

# Jude #4 - Sodom and Gomorrah

by Chuck Missler

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*Jude's epistle warns believers about the dangers of end-time apostasy, using the examples of Sodom and Gomorrah to illustrate the consequences of turning away from God.*

**Duration:** 1:28:25

**Scripture:** Genesis 18:32, 2 Peter 2:4-6

**Topics:** "Sodom"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the violence and indulgences of the flesh that are often portrayed in entertainment. He emphasizes the need for Christians to re-examine their appetite for such entertainment and align it with the teachings of the Holy Spirit. The speaker also highlights the importance of recognizing that profound philosophical insights do not necessarily protect one from indulging in sinful behaviors. He then delves into the story of Lot's wife as a lesson for Christians to learn from and apply in their daily lives. The sermon concludes with a reminder to focus on building treasures in heaven through works that are led by the Spirit and aligned with the kingdom of God.

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## Transcript

Book of Jude, fun book. Last time we were, that was the Halloween session, nothing to do with the calendar, strictly the subject matter. Tonight we are in verse 7. We don't really plan to go at one verse at a time, but these verses in this particular area give us a good excuse to do a review of Genesis, of various parts of it.

So tonight we are in Jude, verse 7, where Jude continues drawing upon three Old Testament examples of apostasy. Jude is an epistle for our time. He deals with end time apostasy.

Apostasy in general, but very specifically we'll discover it's focusing very much on the end time. It's very appropriate for it to be a preface or prelude or what have you to the book of Revelation. And so he has drawn three examples of corporate punishment.

Israel in verse 5, the angels that sinned, verse 6, and 7 is Sodom and Gomorrah. These are three references that Jude makes. He presumes that his readers are quite acquainted with this background.

And obviously all of you are well acquainted with this background, but for some of them that might have joined us who's not, we'll review that, okay? So we'll use this as an excuse to review. Sodom and

Gomorrah, idioms in our language. We speak of Sodom and Gomorrah very glibly.

And Jude does too, verse 7, he says, Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Well, that seems straightforward enough. We all know Sodom and Gomorrah and we all know that they did things they shouldn't.

All very comfortable until you stop and ask yourself, to whom was Jude writing? Was he writing to the people that sponsor cable TV? Was he writing to the world? He was writing to believers. He was writing to the church. Remember? We'll review all that, we covered that earlier, the earlier verses.

Jude, a brother of James, both of them brothers of Jesus Christ, writing an epistle, in this case to the believers, to the church, warning them of the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah. That's a little bizarre. If this was a warning to the unsaved world, a secular hedonistic group, you'd understand that.

And we can delve into all the practices of those early days and what have you, and with a certain aloofness. But as we move down this path, let's be cautious, because Jude has selected this as a warning to you and I. You and I generally, I don't think, identify with Sodom and Gomorrah. Jude is holding it up as an example to the church, and that should get our attention.

What can believers learn from the record of these old cities, there were actually five of them, so-called cities of the plain, which God destroyed because of their terrible wickedness? And as we go down this path, I'm going to suggest at least two dimensions. One is prophetic, that this is prophetic, the whole epistle will be increasingly focusing as a prophecy. So it's prophetic of the apostasy in the church, in Christendom, in the last days.

And we're going to discover in this epistle four steps. We've already seen it back in verse four, that these apostates, these men who creep into the church, will turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. We went through that when we went through verse four, if you recall.

We're going to discover in verse eight that they defile the flesh. We generally think of apostate teaching as doctrinal, heresy, those kinds of things. We don't link it to fleshly lusts.

Defile the flesh, verse eight. In verse 10, we're going to discover that they corrupt themselves with brute beasts. And in verse 16, they walk after their own lusts, that same phrase that Peter uses, also speaking of the end times.

We're going to discover as we go, just to let you know where we're headed, that apostasy begins with intellectual doubts, but it's certain to end with physical degradation. That's a link that's not obvious, but the Word reveals it to us. Now, what I would like to do tonight, since we glibly use Sodom and Gomorrah as phrases, I think I'd like to use this as an opportunity to go back and review a few chapters, very, very superficially, but still enough to get in perspective in the book of Genesis.

What is Sodom and Gomorrah all about? Now, a couple of things. The first thing that may shock you is that Sodom and Gomorrah, we all know them as some kind of reference point or yardstick of sin. Fire and brimstone came down, great.

What we may not realize is that they are referenced here in the mode of apostasy. That implies something that you and I normally wouldn't associate with them, and that is that they once knew the truth. That puts a

little different light on it, doesn't it? And that's going to take us before or through this evening into Romans 1. Now, a couple of other things as we get into a review of Sodom and Gomorrah.

I'd like to stretch your perspective a little bit. Sodom and Gomorrah, the event that we're going to look at when they were destroyed, was only about roughly 450 years after the flood. Shem was still alive and walking the earth, one of the sons of Noah.

In fact, he had about 50 years left in his life. So it's hard to get used to the chronologies back then because we failed to give full countenance to the effect of that extended longevity. A couple of other things you might be interested in, I'll get the archaeological notes out of the way first so you get a perspective of this.

We're very much indebted to Dr. Melvin Grove-Kyle, who has done a lot of work in the whole archaeological background of the cities of the plain, Sodom, Gomorrah, and the three others. One of the five cities, which we'll discover a lot pleaded not to destroy, Zohar, wasn't and has been found and excavated. The rest of them are, we believe, under the southern end, southeastern end of the Dead Sea.

So to get this in perspective, the Dead Sea itself, I don't know how many of you had a chance to visit it, but it's the lowest point on the earth in terms of altitude. It's 1,286 feet below sea level. And it's the terminus of the Jordan River.

The Jordan River starts way up north and goes in the Sea of Galilee, all the way down north to south. It ends in the Dead Sea, which has no outlet. All the water from the Jordan flows into the Dead Sea and it evaporates from the heat, leaving a mineral residue.

So it increasingly gets increasing mineral content that causes the water to be so brackish that you float. If you get in, it's very bizarre because you can almost float waist high. It's a strange experience.

You don't get the water in your eyes or drink it because it isn't too healthy because it's excessively mineral content. But it's something you visit and it's fun to do. But the Dead Sea is roughly about 40 miles long and about 10 miles wide.

And it's sort of in two pieces. A northern segment, which is very deep, about 1,400 feet in some places. The southern end is very shallow.

It's about 10 miles long and it's 10 or 20 feet deep. And most archaeologists believe that in the time we're talking about, this wasn't that way. And it's partly a result of the catastrophe over Sodom and Gomorrah that they were not only covered but are under, if you will, that portion of the Dead Sea.

So the southern segment covers a good portion of the area that's called the Vale of Siddam. And this shows up in Genesis 14 and other places in the scripture. At the time of Abraham and Lot and so forth, this was a very fertile area.

In fact, when Lot gets his choice, he chooses it in contrast to the high ground in Hebron, which Abraham takes over. When they decide to split up, they go their own ways, so to speak. There are five cities involved, Sodom, Gomorrah, Zor, Adma, and Zebulun.

