

THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM

To Study: Genesis 13:1-13, 18:1-33, 19:1-29.

To Read in class: Genesis 13:6-10, 18:1-3, 16-23, 19:1, 12-17.

Memory Texts:

Younger: Hebrews 9:27 “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

Older: Job 36:18 “Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.”

OBJECTIVES: To teach that:

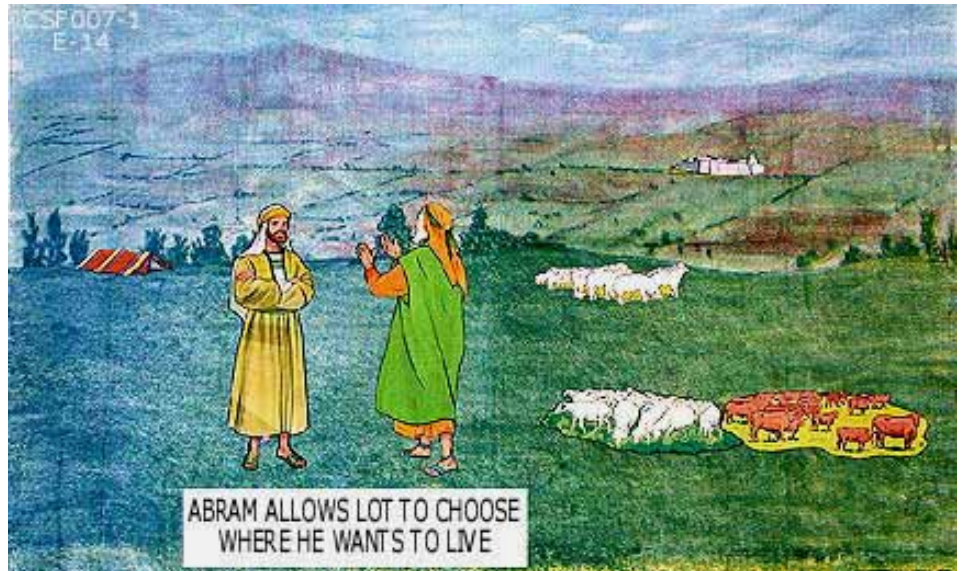
1. Even though God is merciful and patient, He still must judge sin.
2. Intercession on behalf of others is very important and a great privilege granted by God.
3. Certain decisions made by a person TODAY affect his/her future.
4. It is most important to believe and obey the Word of God.
5. To be “almost persuaded” is to be completely lost.

SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS: Figures of Abram and Lot conversing beside their sheep on a hilltop where a green valley and the city of Sodom can be seen in the distance. A sign saying: “Abram lets Lot decide where he wants to live.”

DEVELOPMENT:

- Given the opportunity to choose by his uncle Abram, Lot saw the plains of Jordan as “well watered ... even as the garden of the Lord (Eden), like the land of Egypt.”

Sug. Use this detail to emphasize that as a matter of courtesy, Lot should have let Abram choose first since Abram was older than he. This type of self-centredness and the lack of respect for elders are common today.



- When he saw the attractive qualities of the valley, Lot recalled the land of Egypt where he had gone with his Uncle Abram at the time there was a famine in Canaan (Genesis 12:10).
- Both men were rich in flocks and herds, animals that needed grass for food and water to drink.
- The herdsmen of each of these men had begun fighting with each other, no doubt looking for the best grazing areas for their animals.
- Because of this, Abram suggested to Lot that they separate in order to avoid more conflicts between the two groups.

Apl. Abram wisely suggested a solution to the problem. In this, he shows the quality of being a peacemaker. The Lord Jesus promised a blessing for the peacemaker (Matthew 5:9). This is an example worth following.

Cmt. Rivalry among siblings, family violence, aggressive attitudes, and selfish ambitions are only a few of the causes of arguments, abuse, and the absence of peace in the lives of many children.

- Lot focused only on the potential material gain to be made in the valley in front of him, making his decision based on what he saw (Genesis 13:10). He did not take into account that there were five cities in the valley with reputations for immorality. Among these cities were Sodom and Gomorrah.

Apl. It is very common for human beings to focus more on temporal benefits that lead to personal gain.

Taking God into account is far from their minds.

- When Lot made his decision based on what he saw, he was not thinking of the evil influences that would affect him and his family while living so close to the city of Sodom.

Apl. Emphasize the difference between temporal things that have little value and eternal things that will never lose their value.

- Sodom was known for its sinful and immoral people. Their manner of life was scandalous in the eyes of Jehovah.

Cns. Depending on the maturity of your students, the sin of Sodom (sodomy or homosexuality), can be presented, communicating God's attitude towards this base manner of living.

- The term sodomy finds its roots in the name of the city, Sodom, where these acts were taking place.
- Lot's decision to live near Sodom almost cost him his life. It did cost him all of his possessions and also his wife.
- Little by little, Lot moved closer to Sodom until at last he was living in the city (Genesis 13:12).

