

LOT'S WIFE,

A WARNING AGAINST BAD EXAMPLES.

BY THE
REV. W. J. McCORD,
TRIBES HILL, N. Y.



PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.
NO. 821 CHESTNUT STREET.

BV4501
M17

~~~~~  
Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859, by  
JAMES DUNLAP, TREAS.,  
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District  
of Pennsylvania.  
~~~~~

~~~~~  
STEREOTYPED BY  
JESPER HARDING & SON,  
INQUIRER BUILDING, SOUTH THIRD STREET, PHILADELPHIA.  
~~~~~

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
THE HISTORY,	5

CHAPTER II.

EXAMPLES,	18
---------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

ILLUSTRATIONS,	38
--------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

APPLICATION,	52
------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION,	68
-----------------------	----

LOT'S WIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORY.

Remember Lot's Wife.—Luke xvii. 32.

LOT was the son of Haran, and nephew of Abraham, and perhaps the brother of Sarah. He dwelt for a time in Sodom, and was the only righteous person found there when God determined to destroy that city. He, with his two daughters, escaped from that terrible overthrow by the assistance of two angels. Gen. xi. 27—32; xviii. 17—33; and xix. 1—30.

As to Lot's wife, we are not informed who she was. But we know her character. Perhaps she was a native of Sodom, as nothing is said of Lot's having a wife while with Abraham; and the destruction of Sodom was some twenty years after Lot's separation from Abraham. But as some of Lot's children were grown up and married before Sodom was destroyed, he must have been married himself before removing to Sodom. Be this as it may, his wife was no doubt a wicked woman; and in this respect like the inhabitants of Sodom. Gen. xix. 14—26.

Sodom stood where the Dead Sea now is. It was a wicked city; and it was destroyed for its wickedness. You may read its history in Gen. xiii. 10—13; xiv. 8—16; xviii. 16—33;

xix. 1—38 ; 2 Pet. ii. 4—10 ; and Jude 7, 8. Now when God was about to destroy Sodom, he made known his purposes to Abraham. Abraham interceded for the preservation of the city, and obtained the promise that if ten righteous men were found in it, it should not be destroyed. But so general was the corruption, that Lot alone remained unspotted amid the profane crew. The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah was great, and their sin was very grievous. Hence the Lord sent his angels to destroy Sodom and the cities of the plain. The time had come. They hastened Lot, saying, “Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which are here ; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.” “And while he lingered”—for he seemed unwilling to leave the place and all his possessions

behind him—while he lingered, “the men,” that is, the angels, “laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters”—just as Christ Jesus is ready to lay hold upon the hand of sinners and pluck them from destruction,—“the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. And when they had brought him forth abroad, he”—the angel-Jehovah—“said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.” Her history is brief. She looked back; she disobeyed the command, for the direction was, “Look not behind thee;” she “became a pil-

lar of salt ;” She immediately received the punishment due to her crime, and became a monument of the justice of God and a warning to all transgressors—a beacon to succeeding generations. “Remember Lot’s wife!” Gen. xviii. 17—33 ; and xix. 1—29.

The occasion on which these words were uttered, and the manner in which they are introduced, are calculated to impress them deeply upon the mind. Our Lord is speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem and the calamities which should accompany it. These things, he declares, should come suddenly and unexpectedly, as destruction came upon the old world and upon Sodom. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. “They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were

given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also, as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed"—to destroy Jerusalem. "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. In that day, he that shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back"—either with the hope of safety in the city, or to take his clothes or any thing away. "Remember Lot's

wife." Ye know how it was with her. She looked back and became a pillar of salt. Shun her example. "Escape for your lives." Gen. xix. 26; Matt. xxiv. Luke xvii.

We should remember her disobedience and the punishment inflicted for it. We should be careful not to imitate her unwillingness to leave Sodom and forsake it entirely, even in thought and desire, by an unwillingness to forsake our sins and the pleasures and follies of the world. Nor should we imitate her looking back, by returning to a course of sinfulness after we have commenced a life of piety and devotion. "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke ix. 62.

"Remember Lot's wife!" So the

Redeemer said, and his word should be heeded. "Lot's wife left Sodom, yet she lost her life by looking back to those possessions and connections which she was called to forsake. Thus she was made a perpetual warning to men in every age, not to allow even a wish for, or hankering desire after, those sinful interests and indulgences, which religion requires them to renounce, lest they should be drawn aside to destruction. The young disciple should not hanker after those things which he has left behind, nor draw back unto perdition." Heb. x. 36—39.

It is wise to remember her. "This unhappy woman, contrary to God's express command, in unbelief, and in love to Sodom and its riches and pleasures, and its sins too, regretting what

was left behind, and probably purposing to return, looked back, and as some think, actually attempted to return; and our Lord's words in the verse immediately preceding, 'Let him not return back;' and his adding directly after those words, 'Remember Lot's wife,' favour this supposition. She was, therefore, instantaneously struck dead and petrified, with her face toward Sodom, showing that her heart was there, and thus she remained to after ages, a visible monument of the divine displeasure, being punished as a warning to others through all succeeding time."

