

## The Same-Sex Texts in the Bible

There are (only) 6

- Genesis 19  
(and Judges 19)
- Leviticus 18:22  
and 20:13
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-10  
and Timothy 1:9-10
- Romans 1:18-32

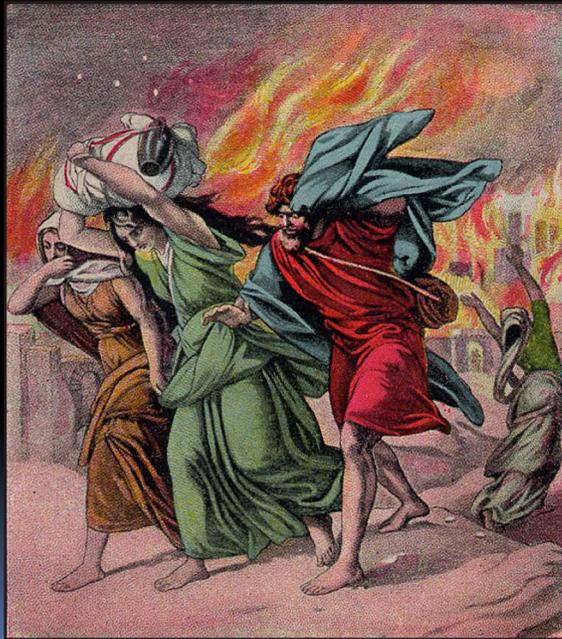


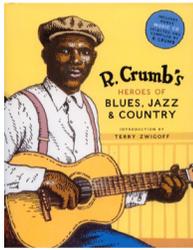
Iowa caucus precinct captain talks to caucus-goer who wants to change her vote when she finds out Pete Buttigieg is gay and married

CBS News

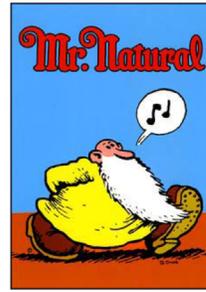
## The Story of Sodom

- Were the men of Sodom gay? Is that why they were destroyed
- If not, why has that become the meaning interpreters give to the story?



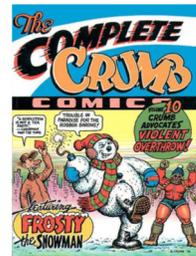
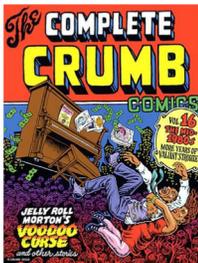


## The Story of Sodom

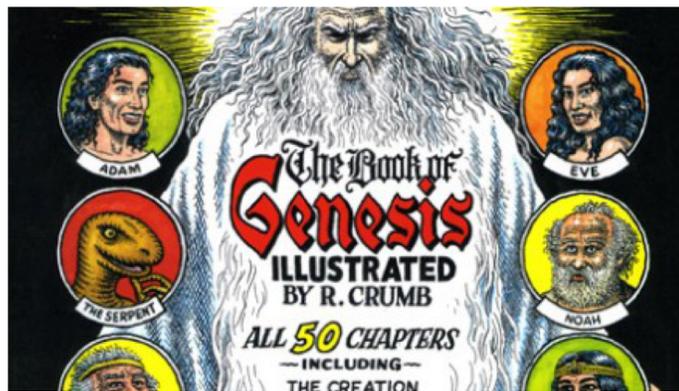


From the illustrations of R. Crumb in  
*The Book of Genesis Illustrated*

(New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009)



## The Story of Sodom



IS NOT THE WHOLE LAND BEFORE YOU? PRAY, KINDLY PART FROM ME! IF YOU TAKE THE LEFT HAND, THEN I SHALL GO RIGHT, AND IF YOU TAKE THE RIGHT HAND, I SHALL GO LEFT.



Gen 13:9

AND LOT LIFTED HIS EYES AND BEHELD ALL THE PLAIN OF JORDAN, SAW THAT ALL OF IT WAS WELL-WATERED— BEFORE THE LORD'S DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH— LIKE THE GARDEN OF THE LORD, LIKE THE LAND OF EGYPT, TILL YOU COME TO ZOAR.

