

## IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE (Gen. 18 & 19)

Have you ever had visitors drop in on you and you have not been prepared? Clothes are lying about the house, dishes yet to be washed, etc.

There are a number of examples in the Bible where visitors called in unannounced, for example ...

- \* When Samuel visited Jesse's home and asked to see all his sons,
- \* When Elijah went to the home of the widow of Zarephath,
- \* When Jesus called at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.
- \* When Peter arrived at John Mark's door, after having come out of prison

... Each of these examples has lessons for us. ... In preparation for coming to the Lord's Table, - I want to consider two homes that were visited in Gen. 18 & 19 and on each occasion the guests were completely unannounced.

We always emphasise the need of careful preparation for coming to the Table, - it is not a 'light' thing handling the elements which remind us of the broken body and the shed blood of our Saviour. The Reformers believed that, - at the Table, - there was a special presence of the Lord ... and I think most of us would hold to a similar opinion. The Lord is always in our midst but there is something special about coming to the Table to contemplate His Son's victory over sin at Calvary.

Within the context of [I Cor. 11:28 let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup](#), let's read the two short passages (Gen. 18:1-8; 19:1-8) ... and using the title, "If Jesus came to your house" ...

... **First, the background** ... Abraham and Lot had a wonderful heritage, - they could trace their ancestry back to Shem the son of Noah (Gen. 11:10), - they were true Semites. Their heritage was a real joy and privilege to them. They belonged to a family tremendously blessed of God, ... living in a city called Ur in the ancient land of the Chaldees, - situated today in the country of Iraq, very close to the border with Iran, and touching upon the head of the Persian Gulf.

From Chaldea Abram travelled with his wife Sarai, his father Terah and his nephew Lot and settled for a time in the land of Canaan. Whilst there in Canaan God instructed Abram, [Gen. 12:1 Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee](#). God specifically commanded Abram ... [and from thy kindred \[mowledeth, family, relatives\], and from thy father's house](#). ... It could hardly have been any clearer ... "Abram, leave home, - just you and your wife. Leave, and move to a place I will show you!" ... It might possibly have seemed just a small matter at the time, but Gen. 12

emphasises *twice* that Abram did not altogether adhere to how God had instructed him, - Abram took “from his kindred” for he took his nephew Lot, (12:4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: ... 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son).

They all travelled down to Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20) and things didn't really work out there so he headed back towards Canaan again and they all settled in Bethel, 13:1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. Again, the Bible makes the point about Lot being with him, 13:5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

Now, both Abram and Lot were so blessed of the Lord it was difficult for the two to continue living in close proximity because there was far too many of them and it was causing strife, Gen. 13:8. ... If Abram had done as he was instructed originally, this would not have arisen ... but it did. So ... Abram took Lot out to a hill and made him an offer, 13:9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, ... even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt. ... There was no need to think too long about which part of the land was the more appealing for Lot! ... v.11 Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan. ... It looked a really good decision! ... This old man won't be around forever, and I might as well get the better end of the bargain!

In the will of God, 13:12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly. Standing there on the hill, God said to Abram, v.14 Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. 17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

Life promised to be so good for Lot in Sodom, - it would have been such a change to how he had been brought up ... New experiences, new things to see, new and very different people to meet ... away from family, and traditions ... a new life for him and his wife and daughters and all his workforce!

Not long after he had settled there a local war broke out (14:1) and the king of Sodom was involved. His land was overrun and some of the inhabitants were

captured. ... Guess who was taken!! ... v.12 they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. ... When Abram heard it, he gathered together three hundred of his men and went and liberated Lot. The king of Sodom was informed of his heroism and offered him all sorts of gifts as an accolade, ... but Abram said No way! ... v. 22 I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, 23 That I will not take ... any thing that is thine. ... He made his position clear! He wasn't going to take anything from any king of Sodom!

... In chapters 15-17 there is no more mention of Lot; the story continues regarding Abram and his quest for a son to take over his riches and his family business.

