Genesis

## **God is Not Mocked (18:16-19:29)**

*From a study of Luther’s Works: Lectures on Genesis, Paul Kretzmann’s Popular Commentary of the Bible, and the Lutheran Study Bible.*

##  **Time to Move On (18:16-22a)**

* Abraham and Sarah’s visitors are ready to move on
	+ Abraham goes along with them for a way.
	+ Sodom is in their sights.
		- Why?
			* Is something wrong?
		- Last we knew, the king of Sodom and others had been rescued by God through Abraham.
			* Chapter 14
			* Around 14 years prior.
* A rhetorical question is asked by the LORD
	+ Although One is recognized as the Lord…
		- The other two are angels
		- The three together are NOT the Trinity…
			* But signified/represented it
	+ Do I tell Abraham or not?
		- God knows
		- God shares what He does
			* Done in His mercy and good will
			* Psalm 25:14
			* Amos 3:7
			* John 15:15
	+ A reminder that Abraham is going to be blessed.
		- Abraham is in need of this reminder, because what is going to happen will not be easy to take in.
			* The destruction of the five cities by fire is revealed to Abraham in this passage in order that you may understand that this extraordinary disaster was a punishment inflicted by an angry God because of the sins of the people. So much importance is attached to this knowledge that the Lord wants this report spread abroad among the descendants and made known forever as an example for others, in order that they may learn to fear God and to shun the kind of sins that were the cause of such a great evil. [[1]](#footnote-1)
* The outcry of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah is great
	+ Isaiah 3:9
	+ Ezekiel 16:49-50
	+ John 7:7
		- Today you may encounter many who are offended by the necessary preaching of the Law and shun it, for they maintain that their consciences are burdened when they hear that sort of thing. But are they not fine Christians? They do not give up sinning; they are addicted to greed, to wrath, to lust, to reveling, etc. When they hear these sins censured, they are offended and do not want their consciences burdened. Shall we for this reason let everyone do what he pleases and declare him blessed? Not at all; for you hear that the destruction of Sodom by fire is to be set before all succeeding generations and indeed before the very church of God, in order that men may learn to fear God.[[2]](#footnote-2)
	+ When the fear of the Lord had been discarded, conjugal faithfulness vanished. Not satisfied with their own wives, they desired others but made prostitutes of their own, until they finally engaged in practices which are contrary to nature and more than bestial. This is Satan’s procedure after he has turned people away from God and has made them ungrateful toward Him.[[3]](#footnote-3)
	+ Law & Gospel
		- If you divide all Scripture, it contains two topics: promises and threats or benefits and punishments.[[4]](#footnote-4)
		- Hence to declare that the Law should not be taught in the church is characteristic of men who do not know Christ and are blinded by their pride and wickedness.[[5]](#footnote-5)
		- There is a need and a desire to hear the whole of God’s Word
			* Psalm 28:1
				+ A desire to walk with God, and not against Him
				+ Those under the crush of the Law need to hear the Gospel
	+ The church of God and the church of Satan
		- Accordingly, if you draw a comparison between the house of Abraham and the people of Sodom, you will find everything most pleasant and friendly in the house of Abraham—to such an extent that the very angels of God seem to jest jovially with Sarah when she laughs and denies that she has laughed. [[6]](#footnote-6)
* Off the two go

## **A Holy Conversation (18:22b-33)**

* Abraham needs to talk with the Lord
	+ Just as before at the tent in the beginning of chapter 18, one appears to be the Lord Himself.
* Abraham knows the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. (v.23)
	+ He knows what is to come for them, and he is worried.
		- For Lot?
		- For the people?
* Abraham’s Prayer
	+ A numbers game
		- It seems to be a stern prayer, but it is a most praiseworthy one if it is judged according to Abraham’s heart; for he sees that it is impossible for God not to have regard for the righteous.[[7]](#footnote-7)
		- It is a forceful and impulsive prayer, as if Abraham wanted to compel God to forgive. Surely it is well known that because of one righteous man God spares, and shows kindness to, an entire house, city, and region[[8]](#footnote-8)
			* Who would this be???
	+ A persistent numbers game
		- Mark 7:25-30
		- Romans 3:5-6
		- From 50 to 10
			* Matthew 5:43-45
				+ What is the purpose of this?
				+ What is Abraham pleading for?
* The Lord Promises
	+ Mercy for all for a small group of righteous
		- Ezekiel 22:30
		- Isaiah 65:8

