

# LESSON 10

## GOD DESTROYS SODOM AND GOMORRAH

### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### Sodom and Gomorrah

After God destroyed the entire world with the flood (Gen 6:5-7:24), the people had already forgotten the reason for this worldwide destruction. After the flood, the descendants of Ham founded the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 10:6-20). These cities were so evil that their wickedness reached up to heaven. Once again, God would bring His righteous destruction upon the wicked.

Abraham's nephew Lot was tempted by the lush greenery and well-watered plain of the Jordan when he separated from his uncle Abraham. After they separated, Lot eventually chose to settle in Sodom, near the city of Gomorrah. These cities were part of a group of cities known as "the cities of the plain" (Gen 13:12).

By placing himself in an unrighteous environment, Lot had failed to consider the temptations and trials he might face. Sodom appears to have been a morally corrupt city, as illustrated by how the men of Sodom attempted to homosexually rape God's angelic messengers (Gen 19:1-5). Because of their wickedness, the cities were destroyed in a firestorm of divine judgment.

Sodom and Gomorrah were located only a few miles from Hebron, the home of Abraham. Their location was probably at the north or south end of the Dead Sea as "you go toward Zoar," which was located at the southern end of the Dead Sea (Gen 13:10).

Around that area, there are vast beds of bitumen (tar, asphalt, or other petroleum products) on both sides of the Dead Sea and at the bottom. Under one of the mountains, people have found great quantities of sulfur gases. Some believe that God ignited these sulfur gases and created a great explosion. As both the salt and the sulfur were thrown into the sky red hot, it would literally have rained down fire and brimstone from heaven.

#### Lot's Wife

Only four people managed to get out—Lot, his wife, and their two daughters—but something went wrong with Lot's wife. She did contrary to what the angels instructed by looking back towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and thus turned into a pillar of salt (Gen 19:26). Only Lot and his two daughters were saved. All those who remained languishing in the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. The two cities were reduced to ashes.

Lot's wife was covered over with brimstone and she became a pillar of salt. At the south end of the Dead Sea, there are many pillars of salt that have been given the name "Lot's Wife." Indeed, everything about that area supports the biblical story of how God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

### BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 18:16-19:29

### BIBLE TRUTH

God preserves the righteous but destroys the evil.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To keep the word of God and stay righteous in the midst of wickedness.
2. To listen to and obey God.
3. To understand that sin can have major consequences.

### MEMORY VERSE

"The Lord knows the way of the righteous."

(Psalm 1:6a)

### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Thank You, Lord, for guiding us throughout the past week. We come again to worship You and learn more about You. Please help us to understand that You are the God who sees every single detail of our lives. When we sleep, You watch over us, when we get up, You watch over us; even when we disobey You, You watch over us. Please teach us to always listen to and obey You, unlike the people in Sodom and Gomorrah who practiced evil. We want to be right with You and shine for You! Hallelujah! Amen.

**Ignoring God's Mercy**

After the angels had warned Lot about the impending destruction, Lot went to warn his two son-in-laws. Instead of thanking Lot for the warning, they brushed off his

words as a joke and chose to remain in Sodom. Their mistake of ignoring God's mercy was one they paid for with their lives.

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## UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

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Your students are learning very quickly about the world around them. They are learning to read, so their world is expanding. They are also learning from the examples of people around them and learning right from wrong. At this age, the students' concepts of right and wrong are easily molded. Parents, teachers, pastors, and classmates all play a part in influencing a child's sense of morality. The words we use and the behaviors we model will have far-reaching effects.

As much as a person's actions can have positive effects, it can also have negative effects. Children are quick to pick up what is permissible and what is not. Therefore, when the people around them begin to do wrong, they are easily influenced. We as teachers need to instill in them the ability to discern right from wrong and to stick with the right, regardless of what their friends are doing. We can tell them to expect loneliness or to be seen as weird when they choose to do what is right. With that expectation, it might not come as quite a shock when they see the results of standing up for what is right. Although it may seem like others don't accept them, there is always Someone that they will please when they do what is right. Learning to

hold on to what is right at this age will be an invaluable asset when they reach adolescence, when peer pressure is at its highest.

It is important to convey a healthy fear of God to the students through this lesson about God's divine judgment; however, we must be careful not to create an atmosphere where the students become scared of God.

Note for the teachers: The wickedness in the two cities was homosexuality. Many people these days accept homosexuality as "the way that a person was born." That means that they think God created them that way and this simply is not true. God plainly tells us in the Bible that homosexuality is a sin and is not right, just like lying, stealing, killing, etc. are sins. God still loves the people, but He doesn't like the sin. It makes God sad when people choose to live this lifestyle.

