



World Christian Fellowship

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Sins of Sodom.

Ezekiel 16:18-50, *“As I live,” says the Lord God, “neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. ⁵⁰And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit.*

Everyone knows the basic story about how the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah had a reputation for being among the most wicked people in history (**Genesis 19:13**).

By Abraham’s day, morality in the two cities had gotten so bad that God personally sent a pair of angels into town to investigate whether or not to cleanse these two cities from the face of the earth.

Their fate was sealed that evening when “all the men of the town both young and old to the last man” surrounded the

home of Abraham's nephew Lot, attempting to gang rape the two angels who were staying as guests under his roof (**Genesis 19:4-6**).

The next morning, after extracting Lot and family, God rained "fire and brimstone" down on both cities as well as the surrounding plains, sparing only the small town of Zoar where Lot had taken refuge.

If we were to go looking for the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah today, we won't find them. Because according to archaeologists' best guess they now sit on the bottom of the Dead Sea.

To this day, while the very name of "Sodom" still refers to acts of sexual deviancy.

more than what you learned in Sunday School is that this was not the only sin which brought about these cities' ultimate destruction.

The rest of their story can be found in Ezekiel 16, where the prophet compares Jerusalem's increasing immorality not to just one but to the six deadly sins of Sodom.

This was the guilt of Sodom:

1. **Pride,**
2. **Fullness of food,**
3. **Abundance of Idleness,**
4. **Not aiding the poor and needy,**
5. **Haughty, and**
6. **Abomination.**

The Risk of Sitting at the Gates of Sodom, pointed directly to parents of young children, describing the price that Lot paid for deciding to settle his family in this town.

Pride.

James 4:6, *But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."*

God deliberately works against them.

What is so bad about pride?

A lot of people are "proud" of things in their lives.

They are proud of their family/ car/ home/ job/ accomplishments.

But that's not the kind of pride God is talking about here. If I say I'm proud of my children, I'm saying I'm pleased they are part of my life.

What is a humble person known for?

They don't brag about themselves.

They are not all wrapped up in themselves.

Romans 12:14, *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.*

Pride is a telescope turned the wrong way. It magnifies self and makes the heavens small.

A proud person is more focused on themselves than they are on God.

Psalms 10:4, *The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.*

Why would a proud person not seek God?

They don't need God or anyone else.

They consider themselves quite capable of doing everything for themselves by themselves.

A proud person is usually a godless person.

Doesn't mean they don't believe in God but they just don't need Him.

The Pharisees were very religious, but they weren't Godly people.

Mark 7:6, *He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honours Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.*

They were literally godless people. In their "self-righteousness" these people considered they did not need God. If anything, God needs them. God should be grateful that they even bothered to show up at church.

Haughty is an interesting word. Its modern definition would be, "to behave in a superior, condescending, or arrogant way."

Very similar to the sin of pride. But, thinking of that word according to its Hebrew meaning -- which is, "lofty", "high", "exalted," or "acting like god" -- can help you understand how this attitude in a human could be deadly.

Scripture often uses this word to describe God's relationship to His creation.

When Isaiah had a vision of God in the Temple.

Isaiah 6:1, *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.*

Isaiah 55:9, *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.*

This idea of God being HIGH and LIFTED UP is an extremely important one, because unless we understand that God is higher than we are, and that His ways and thoughts are ABOVE ours, we have no foundation for morality in our lives and in our society.

Without a God who is higher and more exalted, we are free to make up our own rules, our own morality.

This was clearly illustrated in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.

In response to the people’s demand to turn the angels over to them, Lot steps out the front door pleading with them.

Genesis 19:8, *See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these*

men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof.”

Had not the angels then rescued Lot and blinded his attackers the mob certainly would have killed both him and his family along with their heavenly visitors. That was the kind of haughtiness that ruled in the hearts and minds of Sodom.

Refusing to acknowledge God, they followed their own standard of what was right and what was wrong.

Does this not sound like growing sentiments in our own culture today?

Fullness/Excess of food, and Abundance of idleness/ease.

