

# A Scriptural Response to Homosexuality

## Lesson 7: Homosexuality and the Old Testament (Part 1)

### INTRODUCTION

What are loopholes? Why are we humans so adept at finding them? What do loopholes allow us to do?

### REVIEW PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

1.)

2.)

3.)

4.)

### SODOM AND GOMORRAH

1.) The Context:

a.) Location

b.) A prosperous and lush region in Abraham's time. Lot chose the surrounding vicinity for his flocks and herds. "Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD" (Gen. 13:12-13).

c.) The LORD (along with two angels) visits Abraham to tell him Sarah will have a son. (Gen. 18:1-15)

**Genesis 18:16-24,32** When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. <sup>17</sup> Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? <sup>18</sup> Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. <sup>19</sup> For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him." <sup>20</sup> Then the LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous <sup>21</sup> that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know." <sup>22</sup> The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD. <sup>23</sup> Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the

righteous with the wicked? <sup>24</sup> What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away...? [...] [The LORD] answered, “For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it.”

- What is God’s express purpose for revealing to Abraham what is about to happen (and having Moses include it in the Scripture)? (v. 18-19) (cf. Rom. 15:4; 2 Pt. 2:6-7; Jude 7)
- What does it tell us about God’s character that he would personally investigate what was going on in Sodom, even sending two angels to be “boots on the ground”? Or that in response to Abraham’s pleading he would spare the whole place for the sake of ten righteous people?

## 2.) The Angels in Sodom

**Genesis 19:1-3** The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. <sup>2</sup> “My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.” “No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.” <sup>3</sup> But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate.

- Besides his humility and hospitality, what sense do you get from Lot’s request and urging?
- In the Ancient Near East (and still today) if you are received as a guest into someone’s home, they view it as a matter of sacred responsibility that their guests be protected at any cost.

**Genesis 19:4-11** Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. <sup>5</sup> They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.” <sup>6</sup> Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him <sup>7</sup> and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. <sup>8</sup> Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.” <sup>9</sup> “Get out of our way,” they replied. And they said, “This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door. <sup>10</sup> But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. <sup>11</sup> Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

- What was the foremost sin of the men of Sodom?
- How blatant and engrained had homosexual behavior become in their city?

### 3.) The Aftermath

**Genesis 19:15-17** <sup>15</sup> With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.” <sup>16</sup> When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them. <sup>17</sup> As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, “Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!” [...] <sup>23</sup> By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land. <sup>24</sup> Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens. <sup>25</sup> Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land.

- As a sidenote, what of God’s promise to Abraham’s requests?
- Why the repetition of “the LORD” and “from the LORD” in v. 24?

4.) Use the Scriptures we just read to evaluate the following arguments used by those who deny that homosexuality was the sin for which Sodom and the surrounding towns were destroyed by God.

a.) The real sin of Sodom was inhospitality. These men only wanted to “get to know” the two male strangers that were visiting Lot.

b.) The sin of Sodom was not homosexuality itself, but attempted rape. Violently forcing sexual activity upon another was the real point of the story.

c.) Some writers claim that **Ezekiel 16:49-50** names the real sins of Sodom: *“Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.”*

### CONCLUSION