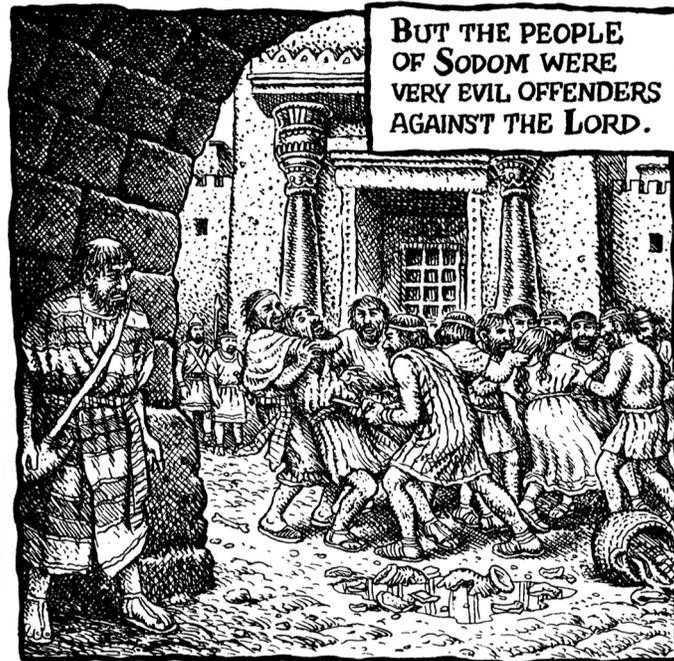


Gen 13:10

AND LOT CHOSE FOR HIMSELF THE WHOLE PLAIN OF JORDAN, AND LOT JOURNEYED EASTWARD, AND THUS THEY PARTED FROM ONE ANOTHER. ABRAM REMAINED IN THE LAND OF CANAAN, WHILE LOT DWELT AMONG THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN, AND HE PITCHED HIS TENT NEAR SODOM.



Gen 13:11-12



BUT THE PEOPLE OF SODOM WERE VERY EVIL OFFENDERS AGAINST THE LORD.

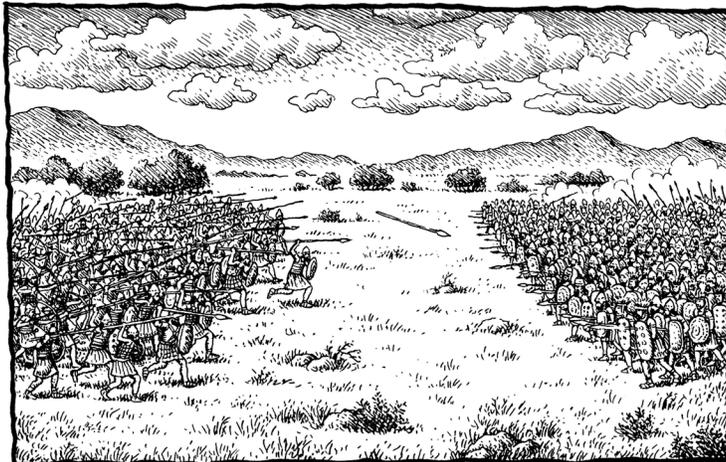
Gen 13:13

AND THEY SWUNG BACK AND CAME TO EN-MISHPAT, THAT IS, KADESH, AND THEY STRUCK ALL THE COUNTRY OF THE AMALEKITE AND ALSO THE AMORITE WHO DWELT IN HAZAZON-TAMAR.



Gen 14:7

AND THE KING OF SODOM AND THE KING OF GOMORRAH AND THE KING OF ADMAH AND THE KING OF ZEBOHIM AND THE KING OF BELA, THAT IS, ZOAR, WENT FORTH AND JOINED BATTLE WITH THEM IN THE VALLEY OF SIDDIM, WITH CHEDORLAOMER, KING OF ELAM, AND TIDAL, KING OF GOHM, AND AMRAPHEL, KING OF SHINAR, AND ARI- OCH, KING OF ELLA- SAR—FOUR KINGS AGAINST THE FIVE.



Gen 14:8-9

AND THE VALLEY OF SIDDIM WAS RIDDLED WITH BITUMEN PITS, AND THE KINGS OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH FLED THERE AND LEAPED INTO THEM, WHILE THE REST FLED TO THE HIGH COUNTRY.



