

Genesis 19:22-26

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The small town where Lot escaped was named Zoar. God destroyed the cities and the inhabitants, but Lot's wife turned and looked back to see. She became a pillar of salt for her disobedience.

Lot's reluctance hinders the completion of the angel's assignment they instruct him to *hurry* since they *cannot do anything until he arrives there*. This shows that these mighty angels, endowed with the power to cause this massive destruction, are following orders. They are not allowed to initiate the destruction until Lot arrives at Zoar. The city's name was apparently changed from Bela to *Zoar* as a result of this incident ([Genesis 14:2](#)). Zoar means insignificant or small.

The sun had risen over the earth when destruction of Sodom begins. *The Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire*. The devastation cannot be described as a freak act of nature. It was a judgment of heavenly fire that God deliberately sent to consume the wicked and a purposeful event of God's direct justice and intervention in human affairs. Jesus said the time of His return would be like the days of Sodom ([Luke 17:26-32](#)). This certainly demonstrates God's wrath against sin, His mercy in rescuing the godly from destruction, and the certainty of the final judgment to come ([2 Peter 2:4-10](#)). The angels said they were going to destroy Sodom, but in this passage the LORD rained brimstone and fire. Even though God works through His messengers, it is still His work.

God overthrew all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. It was a total destruction including all the residents and the surrounding vegetation.

Lot's wife...looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. She was turned into a pillar of salt for disobeying the angel's command to not look back. Jesus refers to this event when talking about His second coming. On that day He says do not take the time to gather your possessions and do not turn back ([Luke 17:28-32](#)). The verb "looked back" means to look intensely in a focused way at something, to gaze at it. Lot's wife was apparently too attached to her lifestyle to follow God's call fully. The text does not specify the appearance of the pillar of salt.

Biblical Text:

²² “Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.” Therefore the name of the town was called Zoar. ²³ The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar. ²⁴ Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, ²⁵ and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. ²⁶ But his wife, from behind him, looked *back*, and she became a pillar of salt.