And all five are destroyed, but Sodom and Gomorrah are the conspicuous ones. Something else, before we jump in, you should get a perspective. Don't visualize these as quaint little towns.

We have found their tombs, their cemeteries, and from the tombs that they find, there's over one million people buried. So the population in that region at that time was very substantial. So it's a whole different perspective, perhaps, as we use this occasion to take a look at what's Sodom and Gomorrah all about.

Well, they're first mentioned in Genesis 10, we won't bother chasing that down, but they're mentioned in Genesis 10 on the border of the Canaanites. Now, one of the main things that occurs, and again, in the interest of time, I won't take up the details, but in Genesis 13, Abraham and his brother's son, which whom we would call a nephew, Lot, both had herds that were growing very large. And it was decided in Genesis 13, Lot, that they would split up to avoid conflicts among their herdsmen and so forth.

By the way, you should understand something else. Most scholars who have studied Abraham believe he may have been one of the wealthiest persons on the earth at the time. We're going to see that Abraham, when there's a war, dispatches 318 trained soldiers that were born under his own tents.

And he defeats five, an alliance of four kings that had just defeated five others. So Abraham is not just some little nomadic herdsman, Bedouin-type little itinerant culture. Abraham's a very powerful, he has many, many resources.

The study of Abraham, I commend to you, obviously. Anyway, Lot decides, Abraham gives Lot his choice, and Lot lifted up his eyes and saw the vale of Siddam and chose that area. This is all in Genesis 13.

And one of the things you can do, and we do in our study of this chapter, in our Genesis study, is point out there's a very predictable series of events that occur with Lot. He first of all lifted up his eyes, and so he went by sight rather than by faith. He chose all the plain of Jordan rather than what God might have him do.

And he elected to separate himself from Abraham. Now you can, around each one of those, build some spiritual lessons. And since we've got a lot of ground to cover tonight, I won't repeat all of that.

I'll just highlight that to you. And if you're interested in that, I commend you to get the Genesis tapes on chapter 13 and do a study of Lot's walk, if you will. Lot is going to separate, as I indicated.

Now in contrast to this, Abraham is seen as choosing the heights of Hebron. The word Hebron means communion. So even in the place names and in the styling of the narrative there, we see the Holy Spirit carrying a message to us as to the contrast between these two.

Now don't look at Lot as an unbeliever. We're going to talk a lot about Lot and all the mistakes he made. But in Peter's epistle in chapter 2, and we will look at this later, Peter describes Lot as a righteous man.

And in fact, God goes to some length to extricate Lot a second time from the ruin of Sodom and Gomorrah. Good, I get a lot of puzzle things. You didn't know that God went after Lot twice.

We'll come to that in a minute. We find as we get in Genesis 13 that Lot elects to dwell in the cities of the plain. And if you're studying, if you're doing a devotional study of the book of Genesis, you can sense all through the story of Lot that each step of the way, and there's about six major steps, that Lot is making the wrong choices.

We are not admonished to dwell in the earth. We're pilgrims. We're passing through.

Where's our citizenship? In heaven, you bet. We're not Republicans or Democrats, we're monarchists. That's an easy position today if you look at the Republicans and Democrats, but I mean... Now, and we get to the end of chapter 13, we find Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom.

It gets worse. But this gives rise to our excuse to get into Genesis 14. And I'll just, we can look at it, but I'm not going to try to read it.

We'll get bogged down too much. But in Genesis 14, we have the first war. The first war.

You can turn with me, we'll just try to skim it through lightly. Because that's the first occasion, and it's kind of instructive to see, it may give you a little different perspective of these events that fill the Torah. We're going to find as Genesis 14 opens up, that there's a group of four kings.

They make war with five other kings. Now incidentally, the four are from the sons of Shem and the five of the sons of Ham. And so you can make a big thing of that if you like.

And you can even come to the idea that, gee, these four guys overthrew these bad guys down south. And so you can sort of take sides if you like. But I have a feeling the Holy Spirit's giving us some other instructions.

And I personally suggest, as we look at this, is to focus on Abraham. Abraham's not involved on either side. He doesn't draw his sword and champion a cause.

He stays in communion with God, but he's not a pacifist. When the occasion calls for it, he knowledgeably feels trained servants. In any case, in the early verses, and we won't wade through all these unpronounceable names, but the battle of the four kings and the five kings is the first recorded war in the Scripture.

The five kings to the south involve the cities we talked about, Sodom, Gomorrah, and three others. Now, if you really are a mystic, I want you to be impressed with me tonight, because you would not ever believe I could pass up an opportunity like this to get mystical. But I'm going to.

But if you want to look behind those names, get a good commentary and dig into it, and you'll have a field day, because they're the names of major demon gods. And it's kind of fun. But I figure after Genesis 6, last time, we really need to get back to something a little more practical.

But I'll throw that out as a footnote for those of you that want to spend some library time and the spooky stuff can chase that down. But the point is, I don't want to mislead you. These were four and five real kings.

The battle is much studied. And the five kings to the south lost. We'll pick this up about verse 10.

And the vale of Sidon was full of slime. Oh, slime pits. Another thing.

The term in the Hebrew that's translated in the King James Slime is bitumen. Or think of oil. Now, bear in mind, we're not talking about trolling the economy here, so it's not that useful to them.

You with me? But that'll give you some insight. And it also leads to some speculations by geologists as to what actually happened, geologically, when the Sodom and Gomorrah was destroyed. But the point is, there are hints in the scripture here already.

It was full of slime pits or visualize a little bit of tar pits kind of thing. OK? And the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell there. And they that remained fled to the mountain.

And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food supplies and went their way. It's OK. These five guys to the south lost.

The four guys from up north won. Why is this in the scripture? Because of verse 12. There was one guy that they spoiled, along with obviously thousands of others, and they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

Now, spiritually, you can make a big thing as what was Lot doing in Sodom in the first place. And we'll shortly discover that Abram, when he hears this, says enough's enough and he takes care of it. We'll get to that in a minute.

But it's interesting. One of the morals here is you can take, you know, how does the proverb say that a dog returns to his own vomit? You'd think that Lot would have learned his lesson. Where does he end up three chapters later? Sodom.

And he's an alderman. I mean, he's sitting at the city gate. He's part of the city council.

So it's pathetic. But in any case, Lot, Abram's brother... Now, Abram, here's Abram. This is before his name gets changed.

But if I say Abraham, pardon me, I'm using the name by which we know him better. Abram and Sarai had their names changed. Abram and Sarai and Ishmael.

Now, Ishmael was the son of Hagar, who was an Egyptian from Ham, which had a curse. So if Abram read a scriptural homework, he knew that Ishmael couldn't be of the promise. God was going to handle it his way.

But if you take Abram, Sarai, and Ishmael, they add up to 961. You might want to write that down. It's very important.

