

The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

Wayne O. Cochran
wayne.cochran@gmail.com

Theophany

- “*And the LORD (YHWH) appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre...*”
Genesis 18:1, 10, 13, 17, 19, 20, ...
 - YHWH יהוה = “I am” name given to Moses (Exodus 3:14)
 - Abraham knows God as El Shaddai אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי = “The Almighty God” (Genesis 17:1)
- *Angel of the LORD* visits Gideon (Judges 6:11-27)
 - God Himself acts an *messenger* (Angel).
- Angel of the LORD speaks to Hagar (Genesis 16:7), Abraham (Genesis 22:11), Moses (Exodus 3:2), Balaam (Numbers 22:31), Wiped out Assyrians (Isaiah 37:36), ...

The Lord Goes to Sodom

Genesis 18:20,21

- The omniscient God personally experiences the pain and hears the outcries of those who are oppressed.
- God is the perfect judge with full understanding and has “walked in our shoes” (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus was “*a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*” (Isaiah 53:4).
- God actually experiences our pain and expresses the emotional extremes of sadness, grief, anger, wrath, and joy.
 - Some say the “immutability of God” precludes his ability to have emotion — this is not the God spoken of in Scripture.
- Some are abhorred at the genocide of the Canaanites, but feel little pity for the oppressed who lived in those wicked cultures — cultures that produced mass graves of children sacrificed to Molech, etc...
- Matthew 25:31-46 *The Final Judgment*: The “Son of Man” associates with the “*least of these.*”

The Sin of Sodom

- Genesis 13:13 *Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.*
- Ezekiel 16:49-50 *Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had **pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy**. They were haughty and did an abomination before me. So I removed them, when I saw it.*
- Luke 17:28 *Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building.*
- Jude 7 *just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.*
- Jeremiah 23:14 *They commit adultery and walk in lies; they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness.*

Ripeness of Judgment

- Genesis 15:6 Amorites judgment is still 400 years off since their iniquity *“is not yet complete.”*
 - The Justice of God implies a *resurrection to judgment* for the wicked Amorites who will die before then.
- Revelation 14:18 *“Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.”*
- Why does God wait? 2 Peter 3:8-10
 - Sometimes the wicked do repent (e.g., Ninevah) Ezekiel 18:21-23; Ezekiel 33:14-16.
- Sodom’s sin was ripe for judgment.

Appealing to God as a Just God

Genesis 18:22-33

“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?”

- Abraham, humbly yet boldly, appeals to God’s justice concerning *“sweeping away the righteous with the wicked.”*
- Much of God’s nature is infinitely above our ability to comprehend (Isaiah 55:9), but God places His character, especially His justice, before us to assess.
- *“O house of Israel, are my ways not just?”* Ezekiel 18:29, 33:17-20
- Christ appeals to the generation of His day *“And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right?”* Luke 12:57
- *“Come now, let us reason together..”* Isaiah 1:18

God Rescues Lot

Genesis 19:1-22

- Lot had chosen Sodom to dwell in when he separated from Abram (Genesis 13:12).
 - The lush, productive valley, and the bustling economy of the Jordan Valley was no doubt appealing.
 - Abraham has already rescued Lot and the Five Kings of the Valley (Genesis 14).
- Lot is sitting at the gate of the city when the two Angels arrive.
 - The angels want to spend the night in the town square — presumably to get a full sense of the city.
 - Lot, perhaps embarrassed by what the angels would encounter, “presses them strongly” to stay at his house.

God Rescues Lot continued...

Genesis 19:1-22

- The entire male population of the city wishes to “know” (i.e., have sex with) the two angels and force themselves upon Lot’s home!
 - The angels are witness to the depravity of the city.
 - Lot offer’s his daughters? What!?
 - Crowd criticizes Lot as judgmental... typical defense of the unrepentant.
- Angels blind the crowd yet they still grope for the door!
- Angels allow Lot and family to escape.

Destruction of Sodom

Genesis 19:23-29

- *19:24 : Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.*
- *Luke 17:32 Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.*

Smoke Ascends

Abraham ... looked and, behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.

Genesis 19:28

- Future judgment is often represented by fire and the smoke signals the utter and final destruction.
- Isaiah 34:9,10 Edom's destruction *"its smoke shall go up forever."*
- Revelation 14:11 Smoke rises forever and ever — an eternal witness of destruction.
- Babylon is consumed by fire and those observing see the smoke (Revelation 18:8,9; 19:3)

Destruction of Wicked

- Psalm 37:20 *“But the wicked will perish; the enemies of the Lord are like the glory of the pastures; they vanish—like smoke they vanish away.”*
- Psalm 68:2 *“As smoke is driven away, so you shall drive them away; as wax melts before fire so the wicked shall perish before God!”*
- 2 Peter 2:4-10
- 2 Peter 3:1-7
- The Fall of Babylon Revelation 18, 19:1-3