Try to help the students see that this is not a lifestyle that God accepts. Even though it is seen in the world, in movies and on TV, God is not pleased with it or any other sin.

### VOCABULARY

**destroy:** to put an end to; to do away with

**judge:** someone who decides what is right and wrong

**pillar of salt:** a long, tall shape made out of salt

### REVIEW

We learned in the previous lesson that Abraham welcomed three visitors, and that one was God Himself. What did God say to Abraham? (That he would have a son in a year's time.) Sarah was listening near the front of the tent and laughed at God's promise. Why did she laugh? (She thought she was too old to have children; she thought that God wouldn't know that she had laughed.) What did Sarah do when God asked why she laughed? (She lied and said she hadn't.) What does this teach us? (That God knows everything we do and think.)

Note to teachers: Be sensitive to the students. There are parts of this story that may be too intense for younger students.

## BIBLE STORY

### God's Plan to Destroy Two Evil Cities

After the visitors ate and talked with Abraham, they got up to leave. Abraham was a very kind and good man, so he got up and walked with them part of the way. They were going towards two evil cities, called Sodom and Gomorrah. Does anyone know why these cities were considered evil? [Allow students to offer suggestions.]

The cities were evil because the people inside the cities did bad things that God did not like. Because the people did these things, God was very sad. Because they did not listen to God, God was going to destroy the cities and everything in them. [Make two towers out of paper. Label one "S" and the other "G" to represent the two cities.] God saw everything that they did and everything was evil. They did not choose to do what was good and right.

God shared with Abraham His plan to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Do we have a good friend we can share our plans with? [Allow students to share.] Sometimes, it is a good idea to talk to our friends about things that are happening to us. We can have many friends, but God should be our most important friend. We must become a friend of God. We are God's friends when we listen to Him and do what is right in His eyes.

### Abraham Pleads for Sodom and Gomorrah

Do you remember that Abraham had three visitors and that one was God? The other two visitors were angels of God. Has anyone ever seen an angel? These angels looked just like normal men, but they were angels. The two angels left Abraham and continued on to Sodom, but God stayed with Abraham.

After God told Abraham His plan to destroy the two evil cities, Abraham asked God, "Will You destroy the good people with the wicked? What if there are fifty good people in the city? You would not kill the good along with the evil, would You? You are the Judge of all the earth; won't You do what is right?"

God answered, "If I find fifty good people in the city of Sodom, then I will not destroy it."

Abraham was asking God to spare the city if there were fifty good people in the city. Do you know why? Abraham was most likely asking God to save the city of Sodom because his nephew Lot lived there. Abraham still loved Lot very much. Abraham did not want him to be destroyed along with the evil city.

[Prepare fifty small items (e.g., dominoes, coins, etc.) to represent fifty people. Let the students know that these people represent the fifty righteous people for whom Abraham prayed.]

Then Abraham asked God another question, "What if there are only forty-five good people in the city? Would You still destroy the city if there are forty-five good people?"

God said, "I will not destroy the city if there are forty-

five good people in the city."

[Have a student take away five of the small items representing the righteous people in Abraham's prayer and continue to do so according to the story, until there are only ten people left.]

Abraham kept asking God the same question again and again until the number went from forty-five, to forty, to thirty, to twenty, and finally to ten.

During the last exchange, God told Abraham, "I will not destroy the city if there are ten good people in the city."

Abraham kept asking God to spare the city if there were still good people in the city. Why do you think Abraham asked so many times, making the number smaller each time? [Allow students to answer.] Although the Bible doesn't say the exact reason, Abraham was probably worried that there wouldn't be fifty righteous people in the city. Can you imagine that? In the entire city, there were less than fifty people who did good things in the eyes of God. Abraham asked until the number was down to ten. Abraham thought that maybe there would be at least ten good people left, and then the city would not be destroyed.

### Lot and the Two Angels

Now the two angels arrived at Sodom in the night after they left Abraham. When they got to Sodom, Lot was sitting at the gate of the city. When Lot saw the two angels, who probably looked like ordinary men, he got up to meet them, bowed down, and said, "Please stay at my house tonight. After you rest, you can go on your way."

The two angels said, "No, we will spend the night in the open square."

But Lot kept asking the two angels to be his house guests, so they agreed. When they got to his house, Lot prepared a meal for the guests to eat.

