

Esoteric Bible Studies

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TEXT

17. And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

18. And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord.

19. Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

20. Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one. Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

21. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

22. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

23. The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

24. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

25. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

26. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.—*Genesis* 19:17-26.

INTERPRETATION

The story of Lot in one of its interpretations is the story of the evolution of man. The entire 19th chapter of *Genesis* is filled with the deepest es-

oteric truth. Lot represents a certain state of development in man, that development wherein he is not sufficiently awakened spiritually to find his guiding light within, and must therefore obey the instructions of a teacher. Abraham was such a teacher. All through the life story of Lot we find that when he followed the advice of Abraham all was well with him, and when he disobeyed Abraham, or followed his own inclinations, he always found himself in trouble. The reason for this is given in *Genesis* 13:12: "Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent toward Sodom," meaning that he was not, as spiritually advanced as Abraham.

Lot enjoyed four great benefits through his relationship with Abraham. He received wealth, large tracts of land, was rescued from thirty-six kings who pursued him, and was saved from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. According to one interpretation of this story of Lot, the angels represented the spiritual powers within himself that were being awakened by his endeavor to follow the instructions given to him by Abraham. Verse 17 is a reminder that everyone upon the path of development is constantly receiving instructions through the voice of his higher self, the angel within: "Stay not in the plain"—that means the lower levels of consciousness—"lest thou be consumed, but escape to the mountain." Spiritualize the mind, learn to know the divinity within all things or, as Max Heindel so beautifully expresses it, learn to look beyond the often unprepossessing exteriors of our brothers and seek to serve the divine essence that is hidden within.

Lot, however, was too material-minded as yet to flee to the mountains. This

accomplishment requires a long and arduous preparation, for remember *the mind is the path*. So in verses 19 and 20 we find him asking to be permitted to go to a near-by city, saying that there his soul would live. "Zoar" means "little," and "city" refers to a state of consciousness. Lot had gained some spiritual sight. Later, as described in verse 30, we find him going to the mountain with his two daughters but he does not commune with God from the mountain top. Instead, *he lives in a cave*, the cave representing also a certain state of development in man's progress toward godhood.

Verse 26 contains a deep esoteric truth. The word "salt" is used many times in the Bible both literally and figuratively to represent both the *material* and the *spiritual*, and it refers always to suffering, overcoming, and regeneration. Many of the most profound secrets of early alchemy are hidden in the word "salt." In verse 17 the angel admonishes Lot, "Look not behind thee." In verse 26 his wife disobeys this command and is turned into a pillar of salt, which represents retrogression; for of one who has once started upon the path and then turns back to the world of material living, the Master said, "The last state of that man is worse than the first."

The first battle in which Lot was taken prisoner was fought in the valley of Siddim near the Salt Sea. We learn in the Rosierucian school of the Christian Mysteries the esoteric meaning of the letters I. N. R. I. which were placed above the cross of Christ Jesus. "I" stands for the Hebrew word "Iam" which means salt; it refers to materiality, namely, the pillar of salt represented by Lot's wife. "N" comes from the Hebrew word "Nour," which is fire or spirit. "Rauch" is the Hebrew word for air or mind; and "Iabahsh" is the new body, the regeneration of the body, or the spiritual meaning of salt—Max Heindel aptly calls it, "the salt of the earth." It is in this connection that the

Master used the word "salt" when He said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour (as Lot's wife did), wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."—*Matt.* 5:13.

The apostle Paul also used the word "salt" in its highest significance in his epistle to the Colossians when he said, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt (meaning with the power of the spirit), that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."—*Col.* 4:6. The early alchemists wrote of universal salt, meaning Chaos, or the feminine or mother substance out of which all things are made.

The term salt is also used most interestingly in describing the location and position of the Twelve Tribes of Israel; referring always to overcoming and regeneration through the lifting of the feminine principle or the heart power of the ego.

The three great alchemical substances were Sulphur, Mercury, and Salt, or Fire, Air, and Water. Salt is always considered feminine and is therefore used to designate water and also the moon, both feminine. The looking back of Lot's wife refers to the lower feminine in manifestation. Sulphur, Salt, and Mercury represent the elements of Fire, Water, and Air. With the lowering of the vibrations of these three elements the physical bodies of the earth and of man have been made. It is the new element that is to be made through the lifting of the feminine or Salt principle that is to redeem the earth and regenerate humanity. The woman in Revelation stands clothed with the sun, with the moon, or lower feminine principle (Lot's wife), under her feet. This is the symbol of future attainment for all mankind.

No action, whether foul or fair, is ever done, but it leaves somewhere a record.—*Longfellow.*