

A SOLEMN WARNING

"Remember Lot's Wife"---Lk. 17:32

The Book of Genesis relates the vicissitudes of Lot, the nephew of Abraham, and the one time Mayor of Sodom. While Lot was a settled and prosperous citizen of Sodom, he received a divine summons to leave that corrupt city on the eve of its destruction. After some delay he set forth with his family. Then the record adds: "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became as a pillar of salt." Gen. 19:26

Jesus Christ read this story and read in it a message that was at once timely and timeless. He heard those death-frozen lips preaching a sermon that was needed by the men of His own day, and that is needed no less by us who live in the present. So he said to us and all men: "Remember Lot's Wife".

I. Remember Her Privileges

1. She belonged to an excellent family
She was part of that little company of pioneers that left Ur of the Chaldees to create a new epoch in the world's civilization. She was a member of that family to which the world owes more than to any other family that has ever lived. She was kinfolk with him through whom God was to send the world its Saviour. She was kin to Abraham.
2. She had pious husband
Lot was not all that he might have been, but he was a righteous man whose soul was greatly vexed on account of the filthy conversation of the Sodomites. She knew how that sort of conversation vexed him.
3. She was faithfully instructed
She had received faithful instructions about God and how to worship Him.
4. She had heavenly visitors
She was greatly favored with the company and converse of celestial visitants.
5. She was warned of impending danger
When the ruin of Sodom was impending, when ghastly death was rattling the latch of her door, God sent His messengers to warn her and her family. Certainly no one could claim that she did not have a fair chance. She was told with a most passionate earnestness of the doom that threatened the city. She was made to understand also that there was a way of escape--away that would bring her to safety. She was urgently requested to escape for her life.
6. She had seen the wicked punished
On various occasions she had seen the judgment of God executed on the wicked.

II. Remember Her Perverseness

1. She acted under the impulse of feeling
Her heart was still in Sodom. Her sin was that ^{of} presumption. The reason she looked back, thus disregarding the heaven-sent warning, was because she was still in love with Sodom even though her steps were turned away from it. She felt especially the lure of Sodom and acted accordingly.
2. She acted under the impulse of unbelief
She did not fully believe the words of the Divine messenger. Consequently, her sin was in yielding to the powerful influence of unbelief.
3. She acted under the impulse of an inordinate worldly attachment
Her sin was but a revelation of the secret love of the world which

was in her. Her mind was hankering after the things which she had left in Sodom.

4. She acted under a disregard of law
Her sin was an actual violation of a known law.
5. She acted in contempt of warning.

Thus her sin revealed her true character. It revealed that she had a divided heart and an undecided will. These two things:----

1. Robbed her of her joy
Since death and disaster were inevitable in Sodom, you would have thought that she would have gone out with gladness. You would have thought that she would have hurried out with nimble feet, with a song on her lips and with deep joy in her heart because of her great deliverance. But what she was leaving more than counteracted the joy in what she was attaining. Being divided in her allegiance there was an utter want of joy in her heart. Fingering the mud with one hand and reaching for the stars with the other, she found nothing but wretchedness.
2. Retarded her progress
The story says, "She looked back from behind." It does not take one who is undecided long to fall behind. An undecided person is a crippled person. Indecision squanders our powers. It is the person of decision, the person whose heart is united, that makes progress.
3. Wrought her doom
As she went half-heartedly toward the heights her steps became slower and slower. At last she stopped and looked longingly back to the city, and there and then she became her own tomb. She stood there a crude piece of statuary. But the face of the statue was turned not toward the heights, but toward the ruined city of the plain. Her face was thus photographed for our beholding.