"Remember Lot's wife!" Yes, remember her. For disobeying the command, "Look not behind thee," she was turned into a pillar of salt. This pillar of salt continued for many ages.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, who wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, has these words : " Lot's wife, continually turning back to view the city, as she went from it, and being too nicely inquisitive what would become of it, although God had forbidden her so to do, was changed into a pillar of salt ; for I have seen it, and it remains at this day." That it was standing then, is also attested by Clement of Rome, contemporary with Josephus ; and that it was standing in the next century also, is attested by Irenæus. Some modern travellers say that it is even now standing. But this of course is extremely doubtful. Something so called may exist near that locality ; but not at all likely the body of Lot's wife. The scripture admonition is to us a more sure word of prophecy ; and

to that we should take heed. 2 Pet. i. 19.

Different views are taken of her case. “Some are of opinion, that being surprised and suffocated with fire and smoke, she continued in the same place, as immovable as a rock of salt; others, that a column or monument of salt stone was erected on her grave; others, that she was stifled in the flame, and became a monument of salt to posterity: that is, a permanent and durable monument of her imprudence. The common opinion is, that she was suddenly petrified and changed into a statue of rock salt, which is as hard as the hardest rocks.” And this common opinion may be the true one. Still, as the term expresses fixedness, “and as the Hebrews reckoned among salts both nitre and bitumen, so the term

salt here used, may denote the bituminous mass which overwhelmed this woman, fixed her to the place where it fell upon her, raised a mound over her, of a height proportionable to her figure, and was long afterwards pointed out by the inhabitants as a memento of her fate, and a warning against loitering, when divinely exhorted." Luke xvii. 32.

Had we the body of Lot's wife here, it might be an object of curious inspection. The Anatomist would love to dissect it, and examine its parts; the Chemist to analyze it, and search into the nature of those changes which it may have undergone; the Mineralogist to ascertain its properties, whether salt, or bitumen as some think; and the Philosopher the causes of its transformation, and the means of its pre-

servation. But there is something to be learned from the simple history of this disobedient woman, far more important than the gratification of idle curiosity. To this let us attend, and not to speculations. We learn from it that bad examples are to be shunned. The end of the wicked teaches us to shun their example. To the illustration and enforcement of this lesson, these pages are devoted. Let them be carefully and prayerfully read.

“Remember Lot’s wife !” Lot’s wife is a warning against bad examples. Look at her end, and shun her example. Look at the end of the wicked, and shun their example. “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. The way of the wicked is as darkness. Let thine eyes look right on.” Prov. iv. 14—27.

CHAPTER II.

EXAMPLES.

If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.—Prov. i. 10. Remember Lot's wife.—Luke xvii. 32.

THE end of the wicked teaches us to shun their example. The end of the wicked may be considered in two points of view:—one, their death, the termination of their mortal existence; the other, their future punishment, their everlasting wretchedness. Lot's wife was smitten and turned into a pillar of salt, in the very act of disobeying God, and this was her end as it respects her mortal existence. But as she died in the act of transgression, she is no doubt at this very moment

with the inhabitants of Sodom to whom she wished to return, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire ; and this is her end as it respects her everlasting state. The end of the wicked, in either or both these respects, as the one involves the other, is calculated to influence us to be careful how we walk in their steps. Their end teaches us to shun their example.

“ Remember Lot’s wife ”—a warning against bad examples. Let us look at the end of some wicked men, as an inducement to shun their example. The Bible contains accounts of some wicked persons, both men and women, and children too ; and what is said of them is recorded for a warning to us. With many of the Israelites, “ God was not well pleased ; for they were overthrown in the wild-

erness. Now, these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them ; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition." 1 Cor. x. 5—11. So all things recorded in the Bible "are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in

righteousness." 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. Let us, therefore, turn over the Bible, and see the end of those who have done wickedly, as there recorded. This will prove a salutary warning against bad examples.

We begin with Adam and Eve. God made them holy, in his own image, and they were happy. But they fell. They did wickedly in believing the devil and disbelieving God; and in obeying the devil and disobeying God. Their unbelief and disobedience brought them under the curse of God, made them miserable, and drove and shut them out of Eden, while it also brought ruin upon their posterity. Rom. v. 12—18. So, sinner, your unbelief and sin have brought you under the wrath and curse of God, and will shut you out of heaven, and shut

you up in hell, if you do not repent and turn unto the Lord. By the fall you are ruined ; but there is salvation in Jesus Christ. He has died ; and you must embrace him by faith if you would be saved.

Such was the effect of disobedience on our first parents. It brought on them, and on their posterity, the sentence of death. What was their end we are not informed ; but we have reason to conclude that they believed in the promised Seed, Jesus Christ, repented of their sins, and were forgiven and saved. So, reader, if you repent and believe—if you come to Jesus Christ—you too shall be forgiven and saved.

