

## HE PITCHED HIS TENT TOWARD SODOM

When the herdsmen of Abraham strove with the herdsman of Lot over grazing land for their cattle, we read that Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom (Gen. 13:12). Lot found himself dwelling among as wicked a population of men that ever existed, and in so much as Lot was a righteous man, his soul was vexed from day to day by their unlawful deeds (2 Pet. 2:7,8).

Unfortunately, because of Lot's choice of dwelling he had even greater grief with which to cope than just abiding with wicked men's sins. He had personal consequences to endure. That is always the case when the righteous dare to cast their tents in the neighborhood of sinners. They, like Lot, will almost always suffer loss. When it becomes apparent that loss will be suffered, as it was with Abraham's nephew, it is often too late to do anything about it.

When the righteous pitch their tent with the wicked, their children often marry the offspring of the wicked. This is what happened with Lot's daughters. When Lot attempted to warn his sons-in-laws that God would destroy the wicked cities of the plain, the scripture says that he seemed unto them as one who mocked (Gen. 19:14). The climate of sin had become too alluring to them. Refusing to listen to their father-in-law, these men and their wives, daughters of Lot, were left behind to be destroyed with the rest of the wicked inhabitants. It was all because Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom.

But the consequences would become even greater for Lot, when in disobedience to God, and doubtless looking back in grief to the loved ones left behind, if not longing for the city itself, Lot's wife turned and looked back, whereupon she was turned to a pillar of salt. Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, and subsequently paid a price almost greater than one can bear.

The sad story does not end with the loss of Lot's wife. Lot feared to stay in Zoar and with his two daughters came to dwell in a cave. Lot's firstborn daughter caused her father to get drunk with wine and committed incest with him and convinced her sister to do the same. As a result of their sin, they both became the mothers of people (the Ammonites and the Moabites) who were bitter enemies of God and stumbling blocks to His people.

It is true, as Paul wrote, that one reaps what he sows (Gal. 6:7). We cannot, and even should not avoid all contact with the wicked, in as much as they need the saving gospel of Christ. On the other hand, if we choose the wicked for our associates, friends, or mere social companions, we will doubtless reap very similar pain to Lot's. For our families' sakes, and to avoid temptation ourselves, let us pitch our tents toward the camp of the righteous not toward the mob of the wicked as Lot pitched his toward Sodom.

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