



SODOM AND GOMORRAH

Genesis 13, 18, 19

Abraham and his nephew Lot separated when their flocks became too big for them to stay in the same land together. Lot chose to settle in the plain of the Jordan River, near Sodom.

Sodom was a wicked city; the people lived there did evil in the sight of God. Even so, Lot and his family moved inside the city walls.

When the Lord visited Abraham, he said, "I will go down to Sodom and to Gomorrah, and see if the people there are truly wicked. If so, I will destroy the two cities."

Now Abraham knew that Lot lived in Sodom. He pleaded with God, saying, "If there are fifty good people there, please don't destroy the city."

"For the sake of the fifty people, I will spare the city," said the Lord.

But Abraham was afraid that God would not find fifty good people. What if there were only forty-five? Or thirty? Or twenty? At last the Lord promised Abraham that he would spare the city for the sake of ten good people, but ten could not be found.

So the Lord sent angels to Sodom to warn Lot, his wife, and his daughters. Lot took the visitors into his home. The men of Sodom were so wicked that they were about to attack his guests but the angels struck the men blind.

"If you have anyone to take with you," one angel said, "gather them and run from this city." Lot went to tell some other men, but they laughed at his warnings. "Hurry!" the angels said. "Take your wife and daughters and get out of here!" Lot hesitated, so the angels grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and daughters and led them out of Sodom. "Run to the mountains!" one angel said. "Don't look back."

Lot asked if they could go to a town nearby, and the angels agreed. "But run quickly!" When Lot reached the town, the Lord rained burning sulfur from the heavens, destroying Sodom and Gomorrah. But Lot's wife looked back at Sodom, and she became a pillar of salt.