

# The Old-Time Evangelistic News

Evangelist W. Paul Redmond Sr.

Volume 11, Issue 10

March 2015

## What Are You Doing In Your Seat? (Part 1)

Genesis 19:1; Daniel 2:49

In Genesis 19:1 and Daniel 2:49, we find two similar statements. Genesis 19:1 is in the passage dealing with Lot's life, and Daniel 2:49 is describing an episode from Daniel's life. Genesis 19:1 reads, "*And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.*" Daniel 2:49 says, "*Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.*" These men are separated by over a thousand years, yet both are described in a similar way—they are sitting in the gate. The men arrived in their respective cities in different ways. Lot chose his city, while Daniel was brought as a captive. Yet both end up sitting in the gate, a place of importance and influence, as we will see. Both are important men in their town, but each had a different reputation then and now. Normally, we see more contrasts between Lot and Daniel. As the message develops, the contrasts will become more evident, but we put them together in one message because they are linked by this phrase—"*sat in the gate.*" We will examine this phrase as it concerns Lot and Daniel, and as the message unfolds, ask, What are you doing in your seat?

For us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is hard to imagine a city surrounded by walls and gates. We have freedom of access and oftentimes enter and leave city limits without ever noticing that we are doing so. But for most of history, walls were built around cities for protection. Of course, in times of peace, people would want to go in and out of the city for various reasons, so gates were built. These gates are what connect the accounts of Lot and Daniel. Remember they "*sat in the gate.*" But what does that mean? Let us look at a couple of thoughts

-2-

to introduce the message.

As we read through the Bible we can learn more about this **Subject of the Seat**. The gate, in ancient times, was a place of extreme importance, as we can see from other passages that give further detail about the events that happened at the gate. I will not quote all of the passages in detail, but just summarize them. Deuteronomy 21:19 and Joshua 20:4 describe the administering of justice by the elders of the city at the gate. Ruth 4:1 is where Boaz declared his desire to take Ruth as his wife. He met the elders at the gate because that is where legal transactions took place. In Jeremiah 17:19, because the gate is a place where kings administered justice, God tells Jeremiah to go and prophesy at the gate. It was at the gate in Nehemiah 8:1 that Ezra read and explained the law to the people who had come back from Babylon. And in Proverbs 31:23 we find that the husband of the virtuous woman is well known because he sits among the elders.

From these passages, we can determine that "*sitting at the gate*" is similar to our city hall or county square. The men who sat at the gate are like city or county councilman. Unlike our elected officials, they would be appointed by the king. But regardless of title, as I have already mentioned, the position was very important. Some may wonder why punishments and transactions were done at the gate. I cannot answer that and further study of the subject is beyond the scope of this message, so we will stop with the realization that "*sitting at the gate*" was an important position. Lot and Daniel were important men in their cities, but their lives were very different. That difference is what we will focus on for the remainder of the message.

Now most of us will never have the positions that Lot and Daniel had, so you may be asking, "How does this apply to me?" We may not have their positions, and in our day, will never literally "sit at the gate." But we all have a position of some kind. It may be employer or employee. It is husband or wife, mother or father. Whatever title you may have, you have an influence on someone. Others are

looking at your life. You may try to excuse how you live because you do not have a “great” position like Lot or Daniel, but the Bible does not excuse you. Romans 14:7 says, *“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.”* People are watching you. Children are watching you. Other men and women are watching you. Saved people and unsaved people are watching you. It does matter how you live. You do have a seat of influence. Therefore, what are you doing in your seat? Are you living so others will say, “That person is a great example. Pattern your life after him”? Or, are you living so others will say, “Stay away from him. Don’t ever become like him.”

This message, as we will see, is about separation, or how we should live our lives after salvation. Some will say that separation is old hat and not for today. “Grandma and Grandpa needed to hear messages like that, but we need a modern message,” is the thought of many. May I firmly and boldly declare that separation is for today! Separation, holiness, sanctification (all great Bible words and very closely related) are absolutely needed for today. Now I know that many have abandoned the practice of separation. Many churches and individuals that once preached and practiced separation, no longer preach and practice it. They say that the Bible does not tell us how to live after we are saved. They obviously do not read their Bible because the Bible is full of verses that teach separation.

As our second introductory thought, notice **The Subject of Separation**. I am going to list one Old Testament verse and several New Testament verses that deal with separation. Obviously, I could list more from the Old Testament and some others from the New, but this will suffice to show that the Bible does teach separation and is concerned with how we live our lives after salvation. Here they are—Leviticus 19:2; Matthew 5:48; Romans 12:1-2; I Corinthians 6:19-20; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 5:11; II Thessalonians 3:6; I Timothy 6:20-21; II Timothy 2:22; Titus 2:12; James 4:4; I Peter 1:15-16; II Peter 3:14; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; III John 11; Jude 3. Many of these verses, if not all of them, are

in the form of commands. They are not options for the believer. They are what God demands of every believer.

This is the foundation of the message. We do have a place where we live our lives. We have a job, a home, and other places that we go. We are to live separated, holy lives unto God. With that in mind, we could make an expanded title for the message—“Are you living a holy, separated life in the place where God has placed you?” How would you answer that question? Are you interested in living a life that is pleasing to God. If so, you must be mindful that God is only pleased with complete obedience. He does not want half-hearted service. He wants you to live completely given over to Him. By looking at the lives of Lot and Daniel, we can learn from their examples and make sure that what we are doing in our seat is pleasing to God.

We begin with **The Tragedy of Lot**. Lot’s early life is not mentioned in Scripture. The first time we find his name recorded is in Genesis 11:27 where Abram’s family is listed for the first time. They are still living in Ur of the Chaldees. Lot is the son of Haran, Abram’s brother, making Lot the nephew of Abram. Many times we want to know the exact ages of these Bible characters, but unless the Bible gives us their ages, we do not know them. Sometimes the Bible tells us the ages, but many times it does not. Some things we can figure out, but it will not add to the meaning of this message, so we will leave it out. Haran, Lot’s father, dies. Perhaps because of this, Terah leaves Ur with Abram, Sarai, and Lot. The death of Lot’s father no doubt has a profound influence on Lot. Because we do not know his age, we can only speculate as to how young he was. Some would say that he is young because he is still cared for by his grandfather, but that fails to take into account the patriarchal Middle Eastern culture where adult sons often live with their parents past adulthood. Some writers think Abram is younger than Haran and make Lot about the same age as Abram. As I mentioned, there is no way to know for sure. Since Lot travels with Abram later, I would think that he is younger than Abram, but an adult. Nevertheless,

Terah takes these with him to Haran, a town they possibly name after his dead son.

In Genesis 12, the Lord tells Abram to leave his family and go to a land that God will show him. Abram leaves and Lot goes with him. They live in Canaan for a few years, but go to Egypt when famine comes. Upon leaving Egypt, they return to Canaan. Lot by now has begun raising his own cattle. The increase of cattle for both men is what brings the first crisis in Lot's life. This episode will be the beginning of Lot's downfall. He could have corrected himself sometime after this, but he never does. One stage of life does not have to ruin the remainder of your life, but beware that it often does. Many, perhaps most, people do not recover from that fateful first step. In Lot's life it began with The Choice. The herdmen of Abram and Lot cannot get along. Genesis 13:6 says that the land was not sufficient for the grazing of both Abram's and Lot's cattle. They need more land; they need to separate from each other, so the animals will have enough to eat. Abram gives Lot the first choice. Lot should have deferred to Abram, the older one. He should have sought God's will by praying. He has a choice to make that will determine the remainder of his life's path. That is where we will start next month.