

On the Streets of Sodom

Text: Gen. 19:1-13; 23-29; Romans 1:18-32

Introduction:

1. This chapter documents the fearful judgment of God upon Sodom and its sister cities. It also records the sad conclusion to Lot's life; a warning to the backslidden believer of the kind of dishonour one can bring to the Name of Christ through living a defeated, worldly life.
2. In this message we will focus on the city of Sodom, its wickedness and its judgment by God with reference to Romans 1. Sodom, Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain are "set forth for an example" (Jude 1:7) in the Word of God as a warning of sinful depravity and God's judgment upon it. God willing, next lesson we will consider Lot and his sad end.
3. We will study the sins of Sodom and God's judgment upon them under four headings as follows:
 - The Cause of Sodom's Sins
 - The Culture promoting Sodom's Sins
 - The Character of Sodom's Sins
 - The Consequences of Sodom's Sins

I. THE CAUSE OF SODOM'S SINS (Vs. 4-5; Rom. 1:20-24)

At this juncture, we could pose the question, "How did Sodom get to such a depraved place as a society?" Romans 1 answers that question and reveals that there are at least five steps involved that lead to the sins of Sodom. We could call this "the staircase to hell". We can summarize these five steps with five words. The first word is...

A. Irreverence (Vs. 21a)

1. They failed to glorify the Creator – "glorified him not as God".
 - a. They started with a knowledge of God but turned from the Creator and failed to glorify Him. Since the chief end of man is to glorify God (Rev. 4:11), this is a most serious sin and is the starting point of the slippery slope downwards.
 - b. Note: Romans 1 teaches the opposite to what Evolutionists insist in relation to religion. The Evolutionist applies his "evolving" idea to religious belief and claims that mankind started with primitive beliefs and eventually evolved to the Christian concept of One God. Of course, they then believe they are the most enlightened and can scrap the concept of God altogether! The Bible (the Truth!) demonstrates the opposite. Man begins with a knowledge of the Creator and then over time, degenerates into idolatry. So, it is not polytheism to monotheism but monotheism to polytheism, pantheism and all the other "isms" of man!
2. They failed to thank the Creator – "neither were thankful". Unthankfulness to God is the fountainhead of wickedness.

B. Imaginations (Vs. 21b)

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1. Vain thoughts – the word ‘vain’ means empty, futile, foolish. When man empties his mind of honourable thoughts towards the One True God, he leaves a vacuum that will inevitably be filled with evil.
2. Darkened hearts – the rejection of the light brings spiritual darkness over the heart.

C. Ignorance (Vs. 22)

1. The Illusion – they thought they were wise (Vs. 22a).
 - a. professing’ = they affirm or claim this of themselves.
 - b. Speaks of one puffed up in pride. How tragic and foolish to be proud about that which they ought to be ashamed!
 - c. The Philosophers of Greece and Rome indulged in “boundless extravagances of skepticism, doubting or denying what was evident to common sense!” (Haldane)
 - d. How we see this self-delusion in the 21st century denial of God under the banner of “intellectualism” falsely so called.
2. The Reality – they were fools (Vs. 22b). The English word ‘moron’ comes from this Greek word. This is the worst kind of ignorance when one thinks they are enlightened and wise when in reality they are deceived and deluded.

D. Idolatry (Vs. 23, 24)

1. The Deification of Man (Vs. 23a)
 - a. It is no surprise that when man rejects the Creator God, the first idol he worships is himself!
 - b. What a tragic change - “incorruptible God...corruptible man”.
 - c. Consider the following excerpt from the Humanist Manifesto 2:

In the best sense, religion may inspire dedication to the highest ethical ideals. The cultivation of moral devotion and creative imagination is an expression of genuine “spiritual” experience and aspiration. We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. **Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence** (does Evolution qualify!!!???) in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so...We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of survival and fulfillment of the human race. **As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity. Nature may indeed be broader and deeper than we now know; any new discoveries, however, will but enlarge our knowledge of the natural.... While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.**¹

2. The Deification of Animals (Vs. 23b)
 - a. Birds – e.g., the Romans worshipped the Eagle.
 - b. Beasts – e.g., the golden calf.
 - c. Creeping things. For example:
 - i. Snakes were worshipped by the Greeks.
 - ii. Dung beetles were worshipped by the Egyptians.