Apl. The pathway of departure from God often happens gradually. At times, those who are on this path don't even realize what is happening as they drift away.

Apl. Children start on this path away from God when they stop coming to meetings, when they lose interest in the Bible, and when they make the things of the world a priority instead of seeking God.

- While Lot sought residence in the cities of the plain, Abram continued living in tents, moving from one place to another and seeking to live for the glory of God. He was focused on another city "**whose builder and maker is God**" (Hebrews 11:10).
- In keeping with His promises, God blessed Abram. Later on, He changed Abram's name to Abraham as an indication of what He was going to do in his life (Genesis.17:5).

- The name Abram means "exalted father". The name Abraham means "father of multitudes."

Cns. The teacher has the responsibility of presenting the truth that the Christian life is an attractive one.

SCENE No. 2. VISUAL AIDS: Figures of Abraham talking with Jehovah, while two angels make their way towards Sodom to warn Lot's family of the coming judgment. A sign saying: "Abraham interceding before Jehovah on behalf of the righteous in Sodom." Another sign saying "If there were 50, 45, 40 30 20 10 righteous people".

Inset: Abraham showing hospitality to three angels while they talk with him in his tent. A small sign saying: "The angels reveal to Abraham that he will have a son."

DEVELOPMENT:

- Abraham received a surprise visit from three angels sent from heaven with two messages.
- The first message was of blessing; a child that was to be born.
- The second message was the opposite; judgment was to fall on Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham had friends and relatives living in these cities.

Apl. God has sent messages of blessing and judgment to the world. The message of blessing



- is about salvation in His Son, sent from heaven. The message of coming judgment is that which is to come upon unbelievers. In the world we have friend and relatives who could be affected.
- Although Abraham did not know the identity of the visitors, he nevertheless invited them to eat with him (Hebrews 13:2).
 - After eating, two of the angels set out for Sodom. The Lord and Abraham continued their conversation, and Jehovah revealed His displeasure over the sin in Sodom.
 - Through this divine revelation, Abraham learns of pending judgment upon the city.
- Lsn.** God reveals His thoughts and purposes for the future to those who live in fellowship with Him.
- Abraham understood that a city in such a terrible condition deserved judgment, and he was concerned about his relatives living in Sodom.
 - Abraham, beseeching the Lord on behalf of Sodom, requested that judgment be withheld if fifty righteous people were found in the city. He continued to lower this number until he arrived at the number ten. He left off asking at this point, thinking that perhaps there would be this number of righteous persons in the city.
 - God in his mercy agreed with each petition that Abraham made.
- Prc.** The effectual fervent prayers of the righteous accomplish much (James 5:16). The primary application is to Elijah, but the same principle is at work in God's response to each of Abraham's petitions.
- Lsn.** God is rich in mercy, as His interchange with Abraham demonstrates.
- Lsn.** Abraham's communication with God reveals a God who is rich in mercy. (Ephesians 2:4.)
- God would have pardoned Sodom if there had been 10 righteous persons. This shows how highly God values those who trust in Him.
- Cns.** How many righteous persons would God find in a large city today?
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SCENE No. 3. VISUAL AIDS: The house of Lot in Sodom with figures of the two angels, Lot's wife and his two daughters. A sign saying: "The angels announce the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah."

DEVELOPMENT:

- The two angels reluctantly accepted Lot's invitation to stay in his home.
- Lot and his family listened to their message telling them that God was going to destroy Sodom.
- While this was happening, a group of wicked men gathered outside the closed door of Lot's home, with evil intentions in mind for the two visitors.
- It became very evident that the only thing the angels had to do in this city was to save Lot and his family, the very people for whom Abraham had prayed.



- Cmt.** Neither Lot nor his family were conscious of the great privilege of having a relative like Abraham, one who knew God and interceded on behalf of others.
- Cns.** Sunday school teachers should have a concern to pray for the children in their classes. If the children are aware of this interest in them, they will feel loved and cared for.

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- The angels insisted that Lot and his family leave the city in order to escape the coming destruction. Lot left to speak with his sons-in-law, but he seemed to them as one who was jesting (Genesis 19:14).

Cns. Christians who have lived a lack-luster testimony before their neighbours are often not taken seriously when they try to be serious about eternal matters.

- The angels had to urge Lot and his family to depart, for they seemed not to have much desire to leave Sodom.

Cmt. When someone lives in a sinful environment, that individual comes to accept sin as a normal occurrence. This produces insensitivity to the seriousness of the sin around. At the same time, the person loses the perspective that God hates sin.

- Finally, the angels take Lot, his wife and his two daughters out of the city of Sodom by force. The Lord had mercy on them because they, and no one else, had paid any attention to the warning given by the angels.