We next read of Cain, the first murderer—the murderer of his own brother. And the curse of God fell upon

him. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord"—bearing the mark of Jehovah's anger—a living monument of wrath—and doubtless died in his sins and perished for ever. Shun his example!

Passing individual instances, the next example is that of the old world. When men began to multiply on the earth, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the

Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." He, by the direction of God, prepared an ark, and the same day that he and his family entered into it, the flood came, and overwhelmed the whole remainder of the human family. Such was the end of that world of sinners—a deluge swept them from the face of the earth. But that deluge is nothing to the fiery deluge of wrath which is even now poured upon them. Nor is it any thing to that deluge of hot displeasure and fiery indignation, which shall overtake the wicked, who are now following the example of the old world, by living in their sins and refusing to enter the Ark of safety which the God of love and mercy hath provided for the perishing, even Christ Jesus! O

sinner, flee from coming wrath ! Flee to the Saviour !”

We come now to Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, the cities of the plain, which for their sins were consumed by fire and brimstone from heaven. These cities, “giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Jude 7.

We read that Er, Judah’s first born, was wicked in the sight of the Lord ; and the Lord slew him. And immediately after, it is said of Onan, his brother, that the thing which he did displeased the Lord, or was evil in the eyes of the Lord ; wherefore he slew him also. Let the wicked beware lest the Lord slay them also. For the

Lord is angry with the wicked every day.

Look at Pharaoh and the Egyptians. They were unwilling to comply with the requirements of God and let Israel go. Plague after plague was sent upon them; the first born in every family was slain; and finally Pharaoh himself and all his host were overwhelmed in the Red Sea and drowned. Look at their end, and shun their example; for thus will God overwhelm in a sea of fire never to be quenched, all who will not yield to his requirements, embrace his Son by faith, give him their hearts, and live to his glory. Hear God's voice, believe, and obey.

Come we now to the house of Israel. We find them delivered from bondage, and led toward the land of promise by the hand of Moses, under the im-

mediate direction and care of God. But soon we hear them murmuring for water, and then for meat, wishing they had died by the flesh-pots of Egypt, where they ate bread to the full ; and again murmuring for water, and soon, in the very sight of Sinai, where God had displayed his glory and given his laws, causing Aaron to make them idols, and bowing down to them and worshipping them ; and there three thousand were slain. Passing over other events in their history, let us notice one more occurrence, a murmuring in which the whole nation joined. “ And all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried ; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron ; and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God

that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!" Numbers xiv. 1, 2. And they had their wish; for except Joshua and Caleb, they all—all who had been numbered on their departure from Egypt—that whole generation—died in the wilderness. Their unbelief prevented their entering the land of Canaan; they fell because of unbelief. Look at their end—shun their example—or your unbelief will shut you out of heaven. "There remaineth a rest to the people of God. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Heb. iv. 1—11.

Of the twelve men whom Moses sent to view the land of Canaan, ten, when they returned, made the congregation of Israel to murmur, by bring-

ing up a slander upon the land. And those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord—a just punishment for their sins. Num. xiv. 36, 37.

Nadab and Abihu burned incense with strange fire, and were consumed with fire sent from God. Thus will God consume all who pretend to serve him, except with incense kindled from the one altar and that one offering by which he perfects for ever his sanctified. He will be worshipped in spirit and in truth. “Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Heb. x. 1—25.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, con-

spired to divest Moses and Aaron of the authority conferred on them by God, on which account they and their families were swallowed up alive by the earth, together with their substance. And the two hundred and fifty men who were associated with them, who were princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown, and who burned incense, were consumed by a fire which came out from the Lord. Look at their end ; shun their example. Be humble before God and obedient to him. Num. xvi. 2—35.

“No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.” Rom. xiv. 7. We live and die for God and for each other. Though in general it is well to speak nothing but good of the dead, yet their example should be held up

to the living, that, if good, it may be followed, or, if bad, it may be shunned. Thus we are to remember Lot's wife; and with this in view, let us continue our research and our exhibition, so as to present a faithful warning against bad examples.

Achan, contrary to the express charge of Joshua, at the taking of Jericho, coveted part of the spoil. Having seized a Babylonish garment, a wedge of gold, and two hundred shekels of silver, he concealed them in his tent. Offended with his crime, God marked his indignation thereat, in the defeat of three thousand Hebrews before Ai, and the slaughter of thirty and six. Pained with grief, Joshua and the Elders of Israel rent their clothes and cried to the Lord for help. The Lord informed Joshua that

one of the people had taken of the accursed spoil, and hid it among his stuff; and that till the discovery and punishment of this sin, they should have no assistance from him. By the direction of God, the whole assembly of Israel sanctified themselves, and prepared for the solemn search on the morrow. The search was referred to the determination of the lot. With solemnity it proceeded. Achan was taken. Admonished of Joshua, he confessed his offence. The stolen goods were brought and exposed to the view of the assembly; then he, and his children, and all his cattle, were publicly stoned to death; and the dead bodies, with his household furniture, were burnt to ashes in the valley of Gilgal, and a great heap of stones cast on them. O Achan, how dreadful

thy end! Let not professors of religion be Achans in the camp of the Lord; nor let sinners covet what is forbidden. "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Avoid even the appearance of evil." Rom. xii. 9. 1 Thess. v. 21—23.

