Safi (Zoar/Bela), 4. Feifa (Admah), 5. Khanazir (Zeboiim)

19:24 Whenever God authors something, no civilization can alter it without experiencing the judgment of God. Renowned anthropologist J.D. Unwin conducted an exhaustive study of the eighty-eight known civilizations, which have existed in the history of the world. Each culture started with a strict code of sexual conduct. Then **each of the eighty-eight known civilizations that he studied demanded over a course of time "complete freedom" to express individual passion.** Dr. Unwin reported that **every society, without exception, which allowed sexual misbehavior and permissiveness to prevail amongst its people perished. There have been no exceptions!** **The following are references to Sodom and Gomorrah's destruction:** Deut 29:23 & Isa 1:9 & 13:19 & Jere 20:16 & 23:14 & 49:18 & 50:40 & Ezk 16:49,50 & Hos 11:8 & Amos 4:11 & Mt 10:15 & Mk 6:11 & Lk 17:28,29 & Rom 9:29 & II Pet 2:6-9 & Jude 7 & Rev 11:8. **CHRIST** used Sodom and Gomorrah along with the Flood as illustrations of judgment (See - Lk 17:26-30).

19:26 **CHRIST** used the incident of Lot's wife turning to a pillar of salt as a warning to other believers not to look back on the things of this world. According to I John 2:15-17, our love for this world will profit us absolutely *nothing*. In the end, this world and our love for it will all pass away (See - II Pet 3:7,10,11).

Jude 7

Just as Sodom and Gomorrah

and

the cities around them,

since they in the same way as these

or act ptc, ekporneuo, 1x, to go a whoring, "give one's self over to fornication"

indulged in gross immorality

and *heteros, 99x, the other, another: i.e. one not of the same nature, form, class, kind, different*

or act ptc, aperchomai, 120x, to go away in order to follow any one; idiomatically, of following wrong sexual practices

went after strange flesh,

sarx, 151x, flesh (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both man and beasts 2) the body 3) human nature

pres pass ind, prokeimai, 5x, to be placed before (a person or a thing), to be placed in front of, to be placed before the eyes

are exhibited as an example,

deigma, 1x, 1) a thing shown 2) a specimen of any thing, example, pattern

in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

pres act ptc, hupecho, 1x, 1) to hold under, to put under, place underneath 2) metaph. to sustain, undergo 2a) suffer punishment

dike, 4x, judicial decision, esp. sentence of condemnation; execution of a sentence, punishment

(Satellite 3-D images copyright Rohr Productions, The Holy Land Satellite Atlas. June 1995 National Geographic)



Added to Bible Bulletin Board's "J. C. Ryle Collection" by: Tony Capoccia
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tony@biblebb.com Online since 1986

[Remember Lot's Wife by J. C. Ryle \(1816-1900\)](#)

There are few warnings in Scripture more solemn than this. The Lord Jesus Christ says to us, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

Lot's wife was a professor of religion: her husband was a "righteous man" (II Peter 2:8). She left Sodom with him on the day when Sodom was destroyed; she looked back towards the city from behind her husband, against God's express command; she was struck dead at once, and turned into a pillar of salt. And the Lord Jesus Christ holds her up as a beacon to His church: He says, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

It is a solemn warning, when we **think of the person Jesus names. He does not bid us remember Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, or Sarah, or Hannah, or Ruth. No: He singles out one whose soul was lost for ever. He cries to us, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"**

It is a solemn warning, when we consider the subject Jesus is upon. He is speaking of His own second coming to judge the world: He is describing the awful state of unreadiness in which many will be found. **The last days are on His mind, when He says, "Remember Lot's wife."**

It is a solemn warning, when we think of the Person who gives it. The Lord Jesus is full of love, mercy, and compassion: He is One who will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax He could weep over unbelieving Jerusalem, and pray for the men that crucified Him; yet even He thinks it good to give this solemn warning and remind us of lost souls. Even He says, *"Remember Lot's wife."*