961. That's the square of 31. Aren't you excited about that? Well, let me help you a little further.

There's only one square, 13 and 31, which if you switch the numbers, switch the square. 13 squared is 169. 31 squared is 961.

And the Kabbalah, the Kabbalistic rabbis, believe they've rediscovered the law of the square. Not only do all Hebrew letters have numerical values, the words thus have numerical value, and all kinds of interesting discoveries. 961 is called by the Kabbalists the signature of God.

The opening stanzas of the creation hymn in Genesis and the closing stanzas of the hymn in Genesis add up to 961. So they look for that, and they see that as one of God's appointed seals. 31 is the number of EI, the name for God.

31 squared is 961. They discovered all kinds of interesting places. Example.

Why did I bring all this up? Because Abram and Sarai and Ishmael add up to 961. When Abraham's name is changed, Sarai's name is Sara. Abraham, Sarai, and Ishmael don't add up to 961, but Abraham, Sarai,

and Isaac do.

Isn't that interesting? That's my excuse. That's one reason I'm really a mystic. And it's also interesting that the way God changed Abraham's name was to put in a Hebrew letter that's basically a breath.

Abraham. And that breath is the ruach, the spirit. And so it's interesting to see what God is doing.

But this event takes place prior to the name change. So I apologize if I read it wrong, because I... It's anyway, Abraham, the one we all know and love. Verse 13.

And there came one that had escaped and told Abram the Hebrew. Now this is the first place the word Hebrew appears in the scripture. It means the one who crossed over from the river.

That's what most commentators believe. It's also derived from Eber, which was an ancestor. But in any case, it's generally viewed, the term Hebrew is first used here.

Abraham was known as the Hebrew. He was one who crossed over. He had his, I assume, somewhat nomadic empire there.

And as somebody that escaped from this devastating battle, came and told Abraham, who dwelt by the Oaks of Mamre. And we're going to come back to the Oaks of Mamre. Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eshgal, the brother of Abner.

And they were confederate with Abraham. So they had an alliance here. Now verse 14 is interesting.

And when Abraham heard that his brother was taken captive, what did he do? He armed his trained servants, born in his own house, 318 of them, and pursued them unto Dan, that is way to the north. Now this word, the Hebrew word here for trained servants, occurs nowhere else in the Bible. But it does occur in some early Egyptian documents, and it's there used of trained mercenary soldiers.

So the term doesn't mean just trained like they read some manuals. They practiced, were expert at what? The art of war. Interesting, provocative insight.

Abraham is not a docile pacifist. He is a steward of resources and has anticipated apparently the need to bear arms. I think that's very fascinating.

And we have here recorded without much comment the fact that he dispatches these trained servants. And it says born under his own house, and his house is big. I mean, that's an expansive term, I'm sure.

But 318 of these pros. And what they're going to do is defeat a confederation of four kings. And these four kings are no pushovers, because they've just defeated the five king alliance in the south.

Which included Sodom, which included Lot, and that's how Lot was taken prisoner, you know, was spoiled. So verse 50, we also find that Abraham was quite a general. God has many, many gifts.

And apparently one of the spiritual gifts given to Abraham at this time was generalship, because he does pretty shrewdly here. He divided his men against them. He and his servants by night smote them, pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot and his goods, and the women also, and the people. Interesting guy. Now incidentally, if you go up to Laish, up to the north in the area of

Dan, they have just recently discovered a mud gate.

Mud gates, by the description of the art form, don't last. We've read about them, heard about them, never found one. Up in Laish, there is one that apparently was made and buried.

Something happened to bury this in such a way that it didn't get destroyed over these thousands of years. They've recently excavated it, and it's one of the sites, if you're archaeologically oriented, if you're in Israel, you can go up to the north to the area of Dan and see the gate at Laish. That gate might have been a gate that Abraham went through at this time in Genesis 14, which is kind of exciting.

When we visited Israel last year, it's strange that that particular event, that particular exposition, somehow captured the imagination of the whole group. We saw many interesting things, but the mud gate at Laish somehow was a real link to the deep past. It was fascinating to see a gate that Abraham himself may have gone through.

And indeed, it's possible, perhaps, that the attack and the destruction gave rise to an event that caused this gate to be buried before the elements destroyed it, because these are not of a material composition that endures like stone kinds of things do. And so it's considered a major archaeological find. In any case, now, Abraham is obviously the man of the hour.

He comes back, and we won't finish 14, but there is an event I want you to be aware of. When he comes back, he stiff arms the king of Sodom, who wants to reward him, and he won't take that, because he doesn't want... He regards the king of Sodom as aloof, a distant... He didn't do it for him, he did it for Lot. But he does do obeisance to another king.

Abraham sees himself senior to the king of Sodom and all these other characters, but he sees himself junior, if you will, to the king of Salem. And we encounter here in the text a strange character, which, if there were no other comment in the scripture, we'd probably pass into semi-oblivion, except in Psalms, in the Psalms and in the book of Hebrews. Much is made of this strange person, because he is a king and a priest, and one to whom Abraham gives tithes.

Now, in the scripture, he is presented as having no beginning and any end. Many people believe that this interesting character by the name of Melchizedek, although it's really a title, not a name, was an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ. You can actually linguistically knock that down, I think, because Christ has a... He's a priest after the order of, in the similitude of, Melchizedek.

Secondly, he is not some kind of angel. He is a man, the book of Hebrews tells us. And it doesn't mean he didn't have father and mother, but he's presented in the text.

The text is presenting himself in such a way, for the purposes of design, Melchizedek is presented with no genealogy. Some people believe he is Shem, because Shem is still alive at this time, except Shem's genealogy we do know, and the writer of Hebrews points out this one we don't. So, he's a mystery in some sorts, but he's primarily there for our instruction.

And he has... he is a king and a priest. And there are very few of those in the scripture. Very clearly, when God ordains the Levitical priesthood, that's much later, he makes it very clear that a priest is not to be a king, and a king is not to intrude on the office of the priest.

Kings and priests are separate. There's only one person in the scripture, clearly identified, next to Melchizedek, as a king and a priest. And who is that? Jesus Christ.

Also, as we study the book of Revelation, we make much of the fact that there's only one other group of people that are kings and priests. And some of them are present in this room. The believers who have trusted Jesus Christ for their salvation have a destiny to be kings and priests.

The 144,000 don't. So, if somebody rings your doorbell and claims to be one of the 144,000, it's fascinating why so many of these weird groups want to identify with the 144,000, because their state, their status, is not nearly where yours and ours are. Or where ours are.

Yours and mine are. Which is a side issue. But anyway, I want you to be aware that the Melchizedek thing happens here.

But we're going to skip ahead at this point a little bit. And now that we've got that background, Abraham was dwelling by the Oaks of Mamre. And that gives me an excuse to skip over to Genesis 18.

Because an event occurs there that is instructive and colorful, and I can't pass this by. Not the least of which it has prophetic impact for you and I. In Genesis 18, it says the Lord appeared unto him. That is to Abraham.