## **It is bad… really bad (19:1-29)**

* The angels arrive
	+ Lot is at the gate of Sodom
		- On watch?
			* Protection of guests and visitors?
			* Hebrews 13:2
		- Respect to these visitors with an invitation
			* Not a form of worship
			* Does Lot recognize them for who they are?
				+ The Hebrew word for ‘lords’ is not the same as ‘The LORD’
	+ Their plan to sleep in the square/street.
		- Why would they want to sleep there?
		- How safe would you feel sleeping in the streets of downtown Milwaukee/Chicago/New York/Eagle River?
	+ Lot pleads/begs them to stay with him
		- A feat prepared
		- Unleavened bread?
* They are surrounded
	+ I for my part do not enjoy dealing with this passage, because so far the ears of the Germans are innocent of and uncontaminated by this monstrous depravity; for even though this disgrace, like other sins, has crept in through an ungodly soldier and a lewd merchant, still the rest of the people are unaware of what is being done in secret. [[9]](#footnote-9)
	+ The depravity of where unrestrained sin leads.
	+ Emphasis is placed on the men of the city.
		- Not just the men from “that bar” down the street…
		- ALL of them…
			* Including those who are supposed to reign such behavior in.
			* Let this be said with due respect for innocent ears, for I do not relish dealing with these matters. Yet we must be on our guard lest such shocking utterances carry away and ruin the age that is rash and in general is inclined toward sin. For where people live and teach in such a way and vices become customary, there, says Seneca sternly, there is no room for a cure.[[10]](#footnote-10)
		- The heinous conduct of the people of Sodom is extraordinary, inasmuch as they departed from the natural passion and longing of the male for the female, which was implanted into nature by God, and desired what is altogether contrary to nature. Whence comes this perversity? Undoubtedly from Satan, who, after people have once turned away from the fear of God, so powerfully suppresses nature that he blots out the natural desire and stirs up a desire that is contrary to nature. Moses emphasizes this sin very much when he adds those awful words which are unbearable in the ears of all sane human beings: “Bring out those men, that we may know them.”[[11]](#footnote-11)
	+ Romans 1:24,-27
	+ Leviticus 18:22
	+ Leviticus 20:13
	+ 1 Corinthians 6:9
	+ 1 Timothy 1:8-11
		- For if you do away with the marriage bond and permit promiscuous passions, the laws and all decency go to ruin together with discipline. But when these are destroyed, no government remains; only beastliness and savagery are left. Therefore as an example for others the Lord was compelled to inflict punishment and to check the madness that was raging beyond measure.[[12]](#footnote-12)
* Lot pleads
	+ First, a ‘soft’ answer
	+ Second a wicked offer
		- A lesser sin to prevent a greater?
			* Romans 3:8
		- Luther urges not a damnation of Lot here for this offer.
			* He knew the men would not want his daughters
				+ If “all” the men were truly there, so would have been the daughter’s fiancés
			* This was a plea to soften their wrath.
		- Not a rule/law to follow or emulate.
			* The head of the house is called to protect and lay down his life for his family.
* The men rush the house.
* The angels intercede.
	+ Pull Lot in
	+ Confuse the men with blindness…
		- BUT THEY STILL LOOK FOR THE DOOR!
* Judgment is decided.
	+ 2 Peter 2:7, 9
	+ Revelation 18:4-5
	+ Jeremiah 51:6
	+ “Who else do you have?”
		- It is time to go!
	+ Lot pleads with his future sons-in-law
		- Lot knows who is with him in his house.
		- They laugh it off
			* “The nearer the world is to destruction, the smugger it is.” (Lutheran Study Bible v.14)
	+ But there is hesitancy in Lot to leave.
		- When do they go?
			* Safety?
			* A desire for repentance?
		- “Lest you be swept away!”
			* If a father does not censure the sin of his children, it becomes the father’s own sin. To be sure, the sins of adulterers, murderers, and usurers are the sins of the citizens who commit them; but if the government does not punish them, as happens here and there at the present time, those personal sins of the individuals become the sins of the city or public sins, and public disasters are always wont to result from them.[[13]](#footnote-13)
			* Thus we are warned in Revelation (18:4) to depart from Babylon and forsake her; that is, we should completely separate ourselves from the pope’s church, unless we want to perish with it.[[14]](#footnote-14)
* A time to flee
	+ Don’t look back (Boston)
		- Why?
	+ Run to the hills (Iron Maiden)
		- Matthew 24:16-18
		- But Lot pleads for a closer city
			* Too easy to look back from on high?
			* A plea to spare the people of that city?
* Sulfur and Fire
	+ Jeremiah 50:40
	+ Even though the statements which follow are brief, they nevertheless include events of such magnitude that human speech is unable to express them.[[15]](#footnote-15)
		- Matthew 10:15
		- No question Whose wrath this is
			* Luke 17:29-32
	+ Lot’s wife looks back
		- Luke 9:62
		- From this we readily understand what it means to look back, namely, to depart from God’s command and to be occupied with other matters—matters outside one’s calling—like the man who has been commanded to follow Christ and wants to bury his dead first (Matt. 8:21).[[16]](#footnote-16)
		- Thus this account teaches us to remain steadfast, for he who wants to be a Christian must not change his purpose: he must not look for another way or another Gospel.[[17]](#footnote-17)
		- Perhaps Lot’s wife was terrified by the awful crash of the thunderbolts and the collapsing cities and looked back for that reason. To be drawn away from the Word by new and strange ideas is, therefore, no joke or slight trial.[[18]](#footnote-18)
* Abraham sees this