**Let's read together from Gen. 18:1-8 and 19:1-8.**

### THE TWO MEETINGS

In Gen. 18:1 Abraham is sitting at his tent door in the middle of the day, sheltering from the heat of the sun. ... It is relevant here to mention he had pitched his tent at a place called Mamre (13:18, 'strength') ... and it was at Mamre he had built an altar to the Lord and he spoke often with the Lord there. ... He sees three men coming towards him. In true Middle Eastern style-hospitality, he ran and bowed himself before them.

He had no idea who they were; as far as he was concerned, these were three travellers to whom he must show generosity and hospitality. There was nothing about them that gave any clue to their identity. Abraham could have called any of his servants, - and he had more than three hundred servants (14:14), - but he chose to serve these three guests himself ... personally, immediately, speedily (he ran to meet them), and generously, Gen. 18:6 [he] hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them.

Let's go down to Sodom. Notice it was the middle of the day when the men came to Abraham, but it is into the evening now when they arrived in Sodom ... the darkness was beginning to descend upon the city.

When Lot had first looked toward Sodom, he thought it would be a beautiful country to explore, - Gen. 13:10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where ... What he saw captivated him. And then, he wanted it so much that he chose it, <sup>11</sup> Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east.

Now, he did not go down into Sodom immediately. Instead, he went in stages. ... He began by pitching his tent toward Sodom (v.12), ... and he gradually moved closer and closer ... until, very soon, he had moved into the city (14:12), despite what kind of people they were, **Gen. 13:13** *But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.. ... It was a gradual journey* which brought him down into Sodom, where he settled and became a citizen of Sodom, a Sodomite, - imagine being identified with such people! - ... But, he had moved in everything which belonged to him ... and he was for staying!

Lot must have made quite an impression on the people of Sodom because he had risen up 'the pecking order' and was sitting at the entrance of the city with all the influential people. To 'get in' with them he would have had to compromise ('set aside') principles he had been brought up with. He would have had to acknowledge their point of view was as valid as his point of view. He would have had to adopt a lifestyle his uncle Abram did not approve of.

Back in Mamre, Abraham had taken his guests into his tent, - and a tent is not a permanent dwelling, it is for someone who was just passing through, cf. **Heb. 11:9** *By faith he [Abraham] sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in ...*<sup>10</sup> *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* - ... Lot, on the other hand, had given up his tent and lived in a *house* in Sodom (14:12), - Sodom had become his *home* (19:2). He was for staying there. *Indeed, his heart was in Sodom long before the rest of him was!*

Lot was a friend to all those people in that godless city. How sad that a nephew of the great friend of God, - Abraham, - was happily cavorting among such a crowd ... But, let's be fair to Lot, - let's give him the benefit of the doubt, - when he saw these two special visitors, he *rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground (19:1)* ... the same as his uncle Abraham had done when he first met the three (Gen. 18:2).

Look closer, though ... notice the wee small difference that can tell you so much. When Abraham saw them, - an old man of ninety-nine years of age, - when he saw them he *ran* to meet them (18:2)! ... When Lot saw the two men coming, he got up without any urgency being mentioned and he simply (but courteously, I'm sure) went to greet them.

He bowed too, - it was good to see he hadn't forgotten some of his upbringing and manners. He offered a similar hospitality as Abraham. Lot invited them, **v.2** *turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and*

ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. It sounded the same, - *almost*, - as what Abraham had said. But when you read it carefully, there is not the same *intensity* of hospitality. It's almost as if he felt he *had* to make the offer!

Was Lot's heart fully in it? Was he inviting the strangers into his home so he would be seen by the other men round the gate of Sodom? Would Lot have liked the visitors to know how he was living? Would he have liked to see how his life had been changed since moving into Sodom? Would he have liked them to have seen how his two daughters were dressed ... just like the other young girls in the city? ... Not only had he moved in to Sodom, but Sodom had moved in on him! ... When you 'read between the lines', he's letting them stay the night because it is getting dark, but he's letting them know he would prefer them to rise up early, and be on their way (Gen. 19:2). ... And maybe if they left early enough, nobody would see them ... nobody will know they were there! ... I wonder how much he *really* wanted them in his home!