There's no doubt as to the identity of these three guys. At least one of them is very clearly identified. Three guys show up by the Oaks of Mamre.

It says, The Lord appeared unto him by the Oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day, and he lifted up his eyes, he being Abraham, lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him. And when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

And he goes on, and, oh, he says, And I'll fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts. After that ye shall pass on, and therefore are ye come to your servant. And he said, So do, as thou hast said.

And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah. He greets them first, goes to the tent to Sarah, and says, Make ready, quickly, three measures of fine meal needed, and make cakes upon the hearth. This introduces, in both the Jewish and Arab cultures, the issue of three measures of meal as a fellowship offering.

The meal is unleavened. And you'll find in the Bedouin traditions, as well as the Judaistic traditions, root back to this event right here. And this gives rise to our insights in Matthew 13, when we talk about that the kingdom of heaven is like a woman who hid leaven in three measures of meal.

Remember? The three measures of meal is a tip-off, but that's a fellowship offering. What is the leaven doing in the fellowship offering? Leaven is always a measure of sin. It's quoted, a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump, is quoted three times in the Gospels, and three times in Paul's Epistles, in all cases, in derogatory fashion.

Leaven is a symbol of sin, because it corrupts by puffing up. And is a model of sin. That's why in the Passover, there's not only an ordination, but even a household ritual of getting the leaven out of the

house.

There's a whole thing there. Leaven is bad. So the whole idea of the woman hiding leaven in three measures of meal is the Lord's prophecy of heresies being introduced in the church.

You've all heard sermons probably preached that, just the opposite, but the real import. Remember, here you have a rabbi talking to Jewish disciples. And when he says the kingdom of heaven is like a woman who hid leaven in three measures of meal, you should gasp in shock, not pleasure.

It's an adverse prophecy on the church, as many of the seven kingdom parables of Matthew 13 are. Anyway, that all emerges from this passage. And what happens here is Abraham receives these three men.

They look like men, they feel like men, they talk like men, and they eat with him. Who are they? The Lord Jesus Christ and two angels. Now, this is a pre-incarnate presentation of none other than our Lord.

Now, two of these three have an appointment over the hill in a place called Sodom and Gomorrah, and we're going to explore that in Genesis 19. But an event occurs that's not only amusing, instructive, but rather provocative. Because, oh, there's first an episode here, I'm skipping over that in the interest of time, where they, in effect, prophesy that Sarah is going to have a supernatural birth, a child.

Sarah chuckles in disbelief, and they call her on that point. And there's a whole episode that occurs in the middle of chapter 18. But for our purposes, I'm going to skip ahead.

Let's pick it up about verse 16. The men rose up from there, and they looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. In other words, on the road.

Two of them are going to move on. The Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham? The thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. All the nations of the earth.

This is universal, not just Jewish. Here in the Torah. They're moving on.

For I know him that he will command his children, his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord, and do righteous and justice to the Lord, may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which has come unto me, and if not, I will know. That's a little confusing.

Does he have to go down there to find out what's going on? No, he's just making clear that they are, that he gathers the facts, and he will judge accordingly. That's really what it's saying. And all three men turned their faces from there, and went toward Sodom.

But Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And we have from verse 23 to 33, 10 fun verses. I really wish I was good at dialects, because I'd love to put this on with a good New York Jewish dialect for Abraham.

But even in the King James, you can hear it come through. Abraham drew near and said to the Lord, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Now, I've underlined that in my Bible. Now, that's the issue that Abraham presents.

He presents it in an amusing way. I want you to hear through all this, what the Lord's answer to that is. Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Abraham continues, Suppose there are 50 righteous within the city.

Wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the 50 righteous that are in it? This is Abraham talking to the creator of the universe. That's what we call chutzpah. That be far from thee to do after this man, or to slay the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee.

Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Abraham knows who he's talking to. There's no guessing here. He knows who he's talking to.

Now, some of this is a learning curve for Abraham. But notice how the Lord responds to this. Verse 36, The Lord said, If I find in Sodom 50 righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

Oh, really? Here's a place with maybe over a million inhabitants, and if there's 50 good guys there, I'll spare it. Interesting idea. Now, by the way, we keep talking about Sodom, but remember, there's five cities involved.

We're just using Sodom as the generic. Sodom, Gomorrah, Zohar, and two others. Verse 27, Now, Abraham's not through.

If you've got chutzpah, you know, a little bit, a whole lot's a lot better, you know. Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak to the Lord, whom I am but dust and ashes. Suppose there shall lack five of the 50.

In other words, suppose I'm 10% off, guy. You know, there wasn't quite 50, but would you believe 45? See, that's what he's saying. And the Lord said, If I find there 40 and five, I will not destroy it.

Now, this is where you really recognize that Abraham is Jewish in his heart. And he spoke unto him yet again and said, Suppose there shall be 40 found there. And he said, I will do it for 40's sake.

And he said unto him, Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak. Suppose there be 30 be found there. And he said, I will not do it if I find 30 there.

He said, Behold now, I have taken upon to speak unto the Lord. Suppose there shall be 20 found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for 20.

He's just haggling. This is first class. This is world-class camel trading going on here.

Now, if you're more Jewish, you can say this is the Arab, and you can play it the other way if you like. But I haven't spent that much time in the Middle East. I've spent more time in Manhattan.

I like the model I'm using. This is Seventh Avenue, gang. Verse 32.

And he said, Oh, let not the Lord be angry. I will speak yet. But this once suppose 10 shall be found there.

Notice what God says. And he said, I will not destroy it for 10's sake. And the Lord went his way.

And as soon as he had ceased talking with Abraham, Abraham returned unto his place. He didn't carry it any further, did he? 50, 45, 40, 30, 20, 10. And he backed off.

What we're going to discover in chapter 19 is there was one there. And we're going to see what the angels had to do before the judgment could come. Now, why am I making a big thing of this? Because I think we need to understand God's ways, because his ways are not our ways, and the way we find his ways is in the Word.

And none other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ points to Lot in chapter 17 of Luke. We're going to look at that later. And makes a prophetic analogy.

We are instructed to look at this situation in terms of the coming judgment on the earth. It's one of the several reasons that I personally believe that the rapture of the church will precede the wrath of God on the earth. Not all kinds of problems, don't misunderstand me.

But I think to the extent that the great tribulation period is pouring out wrath, I believe the church won't be here. And I'm saying that because of 1 Thessalonians 5 and passages like this, because there's a principle that God lays down here, and I believe that God works by his principles, and a principle here that Jesus Christ pointed to. That's the reason I'm spending, I'm using this seventh verse of Jew as an excuse to get into Sodom and Gomorrah and try to extract from it lessons that are relevant to you and I. Now, chapter 19 is transcribed directly from some of your late, late night cable shows.

In fact, if you dramatize this on cable, you might shock that audience. You won't find anything more grisly. Now that I've got your undivided attention, look at chapter 19, verse 1. There came two angels to Sodom in the evening, and Lot sat in the gate at Sodom.

