

Sexual Orientation and the Bible – wk. 2

A Sunday School Class for Dayspring Baptist Church
led by Pastor Chris Fillingham; August 13, 2017

Genesis 19 – The Sin of Sodom

What is the Sin of Sodom?

- Back Story: Genesis 18 – The Hospitality of Abraham
 - Hebrews 13:2
- 19:1-3 How does Lot's hospitality compare with Abraham's?
 - The Command for Hospitality
 - Exodus 22:21-22
 - Exodus 23:9
 - Leviticus 19:33-34
 - Deuteronomy 10:16-19
- 19:4-8 Why does Lot offer his daughters instead?
- 19:9 Why do the men reject the daughters?
 - Modern Parallels? – prison or wartime rape
- 19:13 Why do the angels say that they are going to destroy Sodom?
- What parallels does the rest of the Old Testament make?
 - Isaiah 1:9-23
 - Jeremiah 23:14
 - Amos 4:1-11; Zephaniah 2:8-11
 - Ezekiel 16:49 – Most direct statement of the sins of Sodom.
- What about the 8 New Testament references?
 - Only 2 connect it to sexual immorality (2 Peter 2:6-7; Jude 7)
 - Jude 1:7 – *sarkos heteras* “strange flesh”
 - Greek word *heteras* is connected to our prefix “hetero”, as is heterosexual, as in “different”. The problem is that they presumed a flesh that was too “different” not too “similar” i.e. – a reference to the fact that they were angels.
- ***Traditional Scholars today do not use this story. They concede that the sin of Sodom is not about homosexuality.***

So, what is the real sin of Sodom?

- What are the parallels today?

If we are to draw any conclusion about sexual sin from this story, what would it be?

Leviticus, Abominations, and Jesus

Leviticus 18:22 *“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.” (NRSV)*

Leviticus 20:13 *“If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death; their blood is upon them.” (NRSV)*

Toevah – Hebrew Word “Abomination” or “Detestable”

- 117 times in the Old Testament

What else is *toevah*?

- Deuteronomy 14:3-21: Eating pork, rabbit, shellfish, and other particular animals is “*toevah*”
- Ezekiel: 18:10-13: violence, idol worship, adultery, oppressing the poor, charging interest on loans – an abomination worthy of death.
- Ezekiel 22:6-12: mistreatment of orphans and widows, slandering, treating your parents poorly, and various sexual acts (but not naming same-sex acts) as abominations.
- Leviticus 11:20-23: Certain insects, but not others.

Other Forbidden Things in Leviticus:

- Leviticus 3 and 11 forbid: bacon, ham, sausage, clams crabs, lobsters, shrimp... etc.
- Leviticus 19:19: planting two types of seed in the same field or wearing clothing with two types of cloth/thread
- and so much more!

Why? What is the “Moral Logic”?

- Context: Exodus 25-Leviticus-Numbers 10: Rules and Laws at Mt. Sinai
 - Leviticus 17-21: Holiness Code – Defines us as Yahweh’s people, not Baal’s people, or the god’s of the Egyptians.
- 3 Views Held by Many Scholars on the “Moral Logic”
 1. Ritual Regulations: This is what sets us apart from all others. *Toevah* is a boundary marking term. Us vs. Them
 2. Waste of Life: Male semen was seen as sacred and not to be wasted.
 - Genesis 38 – Sin of Onan
 3. Patriarchy: Men are more “valuable.” honor/shame
 - For a man to be penetrated “denigrates” him to the status of a woman.

111 of the 117 uses of *Toevah* in the Old Testament refer to something other than same-sex acts.

Jesus & Holiness Codes:

Does Jesus reinforce or undermine the Holiness Codes approach to God?

“The text on one hand, and our interpretation on the other, are not the same thing.”