There is not the same oneness between him and the visitors as there was between Abraham and the visitors. ... The meeting between Lot and the men was somewhat strained and awkward. ... There was a definite difference between Abraham's meeting and Lot's meeting with them. **The two meetings.**

### THE TWO MEALS

Abraham rushed into the tent where all the meals would have been prepared. He told his wife to start baking a few loaves of fresh bread, - remember it was the middle of the day when normally they would be having their siesta. ... What a wonderful man Abraham was, - he ran to them, bowed before them (18:2), and called himself a *servant* (vv.3,5). He had Sarah bake them *fine meal* (v.6) and the meat was *tender and good* (v.7) ... and yet in his humility he simply described it as *a morsel of bread* (v.5). ... The old man happily interrupted a comfortable afternoon to become a servant to the three strangers who he had never met and had never even heard of before ... Then he stood near to be available to their need, v.8 *he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.*

Let's go down to Sodom again ... Lot also brought his guests into his home. He used similar language to his uncle, - he was brought up right. He said to his two guests, *19:2 turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house [cf. Gen. 18:3 My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant]*. That was the kind of language he had been brought up with ... and the kind of courtesy he had been taught. But you get the impression Lot was not the host the old ninety-nine year old man had been.

Yes, the visitors were made a feast and some unleavened bread ... but there was no mention of Lot *hastening* to prepare the meal as Abraham did, - there wasn't the same consideration put into the meal; there wasn't the same 'heart' put into it ... and there was no mention of Lot getting his wife, or the daughters, to bake some fresh bread. ... (I get the impression she would have been lying out the back with some of her friends from the best parts of Sodom!) ... Lot simply did not put the same into hosting these guests as Abraham did. ... You don't read Lot stood by to see what further service he could render to his guests.

Lot had 'slipped', as we say. What he was doing was right ... up to a point ... but it was missing that something special, at the same time. Yes, you may say, it was evening so you wouldn't expect the heavy meal like what Abraham had given them earlier. That's true, but Lot did not give the same care and attention Abraham gave. ... Let's look at these two men even closer ...

### THE TWO MEN, - ABRAHAM AND LOT

Abraham remained in Mamre (13:18), - the place where he had built an altar to the Lord, and where he worshipped regularly. Lot, on the other hand, never returned to the altar at Mamre, where once he worshipped with his uncle, - he didn't *do* that anymore. ... Did you notice there is no mention of any altar in Lot's home in Sodom? ... Abraham had stayed in Mamre with the Lord ... whereas Lot sought the popularity of the men of Sodom, - what a difference! Abraham's wife helped her husband to serve their three guests ... However, there was no mention of Lot's wife serving the two guests that came to her home.

Lot could not have been happy in Sodom, - not the way he was brought up ... neither with his companions at the gate or with his wife and daughters. God had raised him up as a son to Abraham and God had blessed him ... but that was all in the past! ... When God has been good to you in your early years and you go off in another direction, you will never be happy away from Him. Not if you became the richest person in Kirkcaldy and had all the top seats and influence will you be happy ... because you have tasted far better company that is *not of this world*. ... Lot wasn't happy.

... But here is where we are coming to ... as we approach the Table. These two men, - Abraham and Lot, - ... they both knew God. *Yes, Lot knew God*. But notice this ... **Abraham made a meal for three, while Lot only made a meal for two!** ... *Why?* ... Of the three men who sat at Abraham's table, one of them was very special, 18:3 *My Lord* .... In the Old Testament, we have what the theologians call 'theophanies'; a theophany is the visible appearance of God in

human form, - i.e. Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, a ‘Christophany’. Here Abraham had Jesus and two angels as his guests. (cf. 18:1,13,14,17,19,20,22,26,33).

Compare who Lot had as his guests, 19:2 *Behold now, my lords*. Why the difference? ... Simply because at the table of Lot in Sodom the *chief* guest, - the Lord Jesus, - was absent! He would not attend ... The meal had been prepared, but in Lot’s home, the Lord was absent.

Yes, in Sodom the two angels had been invited. Yes, they were given a meal. Yes, it was hospitable ... and yes, it all looked right ... but it was incomplete because the Lord was not there! Only the two angels visited Lot, ... without the Lord, for the Lord could not fellowship with Lot as He did with Abraham and Sarah. Lot was a believer, - yes, he was, - but he was out of fellowship with the Lord ... His life was such that the Lord did not feel at home with him ... not in a place like Sodom!