¹ <https://americanhumanist.org/what-is-humanism/manifesto2/>

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- iii. Note the progression downwards! Man does not evolve in his intellect when he rejects the Creator God; he devolves into ignorance and blindness.
 - d. Note: It is of interest that with the rise of humanism in the West, there has been a corresponding rise in the popularity of Eastern idolatrous Religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and the New Age).
3. The Deification of Nature (Vs. 25)
- a. The word 'changed' carries the idea of an exchange (e.g., exchanging trade). It refers not to a turning of a thing into something else but the replacement of one thing for another. They exchange truth for falsehood and the worship of the Creator for the worship of the creature.
 - b. We see this worship of nature in the green movement of today which not only elevates animals and nature above God but also above mankind. We are living in a day where animals and trees have more rights and protections than the unborn. The sins of Sodom go hand in hand with the worship of nature. We shouldn't be surprised that the Greens party which promotes the religion of environmentalism is also the party most vehemently committed to the Sodomite agenda.

E. Immorality (Vs. 24)

1. The human side. The phrase "for this cause" means "because of this". It is a reference to the preceding actions by man.
2. The Divine side. Notice that God is the one who gives them up to this sin as an act of judgment. God is not a neutral by stander when it comes to man's rebellion against Him.

II. THE CULTURE ENCOURAGING SODOM'S SINS (Ez. 16:49)

This verse reveals the climate in which the depravity of Sodom flourished. Sodom was:

- A. Proudful** – "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, **pride**, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." (Ez. 16:49)
1. Is it not significant that the slogan and catch cry of the Sodomite movement is the word 'pride'? It is all about an arrogant flaunting of their depravity in the face of Almighty God.
 2. The word 'PRIDE' has been associated with the Sodomite agenda from the 1960s. PRIDE was an organization formed in Los Angeles, California in 1966 by Steve Ginsburg and stood for "Personal Rights in Defence and Education".
- B. Pleasure driven (hedonistic)** - "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, **pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters,**" (Ez. 16:49)

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1. A society that makes pleasure the chief end of man's existence is a society that slides very rapidly into depraved perversion.
2. Henry Morris writes, "The prosperity of the region that so impressed Lot was likely also the cause of the extreme wickedness of the cities. With all their material needs taken care of, and with an abundance of leisure time, the people developed a moral laxity which soon became gross corruption, until finally God could endure it no longer."

C. Pitiless – "...neither did she strengthen the hand of **the poor and needy**." (Ez. 16:49) A society that becomes taken over with the pursuit of the fulfilment of fleshly lusts will become cruel and uncaring towards the vulnerable and needy. We see this very thing happening in our own country. While there is much rhetoric about compassion and care of the vulnerable, we now have state sanctioned murder of society's most vulnerable.

III. THE CHARACTER OF SODOM'S SINS (GEN. 19:4-11; ROM. 1:24-27)

A. The Popularity of their Sin (Vs. 4)

1. The sin of Sodomy was accepted and promoted by old and young alike. Like a cancer, it had permeated the whole society. Notice the language used by the Biblical writer to emphasis this point – "the men of Sodom...both old and young, all the people from every quarter."
2. You know a nation is in a terrible state when the sins of Sodom are being promoted to its children. It is wicked and evil thing for full grown adults to choose such a lifestyle but to promote such depravity to children and young people in their formative years is unspeakably wicked, vile and demonic.

B. The Publicness of their Sin (Vs. 4)

1. Sodom's citizens had no shame at all about seeking to commit this heinous act in public. Isaiah 3:9 "They declare their sin as Sodom, **they hide it not**".
2. When a society goes public with its perversity, this is not a sign of progress! It is a sign that as a nation we are on the bottom rung of the Romans 1 ladder.

C. The Perversity of their Sin (Vs. 5)

Let us remind ourselves of God's Mind on the sin of Sodomy. There are at least 10 Biblical points that expose this sin for what it is. It is:

1. An Abominable Sin (Lev. 18:22)

- a. The Sodomite activity is an abomination. Lev 18:22 "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is **abomination**."
- b. The Sodomite appearance is an abomination. God's Word is crystal clear that the distinction of the sexes is to be maintained in outward appearance.
 - i. Deut. 22:5 "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so **are abomination** unto the LORD thy God."