Now, that's not just a physical location, it's an office. If you sat at the gate, you're one of the city's elders. That's the way they did things.

The gate was sort of physically designed as a place that the council met and acquitted themselves of the duties of the day, judging things and witnessing documents and passing rules and such. So this is like a county board of supervisors or something. Sat in the gate of Sodom, and Lot seeing, and you wait, what is Lot doing there? Boy, life would be simpler if he'd learned his lesson back in chapter 13.

We're going to look at Lot's state of mind, seen through the eyes of Peter in a moment, but so we don't lose our momentum. Let's keep staying right here. Lot rose up to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.

He said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house and tarry all night and wash your feet, and you shall rise up early and go your ways. And he said, Nay, but we shall abide in the street all night. This is analogous to you going to Manhattan, checking into a hotel and telling the doorman you're going to take a walk through Central Park at 10 or 11 o'clock at night.

I was in Detroit on a merger and acquisition with two partners, and we had to go from our hotel to a restaurant that was three blocks away, and the doorman insisted we take a cab, and he was doing us a favor. He wouldn't let us walk. Metropolitan centers, and this happened to be a very bad time at Detroit, so I'm sure that's not necessarily typical, but most major cities have areas that they won't let an out-of-towner go into for fear of his life.

It's interesting. We'd look at a lot here. We're going to read some stuff that sounds pretty grisly.

It's not grisly. It measured against the yardstick of our own, quote, civilization, close quote. I've had four years of hand-to-hand training as a trained killer, and I would not, I've been accosted in the middle day in New York where I thought I was going to have to use it all.

I was in better shape in those days, fortunately. Metropolitan areas, especially at night, but sometimes in broad daylight, are at risk, and Sodom was no different. So these two visitors, which Lot apparently recognizes as important guys, because in his own way, you see him go to some bizarre lengths to show them deference here.

They're going to go tearing the street all night. And he pressed them greatly, and they turned unto him, and he entered into his house, and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread. Interesting, unleavened bread again.

And they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young. That's bizarre.

These aren't just the young toughs. The old men too. All the people from every quarter.

And they called upon Lot and said unto him, Where are the men who came into thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them. Now that's, the population is broadly homosexual. We don't see any hint of euphemisms in the King James of calling them gays or some other polite term.

These guys are perverts. And they are, they have visitors in town, and they want to take advantage of them. And they're upset with Lot for not accommodating them.

It gets worse, guys. Lot went out to the door unto them, but shut the door after him and said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Now whatever else is true, Lot recognizes that this ain't good stuff.

But Lot offers a proposal that blows us away. As a compromise, in Lot's mind. Verse 8, Behold, now I have two daughters who have not known man.

Let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you and do to them as it is good in your eyes. Only unto these men do nothing. For therefore they came under the shadow of my roof.

What a bizarre proposal. It's hard for you and I to somehow imagine Lot offering that. There is another principle implied here that's interesting.

If you are in an Arab country and you are the guest of the host, you need fear nothing from the host. I've been the guest of the Algerian government under very strange circumstances, but I could take great comfort as long as I was a guest of the Algerian government, despite other factors that were involved. I had nothing to fear.

There is a deep tradition that if you're under their roof, no matter who you are, what the circumstances, you're safe from the host. And that you even see that come through in Lot's sets of values here. These men are under my roof.

I have to do to whatever I can to protect them. This is a rather absurd proposal, but don't lose sight of where at least Lot's coming from in that sense, but we'll move on. And they said, stand back.

And they said again, this one fellow came into sojourn. He will needs be a judge. Now we will deal worse with thee than with them.

So in other words, they're speaking to Lot who is sort of one of them, but really isn't. And now that he's obstructing them, they're threatening him too. It's a lynch mob kind of mood going on here.

And they pressed hard against the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men, that is the angels inside, put forth their hand, pulled Lot into the house to them and shut the door. And they smote the men that were at the door in the house with blindness, both small and great.

So they wearied themselves to find the door. So the angels indulged in a supernatural capability and blinded this mob that was there. And the man said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides son-in-law and thy sons and thy daughters and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place.

For we will destroy this place because the cry of them has become great before the face of the Lord. And the Lord hath sent us to destroy it. What is the mission of these two guys to wipe out the city? I want you to recognize as we go here, there's something that has to be a prerequisite condition before they can execute the mission they were sent for.

We'll see that shortly. And Lot went out and spoke unto his sons-in-law who married his daughters. These daughters that he's offering were married or betrothed at least.

I won't get into those technicalities. And said, Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy the city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.

They didn't take him seriously. And when morning came, the angels hastened Lot and saying, Arise, take thy wife and thy two daughters which are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. Interesting that the threat isn't from them, it's from the city.

Their threat is preconditioned upon their leaving. We'll see that in a minute. While he lingered, the men laid a hold upon his hand and upon the hand of his wife and upon the hand of his two daughters.

And the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth and set him outside the city. The angels physically took them by the hand to drag them out of there. It wasn't sort of coaxing and they finally gave in.

They took them by the hand and got them outside the city limits. And it came to pass, verse 17, that when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain. Escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

And Lot said to them, Oh, not so, my lord. Hard to visualize this. We read these stories and they seem so hard for us to picture.

We, in our life, can picture this kind of degradation because all we have to do is visit a big city. But Lot, you'd think he's a slow learner. Behold now, verse 19, Thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shown me in saving my life.

I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil overtake me and I die. You've got to be kidding. Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one.

He's talking about Zohar. Oh, let me not be a slave to thee, let me escape there. Is it not just a little one? And my soul shall live.

You know, of the five cities, not Sodom and Gomorrah, but one of the five, Zohar, is smaller than the others. And Lot proposes, you know, you and I, I think we would be grateful just to escape this whatever's coming. Lot's looking for a compromise.

Verse 21, he said to me, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, and I will not overthrow this city, for thou hast spoken. The angel concedes. The angel says, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city for which thou hast spoken.

But notice the angel goes on. Haste thee, escape there. Notice this phrase, and I've underlined it in my Bible.

I cannot do anything till, and I always like to circle the tills in the Scripture. They're very meaningful connectives. Till thou come there.

Therefore the name of the city was called Zohar, which means little. It has another name that's also in the Scripture, but we'll know it as Zohar. The angel tells us something here.

The angel's hands are tied until Lot is out of there. Even to the extent that of the five cities, the angel concedes, Okay, Lot, you can go to Zohar, and they don't destroy Zohar. We have found the ruins of Zohar.

That's what Kyle's work is basically mostly built upon. It was spared the total conflagration. The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zohar.

Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, brimstone and fire, from the Lord out of heaven. And He overthrew those cities and all the plain and all the inhabitants of the cities and that which grew up on the ground. Now, Lot's wife had emotional roots in Sodom.

She apparently lingered. You often see in the little children's textbooks that she looked over her shoulder and turned into a pillar of salt. What's probably more, guessing, I'm guessing, more likely is that she lingered.