We read that as Elisha went from Jericho toward Bethel, as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, (who had been trained up in idolatry, and taught to despise the prophets of the Lord,) and mocked him, and said unto him, "Go up, thou bald head! go up, thou bald head!" These "children," were young men, as the same term is applied to Isaac when he was twenty-eight years old, and to Joseph when he was thirty. 2 Kings ii. 23—25. They had heard that Elijah

was gone up to heaven, and they insultingly bade Elisha follow him, that they might be rid of him also. They reviled him also for the baldness of his head, instead of reverencing him for his age. Then he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. The Spirit of God dictated the solemn curse, as is evident from its being immediately followed by so terrible a judgment. "And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them." Here, children, you see the end of those that mocked the prophet of the Lord. Beware, then, how you despise the servants of the Lord; and beware especially how you despise or reject his Son. If you continue in sin, and will not love God, and reverence his Son, and honour his

servants, God will punish you for ever. Remember these wicked children—these scoffing young men! You should love and serve God and do his will, not only because disobedience exposes you to his anger, but because it is your duty—it is right—and God has claims upon you. He says to each one, “Give me thy heart;” and it is sinful not to give it. “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” Eccl. xii. 1.

Evil examples have power to seduce the old as well as the young, because they address themselves to the natural evil of our hearts. Such examples surround us on every side. We are exposed to them from our infancy up; and that we may escape their fatal influence, we should ponder well the end of the wicked, and view it in the light

of God's word. The way of transgressors is hard; even here in this world they have their share of wo; but we cannot always see their present misery. They may even seem to be happy. Their lives may seem to be full of enjoyment; and this renders their example the more dangerous. Hence we should look at their end. We should consider how they die; and especially should we take into consideration their eternal state. This will weaken the force of their example for evil. It will impress upon us the salutary lesson drawn from the unhappy history of Lot's wife, that the example of the wicked is not to be imitated, but to be shunned. Reader, let this lesson come home to your heart! Let the young heed it; let the old heed it. And that you may shun bad examples success-

fully, flee to the Lord Jesus Christ; seek from him renewing, sanctifying, and restraining grace; remember the presence and the claims of God, embrace his Son, and live to his glory.

“ On what a slippery steep
The thoughtless wretches go !
And oh ! that dreadful fiery deep
That waits their fall below !

Lord, at thy feet I bow,
My thoughts no more repine,
I call my God my portion now,
And all my powers are thine.”

CHAPTER III.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Go not in the way of evil men.—Prov. iv. 14.

WHEN Sodom was destroyed, Lot was delivered. His wife looked back, and became a pillar of salt. Our Lord foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, says it shall be as in the days of Noah and Lot, sudden and dreadful, and directs his disciples to flee; and to enforce his admonitions, he adds, "Remember Lot's wife." Luke xvii. 20—37.

As we have seen, the lesson taught by these words is, that bad examples are to be shunned; or, the end of the

wicked teaches us to shun their example. In illustration of this, some scripture examples have been presented; and my present purpose is to adduce still further examples and illustrations, and then make a practical application.

It has been suggested that Lot's wife perhaps was a native of Sodom. But as Lot's interests were separate from Abraham's while they were living near together, it seems most likely that he was married before removing to the vicinity of Sodom. He chose the valley of Sodom for his residence because its pastures were rich. At first he pitched his tent toward Sodom; and then afterward he dwelt in Sodom—he left his tents and dwelt in the city.

RYLE remarks that here are two mis-

takes on the part of Lot :*—First, he made a wrong choice—he chose a residence solely for the sake of its temporal advantages ; and, second, he settled in a wicked place and among sinners, when there was no need of it. And the disastrous effects are seen in himself and in his family. We are not told why he lived in Sodom. “ Perhaps his wife liked the town better than the country, for the sake of society. It is plain she had no grace *herself*. Perhaps she persuaded Lot it was needful for the education of his daughters. Perhaps the daughters urged living in the town for the sake of gay company ; they were evidently light-minded young women. Perhaps Lot liked it himself,

See “ Remember Lot,” published by the Presbyterian Board.

in order to make more of his flocks and herds. Men never want reasons to confirm their wills. But one thing is very clear, Lot dwelt in the midst of Sodom without good cause. . . . When a child of God does these two things which Lot did, you never need be surprised if you hear unfavourable accounts about his soul. . . . Make a wrong choice in life, and settle yourself down unnecessarily in the midst of worldly people, and I know no surer way to damage your own spirituality, and to go backward about your eternal concerns." So it was with Lot. He did no good in Sodom. Not one listened to his preaching. He did no good in his family. Not one of his house was pious. And he died under a cloud. Nothing is said of his latter end. And the doom of his wife we

know. Remember Lot's wife. Shun bad examples.