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- ii. 1 Cor. 6:9 “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor **effeminate**, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,” The word ‘effeminate’ is translated ‘soft’ three times in the New Testament and in this context is a reference to the sin of Sodomy.²
- iii. 1 Cor. 11:14-15 “Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have **long hair, it is a shame unto him?** But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for a covering.”
- iv. God’s Word is clear. The masculinization of women and the feminization of men is repulsive to Almighty God. It is right and Biblical to maintain a clear distinction in dress between the sexes and this is more important than ever in our day of gender confusion.

2. A Death Deserving Sin (Lev. 20:13)

- a. The law of God reveals the mind of God. Only certain sins attracted the death penalty, revealing that while all sin is serious to God, not all sin is the same to God. Some sins are more serious than others!
- b. Lev. 20:13 “If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.”
- c. Note: Capital punishment is not the role of the church. The church’s role is to proclaim the Gospel of God’s saving grace to all sinners. But the law is to be used by the preacher of the Gospel to demonstrate the “exceeding sinfulness” (Rom. 7:13) of sin and to warn the sinner of God’s certain judgment except they repent. To use the law with the Sodomite is a lawful use of the law according to 1 Tim. 1:8-10.

3. An Unclean Sin (Rom. 1:24a)

- a. Sodomy is unclean morally. It comes about when God gives men over to the “lusts of their own hearts” as an act of judgment.
- b. Sodomy is unclean physically. It is significant that God’s Word labels this practice ‘uncleanness’. Such sins of the flesh are unhygienic and filthy. People who live depraved lives tend to also live dirty lives. The old saying “cleanliness is next to godliness” is not far from the truth.

4. A Dishonourable Sin (Rom. 1:24b)

- a. Marriage is “honourable in all, and the bed undefiled” (Heb. 13:4) but Sodomy is ‘dishonourable’ to the body. The word ‘dishonour’ means to maltreat or treat shamefully. The same word is translated “entreated shamefully” in Luke 20:11 in the parable
- b. The coming together of a man and woman in marital intimacy is a wholesome, pure thing with the sanction of Almighty God. The

² According to Strong’s Concordance the word was used figuratively of a catamite. A catamite according to Websters dictionary (1828) was “a boy kept for unnatural purposes”.

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coming together of two men or two women in such a way is a shameful misuse of the body which was created to bear God's image.

- c. It is self-abuse – “**abusers of themselves** with mankind” (1 Cor. 6:9). This phrase is translated from the Greek word αρσενοκοιτη (‘arsenokoites’) which is made up of two words – ‘man’ and ‘bed’ (the marriage bed. Same word translated ‘bed’ in Heb. 13:4). It therefore means “one who lies with a male as with a female, a sodomite” (Strong).
- d. It is self-defilement – “them that **defile themselves** with mankind” (1 Tim. 1:10). This phrase comes from the same Greek word used in 1 Cor. 6:9 (point above).

5. A Vile Sin (Rom. 1:26a)

- a. The word ‘vile’ means morally despicable or abhorrent, physically repulsive.³
- b. The word ‘affections’ means ‘passions’ and is always used in a negative light in the New Testament (See Col. 3:5 & 1 Thess. 4:5 for other occurrences of the word).

6. An Unnatural Sin (Rom. 1:26b-27)

- a. The Bible exposes the lie that is promoted far and wide that individuals are “born that way”.
 - i. “for even their women did **change the natural use** into that which is **against nature**” (Vs. 26)
 - ii. “likewise also the men, **leaving the natural use of the woman**” (Vs. 27)
- b. Note the phrase “for even their women”. “Paul first refers to the degradation of females among the heathen, because they are always the last to be affected in the decay of morals, and their corruption is therefore proof that all virtue is lost.” (Hodge)
- c. The claim that some people are “born that way” is also debunked by scientific evidence. “Perhaps the most powerful line of evidence is found in twin studies. Since identical twins have identical genetics, it would follow that if one twin was homosexual, the other would also have to be homosexual 100% of the time. But both twins are homosexual in less than 15% of the cases.”⁴

7. A Lustful Sin (Rom. 1:27b)

This sin is all about unrestrained indulgence in depraved lust.

- a. The word ‘burned’ means to be inflamed, set on fire. Wuest defines it as, “The rage of lust.”
- b. It is not uncommon for homosexual males in the USA & other western countries to have 300 partners a year. (JM)

³ “Vile.” *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vile>. Accessed 11 Aug. 2022.

