



Lot's Timetable for Escape: from Dawn to Sunrise, Gen 19:15, 23; Divine Punishment, vv. 24-25; Permissive Will for Lot & Zoar; Brimstone Showers

Genesis 19:23 - The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

1. The window allowed for Lot's evacuation and escape to safe haven was between dawn and sunrise:

Genesis 19:15 - When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Up, take your wife and your two daughters, who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city."

Genesis 19:23 - The sun had just risen over the land as Lot reached Zoar (NET).

2. Between first twilight to full sunrise is how long Lot had to get to safety. The word "dawned" in verse 15 is שָׁחַר *shachar* and refers to the breaking of day prior to sunrise. The word "risen" in verse 23 is יָסָא *yasa* and refers to the moment the sun's disk crests the horizon.
3. According to:

de Vaux, Roland. *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1961), 181:

In Israel, the day was for a long time reckoned from morning to morning. When they wanted to indicate the whole length of a day of twenty-four hours, they said 'day and night' or some such phrase, putting the day first. This suggests that they reckoned the day starting from the morning, and it was in fact in the morning, with the creation of light, that the world began; the distinction of day and night, and time too, began on a morning (Genesis 1:3-5).

4. The period between the first light of dawn and the risen sun is called twilight. Twilight begins when the sun is 18 degrees below the horizon and ends when the sun is fully risen.
5. The earth's rotation moves one degree every four minutes. Therefore the period of twilight at the latitude of the pentapolis is just over an hour: $18 \times 4 = 72$ minutes or an hour and 12 minutes.
6. This is how long Lot had to get out of Dodge and into a place of safety. This place turned out to be Zoar. It was just as he entered the city that the sun cleared the horizon.
7. The demarcation on the surface of the earth between day and night is referred to by astronomers as the terminator. And it was as this terminator swept over the pentapolis that The Terminator executed judgment on four of them.

Genesis 19:24 - Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven,

v. 25 - and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

1. Because Lot hesitated to move out of Sodom when the angels ordered him to in verse 16, because of the time he took to deliver his soliloquy outside the city in verses 18 and 19, and because of his refusal to escape to the mountains in verse 20, the Lord was forced to spare Zoar in order to spare Lot.



2. It is important to understand that Zoar was on God's original hit list. But the issue in the appeal trial is human volition. God does not tamper with free will unless it violates the rules of engagement for the angelic conflict.
3. This passage shows that the free will of the citizens of four-fifths of the pentapolis will be removed from history. Lot, on the other hand gets in the way of divine judgment intended for Zoar.
4. Why are Lot and Zoar spared? First, God promised Abraham He would spare Lot. Because of Lot's disorientation to grace and rejection of angelic authority, the angels were instructed to allow him refuge in Zoar. Therefore, Zoar got a reprieve.
5. The other four cities did not. The conflagration which hit them completely removed them from the face of the earth.
6. Note the power of the presence of one righteous soul in the city of Zoar. This is an excellent illustration of the power we possess to deliver our client nation. Not only do we as believers have imputed righteousness but we are also accumulating doctrine in our souls.
7. There are two explanations of how the conflagration occurred in what was known as the Valley of Siddim. Both are plausible, each is possible, and it is conceivable they happened simultaneously. The first consideration is that the raining "brimstone and fire" were a miracle executed by divine omnipotence.
8. The second is that in eternity past, God orchestrated within the divine decrees a series of geologic and atmospheric events that combined to obliterate the four cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim.
9. The details of how these cities were completely removed from history without a trace are given in verses 24 and 25. In verse 24 we read that the Lord "rained" on them "brimstone and fire." The word "rained" is the Hebrew:

מָטָר *matar* - "rain" Used here as a metaphor for anything falling like rain.

10. Rain is used metaphorically for the gracious provision of manna in the *Jornada* in Exodus 16:4. The correlation between abundant and well-timed rain is consistently indicated in Scripture as a blessing to those who love God; drought is a punishment to those who do not.
11. There is not a greater indication of divine displeasure and punishment than for it to rain blazing objects upon a region. These objects ablaze are identified as:

גִּפְרִית *goprith* - "brimstone"

Brimstone is an English word that means literally "burning stones." The substance it describes is sulfur.

12. The catalyst for this storm of fire is said to be the Lord indicated by the Tetragrammaton:

יהוה *YHWH* - "Jehovah"

Jehovah can refer to any member of the Trinity and in this verse there are two. "Jehovah rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven."

13. Jesus Christ is on earth in the form of a theophany, in this instance that of a man. God the Father is in heaven and is the One who administers justice during the formal phase of the appeal trial of Satan.



14. God set the time for the conflagration in eternity past while Jesus Christ was the one who initiated it in time. The time it was decreed and the time it was initiated were at the moment the sun was fully risen over the pentapolis.