We have looked at the example of Adam and Eve, of Cain, the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain, Er and Onan, Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the Israelites in the wilderness, the spies, Nadab and Abihu, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, Achan, and the children, or young men rather, who reviled the prophet, and were devoured by wild bears. All these teach what an evil thing it is to sin against God, and admonish us to shun bad examples. And now, in further illustration and admonition, take the following examples :

Ahab, king of Israel, reigned in Samaria. In iniquity and impiety he far exceeded all the kings of Israel. It is said by the prophet that " he sold

himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord." He was very much grieved because Naboth refused to sell him his vineyard. His wife enquired the cause of his grief, and being informed, bade him be comforted. She had Naboth slain; and Ahab went to take possession of the vineyard. The prophet Elijah was sent to him by God to deliver this message: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." Not long after this, Ahab was engaged in battle with the Syrians; and a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness, and he died at even. God directed that arrow, though it seemed a chance shot, for in God's government there is no such thing as chance. The prophecy

must needs be fulfilled. The blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot; and one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, and dogs licked up his blood. He shed man's blood, and by man was his blood shed, and dogs fed themselves on it. Remember Ahab.

Another example. Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, was a similar character, performed similar deeds, and met a similar end. She used witchcraft; and had she lived at the present day, she would have been a thorough spiritualist, holding pretended converse with the invisible world, or real converse with the Evil One. She was so mad on idolatry that she maintained, at her own expense, four hundred priests of the groves sacred to Ashtaroth, while her husband maintained four hundred

and fifty for Baal. She instigated her husband to murder the prophets of God wherever they could be found. In the most unjust and cruel manner, she caused Naboth of Jezreel to be murdered, as we have just seen, to obtain for Ahab the vineyard which lay near the palace of the king of Israel. In just judgment for her enormous wickedness, according to the prediction of the prophet Elijah, who said, "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the walls of Jezreel," she was thrown out of a window, trodden under foot by the horses of Jehu, and then devoured by dogs, near the spot where Naboth had been stoned to death by her iniquitous command. When Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.

And they threw her down, and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and he trod her under foot. Then he said, "Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter." But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again and told him. Then he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, "In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel." Remember Jezebel—a fit companion of Lot's wife.

Here is another. Herod the Great was a monster of cruelty and wickedness. He slew the children of Bethlehem of two years old and under; he caused Aristobulus, his wife's brother,

to be murdered when eighteen years of age ; he put to death Hyrcanus at the age of eighty years, grandfather to his wife Mariamne ; he publicly executed Mariamne his amiable wife, and her mother Alexandra ; he caused his two sons Alexander and Aristobulus to be strangled in prison. Just before his death he assembled the chief men of the nation at Jericho. He shut them up in the circus, and made his sister promise that she would have them slain the moment he died. This he thought would cause mourning at his death, when he knew all would rejoice to be rid of him. The promise of his sister was not performed. Herod died in great misery of a most loathsome disease. Such was his end. View it, and shun his example. Remember Herod.

Herod Agrippa, grandson to Herod the Great, who caused the murder of James the son of Zebedee, and proceeded to take Peter also, having made a speech on a certain occasion, was applauded with the cry, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. Receiving the impious flattery with pleasure, he was smitten by an angel, and was eaten of worms and died. Let flatterers and the flattered, the vain and the proud, look at his end and shun his example. Remember also this Herod.

Judas betrayed Christ. Smitten with remorse, he confessed his sin, threw down the money, and went and hanged himself; and falling headlong from the place where he was suspended, all his bowels gushed out. Reader, beware! Sell not your Saviour for this world, its riches, its honours, its pleasures,

lest you follow Judas "to his own place." "How can you escape if you neglect this great salvation?" Remember Judas.

Ananias and Sapphira sold their possessions and laid part of the price at the Apostles' feet, and kept back the rest, pretending that they had surrendered all unto the Lord. Thus they lied unto the Holy Ghost; they lied not to men, but to God. And they were smitten and died with the lie upon their tongues. Take warning, ye that keep back part of your hearts from God. He requires the whole heart, an unreserved surrender. And let liars remember Ananias and Sapphira, and shun their example; for "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." Nothing that maketh a lie

shall enter heaven. There was also grievous hypocrisy in the conduct of these smitten ones; and their fearful end is designed to be a warning to hypocrites in all ages. Remember Ananias and Sapphira.

The Jews rejected Christ, saying, "His blood be on us!" And the Jews are scattered among all nations under heaven, a by-word and a reproach; and Jerusalem is this day trodden down by the Gentiles. Let the rejecters of Christ remember this, and prepare for the coming vengeance of God upon them. "The day of vengeance is in his heart." The Lord Jesus "shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord

Jesus Christ ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." O flee to Christ, and escape the coming wrath !

CHAPTER IV.

APPLICATION.