⁴ https://www.str.org/w/are-homosexuals-born-that-way-1#_edn1. Accessed 12 Aug. 2022.

See also the following article - <https://americanvision.org/8136/new-twin-study-people-not-born-gay/>

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- c. Jude 1:7 “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, **giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh**, are set for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

8. An Obscene Sin (Rom. 1:27c)

- a. The word ‘unseemly’ means “shameful, indecent. It refers to a “shameless or disgraceful act, obscenity”. (Linguistic Key)
- b. We are certainly living in a day where the obscene is flaunted openly and brazenly for all to see. Immodesty, indecency and immorality are displayed all around us in a society that has all but abandoned Biblical morality.

9. A Delusional Sin (Rom. 1:27d)

- a. The word ‘error’ means “a wandering, a straying about” and refers to “one led astray from the right way” (Strong).
- b. The same word is also translated ‘deceit’ and ‘delusion’.

10.A Disease-ridden Sin (Rom. 1:27e)

- a. The word ‘recompense’ means a reward or penalty. The word here “refers to that natural result of their sin which pays them back for what they have done. Like a person who contemplates doing something wrong says, “I suppose I shall pay for this.” (Wuest)
- b. The word ‘meet’ means fitting, necessary (as ordained by Divine law).
- c. Examples: STD’s, AIDS etc....According to the WHO, “more than 30 different bacteria, viruses and parasites are known to be transmitted through sexual contact.”⁵ **Depraved lifestyles lead to disease, death and destruction.**
- d. 1 Cor. 6:18 warns, “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication **sinneth against his own body.**”

D. The Perniciousness of their Sin (Vs. 6-11)

The Biblical record makes it clear that the Sodomite lifestyle is an aggressive lifestyle. It is aggressive in:

- 1. It’s Pursuit – they aggressively pursued these two angels who had the appearance of clean, pure men.
- 2. It’s Persistence – these men would stop at nothing to achieve their perverted aims.
 - a. Threatening (Vs. 6-9a). Lot found out that to suggest that this sin is ‘wicked’ (Vs. 7) is to provoke a heated torrent of abuse. We see the same attributes of those who promote the sins of Sodom today.

⁵ [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-\(stis\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-(stis)). Viewed 12.8.22.

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- b. Violent (Vs. 9b). They pushed hard against Lot and attempted to break the door down.
- a. Brutish (Vs. 10-11). Despite being smitten with blindness by the angels, they grope for the door like brute beasts. There comes a time when those engaged in this sin become 'reprobate' and can no longer be saved (See Rom. 1:28). Robertson says, "Like an old abandoned building, the home of bats and snakes, left "to do those things which are not fitting," like the night clubs of modern cities, the dives and dens of the underworld, without God and in the darkness of unrestrained animal impulses."

IV. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SODOM'S SINS (GEN. 19:12-13; 23-29)

A. For the Unrepentant (Gen. 19:12-13; 23-29)

God's answer to Sodom's depravity was the fire of His righteous wrath.

1. The Consuming Fires from Heaven Above (Vs. 23-29)
 - a. God rained fire and brimstone out of heaven upon these wicked cities. This is the first mention of 'fire' in the Bible and speaks of Divine judgment on man's sin.
 - b. 2 Peter 2:6 "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha **into ashes condemned them with an overthrow**, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;"
2. The Everlasting Fires of Hell Beneath (Jude 1:7).
 - a. Jude 1:7 "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, **suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.**"
 - b. The inhabitants of Sodom perished in the torment of fire on this earth only to open their eyes in the next life engulfed in the everlasting flames of hell for all eternity. The inhabitants of Sodom are still "suffering" (present tense) the eternal fires of hell right now. What a sobering thought.

B. For the Repentant (1 Cor. 6:11)

1. "...abusers of themselves with mankind...And such were some of you: but **ye are washed**, but ye are **sanctified**, but ye are **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:9, 11)
2. Praise God there is no sin the blood of Christ can't wash away if the sinner will repent and turn to Christ in faith including the sin of Sodomy.

Conclusion:

1. Are you caught up in an immoral lifestyle? God offers you cleansing and forgiveness if you will turn in repentance and faith to Him.
2. Are we living a pure, distinct Christian life in a culture that is becoming increasingly like Sodom?
3. Are we thinking biblically and seeing sin from God's perspective?