She straggled. She lingered back, couldn't let go. And she gets hit with brimstone and becomes a pillar of salt, as it's described here.

Doesn't have to be sodium chloride to be a salt, by the way. But the point is that that's anyway, Lot's wife turns into a pillar of salt. Now, there's all kinds of ideas what this may really mean.

Let me make it simple for you and I. I think that's exactly what happened. That's what the Torah says. That's what the Septuagint says.

And that's what Jesus Christ quotes in Luke 17. He says, remember Lot's wife. So I don't believe that we, they or we are any misconceptions about what happened to Lot's wife.

She turned into a pillar of salt. Not necessarily a miraculous change. She may have just been clobbered with the brimstone that was aimed at those cities.

It doesn't take anything but being too close to ground zero to cause that to happen. If she had been with the entourage at a safe distance in Zohar, fine. But she was straggling.

Maybe, I'm guessing, go back for some particular artifact or somehow not letting go, not putting it behind her. Because we know what we have to do. We have to put the life of the flesh behind us.

You can't straggle. We have an award in our company. It's the minute man.

It's a trophy thing. But hidden in the thing, we've got Luke 9.62. I don't know if you know the Concord minute man, the famous statue that has the musket. He has his hand on something.

You always see it. It's a plow. A minute man kind of idea.

And he has his hand on the plow. So I had the artist, Don Winton, who did this for us. It's a trophy.

Hide behind the thing, Luke 9.62. No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom. So it's a little secret thing in the thing. But no man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom.

And so that's part of what Lot's wife is all about. Okay, so Simon Gamora. My premise here is that God honors even one righteous.

You say, Chuck, you've got to be kidding. You're going to call Lot righteous? This guy that was trying to compromise with his lynch mob outside, you're going to call that proposal born of the Spirit? No. But I am intrigued that Lot is recorded in the Scripture as a righteous man.

This isn't Chuck Missler's off-the-wall screwball idea. There's plenty of those around too. But I'm talking about, let's take a look at 2 Peter 2. Let's look at what the Holy Spirit tells us through Peter.

We looked at 2 Peter 2, verse 4 last time. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, or to Tartarus actually, and delivered them into the chains of darkness to be usurped unto judgment. He continues then, verse 5. And spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, the preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.

Okay, that's Genesis 6 and 7, the flood. We all know about that. But then verse 6. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemn them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly.

All right. That's the same thing that Jude is pointing to as a milestone here. But I want to call your attention to the next two verses.

Because they give us the Holy Spirit's report card on Lot. And it's a surprise. And delivered just Lot.

The word just there means justified, righteous. Just Lot. I want you to notice an insight into Lot's emotional state.

Vexed with the filthy manner of life of the wicked. When Lot dwelt in Sodom, he wasn't happy. He was in total conflict because the values of that city were at conflict with his own personal values.

He didn't have a strength of character to flee there, separate himself. Bad news. But he also was uncomfortable there.

He was vexed with the filthy manner of life of the wicked. For that righteous man, Peter says, dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. So, Lot had no pleasure.

He was not at peace. He was not in the Lord's rest. Was he saved? At least twice.

Abraham's 318 troops saved him once, in the physical sense. Abraham's intercessory prayer may have had something to do with the second time. Genesis 18, the whole haggie that I kid about with Abraham and the Lord, was an intercessory prayer.

Probably the first intercessory prayer in the Torah. I don't think it was because of that prayer that Lot was saved, because I think the angels apparently had that mandate in root. But I won't put things in order in that regard, because he knows what we're going to pray before we pray it.

So you can chase that one down. But notice what else comes right after this. This occasion of Lot gives rise to Peter's ninth verse here, 2 Peter 2.9, The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

And he goes on to make his points. Interesting that Lot, with all this adverse comment on his walk, is regarded in the New Testament as one who is saved. And indeed he was, literally in terms of being removed from Sodom and Gomorrah, for our learning.

I personally believe that Lot was saved the same way you and I are, by the grace of God and His mercy. Now, for those of us that have an imperfect walk, and I think that includes more than 51% of us here tonight. It certainly includes 100% of the people on this side of the platform, me.

For those of you that have an imperfect walk like I have, I take enormous comfort from Lot. I look at Paul and others and get a little humbled. I look at Lot and I figure, well, maybe that's a benchmark I at least can beat a little bit.

But there's great comfort, because we're justified and we're saved, not by our righteousness, but by His mercy and grace. And that's what Lot's all about. And it's interesting to me because this is a spiritual issue here.

God is seeking to save even one. This is not just limited to Genesis 19. Let's turn to Ezekiel 22.

Ezekiel is prophesying the last two verses of chapter 22, 30 and 31. Ezekiel says as follows, or speaking for the Lord, he says, I sought for a man among them that they should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none. I sought for a man, singular, couldn't find any.

Verse 31, Therefore have I poured out my indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath. Their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord. Okay, and I won't get into the context of Ezekiel's point with Israel and all that.

That's the point. The principle though is interesting. God is looking for one and couldn't find it.

So, kavum, right? That's Ezekiel. Let's take a look at Jeremiah. That's a review thing.

We've just been in Jeremiah recently. Let's kick over to Jeremiah, about 5, chapter 5, verse 1, Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem and see now and know and seek in its broad places if ye can find a man, singular, if there be any that executes justice and seeketh the truth and I will pardon her. Interesting.

The Lord doesn't seem to require much, does he? When you read the scripture, you find that his posture with Sodom and Gomorrah is not unique. That's his way. If there's one righteous, he will spare the city for the sake of that righteous.

That's why when I hear, in the book of Revelation, that's why when Paul says in 1 Thessalonians, I appointed you not unto wrath, but unto salvation. I believe the church will not see, but from a distance, the wrath of God. I believe the church will be extracted from the world scene.

In the book of Revelation, we have idioms that are used very precisely for various groups of people. And the main scenario in the book of Revelation has to do with a people called the earth dwellers. They that dwell upon the earth.

Again, they that dwell upon the earth. The earth dwellers. You and I are not earth dwellers.

And the earth dwellers are blaspheming, right? And what is the sin in Israel for blasphemy? Stoning. What happens in the book of Revelation? Stones. A couple hundred pounds each.

That's a hailstorm. But it's interesting how the idiom is consistent with what God has premised in the Torah. Stoning is the punishment for blasphemy, and that's what the earth gets.

Now, okay, that's the one scene. On the other hand, let's turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 3. So we understand another principle. You know, this is all review.

I'm sure this is familiar to you, but I think it helps build a perspective here. And it's what you're building on. What was Lot building on? Nothing too firm here.

There's only one foundation, verse 11, that no man, which for other foundations, again, no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. That's the only foundation you can build on. Anything else is a waste.

And it goes on to describe this in verse 12. 1 Corinthians 3, 12. Paul says, Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble.

What's not obvious in the structure, there's two groups of things. Those that are combustible, those are not combustible. It's a little confusing to some of us because you don't think of gold, silver and precious stones as being a desirable.