Ponder the path of thy feet.—Prov. iv. 26.

REMEMBER Lot's wife. This is a solemn warning; and it teaches us that the end of the wicked should lead us to shun their example. Let us continue to illustrate and enforce this doctrine, and make a more close and personal application of it.

The end of the swearer should lead us to shun his example. God hath said, "Take not the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Ex. xx. Frequently has the swearer been cut down with an

oath upon his lips. Who is willing thus to be called into the presence of God? Oh then shun the swearer's example and company, and learn to fear and dread an oath! It is both wicked and vulgar to swear.

The end of the Sabbath-breaker should lead us to shun his example. Not few and far between are the instances of judgments visited upon the despisers of God's holy day. Often are the Sabbath pleasure parties of the young the death scene of some of their number. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is the command of God. Ex. xx. And let those who violate it, remember those unhappy ones, who, for disobeying God, have been made monuments of his wrath.

Here is a paragraph which should

be deeply pondered by all. It speaks of Sabbath-breaking and crime. The Committee of the British House of Commons, on the Observance of the Sabbath, state in their report, that, "innumerable unhappy individuals, who have forfeited their lives to the offended laws of their country, have confessed that their career in vice commenced with Sabbath-breaking and neglect of religious ordinances." The Committee made inquiries on the subject very extensively; and the language of their report is remarkable. So many are the instances where a career in guilt and crime was commenced in Sabbath-breaking, that they call them "innumerable;" and this, they say, was "strongly stated in evidence," by witnesses whom they examined. Are those who profane the

Sabbath aware whither their course is leading them? Sabbath-breaking leads to ruin. Shun the Sabbath-breaker's example.

The end of the murderer should lead us to shun his example. "Thou shalt not kill." Ex. xx. Cain was cursed of God. But the punishment of this crime, so far as this world is concerned, is committed to man. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Hence we must look for the end of the murderer on the scaffold. There you behold his end. Look at it; and—I need not say—shun his example. No one thinks of imitating it. Then beware how you give way to anger! Never seek revenge. "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." Then love one another.

The end of adulterers and fornicators should lead us to shun their example. Perhaps on earth these meet not the treatment they deserve. They should be driven from the society of the chaste. They should be branded with eternal infamy. The licentious man is a pest and a curse to society. His example and his influence are dangerous; they are fatal and deadly. His end, what is it? Disease preys upon him; he dies an enemy to God and man; and the leprosy of sin kills his soul eternally. "Neither fornicators nor adulterers shall inherit the kingdom of God." These sins caused the awful doom of Sodom.

The end of the thief should induce us to shun his example. He is watched with a suspicious eye. He is trusted by none. All hate him; all abhor

him. They wish well to his soul ; but they detest his conduct. He dies in disgrace ; and in the long living annals of infamy, his name is recorded. And on his grave-stone it is written, Shun my example ! Beware of dishonesty ! Regard as sacred what is not your own ! “Thou shalt not steal ! Thou shalt not covet !”

The end of the drunkard instructs us to shun his example. His end you know. He dies as a brute. His body dies, but his soul, Oh ! where is that ? He dies and is buried, and on his grave-stone we read, “No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God.” His end says to all who pass by, Walk not in my footsteps ! Shun my example !

But we need not go so far as the end of the drunkard to be taught not

to follow his example. His example itself is detestable. None will follow it for its beauty; none will follow it for its pleasure; none will follow it for its honour. Indeed, there is but little danger of men's imitating the example of the drunkard. It is the example of another class that is imitated, and whose influence is fraught with destruction. The temperate drinker makes the practice of drinking respectable—if a practice so degrading can be called respectable. The temperate drinker keeps the practice in countenance. He keeps up the drinking usages of society. By his example he induces others to drink and be drunken. With that panoply which the temperate drinker's example furnishes to their hands, the drunkards shield themselves against every attack on their sinful

and ruinous habit. Go to the drunkard and tell him his sin, and urge him to forsake his cups, and he will immediately say, My neighbour drinks, and I can too—and I will ! Or he will say, Go to the members of your church, and get their names to your pledge ; and then it will be time enough for me to think of giving you mine. Thus the moderate drinker's example affords a shelter to the drunkard ; and thus he becomes a file leader in the army of inebriates, who walk in his steps and sink to perdition ; and God will bring him into judgment for the souls he has ruined.

But while leading others to ruin, the moderate drinker is himself walking the same broad road. Often does he fall himself by the hand of the destroyer. In fact no one becomes a

drunkard at once ; it is by little and little that the fearful end is reached. Every drunkard was once a moderate drinker ; and it is moderate, temperate drinking that makes drunkards.