It is a solemn warning, when we **think of the persons to whom it was first given.** The Lord Jesus was speaking **to His disciples:** He was not addressing the Scribes and Pharisees who hated him, but Peter, James, and John, and many others who loved Him: yet even to them He thinks good to address a caution. Even to them He says, *"Remember Lot's wife."*

It is a solemn warning, when we consider the manner in which it was given. He does not merely say, "Beware of following-take heed of imitating-do not be like Lot's wife." He uses a different word: **He says, "Remember"** He speaks as if we were all in danger of forgetting the subject; He stirs up our lazy memories; He bids us keep the case before our minds. He cries, **"Remember Lot's wife."**

I will speak of **the religious privileges which Lot's wife enjoyed.**

In the days of Abraham and Lot, true saving religion was scarce upon earth; there were **no Bibles, no ministers, no churches, no tracts, no missionaries.** The knowledge of God was confined to a few favoured families; the greater part of the inhabitants of the world were living in darkness, ignorance, superstition, and sin. Not one in a hundred perhaps had such good example, such spiritual society, such clear knowledge, such plain warnings as Lot's wife. Compared with millions of her fellow-creatures in her time, Lot's wife was a favoured woman.

She had a godly man for her husband: she had Abraham, the father of the faithful for her uncle by marriage. The faith, the knowledge, and the prayers of these two righteous men could have been no secret to her. It is impossible that she could have dwelt in tents with them for any length of time, without knowing whose they were and whom they served. Religion with them was no formal business; it was the ruling principle of their lives and the mainspring of their actions. All this Lot's wife must have seen and known. This was no small privilege.

When Abraham first received the promises, it is probable Lot's wife was there. when he built his tent between Hai and Bethel, it is probable she was there...when the angels came to Sodom and warned her husband to flee, she saw them; when they took them by the hand and led them out of the city, she was one of those whom they helped to escape. Once more, I say, these were no small privileges.

Yet what good effect had all these privileges on the heart of Lot's wife? None at all. Notwithstanding all her opportunities and means of grace-notwithstanding all her special warnings and messages from heaven - she lived and died graceless, godless, impenitent, and unbelieving. The eyes of her understanding were never opened; her conscience was never really aroused and quickened; her will was never really brought into a state of obedience to God; her affections were never really set on things above. The form of religion which she had was kept up for fashion's sake and not from feeling: it was a cloak worn for the sake of pleasing her company, but not from any sense of its value. She did as others around her in Lot's house: she conformed to her husband's ways: she made no opposition to his religion: she allowed herself to be passively towed along in his wake: but all this time her heart was wrong in the sight of God. The world was in her heart, and her heart was in the world. In this state she lived, and in this state she died.

In all this there is much to be learned: I see a lesson here which is of the greatest importance in the present day. You live in times when there are many persons just like Lot's wife: Come and hear the lesson which her case is meant to teach.

Learn, then, that the mere possession of religious privileges will save no one's soul. You may have spiritual advantages of every description; you may live in the full sunshine of the richest opportunities and means of grace; you may enjoy the best of preaching and the choicest instruction; you may dwell in the midst of light, knowledge, holiness, and good company. All this may be, and yet you yourself may remain unconverted, and at last be lost for ever.

I dare say this doctrine sounds hard to some readers. I know that **many fancy they want nothing but religious privileges in order to become decided Christians.** They are not what they ought to be at present, they allow; but their position is so hard, they plead, and their difficulties are so many. Give them a godly husband, or a godly wife-give them godly companions, or a godly master-give them the preaching of the gospel-give them privileges, and then they would walk with God.