That sounds materialistic. Paul's point is, is that they're non-combustible in contrast to the wood, hay, stubble, which is combustible. Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire.

And the fire shall test every man's work of what sort it is. Right? Half is going to burn, half doesn't. That's sort of the rhetorical idiom that Paul is using.

If any man's work abide which he is built on, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss. So depending on what you're building on, it's going to be tested by the living God.

And if it stands, you'll get a reward, if not, your works, the result, your fruits, will be lost. It's got nothing to do with your status. Because look at the way that verse 15 finishes.

But he himself shall be saved, yet as by fire. The analogy is, you made it as a refugee. You're in heaven with just the, I was going to say the clothes on your back, but that ain't any good either because there's filthy rags.

You've got to be reclothed with his righteousness. So I can't play that model too far. But you, you don't have anything else.

And you've heard me talk about Luke 16. I think you can't take it with you, but you can. The way you take it with you is to send it up ahead.

Your works on this earth that are based upon leading of the Spirit for Jesus Christ will offer a reward and that will be sent up ahead. If you're going to travel to a foreign country, you change your currency at a favorable rate. And you do that here by using your opportunity, your talents, whatever Lord puts, whatever resources the Lord puts in your way, for his kingdom.

And that will generate a reward you can't possibly lose. Anything else is but dross. That's what this really says.

And again, Lot's in a good example because he left Gomorrah. He was saved from Sodom. He was in a cave, whatever.

There's an aftermath here that I haven't got into yet. It's a pretty grisly aftermath, incidentally, because they hide in a cave. He's miserable.

And his daughter is now not having any, you know, they're would-be guys or stars they make ashes of themselves. That's probably a bad crack, isn't it? I'll hear about that later. I'm sorry.

So what do they do? They resort to incest with their father, Lot. And the two daughters give rise to the Moabites and the Ammonites. And it's a rather grim denouement to the whole scene.

Okay. Why did I get into all of this? Turn with me to Luke chapter 17. Jesus is in verse 22 on describing his second coming.

It says, The disciples, the days will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you shall not see it. And it shall say unto you, See here or there, go not after them or follow them. For as the lightning out of the one part of heaven shines on the other part of heaven, so shall also the second coming.

The Son of Man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. Now he goes on in verse 26.

It says, As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. And he's speaking generally and specifically. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage.

Now his point isn't that those are wrong things. There's nothing wrong with eating. There's nothing wrong with drinking.

In the context of what he's saying here. There's nothing wrong with marrying. See, what he's listing here is not the sins.

It's business as usual is what he's saying. And they were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark and then the flood came and destroyed them all. Verse 28.

As it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built, but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. This is speaking of the conditions on the earth at the time and it'll come by surprise.

Now he says something interesting here. Verse 31. In that day let him that shall be on the housetop and his stuff in the house not come down and take it away.

Let him also that is in the field not return. And then verse 32. Simple little admonition.

Remember Lot's wife. So this isn't some quaint translation problem. This isn't some little nook and cranny of the Torah we're talking about.

None other than our Lord Jesus Christ expects us to examine Lot's wife, her predicament, her error, and learn from it. What was Lot's wife's error? She was married to the world. She couldn't let go.

Here an angel was intervening, taking her by the hand to pull her outside the city limits. Didn't get the message. Clinging too tightly to the world, the flesh, the things that were shortly to be destroyed.

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. And then I love the next three verses just as a physicist. I tell you that in that night there should be two men in one bed, one shall be taken in the other left, two women shall be grinding together, one shall be taken in the other left, and two men shall be in the field, one shall be taken in the other left.

I love that. Because the two men in the bed, I assume that's in the middle of the night. The two women shall be grinding at the meal.

They did that at the beginning of the day. The first thing the gals did in that era was to get the meal and grind enough meal for the day. Early morning chore.

And two men shall be in the field. That's a midday job. So we got night, morning, and day, and it all happens like that.

Did the Lord know the world is round? You bet. Interesting study in astronomy coming right there. Okay.

No Ptolemaic cosmology there. Strictly Copernican. Okay.

Okay. All right. Now, let's talk a little bit more before we get too far afield about Sodom and Gomorrah spiritually.

What was going on there? The answer to that is in Romans 1. Romans chapter 1. God tells us some things how that Sodom and Gomorrah are held spiritually accountable. I think we could probably presume that Lot attempted to witness to them, but he was obviously very ineffective. But there's another witness that they had, and that is summarized in Romans chapter 1. I'll pick it up about verse 18.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Not hold the truth. Hold in the sense of suppressing the truth in unrighteousness.

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shown it unto them. In other words, the heathen are accountable. The heathen are accountable.

Why? That's what Paul deals with in Romans 1. Any time you have a hang-up on, gee, what about the whatever, some pagan this, that, or anything, Romans 1 is your answer. Study it carefully. Verse 20.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. Even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse. Heavy stuff.

It isn't gospel tracts or a midnight preacher while you're driving that condemns them. It's far broader, more universal than some specific incident. It's his whole creation holds them accountable without excuse.

Now, where do they go wrong? Verse 20 on and on. Because when they knew God, they glorified him not. Okay.

They once knew God. Everyone did. Everyone does.

But they failed to glorify him. They glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. This is the progress you can take these verses and just diagram the process.

They knew God. They glorified him not. They were not thankful.

Then, as a result, they become vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened, professing themselves to be wise. They became morons. That's what the word means.

If you don't believe that, take the rankest, the most senior intellectuals you know that are agnostic and watch what they embrace as a belief. You stand back, it's laughable. It's really interesting.

Verse 23, And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. What's the response to all of this? Wherefore God also gave them up. They gave God up, right? They knew God.

They gave him up. What's God's response? To give them up. To what? To uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts.

To dishonor their own bodies between themselves. Oh, really? To dishonor their own bodies between themselves. Gee, do you mean to tell me that there's a link between sexual perversion and a denial of the living God? You bet.

What's my authority? Right here. It isn't just that they're bad or heinous. They're specifically a form of rebellion against these truths.

Moving on. Who exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this cause, God gave them up to what? Intellectual debate, forensic apologetics and things? No, vile affections for even their women did exchange the natural use for that which is against nature. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men, working that which is unseemly and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was fitting. Heavy stuff.

Amen. Now, if there is anyone in the audience that happens to be or have had a homosexual experience, you're welcome because God can deliver you from that just as he delivered us all from all kinds of things. So if I'm coming across to anyone here offensively, well, praise God, the Holy Spirit may use that.

I love what Billy Graham said. Asked once if a homosexual can become a pastor. He says, absolutely.

He can confess and repent of his sin just like all of us have of our sins. So we're speaking here not against some group. We're speaking against a sin that God hates and that is symptomatic of a deeper problem.