Hence the end of the temperate drinker should lead us to shun his example. And what is the end of the temperate drinker ? Why, it is to be a drunkard ! That is his end, almost certainly. You may see his end in the drunkard who staggers through the streets. I do not say that every temperate drinker will become a drunkard ; but I do say that the tendency, the legitimate and unavoidable tendency, and the frequent result, of moderate drinking is to lead to drunkenness. And I say further, that the legitimate end of the moderate drinker is to be a drunkard. To this

end he is hastening. He may, perhaps, die before he becomes a drunkard; but if he live sufficiently long, and continue to drink, though at first he drink moderately, he will become a drunkard; not, it may be, in the estimation of some men, but in the view of good men, and in the sight of God. Let me therefore point you to the end of the moderate drinker—and you may see it in every drunkard you meet—let me point you to his end, and warn you to shun his example. Beware of the first drop! Taste it not! Look not upon it! There is danger and death in the cup. “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall!”

The end of the moralist—the one who depends upon his morality—teaches us to shun his example. We are to be moral—we must obey God

and ever do right—but we must not base our hopes of heaven upon our moral lives. The one who does so is a moralist; and you may read his end in the history of the young man who came to Christ enquiring what good thing he should do that he might have eternal life. The commandments, he said, he had kept from his youth up. But when told to sell his possessions, and give to the poor and follow Jesus, he went away sorrowful; and lost his soul notwithstanding his morality. Matt. xix. 16—22. Shun his example and flee to Christ for salvation! Depend not on your works. You are a sinner; and none but Jesus can save!

The end of the worldling teaches us to shun his example. For “what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own

soul?" Mark viii. 36. The gain would be loss; for the soul lost, all is lost, and lost for ever! "Seek first the kingdom of God!" Come to the Saviour now!

The end of all unbelievers, and of the wicked generally, should induce us to shun their example. The wicked are frequently prosperous and apparently happy. Hence they are sometimes envied even by good men. Asaph was envious at the foolish, when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. "They are not," says he, "in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish. And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High? Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in

the world ; they increase in riches." And he adds, " Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." He was in distress. The wicked were prosperous ; but he was afflicted. All the day long was he plagued, and chastened every morning. And he says, " When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God ; then understood I their END !" This set the whole matter right. The END of the wicked taught him not to envy their prosperity, but to shun their example. Ps. lxxiii.

Even the death-bed of the wicked—the end of their mortal existence—should teach us this. But this is not the whole of their end ; it is but the beginning.

“ 'Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die.”

Sin kills beyond the tomb. “ After death the judgment.” Hence the Psalmist continues, “ Surely thou didst set them in slippery places ; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment ! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh, so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image !” The wicked shall be turned into hell. They shall go away into everlasting punishment. They shall be tormented day and night ; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever ! This is the second death—the wages of sin. Consider it. Look at the end of the wicked, and shun their example !

The end of the impenitent and unbelieving, in particular, should lead us to shun their example. Draw near the death-bed of the impenitent sinner, and you view a scene of horror. Unwilling, and yet obliged to die! Approaching death, and yet shrinking from it with terror!

“———Oh how the frantic soul

Raves round the walls of its clay tenement!”

How does it weep over past neglects! How does it cry for another hour in which to prepare to meet its God! How does it warn all around to flee to Christ, and when death comes in the midst of its warnings, it departs in anguish, saying :

“No time is granted for expostulation—

Shun my example!”

Reader, follow it up to the bar of God, and down to the pit of despair!

View there its misery ; survey its doom ; contemplate its end ; and shun its example !

Yet how many follow the example of the impenitent and unbelieving, and perish for ever ! They resolve to repent, but never do it ; they resolve to believe, but never do it. Reader, have you repented ? Have you believed in Jesus Christ ? Will you repent ? Will you believe ? When ? Now ? Delay not ! Don't put it off ! Now is the time ! Do it now ! Boast not thyself of to-morrow ; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

“ While God invites, how blest the day !

How sweet the gospel's charming sound !

Come, sinners, haste, oh ! haste away,

While yet a pardoning God he's found.”

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION.

Consider your ways.—Hag. i. 7.

It is time now to come to a conclusion. We have looked at the history of Lot's wife, and drawn from it this lesson—"Bad examples must be shunned." This lesson has been enforced and illustrated by numerous examples; and as a practical application of it, it has been shown that the end of the wicked teaches us to shun their example. Now one remark, and I have done. This subject affords a powerful incentive to virtue and piety. Dwell on these examples and illustrations. See in them the tendency of vice.

See its result—it ruins those addicted to it. And see in them also the justice of God—see both his goodness and his severity. He is just. Beware how you offend him and abuse his goodness. “Ponder the path of your feet. Avoid the way of transgressors.” It is hard, and leads to death. Let the end of them that walk therein, as exhibited in the examples here presented, and in the providence of God around you, teach you to shun their example. Walk in the pleasant and peaceful paths of wisdom; imitate the just; obey God; repent of sin; believe in Christ; tread in the steps of the upright, and your end shall be peace.

Scripture examples are of two kinds: the bad, for our warning; the good, for our imitation. To some of the bad I have pointed you; and have drawn

the practical lesson, Shun bad examples ; not only the vile and degraded, but every thing that is not in conformity with the mind and will of God. Let the precept be deeply impressed upon your soul : “ Abhor that which is evil ; cleave to that which is good.” Rom. xii.

