

Glimpses from the Life of Prophet Lot

Description: Events from the life of Prophet Lot.

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Objective:

- To examine several events and learn valuable lessons applicable in the 21st century.

Arabic Terms:

- *Lut* - the Arabic name of Prophet Lot.

Many stories in the Quran demonstrate the nature of Allah, some sections teach us about Paradise and Hell and still other parts of Quran teach us lessons. These lessons are as relevant today as they were in the time Quran was revealed or even further back in the history of humankind. The story of Prophet Lot in both the Bible and the Quran are remarkably similar. The story of Prophet Lut is one that is particularly pertinent to the 21st century yet people usually remember very little of the story.



The story of Lut has over the centuries been reduced to a morality tale, a parable warning people not to practice homosexuality. Usually all we hear is that Lut was a man of Allah living in the town of Sodom whose people practiced the unnatural act of homosexuality, Allah called such behaviour an abomination and destroyed the town but not before saving Lut and most of his family. However Lut's story is much more than that, it is a story filled with lessons for humankind. Let us take a glimpse into his life and see what messages we are able to find and learn from it.

Lesson 1

Allah destroyed Sodom for crimes and sins we see around us and accept every day.

We live in a world where murder is common, drugs are readily available and young girls fall pregnant outside of the bonds of marriage. Identities are stolen, sinful acts are called

fun, and some streets are unsafe to walk down even in the middle of the day. Paedophilia is rampant, as is child pornography and human trafficking. Degenerate lifestyles are accepted and thought of as normal. Alcohol is easily available even to underage children and is responsible for many of society's ills. The people of Prophet Lut lived in a society very similar to our own.

The town of Sodom was corrupt through and through. The majority of people had no shame and considered sinful acts to be fun and frivolity. Sodom was a party town, criminals and criminal activity abounded, and those passing through the town risked robbery and physical abuse. Rape was considered normal, homosexuality was considered fun and travellers expecting hospitality usually got more than they bargained for. Sodom was the equivalent of the district we avoid at night, perhaps even the suburb police will not respond to in an emergency.

Lesson 2

To invite people to the truth with wisdom and kind words.

"Invite to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better..." (Quran 16:125)

Allah sent Prophet Lot to this town with the message to worship Allah alone. He asked them to fear Allah and mend their evil ways saying, **"Will you not fear Allah and obey Him? Verily! I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allah and obey me" (Quran 26:161 - 163)**. Lot spoke using mild words; he condemned the actions not the people themselves and encouraged them to seek forgiveness. There is surely a lesson for us in this. Lot spoke mildly to people Allah described as evil and disobedient, thus we should remember this when we are confronted with the evil acts people in the 21st century think of as fun. Condemn the act, not the person. This was also the way of Prophet Muhammad; he too would speak harshly about the action, not about the person who did the action.

Lesson 3

Allah is the All-Seeing.

Sadly however, in Sodom, Lut's words fell on deaf ears because the people were content with their corrupt ways and had no desire to curb them. The people of Sodom committed their sins openly and had no shame, they cared not whether anyone saw their sinful actions so it did not bother them that Allah was watching. No matter whether we try to disguise or hide our sins Allah sees everything, nothing can be hidden from the Almighty. Thus if we are ashamed of our actions and wish that Allah did not witness our behaviour it is probably time to rethink, and find a way to act that is more pleasing to Allah.

Lesson 4

Believers should be hospitable.

When the angels came into the town of Sodom they appeared to the people as very attractive male travellers. The first person they spoke to was one of Lut's daughters. She was afraid for them and asked that they wait for her father in order for him to see them to safety. When Lut met the strangers he could not convince them to bypass the town so he tried to keep them safe in his own home. Lut did not know that his guests were angels sent by Allah, yet he feared for them more than his own safety. When the men of Sodom rioted outside his house, demanding that the strangers be delivered into their hands, Lut opposed them.

The goodness in hospitality comes from giving for no other reason than to please Allah. The person you help may never be in a position to help you and in some cases he may even bring you harm, however in Islam hospitality is a triangular relationship between the host, the stranger and Allah. Providing sustenance to a stranger is part of a stranger's right over you - it is not a gift that you bestow, and the duty to provide it is owed to Allah not to the stranger.

A more detailed story of Prophet Lut can be found here:

<http://www.islamreligion.com/articles/1879/>

The web address of this article:

<http://www.newmuslims.com/lessons/166>

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