

32 - Remember Lot's Wife

Now I saw that, just on the other side of this plain, the pilgrims came to a place where stood an old monument hard by the highway side, at the sight of which they were both concerned, because of the strangeness of the form thereof; for it seemed to them as if it had been a woman transformed into the shape of a pillar. Here, therefore, they stood looking and looking upon it; but could not for a time tell what they should make thereof. At last, HOPEFUL espied written above upon the head thereof a writing in an unusual hand; but he, being no scholar, called to CHRISTIAN (for he was learned) to see if he could pick out the meaning; so he came and after a little laying of letters together, he found the same to be this, "REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE!" So he read it to his fellow; after which, they both concluded that that was the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was turned for her looking back with a covetous heart when she was going from Sodom for safety (#Ge 19:26), which sudden and amazing sight gave them occasion of this discourse.

Chr. Ah, my brother, this is a seasonable sight; it came opportunely to us after the invitation which DEMAS gave us to come over to view the hill Lucre; and had we gone over as he desired us, and as thou wast inclining to do, my brother, we had, for aught I know, been made ourselves like this woman, a spectacle for those that shall come after to behold.

Hope. I am sorry that I was so foolish, and am made to wonder that I am not now as Lot's wife; for wherein was the difference 'twixt her sin and mine? she only looked back, and I had a desire to go and see. Let grace be adored; and let me be ashamed that ever such a thing should be in mine heart!

Chr. Let us take notice of what we see here, for our help for time to come. This woman escaped one judgment, for she fell not by the destruction of Sodom; yet she was destroyed by another—as we see, she is turned into a pillar of salt.

Hope. True; and she may be to us both caution and example: caution, that we should shun her sin; or a sign of what judgment will overtake such as shall not be prevented by this caution. So Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with the two hundred and fifty men that perished in their sin, did also become a sign or example to others to beware (#Nu 26:9,10): but above all, I muse at one thing, to wit, how DEMAS and his fellows can stand so confidently yonder to look for that treasure, which this woman, but for looking behind her after (for we read not that she stepped one foot out of the way) was turned into a pillar of salt; especially since the judgment which overtook her did make her an example within sight of where they are; for they cannot choose but see her, did they but lift up their eyes.

Chr. It is a thing to be wondered at, and it argues that their hearts are grown desperate in the case; and I cannot tell who to compare them to so fitly as to them that pick pockets in the presence of the judge, or that will cut purses under the gallows. It is said of the men of Sodom, that they were sinners exceedingly (#Ge 13:10,13), because they were sinners "before the Lord," —that is, in his eyesight; and notwithstanding the kindness that he had showed them, for the land of Sodom was now like the Garden of Eden heretofore. This, therefore, provoked him the more to jealousy; and made their plague as hot as the fire of the Lord out of heaven could make it. And it is most rationally to be concluded, that such, even such as these are, that shall sin in the sight, yea, and that too in despite of such examples that are set continually before them, to caution them to the contrary, must be partakers of severest judgments.

Hope. Doubtless thou hast said the truth: but what a mercy is it that neither thou, but especially I, am not made myself this example! this ministers occasion to us to thank God; to fear before him; and always to "remember Lot's wife."

Ge 19:26, Nu 26:9,10, Ge 13:10,13

"But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." (Ge 19:26 NKJV)

"⁹ The sons of Eliab *were* Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These *are* the Dathan and Abiram, representatives of the congregation, who contended against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they contended against the LORD; ¹⁰ and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah when that company died, when the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men; and they became a sign." (Nu 26:9-10 NKJV)

"And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar." (Ge 13:10 NKJV)

"But the men of Sodom *were* exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD." (Ge 13:13 NKJV)