

# The Sin of Sodom Was NOT Homosexuality!

by Mary Pearson

For years people have accepted without question, that the sin of Sodom was homosexuality. A more careful examination of the story itself, combined with other passages in both Old and New Testaments, will indicate this not to be so.

The Genesis 18, 19 story tells of two angels who came to Lot's house to rescue his family from the impending destruction of the city "because of its great wickedness".

*The LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me." (Gen 18:20,21)*

Notice that the exact form of wickedness is not mentioned. The story continues:

*Before they (the two angels) had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom--both young and old--to the last man--surrounded the house. They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can know them." (Gen 19:4,5)*

We know that throughout history gays have represented only about 10% of the population. If *"ALL the men from every part of the city of Sodom--both young and old--to the last man"* took part in this attempted rape, then 90% of them were heterosexuals!

Some translations interpret "know" them as to "have sex" with them, but the original Hebrew word "know" is used 943 times in the Bible and only ten times to mean "have sex", and then it is always heterosexual sex. However, let's assume that it does mean to have sex with them, based on Lot's offer of his daughters, as follows.

*Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, "No, my friends. Don't do this wicked thing. 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." (Gen 19:6-8)*

If these men were gay, this substitution would hardly have been tempting, but the concept of a "gay orientation" was only recognized by society about a hundred years ago, so Lot would have presumed that all the men were straight.

Lot's offer of his virgin daughters shows the total absence of the value of women in this culture. The men, on the other hand, were guests, and hospitality was a vital part of the culture in these days of no refrigeration, restaurants or hotels to accommodate travelers. It was not just a matter of good manners. A traveler could die without the hospitality of strangers, and so it was a matter of honour that Lot protect his guests.

Lot was an outsider in Sodom. He had moved there but was never accepted. His guests were also outsiders, and the Sodomites (inhabitants of Sodom) didn't like outsiders. These men were not looking for a love affair. If indeed they wanted to have sex with the angels, it was rape that was at issue, not love. Domination was commonly shown by rape at that time, because to make a man take the part of a woman was the worst possible form of humiliation. Conquering armies raped all captives for this reason.

The case against gays is based on the attempted rape of the angels, but does it stand up to scrutiny? There are several things to consider:

Recall please that God mentions how grievous the sin of Sodom was BEFORE the attempted rape of the angels, so this is NOT the reason that God decided to destroy the city.

In addition to the Genesis story, there are 27 other references in the Bible to Sodom, and not one of them mentions homosexuality or rape! The overwhelming themes are idolatry, immorality and inhospitality. To be specific, they are referred to as: rebellion, corruption, injustice, murder, greed, theft, covetousness, arrogance, gluttony, haughtiness, lawlessness, blaspheming, mistreating the poor, adultery, lying by priests and prophets, oppression, pride, false prophets, cruelty and failure to care for the young, poor and needy, living after ungodliness, gross immorality, insulting and mocking the people of the Lord, etc.

This attempted rape of the angels at Sodom was about violence and domination, committed mainly by heterosexuals. To compare it with a loving relationship between two people is akin to saying that rape is like marriage, simply because they both involve a sexual act. There is NO similarity!

Sodom was a detestable city, full of gross indecency, immorality and inhospitality, but the attempted rape of the angels, on which prejudice against gays is based, was NOT the reason for the destruction of the city.

Some would say that the "immorality" mentioned is homosexuality, but I challenge anyone to substantiate that accusation. There is just no foundation for it. Certainly there are immoral gays, just as there are immoral straights, but homosexuality, of and by itself, carries no implication of morality or immorality, any more than does heterosexuality.

A nearly identical story is found in Judges 19. However in this case, the men DO rape the concubine who is offered in exchange for the guests. The men abused her all night and the woman died as a result, but I have never seen this passage used against heterosexuals, although the outcome was much more dire.

Jesus mentions Sodom only twice, once when he has been accused of being a glutton and a drunkard and then when he tells his disciples to go out in pairs to every city where He intended to visit, and He says:

*But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town. (Luke 10:10-12)*

Does it appear that Christ is talking about homosexuality with His reference to Sodom? No! He's referring to the inhospitality of towns that do not welcome them. The hospitality that would be so vital to their survival corresponds exactly to the original story of Sodom in which hospitality was the issue with Lot and the angels.

Surely, if Jesus uses the story of Sodom to illustrate His message of inhospitality, then does it not follow that Sodom's sin had more to do with inhospitality than with homosexuality?

Our sexuality is a God-given gift. If God created us gay, it follows naturally that He loves us exactly the way He made us.

There are six "clobber verses" in the Bible which are used against gays. Just as the sin of Sodom has been misrepresented, so have the other verses.

## Bible Verses Which Mention Sodom Summarized

**Deuteronomy 29:17-26** - the sin - idolatry and images to false gods - "Why has the Lord done this to the land? . . . It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the Lord . . ."

**Deuteronomy 32:32-38** - the sin - idolatry - "He will say 'Now where are their gods?'"

**Isaiah 1:2-23** - the sin - idolatry, rebellion, injustice, murder, greed, theft, covetousness, mistreating the poor - "They have rebelled against Me."

**Isaiah 3:8-19** - the sin - idolatry, arrogance - "Their words and deeds are against the Lord, defying His glorious Presence"

**Jeremiah 23:10-14** - the sin - idolatry, adultery, lying by priests and prophets - "Both prophet and priest are godless. . . . They prophesied by Baal and led My people astray."

**Jeremiah 49:16-18** - the sin - idolatry, arrogance, oppression, pride of the heart - "The terror you inspire and the pride of your heart have deceived you. . ."

**Jeremiah 50:2-40** - the sin - idolatry, pride, false prophets - "Her images will be put to shame and her idols filled with terror. . . . For she has defied the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. . . . Their shepherds have led them astray."

**Lamentations 4:3-6** - the sin - cruelty and failure to care for the young and poor - "My people have become heartless."

**Ezekiel 16:49-50** - the sin - "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."

**Amos 4:1-11** - the sin - idolatry, oppression, mistreating the poor - "I overthrew some of you as I overthrew Sodom . . . . yet you have not returned to Me."

**Zephaniah 2:8-11** - the sin - idolatry, pride, mocking - "This is what they will get in return for their pride, for insulting and mocking the people of the Lord Almighty. The Lord will be awesome to them when He destroys all the gods of the land."

**Luke 17:26-29** - Jesus speaking - No specific sins mentioned

**II Peter 2:1-22** - the sin - idolatry, living after ungodliness, lawlessness, arrogance, blaspheming, adultery, greed, corruption, depravity, boasting, lust - "But there were also false prophets among the people . . . ."

**Jude 1:7-8** - the sin - sexual immorality and perversion, i.e fornication after strange flesh (angels, see Genesis 6:1) KJV