

LET US REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE

There are many things we need to remember in order to live a life in agreement with God's expectations: on the first place, Jesus' sacrifice for us personally, our experiences with Him as He tries to teach us meekness and humbleness so that we may one day be partakers of His glory, but as we approach the end of times, besides remembering to keep the Sabbath Day holy, we need to remember Lot's wife.

When Luke makes reference to the conversation our Saviour had with His disciples regarding His second coming in glory, he, as well as Matthew, refers to the comparison the Lord made of our times with the days of Noah in which people went about performing their daily routine without being aware that the door of grace was closed and that the judgments of God were about to fall upon an impenitent race. But Luke adds one more example the Lord gave and that is the one of Lot and his family. It is maybe wise for us to review that story and apply it to our own life and circumstances in the times in which we are living.

Lot had chosen the most promising region as a dwelling place with the hope of having a prosperous life, which he did. But he paid a high price for having allowed his material interests prevail over his spiritual ones. He lived and raised his children in an atheist and depraved society which lowered the moral standard of his whole family and his own soul was constantly afflicted by what he saw and experienced.

If we ever tend to doubt God's faithfulness and care for us as His children, we only have to read this story and see how our loving Father does not forget any soul whose heart beats for Him, no matter where this one may be and what his/her past errors may have been. But, since everything written in the Scriptures is for our admonition so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past, we should also learn to live by faith, that leads to obedience to all of God's precepts and not be presumptuous and think that we can go against our best knowledge of God's word and be saved by His infinite grace.

Jesus does not mention every details of Lot's life, not even the fact that his sons in law laughed at the angels' warning and as a consequence he lost some of his daughters, but He says, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

When we read the epistle to the seven churches in Revelation, we find an invitation to some churches to remember from where they had fallen or what the principles of God's kingdom are and to repent. God's concern is for those among His people, who are still trapped in sin or not living up to the high standard of the faith they profess when the time of probation is about to close.

Lot's sons in law were lost in their carnality and worldliness; they were cold and insensitive to any offer of grace so they put themselves beyond the reach of God's saving hand. But Lot's wife had been taken out of the city by the hand of an angel and put on the way of salvation. She left the corrupted city together with her husband, but her unconverted heart remained there where her treasure was. Perhaps she thought she would miss the pretty clothes in her wardrobe, perhaps her jewels or the nice house where she lived so comfortably; maybe a couple of friends with whom she met now and then to talk about trivial things; who knows. The fact is

that she belonged to the lukewarm members of the Laodicea church in the city of Sodoma of that time and she was spewed out of the Lord's mouth. What a terrible fate! How could that be? She did not value the gift of salvation. Her spiritual eyes were not open to see the glory of the world to come because she had allowed her carnal eyes to rest upon too many things that shine, but are not gold. Her ears had not been opened to hear God's voice and not being familiar with it, she could not realize of the solemnity of that moment. She belonged to the group of the foolish virgins.

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou were cold or hot." (Revelation 3:15). Who said that God does not like extremes? *"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil."* (Deuteronomy 30:15). There is no in-between stage in God's scale of values, we either pass or fail the test; we either live in the flesh or in the Spirit; we either walk by faith or by sight; we are either faithful or unfaithful; we are either saved or lost. There is no purgatory for the lukewarm.

When I read the story of ancient Israel (and I do not know why we say story when it is actually history), I am always very impressed by what is written about Caleb, "he hath **wholly** followed the Lord" (Deuteronomy 1:36), and I tremble. The same was the case of Joshua, the only two souls that entered the land of Canaan from among the great multitude that had left Egypt. Had the majority of the people actually left Egypt or they were carrying it in their hearts, just as Lot's wife did with Sodoma?

Can it be said of us that we follow the Lord wholly? Maybe we have crossed the Red Sea, but are we ready to cross the Jordan? In the Spirit of Prophecy we read, "When probation ends, it will come suddenly, unexpectedly – at a time when we are least expecting it. But we can have a clean record in heaven today, and know that God accepts us; and finally, if faithful, we shall be gathered into the kingdom of heaven. There is not a second probation for anyone. Now is the probationary time, before the angel shall fold his golden wings, the angel of mercy, and shall step down from the throne, and mercy is gone forever." 7BC, p. 989.

Maybe we have accepted Jesus by faith, but our faith is not strong enough to resist the fiery trials that come across us; maybe we are still wearing our filthy rags and have not even once tried on the wedding gown that is being woven in the loom of heaven for us. Maybe our vision is blurred and we keep on trying on different types of glasses because we are afraid that the eye-salve that the Great Physician wants to apply to our eyes may burn. No matter what the side effect may be, it is absolutely necessary to receive the baptism of the Spirit in order not to follow Lot's wife's example. The Holy Spirit convinces us of sin, righteousness and judgment. This conviction is like an arrow that hits the target of our heart and all of a sudden we see ourselves as we really are in God's eyes, *"wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked"*, hopeless sinners condemned to perpetual death by the righteousness of God's law of love and freedom and that same moment, as we surrender to the appeals of the Spirit, we are justified and set free indeed. It only then that the process of sanctification begins.

There are no "liberals" among God's real children, but (and let me say it in Spanish) only "libres", free people. There are no open or narrow-minded, but Christ-minded people, with the law written in their hearts. There are no fanatics, but people who live responsibly, according to every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God

manifested both in the Bible and the Testimonies. *"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* Isaiah 8:20.

As new creatures in Christ we shall not look back; we do not want anything to do with our past vanity, pride and ambition. We have eyes only for the bright future ahead of us *"which God has revealed unto us by his Spirit."* (1 Corinthians 2:10).

Only if we remember Lot's wife now, while there is still time to make this experience, shall we remember the Sabbath day when the great tribulation comes.

May the Lord help us not to procrastinate. The door of grace may be closed any moment *"for the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God."* 1 Peter 4:17. Amen.

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