Shun bad examples ; and, at the same time, follow good examples. The Scriptures abound in these. Search them out and read them. There is righteous Abel—follow him. There is Abraham, the friend of God—follow him. There is Enoch—walk with God as he did. There is Joseph, and Moses, and Joshua, and Caleb, and Samuel, and David ; there is Noah, and Job, and Elijah, and Daniel ; there is Timothy, and Paul, and John ; and above all, there is the example of Him

who did no sin, and in whose mouth there was no guile—the example of Jesus Christ—follow HIM. Possess his spirit, imitate his example, live to his glory, and yours shall be a life of usefulness, a death of peace, and a heaven of glory!

Beware of little sins! Lot's wife only looked back, and where is the harm of a look? See it in her end! A little leak will sink a great ship. "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out!" "Look not on the wine when it is red!" The lustful look is uncleanness!

Take another example. See that young man—he takes an occasional glass—he fears not an occasional oath; he has begun the down-hill course. Shun his example! One glass may lead to your ruin! One oath may be

your undoing ! One visit to the theatre—one forbidden indulgence—one Sabbath misspent—may sink you to perdition !

See that young woman—gay and thoughtless—poring over the impure novel—dallying with temptation—running the giddy round of pleasure—sporting on the brink of ruin—and neglecting her soul ! Shun her example !

See that delaying sinner—putting off the one thing needful—resisting the calls of God and the influences of the Spirit—and shun his example !

See that one trifling with holy things—making a mock at sin—hardening his heart against God—and shun his example !

See that one trusting in the hope of future repentance—dreaming there is

time enough yet to attend to the concerns of the soul—and thus cheating himself out of heaven—and shun, oh shun his example !

Let husbands and fathers remember Lot's wife ! She may have induced Lot to pitch toward Sodom, and to dwell in the city, and to linger in escaping from it. So Eve led Adam into sin. Though husbands should love their wives, they should not be led by them away from God and duty, but order their families in the fear of the Lord.

Let wives and mothers remember Lot's wife ! Her husband's influence was weakened by her ; he saved none around him ; none of his own family were saved by him ; his sons-in-law were not ; and his daughters were vain and wicked, and seduced their father into sin. A wicked mother may

do much evil. If a pious mother is a blessing, a wicked mother is a curse; for as is the mother, so is the daughter. Ye mothers, fear God and keep his commandments, and train up your children for him.

Let daughters remember Lot's wife, and not like her go to destruction, nor be led by a wicked heart and improper influence to infamy and ruin!

Are you a professing Christian? Take warning from her example. Look not back to the world; be not conformed to it. Shun its sins, its pleasures, and follies, and beware of a worldly spirit. This ruined Lot's wife, this ruined Lot's family; and this caused Lot the loss of all his possessions. His wealth was consumed in Sodom, where he went to increase it and to enjoy it. His own soul was damaged, and al-

most his entire family slain. Christian, beware of the world ! Look not back !

Have you just set out in the Christian race ? Press on ! Live near to God. Be firm and faithful. Look not back. Go forward ; grow, run, strive, fight manfully.

Are you enquiring what you must do to be saved ? Let nothing keep you from Christ. Flee to him now, and cling to him for ever. Delay not. Escape for your life ; stay not in all the plain ; flee to the mountain—Jesus Christ ; look not behind thee—flee—flee.

Have you any desire for salvation ? Quench not the Spirit. Call earnestly upon God for mercy. Pray ; repent ; believe !

Would you be saved in the day of

wrath—saved from sin and hell? Then turn unto God; cease from sin; believe in Christ.

Alas! there are many in the church who are lingerers like Lot. There are many in the church who love the world as did Lot's wife. There are multitudes who are as unwilling to leave their sins and forsake all for Christ, as Lot's wife was to leave Sodom. And oh! how many have set out to escape the wrath of God—begun to flee from the wrath to come—begun to walk in the way to heaven; and yet have looked back—returned to their sinful ways, and perished! They have been almost Christians, but not quite! have gone almost to heaven, but not quite! And thus the shores of the eternal world are covered with the wrecks of immortal hopes! And all along the pathway of

life are the bleached bones of those who have died in the wilderness, and never reached the heavenly Canaan ! Reader, set out at once in the divine life, and look not back !

Christian, would you escape the evils of a worldly spirit, be rich in faith and good works, be useful in your day and generation, enjoy God's presence here, and dwell with him for ever ? Then take warning and remember Lot's wife !

Sinner, would you be saved from the end of the wicked, have your sins forgiven, have the love of God in your heart, have peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost, have a title to heaven and a fitness for it, and enjoy a foretaste of its blessedness even before you die ? Oh then shun bad examples ! Cease to do evil ; learn to

do well. Behold the Lamb of God and follow that which is good. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and live for God's glory—for holiness and usefulness and heaven!

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Eccl. xii. 13, 14.

23 Jan 1860.