### The Evil Men of Sodom

After Lot's two guests had finished eating, there was a sound outside the door. Do you know who was at the door? [Let students answer.] Bad people were. Evil men, young and old, who lived in Sodom, came knocking at Lot's door. These evil men wanted Lot to bring out his two guests so that they could do bad things to them and hurt them. They didn't know that the two guests were really God's angels because they looked like regular men.

Lot went outside to talk to the evil men. Lot was careful to shut the door behind him. He said to them, "Do not do this evil thing. These men are my guests."

But the evil men said to Lot, "You moved to this city just to stay for a while, and now you are acting like you are a judge! We'll treat you worse than them if you don't let us in!"

**Struck with Blindness**

The evil men began to push very hard against Lot. The men pushed so hard they almost broke down the door. The two angels reached out and pulled Lot back inside the house. After that, they shut the door and made the evil men outside blind and confused. Now the evil men couldn't find the door.

The two angels asked Lot a question. "Is there anyone else here who is a part of your family? Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place!"

So Lot went out that night and spoke to his two daughters and their husbands. When the husbands heard that God was going to destroy the city, they thought that Lot was joking.

**Lot and His Family Run for Their Lives**

Soon, it was almost morning. The two angels said to Lot, "Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters and run, or else you will also be destroyed."

Lot heard what the angels of God told him to do, but Lot didn't look like he wanted to leave. So the angels took Lot's hand and the hands of his wife and his daughters and they left. After the angels led them safely out of the city, one of the angels said, "Run for your lives! Don't look back, and don't stop anywhere until you get to the mountains, or else you will be destroyed."

But Lot saw that the mountains were too far away for them to run to. So he asked the angels if he could run to a small town nearby called Zoar (Zoar means "small"). The

angels agreed and waited until Lot and his family reached that town. When they arrived in the little town, God rained down burning fire and salt from the heavens. It totally destroyed the two cities and everyone in them. [Crush the paper towers representing Sodom and Gomorrah to illustrate this to your students.] When we crush something like papers towers, it may seem small. But God destroyed two entire cities and all the people. It was something very big!

**A Pillar of Salt**

The angels warned Lot and his family to keep running and not look back. But on their way out of the city, Lot's wife did not listen to the angels and looked back! She turned into a pillar of salt. That is like a statue that is made out of salt.

Early the next morning, Abraham got up and went to the place where he had begged God to save the city. Abraham then looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah. He saw very thick smoke coming from the area, and knew that the Lord could not even find even ten good people in Sodom. Because of the great wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah, they were destroyed. But Abraham was thankful that Lot was spared. That was the mercy of God.

Today, none of us wants to be destroyed. God loves each of us very much, but He also wants us to do what is right. There are many lessons that we can learn from this story, but the most important teaching is that we must listen to God. This means to obey and do what is right.

**CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING**

- 1. Where did the Lord send the two angels?** Sodom and Gomorrah.
- 2. Why did the Lord send the two angels to the two cities?** To see if there were any righteous people left.
- 3. When Abraham asked for the last time, the Lord agreed not to destroy the wicked city if there were how many good people left?** Ten.
- 4. What did the evil men of the city try to do to the angels at Lot's house?** They tried to hurt them.
- 5. What did the angels tell Lot to do and why?**  
Take his family and run out of the city because God was going to destroy the city.
- 6. If we don't want to be destroyed, what should we do?**  
We should be good, learn to listen to God's teachings, and do what is good.
- 7. What would have happened to Lot if he had decided not to listen to the angels?**  
Lot would have been burned up and destroyed along with Sodom.
- 8. What happened to Lot's wife? She looked back and turned into a pillar of salt.**
- 9. Why do you think Lot's wife looked back at the city?**  
Maybe she was worried about her house or something else in the city. But the teaching is that Lot's wife did not listen to the angels who told her not to look back.
- 10. Where did Lot and his family run to?** Zoar.

**MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE**

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.  
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**"The Lord knows the way of the righteous." (Psalm 1:6a)**

## SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

**We must learn to listen to and obey God. This means doing what is good.**

1. It is good to be afraid of God's punishment, but we should know that God loves us very much, just like our parents.  
 How do you know that your parents love you? (They sacrifice their time and energy to care for you.)  
 How do you know that God loves you? (He created all things for us to enjoy and He gave us free salvation.)  
 How can you show that you obey your parents? (By doing what they ask of you.)  
 How can you show that you obey God? (By following God's commandments wholeheartedly.)
2. How do we do what is right, when all our friends are doing something wrong?  
 (For example, your friends don't think it's wrong to say bad words so they say them.)
3. Come up with a plan to turn away from doing bad things. What can you do or say?  
 (You can pray to God immediately and ask Him to give you the courage to run away from doing bad things.)
4. What kind of things might happen to us if we do bad things?  
 (We can find ourselves in dangerous situations if we are not careful.)  
 Do you think we have consequences for the bad things we do?  
 (Yes, we have consequences for the wrong choices that we make.)