Moving on, verse 28. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Do you see the parallelism here? They did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

So God gave them over to the knowledge they preferred, which is a reprobate mind to do those things which are not seemly being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, who knowing the judgment of God that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, now by the way, if you've been comfortable up till now, the last phrase gets us all, but have pleasure in them that do them. I'm guilty. I love watching violent things on television.

You know, the Clint Eastwood this, or the Bronson this, or whatever. That's wrong. My wife tries to tell me that, and I just don't listen.

I love that stuff. But it's, what is it? You know, it's murder, violence, that and so forth, right? I'm fond of one scene that really is in, it was in a movie where there's, there's, there's a whole bunch of Westerners, guys coming in, breaking up a camp, shooting everything, and they're killing people and stuff, and you don't mind it. There's a little dog, and they shoot the dog.

And yet the whole audience goes, oh, like up to lenulars, women and men getting shot and killed. So you saw that's all part of the thing, right? And his little dog, his pet of the school, plowing, you know, and then the whole audience is shocked by the fact they shot this dog. So candidly, the shoe pinches here, because I, I have an appetite entertainments that I've got to reexamine in the light of the Holy Spirit.

It's wrong. My wife can be pleasingly home tonight. I finally got the message.

Very interesting that the most profound philosophical insights will not result or preserve you from indulgences of the flesh. Recognition is not a cure. The highest goal of philosophy or ethics or morality in a philosophical sense at best can only give you a consciousness, not a, not a, the power to overcome this only by the Holy Spirit.

Anyway, Romans 1, men who once knew God failed to glorify him, became vain in their reasoning, had their hearts darkened. So God gives them up to uncleanness, vile affections, reprobate mind. Same

issues covered in John 12.

Remember, Lot's wife is the message today. Now, I'm going to do one thing. We have a few minutes left.

Turn back to Jude. We've spent, we've spent a little bit of time on Jude 7. We've taken three examples, 5, 6, and 7. Israel, the angels of sin, and Sodom and Gomorrah. And they're sort of summarized in verse 8. So we're actually going to slip another verse in before we are out of our time.

Verse 8, in like manner, also these filthy dreamers, meaning these, the present ones that Jude's talking about. These, he just went through three Old Testament historical examples. But he's bringing you back to now the church.

In like manner, these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, speak evil of dignities. Three things emerge as these ancient sins, sins from the wilderness wanderings, sins of the angels that sinned in Genesis 6, and the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 14 and 18 and 19. What are these sins? Defiling the flesh, they set at naught dominion, and they rail at dignities.

Three things. Defiling the flesh. They walk after their own lusts.

Peter says that in 2 Peter 3, verse 3. Remember, in the last days shall scoffers come walking after their own lusts and saying, where is the promise of His coming? Talking about the second coming. For all things continue as they were. And he links that to a belief in evolution.

A belief in prophecy is antithetical to a belief in evolution. Both imply creation and second coming imply God intervening in the history of man, and of course He does. So part of the reason there's such a commitment to evolution on the part of secular humanism is that's an undermining of any concept of a second coming of Jesus Christ.

If you want defiling the flesh, the classical list is Galatians 5, verses 19 and 20. That's a list that's just as grisly as the one I just went through in Romans 1. I won't take the time. Those of you that want to complete your notes can chase down Galatians 5, 19 and 20.

Jesus Christ in Matthew 15 says, out of the heart come those things which defile a man. Same list. Defiling the flesh.

What's the second characteristic of these apostates? They set at naught dominion. What does that mean? They deny authority. They certainly deny the ultimate authority.

They deny our Master and Lord. We saw that in verse 4 of Jude. No man can say that he is Lord by the Holy Spirit.

Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12, 3, so you can run with that one. But the ultimate authority is in Philippians chapter 2, where every knee shall bow and confess that he is Lord. Now that's in the ultimate spiritual sense, but we can bring this right on down.

Set at naught dominion. God sets up authorities. Even Daniel in Babylon was subject to King Nebuchadnezzar.

And because he was, I think he was converted in chapter 4 of Daniel. He wrote, Nebuchadnezzar wrote chapter 4 of Daniel. God sets up authorities.

One of the characteristics of these apostates is that they will rail. Now what do you mean rail? Ancient word. Speak evil of, revile dignities.

They're iconoclasts. Now, they speak in judgment of authority. Now, if we speak in judgment of authority, we're running huge risks.

Huge risks. Let me give you an example of one that I mean. In Revelation chapter 12, verse 10, we have one of the 50 titles of Satan.

The accuser of the brethren. Right? That's the way Revelation 12, 10 defines the name Satan. He's our accuser.

Great. When you accuse the brethren, are you doing his work? Ooh. So when you hear, you know, a rumor about this, or so-and-so did that, or whatever, and it's a brother you're talking about.

Boy, are you in trouble. Because whether you realize it or not, and it's going to happen to all of us, it'll sneak up on you, and you suddenly discover you are Satan's messenger. Heavy stuff.

Every time you open your mouth against one of God's chosen vessels, you're in deep trouble. If it's to anybody other than him in privacy. Now, if they're going to speak evil of dignities, you can just scale this from the local arena all the way through to the top.

Who is the highest dignity that the world will speak evil of? Jesus Christ, you got it. And that, you know, the ultimate dignity, and the ultimate, and who, of course, as an official state religion of the United States, secular humanism, does it attack? The deity, mission, origin, and accomplishment, achievement, commitment of none other than our Lord and Savior. Jude's message to us tonight is to remember Sodom.

Strange, strange thing. Remember Sodom. Remember Lot's wife.

This isn't a distant historical oddity, or a dramatic scene for some high-budget biblical epic film. It's an event that actually happened in history that the Holy Spirit has called to our attention again, and again, and again, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ points us to to learn some lessons for our spiritual walk, yours and mine. Not the unbelieving world that's chasing some carnal entertainment.

But you and I, as we grapple with the day-to-day business of being a Christian in a Christian walk, what are the lessons here? That's your challenge, to read and have the Lord speak to you on. Because this is written for our learning. Let's bow our head.

Father, we praise you that you love us so much as to go so far as to instruct us. We thank you, Father, that we are not limited to the creation for our insights as to who you are and what you have done, but that far more precious than these is the story of your redemption, which has been revealed supernaturally to us by action of your Holy Spirit. Oh, Father, we would just ask you in the name of Jesus Christ to His glory that you just might fill us with that Spirit.

Make clear to us those lessons that you have for us. Help us to examine our lives in the light of Romans 1, in the light of lots, danger in abiding at the gates of Sodom. Father, help us to put our hearts at Hebron on the high ground, the ground of communion.

Father, we would ask you through the power of your Holy Spirit to help us be mindful that we are but travelers and sojourners here and our citizenship is not here. Help us to elevate our tastes, our appetites,

our desires to those that would glorify you, those that would edify the body, those that would be a witness to all those around us. Help us, Father, to remember Sodom.

Help us, Father, to not commit the error of Lot's wife. Fill us with your Spirit. Increase our appetite for the things of thee.

Be with us while we are apart from one another. Draw us closer to you, to the glory and the authority and to the power of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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