Which is also what originally attracted Lot to move there. The countryside around Sodom and Gomorrah was so lush, and so productive.

Sodom was also located on a main trade route making this one of the most prosperous towns in the region.

In Sodom life was easy because everyone was rich and well fed. They had more than what they needed, not only in wealth but also in time to do with as they wished.

Without any moral base to guide what they should be doing with their excess of wealth and time.

Does this not sound like the current lifestyle of the rich and famous today?

An attitude that often grows out of a life of wealth unharnessed by any moral convictions. Even while having an excess of food and prosperous ease, the citizens of Sodom did not aid the poor and needy.

They had no concern for those less fortunate than themselves. No desire to share from their abundance.

Pride and wealth combined with a life of leisure lived by one's own standards with no sense of obligation to anyone else, higher, or lower.

How many stories Jesus told about such attitudes?

"Rich Man and Lazarus"

May be Jesus was referring to an actual event.

Luke 16:19-31

The rich man, at least, was worried about his brothers. He may not have been all that bad, in the way we view "badness."

His sin was not that he broke any of the Ten Commandments.

He wasn't sleeping around, he wasn't a thief, he hadn't killed anyone. In all probability, he came by his money through hard work. He hadn't done anything "bad" by the understanding of "badness" in our culture.

The sin of the rich man was that he enjoyed the "Good life", while being unconcerned about those around him who desperately needed help.

Sharing with the poor and needy is a very important issue for God.

God had ordered the nation of Israel.

Everywhere else you read in the Bible, from the books of law to the proverbs, to the warnings of the prophets to share with those poorer than you.

Proverbs 19:17, *He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given.*

God telling us that when we help the poor, we lend to Him and He promises to pay us back.

Its obvious God has a very high regard for those who reach out to the needy and poor and He doesn't think much of those who don't think to do so.

Abominable things.

God concluded therefore I removed them when I saw it.

Conclusion:

Ezekiel speaking of these transgressions of Sodom and their interrelatedness to Israel's exiles in Babylon.

Why?

Sodom might function as a mirror for the exiles in which they might see their own sins.

These Israelites were guilty of the same sins because they tolerated the same initial attitude.

The same sins!

Are we to understand that Jerusalem committed the identical offences Sodom did?

No!

On the outside Jerusalem's behaviour was not near as repulsive as Sodom's was, if only because we read nowhere in Scripture that the men of Jerusalem demanded the strangers that came for the night that they might engage them in homosexual activity (Genesis 19:5).

Ezekiel 16:52, *You who judged your sisters, bear your own shame also, because the sins which you committed were more abominable than theirs; they are more righteous than you. Yes, be disgraced also, and bear your own shame, because you justified your sisters.*

Jerusalem's sins were worse because the root of Sodom's sin was found also in Jerusalem even though Jerusalem had received the riches of the gospel!

Root was their pride, their setting themselves up as gods for themselves and so making their own rules for what was acceptable behaviour.

So, they used their prosperity and their ease to serve other gods instead of acknowledging that their material abundance and their peace were God's gifts to them in His covenant love.

Because they were busy with themselves, abused God's gifts for their own selfish pleasures, the people of Israel considered the poor a nuisance.

How often the prophets rebuke Israel for neglecting and robbing the poor?

Matter cuts so close to home for us, God's children today.

To us belongs God's covenant of grace and the preaching of the gospel.

How have we used the abundant "fullness of food" and the "prosperous ease" that has characterized our country in the last number of years?

Have we used them for ourselves and our wishes or for the benefit of others?

What attitude determines our approach to this prosperity and peace?

An attitude of self-denial, of humbly seeking how we could best use this prosperity and peace to benefit others less privileged than ourselves?

Or an attitude of we have worked for this, it's ours, and so we can stroke our desire for comfort, satisfy our urge for a fancier house, give ourselves and our children the latest of toys to excite our adrenalin in our free time?

Have we made it our business to strengthen the hand of the needy –at home and aboard- or do we consider the poor a nuisance, a threat to our comforts and desires?