## **What are we to do with this?**

* Law and Gospel must be properly applied
* 1st Commandment issue
	+ Even the most wicked human beings must be borne with compassion; but when they want to snatch us with them to destruction, compassion must cease. Neither the authority of parents nor the love for our children must mean so much to us that we are willing to perish with them. Then all compassion must be forgotten, in accordance with the example of Lot, who abandons his wife when, contrary to the Lord’s command, she looks back while she is on the way. Because such people have become hardened and accept no admonition, they must be abandoned.[[19]](#footnote-19)
* The fear of the Lord
	+ This is why I read awful accounts of this kind. Yet I read them reluctantly, because I am frightened by the greatness of God’s wrath. Still I see that this doctrine is useful not only to frighten the proud but also to keep the godly in the fear of God, lest they sin and perish in accordance with the example of the ungodly.[[20]](#footnote-20)
* The need of the Gospel for those who rightly fear the Lord
	+ Isaiah 61:1-3
* Do NOT take such accounts lightly.
	+ A careful consideration of these events will induce you to think of your own peril, to cease sinning, and to implore pardon for your sins.[[21]](#footnote-21)
1. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.19&off=659&ctx=ing+any+higher.+But+~the+destruction+of+t), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 221. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.19&off=6325&ctx=e+and+condemn+them.%0a~Today+you+may+encoun), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.20-21&off=2693&ctx=+of+the+government.%0a~When+the+fear+of+the), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.19&off=9163), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.19&off=11090&ctx=+teaches+otherwise.%0a~Hence+to+declare+tha), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.20-21&off=4970&ctx=cendants%2c+and+line.%0a~Accordingly%2c+if+you+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.22-26&off=7429), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.22-26&off=8436&ctx=is+to+be+destroyed.%0a~It+is+a+forceful+and), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.4-5&off=310&ctx=+of+a+terrible+sin.+~I+for+my+part+do+not), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 251–252. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.4-5&off=6255&ctx=eeks+an+outlet.%EF%BB%BF22%EF%BB%BF+~Let+this+be+said+wit), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.4-5&off=8559&ctx=lges+freely+in+sin.%0a~The+heinous+conduct+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.4-5&off=10222&ctx=+continued+to+exist.~+For+if+you+do+away+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.15&off=4800), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.15&off=8116&ctx=+the+sin+of+others.+~Thus+we+are+warned+i), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 280. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.23-25&off=819&ctx=+ideas+to+allegory.%0a~Even+though+the+stat), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 293. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.26&off=2537&ctx=member+Lot%E2%80%99s+wife.%E2%80%9D+~From+this+we+readily), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 299. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.26&off=2688), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 299. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.26&off=7335&ctx=adhere+to+the+Word.%0a~Perhaps+Lot%E2%80%99s+wife+w), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 301. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.1&off=3194&ctx=ns+of+your+people.%E2%80%9D+~Even+the+most+wicked), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 240. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.1&off=6368&ctx=pt+from+despairing.%0a~This+is+why+I+read+a), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 241. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge19.1&off=10858&ctx=perished+eternally!%0a~A+careful+considerat), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 243. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)