

## Lot's Daughters

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Hospitality was a very sacred thing in the Patriarchial times. If someone entered your home you were duty bound to treat them with great courtesy, a meal, and a place to rest. As Adam Clarke says, "A man who had taken a stranger under his care and protection was bound to defend him even at the expense of his own life." This custom is still common in many places.

One of the most interesting examples of this in the Bible is found in the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 18 and 19. If you remember, God decided that Sodom and Gomorrah were so wicked that they should not be allowed to continue to exist. But Abraham's nephew Lot and his family were there and God was willing to save them from destruction. So he sent two angels to Sodom to warn Lot and get him to leave the city.

But Lot knew how evil the city was and was watching for visitors so that he could offer them his protection under the law of hospitality that he obeyed. When the angels arrived, Lot got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. He offered them his home and they declined, saying that they would just stay in the city square that night. Lot knew that this would be a disaster, so he insisted that they stay with him. And he prepared a meal for them. But before they had gone to bed, the evil men from the city surrounded the house and demanded that Lot surrender his guests so that they could abuse them.

Lot of course refused, but what he did next is what is so interesting. Knowing that these men would not just go away without getting what they wanted, he offered his own daughters to them to do what they liked. Such was the awesome power of this duty of hospitality that Lot was bound to protect his guests at whatever cost to himself. I don't think we can possibly understand this with respect to our own culture. We must remember how different the world was at that time.

Fortunately, Lot did not have to make this great sacrifice, for the angels struck the men of Sodom blind. Lot and his immediate family were convinced of the evil of the city and its impending destruction and agreed to leave.

What Lot did by offering the pure lives of his own daughters seems so terrible. How could God have approved such a thing? But we must remember the tremendous sacrifice that God made when He sent His son to die for our sins. In a way, this was a similar thing, for God offered his own Son to the abuses of mankind. He gave him while we were yet enemies, in the hope that we would see the unending love that He had for us. See how much he sacrificed so that we could be under his protection! We should then worship Him as our God!

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