SCENE No. 4. VISUAL AIDS: In the distance, a split figure showing the city of Sodom intact on one side and enveloped in smoke on the other. Figures of Lot fleeing towards Zoar with his two daughters, and near the entrance to the city, a figure of his wife turned into a pillar of salt. In one corner, the figure of Lot's wife with the printed words, "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32).

A sign saying: "Lot flees with his two daughters while his wife is changed into a pillar of salt."

DEVELOPMENT:

- Taken out of the city by the angels, Lot and his family receive precise instructions from the angels so that they will not be destroyed.

- They are warned to escape for their lives and not to look behind. The angel's message is clear.

Sug. Apply the five points to the class:

1) ESCAPE FOR THY LIFE.

They must escape from the judgment that is about to fall.

2) LOOK NOT BEHIND

THEE. Conversion to Christ means separation from sin and all that is condemned to destruction.

3) **NEITHER STAY THOU IN ALL THE PLAIN.** Salvation is not a matter of leaving sin a little at a time, but rather of making a complete break with it.

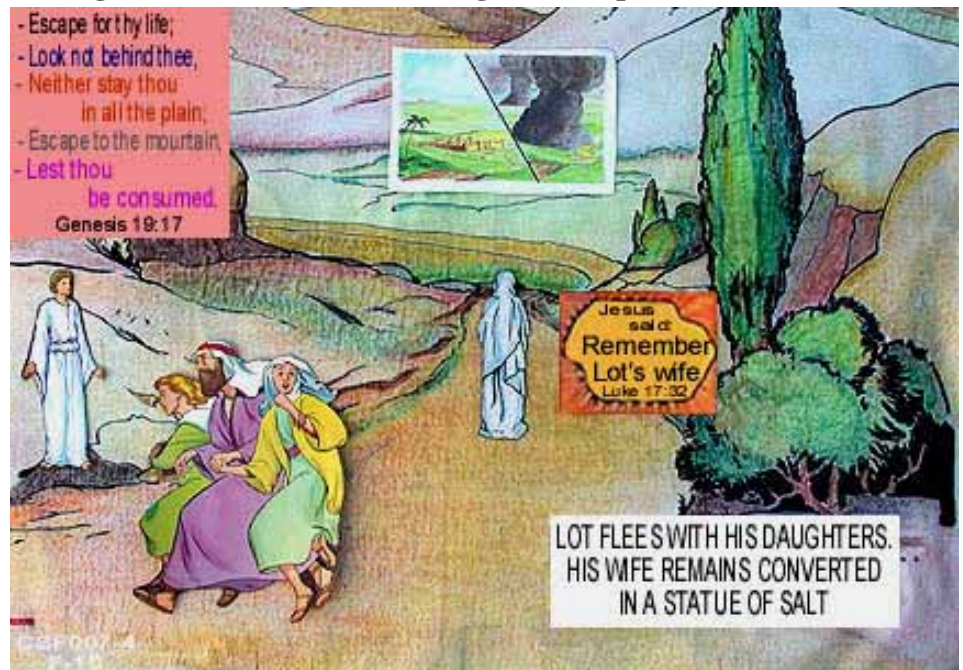
4) **ESCAPE TO THE MOUNT.** In the mountains, there was safety. At Calvary, there is refuge and safety from judgment.

5) **LEST THOU BE CONSUMED.** A warning with a clear message to escape the judgment. If they did not obey, they would perish.

- Lot begged God to let him take refuge in a small city. In His mercy, God granted him his petition (Genesis 19:19-21).

- Lot's wife had been taken from the city but lost her life because she did not believe the warning and disobeyed the clear instruction not to look behind.

- As the morning dawned the following day, Lot was safe inside Zoar, saved from the judgment about to fall.



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- Unable to delay judgment any longer, God caused the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to be destroyed, according to what had been prophesied by the angels (Genesis 19:23-24).

Sug. Use this opportunity to mention the warnings God gives us in His Word, for they will most certainly be fulfilled (Hebrews 10:31; Acts 17:31).

Apl. The Lord Jesus referred to Lot's wife as a warning to us today (Luke 17:32).

1. Lot's wife died knowing a place of refuge existed.
2. She died even though she saw the obedience of her husband and daughters.
3. She died even though someone prayed for her.
4. She was lost even though her hand had been held by the hand of an angel.
5. Her heart was still in Sodom, and she did not want a new way of life.

Cmt. All the privileges she had did not protect her.

Cns. Just as statues are built to remind us of the achievements of this world's heroes, the statue of salt made with the body of Lot's wife reminds us of how privileged she was and how, in spite of it all, she lost everything.

Apl. There are many students in the Sunday School that are just as privileged, but will be lost eternally if they do not obey the gospel. See Acts 17:30-31.

- In the end, there were only three righteous persons and the judgment on Sodom revealed who they were.

Apl. Before judgment comes upon this world, the Lord will return for His own. Only those who have heard and obeyed the message of salvation will be taken to Heaven.

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