How *could* God have gone down into Sodom! Not even the two angels wanted to go into Lot’s home (19:2 *Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. 3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house*)! Lot had become a friend of the world ... and because of that, the Lord could not sit at his table, and the angels didn’t want to be there either!

Just as they were about to settle for the night, a crowd of wicked men gathered outside, - old and young, - they came from every quarter of this city where Lot lived, - it was full of them! They started banging on the door and shouting to Lot, *v.5 Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them*. ... Do you realise what that means?! ... *that we may know them* ... That is the intimate language reserved for a husband and a wife, for example, *Gen. 4:1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived* ... but that is what these evil men wanted to do to the two guests Lot had in his home! They wanted to rape them!

That was the kind of place Lot lived in and was bringing up his two daughters! ... But it gets even worse ... Lot goes out to them, and says, (v.8) “I have two daughters/virgins, you can have them and you can do what you like with them” ... That is how low he had sunk ... He called them, “*brethren*” (v.7) ... He called these ungodly, wicked men “*brethren*”! He even tried to appeal to something which was in extremely short supply in Sodom, i.e. their decency (!), *v.7 I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly*.

But, they had no respect for him or for what he believed. They didn't consider their sexuality/activity evil or wicked ... *What was this man, - who had been brought up with Abraham, - doing living among such people!* ... This was not a place God would enter! Jesus, - the LORD, - stayed away!

**CONCLUSION** What is our study about this evening? It is about the Table to which we are preparing to invite the Lord. The Lord sat with Abraham ... but He would not sit with Lot. Abraham made every effort, whereas Lot's efforts were lacking.

It is a serious business coming to the Lord's Table. We welcome the Lord in a very special way to meet with us as we remember what He did to save us. He remained with Abraham, and would not visit Lot's home. He is particular about His company, about those with whom He meets in this way ... because this Table is at His invitation ... and it is spread for those whom He has redeemed. It is for those Who know Him as Saviour and who are walking with Him in obedience, and in fellowship with other believers. Together, they recognise Him as their Saviour and Lord.

Yes, this is the highest ... The Table represents the most preeminent meeting with God on earth. It prefigures the Table of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Heaven at which God has all His guests *arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints (Rev. 19:8)*. Consider how the Lord would sit with Abraham, but not with Lot. Consider our invitation to Him this evening ... Is He made most welcome, and is this a place He wants to be? Is this a place fit for Him? To make sure that it is ... then this Table is where we must be preparing to meet with the Lord in the way He has prescribed, *I Cor. 11:28 let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

Come to the Table if you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Come and take the bread and the cup if you are walking with Him, and with your brother and sister. ... This is a simple study of God's Word we have engaged in, and yet it is so important. I trust God will impress His Word upon our hearts ... about the privilege which is ours of being in His company ... the company of the One Who sent His Son into this world to die for us, and Who gloriously and victoriously rose again so on the great day that is soon coming, He will wonderfully and eternally welcome us into *His* home forever! Amen.

If Jesus came to your house  
 To spend some time with you,  
 If He came unexpected,  
 I wonder what you'd do.

Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room  
 To such an honoured guest  
 And all the food you'd give to Him  
 Would be the very best.

And you would keep assuring Him  
 You're glad to have Him there—  
 That serving Him in your home  
 Is joy beyond compare.

But when you saw Him coming,  
 Would you meet Him at the door  
 With arms outstretched in welcome  
 To your heavenly visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes  
 Before you let Him in  
 Or hide some magazines  
 And put the Bible where they'd been?

Would you hide your worldly music  
 and put some hymn books out?  
 Could you let Jesus walk right  
 in, or would you rush about?

And I wonder—if the Saviour  
 spent a day or two with you,  
 Would you go right on doing, the  
 things you always do?

Would you go right on saying, the  
 things you always say?  
 Or would life for you continue  
 as it does from day to day?

Would you take Jesus with you  
 everywhere you go?

Or would you maybe change your  
plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him  
meet your closest friends?  
Or would you hope they stay away,  
until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him  
stay forever on and on?  
Or would you sigh with great  
relief when He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know,  
the things that you would do,  
If Jesus came in person, to spend  
some time with you.