III. Remember Her Punishment

1. It was sudden
That is, it was wholly unexpected. She turned to look back, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, her blood congealed in her veins, and she stood forth a monument of the wrath of an offended God.
2. It was seasonable
That is, it was inflicted at the very time that her disobedient act was committed. Punishment was not prolonged.
3. It was shameful
That is, by this punishment she was made a public and lasting monument of shame to herself. Not only did she thus lose her life, but that made her husband a widower, and her daughters orphans. Then to think that she should die in the very act of disobedience.
4. It was merited
That is, it was absolutely consistent with the rules of justice. She had been taught, warned, entreated, etc.
5. It was a signal
That is, her destruction was so ordered as to make her a memorial and a warning to all others. She thus became a monument before the world of God's power and faithfulness, and His righteous displeasure against apostasy and disobedience. The punishment which was inflicted upon her was certainly cautionary in its design.

Conclusion:

See Here:-----

1. A monument to the Divine wrath
2. A beacon to warn coming generations.
The warning administered

"Remember"

1. Beware of worldly entanglements
2. Beware of questioning God's commands
3. Beware of delays
Delays are dangerous
"Today is the day of Salvation."

LOT'S WIFE A BEACON

Luke 17:32

Lot's wife is one of the beacons of the Bible. Beacons are not to be looked at in idle and careless curiosity, but with an earnest gaze and for practical purposes. They point to the deeps of perdition where men have been drowned; to the giddy heights off which they have slipped, over which they have toppled into the terrible destruction below. They tell of the calamities which, with the suddenness of an eagle's swoop, have come upon them as the result of their heedlessness, and wickedness, and folly. They do not speak in articulate speech, but their silent warning is more terrible than the mightiest sound could be. We have an illustration of this in the disciples being pointed to Lot's wife as a beacon. Our Lord tells us of the calamities with which Jerusalem will be visited, and simply says - text. I need not waste words in proving that she is a beacon for us also.

I. Remember Her Privileges.

1. Her marriage relationship.

Her husband feared the Lord. With all his moral weakness and faults, he was, on the whole, a godly man.

2. She was warned of the destruction.

The angels warned Lot, his wife, and daughters. Threading his way through the blind multitude without, Lot goes to warn his sons-in-law. They heeded not, but mocked, for they thought he was mocking them. He returns. The night passes. The morning dawns: and the angels "hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife." But not only did the angels warn her to flee from the doomed city, but took hold of her and led her out of it. Here was Divine earnestness and compassion combined. Surely no member of that favoured family will hesitate or tarry a moment; but all with eager, onward look, "escape for their life." It was not so. Text.

II. Remember Her Perverseness.

Her perverseness is seen:

1. In her reluctance to leave the doomed city.

Was it not enough that she should have been warned by angels, and who had authenticated their mission by working a miracle? No; that was not enough, for wicked and corrupt as Sodom was, she did not wish to leave it, and so they must needs take hold upon her and lead her out perforce. Looked at on its Divine side, this act of the angels shows her privilege; but looked at on its human side, it proves her perverseness.

2. In her tarrying behind.

"She looked back from behind." She did not keep pace with her husband and daughters. Do you account for this by bodily infirmity or fatigue? I cannot.

(1) An earnest soul energizes a weakly body.

Even the cripple can run in the time of peril with remarkable swiftness and alacrity.

(2) No mention is made of her physical infirmity.

It was her soul that loved Sodom (whether for its own sake, or because she had property or relatives there does not matter); that caused her to hesitate and halt.

3. In her looking back.

(1) The backward look betrayed weak faith.

(2) The backward look betrayed want of earnestness.

(3) The backward look defied God.

Command. He that defies God defies one stronger than himself. Who art thou to contend with the Almighty? If we dare God to destroy us He will do it. Text.

III. Remember Her Punishment.

"She became a pillar of salt."

What does this mean? There are three theories respecting this punishment.

1. That literally she became a mass of rock-salt.
2. That the storm of fire which caught her, because of her lingering in the plain, encrusted her in sulphuric matter, partly composing of saline particles.
3. That she became an everlasting memorial of the folly of disobedience.

Accept which you like -- you must admit that the punishment was awful. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." God has often been provoked to anger, will be angry again. The wrath to come -- flee from it.

Tarry not, look not back. Text. -- E. D. Solomon.