It is all a mistake. It is an entire delusion. ***It requires something more than privileges to save souls.*** Joab was David's captain; Gehazi was Elisha's servant; Demas was Paul's companion; Judas Iscariot was Christ's disciple; and Lot had a worldly, unbelieving wife. These all died in their sins. They went down to the pit in spite of knowledge, warnings, and opportunities; and they all teach us that it is not privileges alone that men need. ***They need the grace of the Holy Ghost.***

Let us value our religious privileges, but let us not rest entirely upon them. Let us desire to have the benefit of them in all our movements in life, but let us not put them in the place of Christ. Let us use them thankfully, if God gives them to us, but let us take care they produce some fruit in our heart and life. If they do not do good, they often do positive harm; they sear the conscience, they increase responsibility, they aggravate condemnation. The same fire which melts the wax hardens the clay; the same sun which makes the living tree grow, dries up the dead tree, and prepares it for burning. Nothing so hardens the heart of man as a barren familiarity with sacred things. Once more I say, it is not privileges alone which make people Christians, but *the grace of the Holy Ghost* Without that no man will ever be saved.

I ask **those who attend a sound ministry** in the present day to mark well what I am saying. You go to Mr. A's, or Mr. B's church: you think him an excellent preacher; you delight in his sermons; you cannot hear anyone else with the same comfort; you have learned many things since you attended his ministry; you consider it a privilege to be one of his hearers! All this is very good. It is a privilege. I should be thankful if ministers like yours were multiplied a thousandfold. But, after all, what have you got in your heart? Have you yet received the Holy Ghost? if *not, you are no better than Lot's wife.*

I ask **the children of religious parents** to mark well what I am saying. It is the highest privilege to be the child of a godly father and mother, and to be brought up in the midst of many prayers. It is a blessed thing indeed to be taught the gospel from our earliest infancy, and to hear of sin, and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and holiness, and heaven, from the first moment we can remember anything. But, O, take heed that you do not remain barren and unfruitful in the sunshine of all these privileges: beware lest your hearts remain hard, impenitent, and worldly, notwithstanding the many advantages you enjoy. You cannot enter the kingdom of God on the credit of your parents' religion. You must eat the bread of life for yourself, and have the witness of the Spirit in your own heart. You must have repentance of your own, faith of your own, and sanctification of your own. *If not' you are no better than Lot's wife.*

I pray God that **all professing Christians in these days** may lay these things to heart. May we never forget that privileges alone cannot save us. **Light and knowledge, and faithful preaching, and abundant means of grace, and the company of holy people are all great blessings and advantages. Happy are they that have them! But after all, there is one thing without which privileges are useless: that one thing is *the grace of the Holy Ghost.* Lot's wife had many privileges; but Lot's wife had not grace.**

How did Lot's wife become a pillar of salt?

"This remarkable happening is stated matter-of-factly, with no suggestion that it was a special miracle or divine judgment. Lot's wife "looked back" (the phrase might even be rendered "returned back" or "lagged back") seeking to cling to her luxurious life in Sodom (note Christ's reference to this in Luke 17:32,33) and was destroyed in the "overthrow" (Genesis 19:25,29) of the city. There are many great deposits of rock salt in the region, probably formed by massive precipitation from thermal brines upwelling from the earth's deep mantle during the great Flood.

Possibly the overthrow buried her in a shower of these salt deposits blown skyward by the explosions. There is also the possibility that she was buried in a shower of volcanic ash, with her body gradually being converted into "salt" over the years following through the process of petrification, in a manner similar to that experienced by the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the famous eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

- Henry Morris (taken from: "The Defenders Study Bible")



The Origin of Moab and Ammon (Genesis 19:30-38)

³⁰ And Lot went up from Zoar, and stayed in the mountains, and his two daughters with him; for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; and he stayed in a cave, he and his two daughters. ³¹ Then the first-born said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of the earth.” ³² Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father.” ³³ So they made their father drink wine that night, and the first-born went in and lay with her father; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

³⁴ And it came about on the morrow, that the first-born said to the younger, “Behold, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father.” ³⁵ So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. ³⁶ Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father.

³⁷ And the first-born bore a son, and called his name **Moab**; he is the father of **the Moabites** to this day. ³⁸ And as for the younger, she also bore a son, and called his name **Ben-ammi**; he is the father of **the sons of Ammon** to this day.

