

in the city of refuge; but rather encouraged to flee at once to the hope set before them in the Gospel. The voice of Jesus is still saying: Come unto Me and rest. "Lay down thou weary one lay down thy head upon my breast."

[ORIGINAL.]

"Sodom Destroyed."

Gen. 19: 1-29

BY MISS DORA ALLEN.

Verse 1. "There came two angels"—Are not angels ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister to them who are heirs of salvation? Heb. 1: 14. Did not the Lord send them to His servant Lot, to show him the way of escape from the destruction of Sodom?

2. This verse is a fulfilment of the command of the Holy Ghost, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Heb. 13: 2. The washing of the feet, was a general custom of the East. Does it not bring before us two scenes in our Lord's life specially? The first, where this common hospitality was denied to him. Luke 7: 44. The second, where He Himself condescended to wash the feet of His disciples. John 13.

3. This verse reminds us of another scene in our Saviour's life, when He was urged to come in, and tarry with His disciples, and when He was made known to them in the breaking of bread. Luke 24: 28. Do we invite the Saviour into our hearts, our homes? Is He ever a welcome guest at our feasts?

4-7. The wickedness of those amongst whom Lot was living, is seen in these verses. Mark the contrast between their conduct and His, and yet notice one sad thing, viz., how he identifies himself with them, instead of being thoroughly distinct from them, this is seen in the terms in which he addresses them, "brethren"—rather ought he not to have looked upon them as "enemies" for, were they not his Father's enemies. "Do I not hate them that hate Thee?—I count them mine enemies." Ps. 139: 21: 22.

8-11. "Who made thee a prince?" &c. His inconsistency of character had taken away any respect the might have had for him. See how when man's power fails, and his danger is great, the Lord shews Himself strong in the behalf of His servant, striking the enemy with blindness! A type of the Lord's ultimate dealings with the wicked, when they shall be "cast into outer darkness." Matt. 8: 12. Notice some other instances of sudden blindness being inflicted as a judgment. 2 Kings 6: 18; Acts 13: 11.

12. "Hast thou here any beside?" What a solemn question! Are all in whom we are interested safe? Are our relatives, our friends, our Sabbath scholars all saved? "Whatsoever thou hast" bring with thee to Jesus, the only safe refuge—this implies that we ourselves know the way to that Saviour. Do we?

13-14. The time had come for the threatening judgment to be poured out; yet they all went on as

usual, mocking the messages of love and mercy,—and is it not so now? How do we receive the messages we hear? As those who despise them, or as those who believe them?

15-16. "Arise"! What a rousing word! Don't be content to sit still, hoping that things are not so bad as they are said to be—but *arise*, cast away whatever hinders your running for your life to Jesus—linger not one moment. "*Now* is the accepted time—*now* is the day of Salvation." Arise therefore, *now*, and flee to Jesus, the sure resting place—the safe refuge.

17. "Escape for thy life"—all depends upon fleeing *now*—your soul is in danger—turn at once to Jesus, He promises "eternal life" to all who come, and that which He promises, He gives. "Look not behind thee;" for, if we are running *in earnest*, we dare not pause to look back—rather shall we say with Paul, "forgetting those things which are behind, I press toward" Jesus. The world's allurements, the world's pleasures, all left behind. "And stay not in all the plain" but "seek these things which are above," having your affections *there*. Col. 3: 1, 2.

18-22. In Lot's request being granted, we may take courage, and realize the truth of that promise, "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him." Ps. 145: 19. Let us remember too, that we have an High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Heb. 4: 15.

23-25. The threatened destruction came, so soon as God's servant was safe—and are not God's judgments *now* delayed, simply till God's people (whom He Himself calls "the salt of the earth," Matt. 5: 13, on account of their preserving character) are safe, then shall the snares, fire, and brimstone fall upon the wicked, (Ps. 11: 6;) and they shall not escape. Oh may God lead us each one, *now* to Himself!

26-29. "His wife looked back"—how many seem to come out! How many make a profession, whose hearts are still in the world! How many are "almost" saved, yet "altogether" lost! Well may we take heed to our Lord's words, "Remember Lot's wife." Luke 17: 32. Let us see that "we are not of them that draw back unto perdition" but rather, that we are among them that believe, to the saving of the soul." Heb. 10: 38, 39.

From this history we may learn:—

1st. The danger of uniting with the world. It holds out many inducements, but destruction *shall* come upon it; therefore we must "come out and be separate" as saith the Lord, 1 Cor. 6: 17, that we be not "partakers of her sins." Rom. 18: 4. We are not called to go forth *alone*, for it is to meet Jesus *without* the camp. Heb. 13: 13.

2nd. We are all to act, as God's angels acted here, pulling those with whom we come in contact out of the fire. Jude 23. And seeking to save many brands from that burning, which is eternal. Zech. 3: 2.

3rd. We see the security of God's people, they are saved, though it may be "as by fire." 1 Cor. 3: 15.