

Lessons For Life From Lot's Wife - Luke 17:32

Introduction: Gen. 19:12-26; Luke 17:32

1. Sometimes people are remembered because of the many bad things they do. Al Capone, Hitler, Bonnie and Clyde, Jesse James, and many others are remembered because of numerous acts they did over various periods of time.
2. On the other hand, sometimes a person is remembered because of only one bad thing they do. Lee Harvey Oswald is known, and will be known in history, because of the one act he committed in killing President Kennedy. If it were not for that one act, odds are that we would have never known that he lived. There are many others who fall into this category.
3. The subject of this present study is a person who is known and remembered because of one bad act. One bad act makes her famous. There are only a few words in the Bible about her. Yet, Jesus Himself told us to "*remember*" her. He told us to remember her and we don't even know her name. Therefore, she is to be remembered not for who she was by name, but for what she was by nature. In Luke 17:32 Jesus said, "*remember Lot's wife.*"
4. All we really know about her specifically is in a few verses in Genesis 19 and in one verse in Luke 17.
5. But what is it about her that we need to remember, and why should we remember it?

We could remember:

- a. Who she was – Lot's wife who was told to get out of Sodom.
- b. Why she was told to leave – because God was going to destroy the city.
- c. What happened to her – she looked back and became a pillar of salt.

6. There are the things that immediately come to mind when we mention her. She is famous.

ILLUSTRATION: A teacher was teaching her class of little boys about this incident where Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt.

One of them replied, *"That's nothing, my mother was driving our car down the road and she looked back and turned into a telephone pole."*

ILLUSTRATION: I heard about one preacher who having trouble with people looking back at the clock while he was preaching so he hung a sign with big letters just below the clock which read *"Remember Lot's wife."*

7. In this present study I want us to remember three things about her that should help us all to be better people. Let's remember:

- a. HER PRIVILEGE.
- b. HER PUNISHMENT.
- c. HER PROBLEM.

I. HER PRIVILEGE (Gen. 19:12-17).

A. The Lord's message (vs. 12-15).

1. She had the privilege of hearing the Lord's message of the coming destruction of the sinful city. God warned Lot and his family concerning the city. The message was clear: *"The Lord will destroy this city."*
2. She had the privilege of knowing and being

forewarned of the coming danger.

3. As we “*remember Lot’s wife*” today let us be reminded of the fact that God has also clearly warned us of the coming wrath on sinners (Mark 16:16b; II Thess. 1:6-9; Matt. 25:31-46).

B. The Lord’s Mercy (Vs. 16-17).

1. She also had the privilege of receiving God’s mercy. The text says concerning Lot and his family, “*The Lord being merciful unto him.*” He saved Lot for Abraham’s sake (Gen. 19:29). He saved Lot and his family because of His mercy.
2. Because of this mercy He provided a way for Lot’s wife to be saved from the destruction. The message of mercy to her was clear: “*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee.*” All she had to do was obey the good news God had for her and she would have been saved from destruction.
3. As we “*remember Lot’s wife*” let us remember that He extends the same mercy to us that He did to her in that He has provided a way for us to be saved. He saves us for Jesus’ sake and because of His mercy (Titus 2:11-12; 3:5; Mark 16:15-16; Rev. 2:10). But we must do as they had to do – obey (Heb. 5:8-9; II Thess. 1:6-8).

II. HER PUNISHMENT (Gen. 19:26).

- A. The second thing I want us to notice is her punishment. She did not take advantage of her privilege and therefore she was punished.

- B. Her punishment was sure. The text says she *“looked back from behind her and she became a pillar of salt.”* She sinned and she suffered. As Moses later said concerning those who sin against the Lord, *“be sure your sin will find you out”* (Num. 32:23).
- C. Her punishment was severe. She became a pillar of salt. The same Lord who *“rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire”* (Gen. 19:24) also turned Lot’s wife into a pillar of salt. Observe God’s goodness in providing a way for her to escape and also God’s severity when she refused to follow His instructions. In short, *“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God”* (Rom. 11:22). We need to realize that God is good but He is also severe in dealing with those who refuse to do as He says. He has promised to punish evildoers and He will (II Thess. 1:6-9; Matt. 25:41,46). If you don’t think so just *“remember Lot’s wife.”*

III. HER PROBLEM (Gen. 19:26).

- A. The third thing I want us to see is not only her privilege, and her punishment, but also her problem. Why did she look back? What was her problem?
- B. First, we need to realize that the Lord did not tell us specifically why she looked back. Possibly He wants us to know that regardless of the reason – she perished. In other words, there was no legitimate reason for her disobedience. Whatever her excuse there was no justification for it.

C. Second, there have been some very interesting suggestions as to why she looked back, and while they may or may not be the exact cause, they do provide some good lessons for us. Some suggest that her problem may have been:

1. **Curiosity.** Some suggest that she was curious and wanted to see if the Lord really meant what He said. If that be the case, she soon found out – the hard way! Many today do not seem to believe what the Lord said in John 3:5, 4:24; Matthew 6:33 or Revelation 2:10. However, if you ever really wonder whether or not God means what He says just “*remember Lot’s wife.*”
2. **Children** – Others suggest she was concerned about her children who remained in Sodom and that is why she looked back (Gen. 19:14). However, love for the family is no excuse for failing to obey God (Matt. 10:37). If you are allowing your children, parents, friends, or anyone else to hinder you from obeying God, you’ll still be lost. I’ve known people who would not obey the gospel because other members of their family would not and they just would not leave them behind. If that’s the case we need to “*remember Lot’s wife.*”
3. **Covetousness** – Still others suggest that covetousness or materialism was the reason she looked back. That is, the angels got her out of Sodom but they did not get Sodom out of her. It seems to me that the Bible lends some support for this view. For example, Genesis 19:26 says that she

looked back "*from behind him*" which indicates her reluctance to leave. She really did not want to go and thus she was lagging behind. (I wonder how many of us are tied to this world, Matt. 6:19-20; Col. 3:1-2)? Also, Luke 17:28-33 clearly indicates that materialism and covetousness will be a characteristic of the people living when the Lord returns. This is the context in which Jesus referred to Lot's wife. Observe especially how Jesus warns about being overly concerned about the "*stuff in the house*" in Luke 17:31 before bringing up Lot's wife in verse 32. Also the verse that follows indicated that she was concerned about her life "*in this world*" (Luke 17:33; John 12:25). If we ever start being so concerned with life in this world that we do not want to leave it, we need to "*remember Lot's wife.*"

CONCLUSION:

In this study we have learned some **lessons for life from Lot's wife**. Hopefully they will help us be better people and avoid some of the pitfalls we all face.