

Genesis 19:1-3

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Two angels appear to Lot in Sodom. Lot urges them to spend the night in his house and he prepares a feast for them.

The two angels came to Sodom in the evening. The Hebrew word *mal'ak* is translated as the word "angels" in this verse. The word means a *messenger*, one sent on business or diplomacy by another ([Judges 6:11-12](#), [13:3-6](#), [15-16](#)). These messengers were often responsible for aiding, protecting, and fighting for those who trusted in the Lord ([Genesis 24:7](#); [Exodus 23:20](#), [33:2](#); [1 Kings 19:5](#); [Psalm 34:7-8](#), [91:11](#)). They also were instruments of God's judgment, executing punishment of the rebellious and the guilty ([2 Samuel 24:16-17](#); [Psalm 35:5-6](#), [78:49](#); [Isaiah 37:36](#)).

The two angels arrived at Sodom after leaving Abraham and the Lord at Mamre ([Genesis 18:22](#)). One cannot determine if this trip happened the same day after their noontime meal with Abraham or after the normal two to three-day journey from Hebron to Sodom. If the journey of roughly forty miles took only several hours (from midafternoon until the evening of the same day), it reinforces the supernatural nature of the two angels. The angels were there to determine firsthand the true character of the citizens of Sodom.

Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. This suggests that Lot had become an integrated citizen of Sodom, possibly a leader. The city gate was a central gathering spot for social life in the city ([Psalm 69:13](#); [Hebrews 12](#)). It served as a trading place for merchants with stalls and booths for craftsmen ([Genesis 23:10,18](#); [2 Kings 7:1](#)). It also served as the seat of government, where legal transactions were conducted and judgements rendered ([Genesis 34:20-24](#); [Deut 22:15](#); [Joshua 20:4](#); [2 Samuel 15:2](#); [Ruth 4](#)).

Lot bowed down with his face to the ground.. It could be that Lot somehow knew or expected they were messengers from God. Lot asked that the angels *turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.* Lot is eager to protect these guests. It is likely because he understood how wicked Sodom was. [2 Peter 2:7-8](#) tells us his soul was vexed as he saw the unrighteousness in Sodom. It also tells us Lot was delivered because he was righteous:

...and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)—

We are not told why Lot continued to stay in such a wicked place. The angels declined Lot's invitation, saying, *no, but we shall spend the night in the square*. The messengers were not afraid, and they must test the inhabitants to learn if their evil reputation is deserved ([Genesis 18:21](#)). The Square was a large open space (like a plaza) near the main city gateway where public gatherings were held ([Deuteronomy 13:16-17](#); [2 Chronicles 32:6](#); [Judges 19:15,17,20](#); [Psalm 55:11-12, 144:14](#); [Proverbs 5:16](#); [Zechariah 8:45](#)).

But Lot *urged them strongly*. Lot insisted equally as strong to the reluctant visitors. Lot likely knew that the visitors would not be safe spending the night in the street or public square. So *they turned aside to him and entered his house*.

Lot *prepared a feast for them*. The word "feast" is the Hebrew word *mishteh*. Usually, during a Jewish *mishteh* there would be food and wine. It was considered a special occasion and a time of blessing ([Proverbs 15:15](#); [Isaiah 25:6](#)). Lot makes them *baked unleavened bread*, flat pieces of unleavened (without yeast) bread. Lot might have learned his hospitality skills from his uncle Abraham.

Biblical Text:

¹ Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw *them*, he rose to meet them and bowed down *with his face to the ground*. ² And he said, "Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." They said however, "No, but we shall spend the night in the square." ³ Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.