## ACTIVITIES

1

### **Sin Can Cause Great Damage**

**Objective:** To illustrate what it is like when we let sin enter into our hearts.

#### **Materials**

- Coffee filters
- Washable markers
- Water

#### **Instructions**

Let the kids mark on the filters. Now dip them in water. The water will cause the marks to blend together. Share how sin in our lives grows until it has blended into everything. It may look pretty from far away, but sin trips us in our journey of faith and causes great damage. Talk to the students about disasters. Make sure they do not think that God caused them to happen. God wants the best for us. He does not want to hurt us or make us do evil. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because God could not find anyone who loved Him, except for Lot and his family. The people did not love God and were doing wicked things.

2

### **Story Circle**

**Objective:** To allow the students to review the story.

#### **Instructions**

1. Have one student begin relating today's Bible story. After a few sentences (or even in mid-sentence), he should stop and let the student next to him continue.
2. Continue until the whole story is finished.

#### **Note**

- If the story is finished quickly, you may want to review some previous stories.
- Teaching aids such as characters made out of felt and felt boards are especially helpful. As the story is being told, the characters can be put up on the board for easier visualization.

**3****Salt Pictures / Optional**

**Objective:** To remind the students to listen and obey by reminding them of what happened to Lot's wife when she didn't obey.

**Materials**

- Pieces of cardboard
- Colored chalk
- Salt
- Glue
- Egg carton

**Instructions**

1. Ask students to draw a picture on the cardboard of how they can listen to and obey God. Crush the chalk and mix it with salt in the egg cartons to keep the colors apart.
2. Spread glue over one area of the picture at a time. Sprinkle the desired color of salt on the glue and shake off excess salt onto a sheet of paper. Repeat this until the whole design is done. Now the students have something unique to hang on the fridge to remind them of the story.

**HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY**

1. Sodom, Gomorrah
2. ten
3. blind
4. salt
5. A
6. B
7. C
8. True
9. False; Abraham pleaded with God to save Sodom.
10. False; Lot's son-in-laws and their wives stayed in Sodom and Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt.
11. Answers may vary.

E1 Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 10—God Destroys Sodom and Gomorrah

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** God preserves the righteous but destroys the evil.

- Lesson Objectives:**
1. To keep the word of God and stay righteous in the midst of wickedness.
  2. To listen to and obey God.
  3. To understand that sin can have major consequences.

**Bible Reading:** Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Psalm 1:6a)

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## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Homework Assignment

*Understanding What You Have Learned*

## Fill In the Blanks

(salt      ten      Sodom      Gomorrah      blind)

1. The Lord sent the two angels to two cities called \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. When Abraham asked for the last time, the Lord agreed not to destroy the wicked city if there were \_\_\_\_\_ good people left in the city.
3. The angels made the evil men who were at Lot's door \_\_\_\_\_ so they could not find their way.
4. Lot's wife turned into a pillar of \_\_\_\_\_ because she turned around.

## Multiple Choice

5. \_\_\_\_ : Why did God destroy the two cities?
  - a. The cities were evil.
  - b. They listened to what was good.
  - c. They did not do anything against God.
6. \_\_\_\_ : What did the angels tell Lot to do?
  - a. Stay where he lived and wait for God's sign.
  - b. Take his family and run out of the city because God was going to destroy the city.
  - c. Wait for Abraham to save him and his family.
7. \_\_\_\_ : Why was Lot saved before the city was destroyed?
  - a. Abraham prayed to God.
  - b. The angels of God were sent to save Lot and he listened to what the angels told him.
  - c. All of the above.

## True or False

8. God planned to destroy two evil cities called Sodom and Gomorrah. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Abraham did not care what happened to Lot, who was living in Sodom. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Lot and his whole family listened to the angels and got out safely. \_\_\_\_\_

## Life Application

11. We all have to learn to listen to God, our parents, and our teachers. They teach us what is good.

Write down two things your parents teach you to do that are good.

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Write down two things God teaches you to do that are good.

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Write down two things your teacher teaches you to do that are good.

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