Gen 14:10

AND THE FOUR KINGS TOOK ALL THE GOODS OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH AND ALL THEIR FOOD, AND WENT OFF. AND THEY TOOK LOT, ABRAM'S NEPHEW, AND ALL HIS GOODS, AND WENT OFF, FOR HE WAS THEN DWELLING IN SODOM.



Gen 14:11-12

AND THERE CAME ONE THAT HAD ESCAPED,  
AND TOLD ABRAM THE HEBREW, FOR HE  
WAS THEN ENCAMPED AT THE TERE-  
BINTHS OF MAMRE THE AMORITE, KINS-  
MAN OF ESHKOL AND ANER, WHO  
WERE ABRAM'S CONFEDERATES.

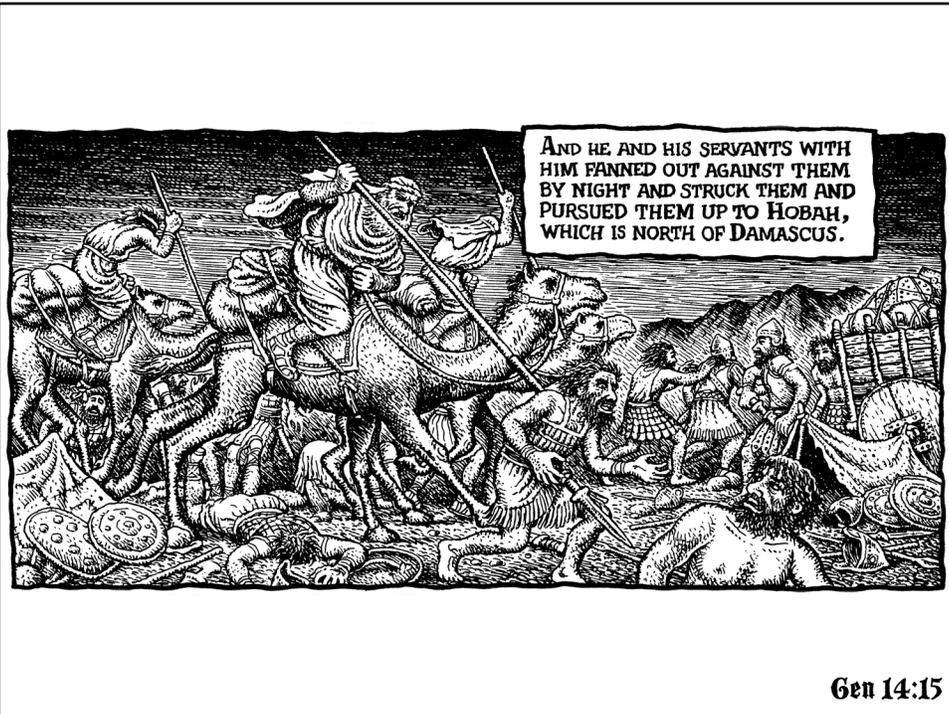


Gen 14:13

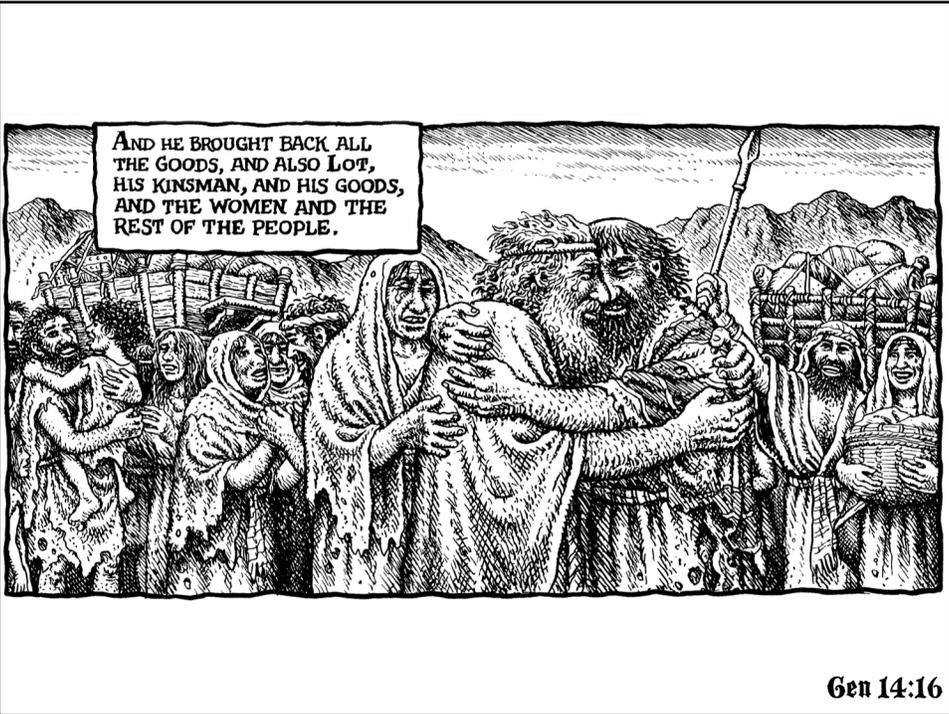
AND WHEN ABRAM HEARD THAT HIS KINSMAN WAS TAKEN  
CAPTIVE, HE MUSTERED HIS RETAINERS, BORN INTO HIS  
HOUSEHOLD, 318 OF THEM, AND WENT IN PURSUIT  
UP TO DAN.



Gen 14:14



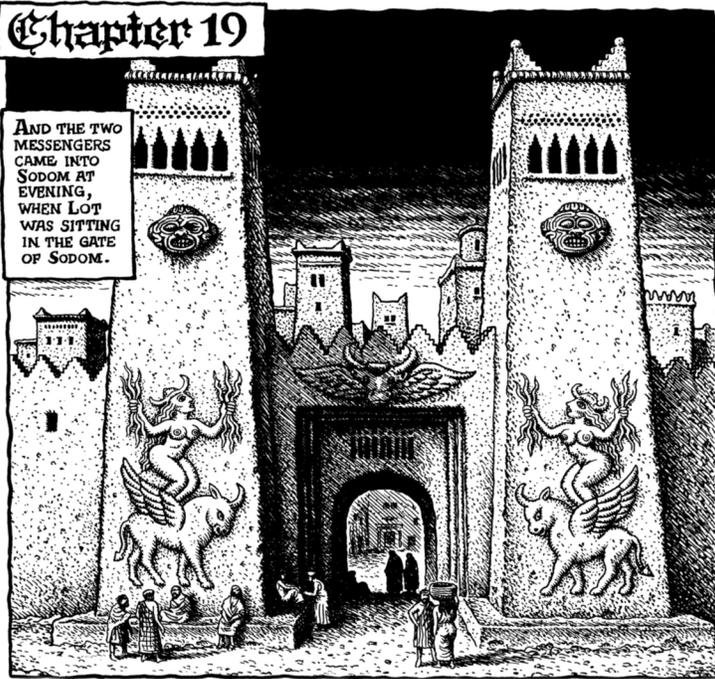
Gen 14:15



Gen 14:16

# Chapter 19

AND THE TWO MESSENGERS CAME INTO SODOM AT EVENING, WHEN LOT WAS SITTING IN THE GATE OF SODOM.



