

Bible Study for June 23, 2021

[adapted from The Serendipity Study Bible]

Read Genesis 19.30-38

Lot went up from Zoar with his two daughters and settled in the mountains because he was afraid to live in Zoar. So, he lived in a cave with his two daughters. ³¹ Later the older daughter said^[a] to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man in the country^[b] to sleep with us,^[c] the way everyone does. ³² Come, let’s make our father drunk with wine^[d] so we can go to bed with^[e] him and preserve^[f] our family line through our father.”^[g]

³³ So that night they made their father drunk with wine,^[h] and the older daughter^[i] came in and went to bed with^[j] her father. But he was not aware of when she lay down with him or when she got up. ³⁴ So in the morning the older daughter^[k] said to the younger, “Since I went to bed with^[l] my father last night, let’s make him drunk^[m] again tonight. Then you go in and go to bed with him so we can preserve our family line through our father.”^[n] ³⁵ So they made their father drunk^[o] that night as well, and the younger one came and went to bed with him.^[p] But he was not aware of when she lay down with him or when she got up.

³⁶ In this way both of Lot’s daughters became pregnant by their father. ³⁷ The older daughter^[q] gave birth to a son and named him Moab.^[r] He is the ancestor of the Moabites of today. ³⁸ The younger daughter also gave birth to a son and named him Ben Ammi.^[s] He is the ancestor of the Ammonites of today.

Footnotes

- a. Genesis 19:31 **tn** *Heb* “and the firstborn said.”
- b. Genesis 19:31 **tn** Or perhaps “on earth,” in which case the statement would be hyperbolic. **sn** Presumably there had been some men living in the town of Zoar to which Lot and his daughters had initially fled. Perhaps they feared that the destruction was more widespread than it really was, or perhaps they feared some sort of stigma following the disaster that fell on their former town.
- c. Genesis 19:31 **tn** *Heb* “to come over us according to the manner of the whole world.” “To come over us” is a euphemism for sexual relations. “According to the manner of the whole world” is an idiom for what is

customary and normal, elsewhere ([Josh 23:14](#); [1 Kgs 2:2](#)) used to describe dying.

- d. [Genesis 19:32](#) **tn** *Heb* “drink wine.”
- e. [Genesis 19:32](#) **tn** *Heb* “and we will lie down with.” The cohortative with *vav* (I) conjunctive is subordinated to the preceding cohortative and indicates purpose or result. The phrase “to lie down with” is a euphemism for sexual relations; the translation, in turn, also supplies a euphemism.
- f. [Genesis 19:32](#) **tn** Or “that we may preserve.” Here the cohortative with *vav* (I) conjunctive indicates their ultimate goal.
- g. [Genesis 19:32](#) **tn** *Heb* “and we will keep alive from our father descendants.” **sn** For a discussion of the cultural background of the daughters’ desire to *preserve our family line* see F. C. Fensham, “The Obliteration of the Family as Motif in the Near Eastern Literature,” *AION* 10 (1969): 191-99.
- h. [Genesis 19:33](#) **tn** *Heb* “drink wine.”
- i. [Genesis 19:33](#) **tn** *Heb* “the firstborn.”
- j. [Genesis 19:33](#) **tn** *Heb* “came and lied down with.” Both of the expressions can be a euphemism for sexual relations. See the note at [2 Sam 12:24](#).
- k. [Genesis 19:34](#) **tn** *Heb* “the firstborn.”
- l. [Genesis 19:34](#) **tn** *Heb* “to lie with.” The phrase is a euphemism for sexual relations.
- m. [Genesis 19:34](#) **tn** *Heb* “Let’s make him drink wine.”
- n. [Genesis 19:34](#) **tn** *Heb* “And we will keep alive descendants from our father.”
- o. [Genesis 19:35](#) **tn** *Heb* “drink wine.”
- p. [Genesis 19:35](#) **tn** *Heb* “lied down with him.”
- q. [Genesis 19:37](#) **tn** *Heb* “the firstborn.”
- r. [Genesis 19:37](#) **sn** The meaning of the name *Moab* is not certain. The name sounds like the Hebrew phrase “from our father” (מֵאֲבִינוֹ, *me’avinu*) which the daughters used twice ([vv. 32, 34](#)). This account is probably included in the narrative in order to portray the Moabites, who later became enemies of God’s people, in a negative light.
- s. [Genesis 19:38](#) **sn** The name *Ben Ammi* means “son of my people.” Like the account of Moab’s birth, this story is probably included in the narrative to portray the Ammonites, another perennial enemy of Israel, in a negative light.

Questions to Consider

1. When have you feared for your safety? As a place to runaway, where would you go: A] Beach? B] Mountains? C] City? D] Country? Why?
2. Why do you suppose this story is in the Bible?
3. From this story, how would you describe Lot? Lot's daughters? Lot's grandchildren?
4. What bothers you most about this story? Why?
5. What about Lot's story, or your own, moves you to pray?