



## *The Road to Sodom*

*by Gene Easley*

*"Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly" (Genesis 13:11-13).*

Lot did not instantly move to the city of Sodom when he departed from Abraham. He went first to the well-watered plains of Jordan. Lot was a man who was looking out for himself. He knew the plains of Jordan offered far more opportunity for advancement than the part of Canaan that had become Abraham's portion. Then he saw Sodom. It was a prosperous city. Financially, the opportunities beckoned. He began pitching his tent toward that city and started his journey on the road toward Sodom.

In Lot's heart, he quickly began to value the things that Sodom valued. The people of Sodom did not care about the things of God, but money and pleasure captured their hearts. It does not appear that Lot ever fell into the sin for which Sodom is known, but for convenience sake he tolerated its ungodly ways. It is apparent that Lot's two daughters who escaped the judgment on Sodom however, did bring with them a disregard for high moral values when they initiated incest with their father.

How did the city of Sodom arrive at a place of total degradation without someone along the way stepping in and changing its course? In military operations there are strongholds that military units establish--places where opposition is totally suppressed. Perhaps, this is what happened in Sodom. No one dared speak out against the lifestyle of the Sodomites. Lot kept silent, too, so that he could enjoy the good life and the luxuries of Sodom.

My contention is that as Sodom advanced toward the day of God's judgment and total destruction, there had to have been some of its residents who realized they were going in the wrong direction. For some reason, they yielded their God-given duty and God-given right to lift their voice and change the course. As horrible as the sin of Sodom was, equally horrible was the sin of those who remained silent and refused to be a voice for righteousness.

Many of the major Christian denominations in America began in a true pursuit of God. Salvation of the soul, separation from sin, righteousness, and faith were all on their agendas. But today most of them have deviated from the original course, and many find themselves on the road to Sodom--seemingly with no one bearing a strong enough voice to change their direction.

When John Wesley laid the foundation for the Methodist Church, he would never have dreamed that his organization would find itself on the way to Sodom, unable to purge out the old leaven. During his life there never would have been a discussion among his fellow workers as to whether homosexuals should be ordained for ministry in the Methodist Church. But between the 1700s, when Wesley's movement began, and today, enough voices have been silenced to allow the ungodliness of Sodom to take a stronghold among the Methodists.

In Isaiah 1:10, God labeled His own people of Israel with the names of Sodom and Gomorrah. Speaking to Israel, Isaiah stated, "Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah." What a sad testimony for those who name the name of the Lord! Isaiah prophesied of coming judgment and desolation. The road to Sodom is always the road to judgment.

In 1962, at the age of 19, I was saved in a small church that belonged to one of the larger Pentecostal denominations in America. At that time most of the Pentecostal churches still preached a message of dedication to God and a denunciation of sin. They worshipped God with fervency and whole heartedness (thankfully, some of them still do). Many of their church periodicals printed inspiring testimonies and studies of Scripture that gave the reader spiritual help and encouragement. Today, some of those same publications now center mostly on social and humanitarian topics with a slant toward glorifying Hollywood and other famous celebrities and stars. They are on a path taking them from their original course. Because of an effort to please men instead of God, they have not been able to escape the drift toward Sodom. They, as well as the mainline denominations, are on that road to destruction. If we are not going toward God, we are headed toward Sodom.

In our day, traffic is heavy on the road to Sodom. It is not just among those who do not claim Christ, but it also involves those who make a profession to be a part of His church. Jesus warned that the last days would be as the days of Lot: "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;"<sup>29</sup> But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.<sup>30</sup> Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:28-30).

You cannot forsake Christ and His righteousness and end up anywhere else but Sodom. America has taken the road to Sodom, and we do not have strong enough voices speaking out to stem the tide. Pastors have become fearful that they will be called "fire and brimstone" preachers if they stand up strongly against sin and immorality. They are afraid of losing popularity and of being mocked. So, they have backed away from denouncing sin. We are without a voice.

We are told that we need a "broad" mind. But the Christian is not called of God to have a "broad" mind. We are called to have a pure mind, a holy mind, a mind whose thoughts and opinions are based on the Holy Scriptures. And if we follow a call to holiness and purity, we will not end up on the road to Sodom.

We have witnessed pastors and church leaders begin to surrender a little in one area and then in another until the enemy destroyed the power of godly conviction in the church. The result is that the enemy has gained a stronghold. All voices that oppose the new permissive lifestyles are silenced, and these compromisers and all who follow them find themselves on the road to Sodom.

What are the Methodists doing today? What are the Episcopalians doing? What are the Presbyterians doing? They have found themselves at the gates of Sodom, and the sad testimony is that many of them have decided that they can't turn back. They will also find themselves suffering the judgment that awaits them for their actions. The judgment of Sodom was not a one-time event. God always judges sin.

How did Sodom find itself in the immoral and sinful situation it was in? There simply were not enough strong or persuasive voices along the way to help change its course. The only road away from Sodom is the road back to the Cross of Calvary. "Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21) is the only answer.