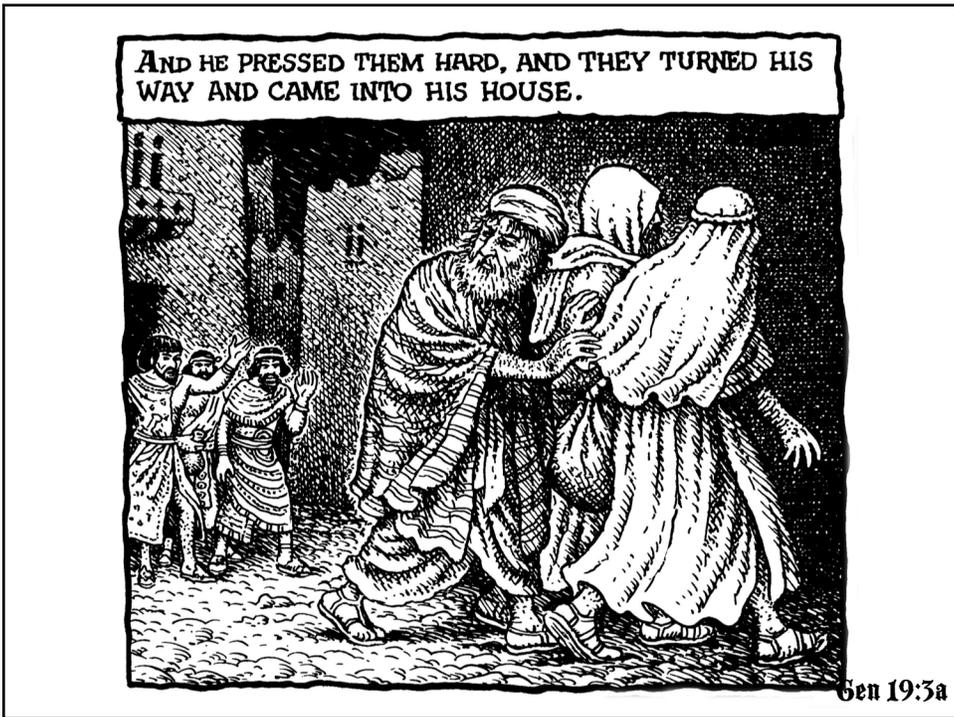
en 19:1a

AND LOT SAW, AND HE ROSE TO GREET THEM, AND BOWED WITH HIS FACE TO THE GROUND.



O, PLEASE, MY LORDS, TURN ASIDE TO YOUR SERVANT'S HOUSE AND BATHE YOUR FEET, AND YOU CAN RISE EARLY AND SET OFF ON YOUR WAY!

Gen 19:1b-2a



AND HE PREPARED THEM A FEAST, AND BAKED UNLEAVENED BREAD, AND THEY DID EAT.

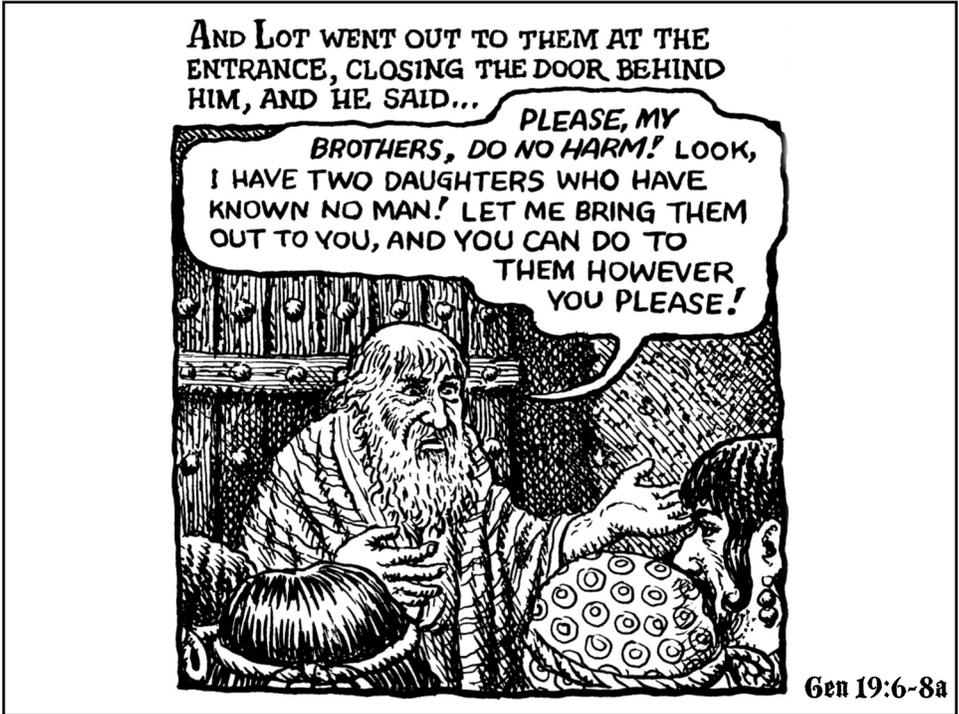


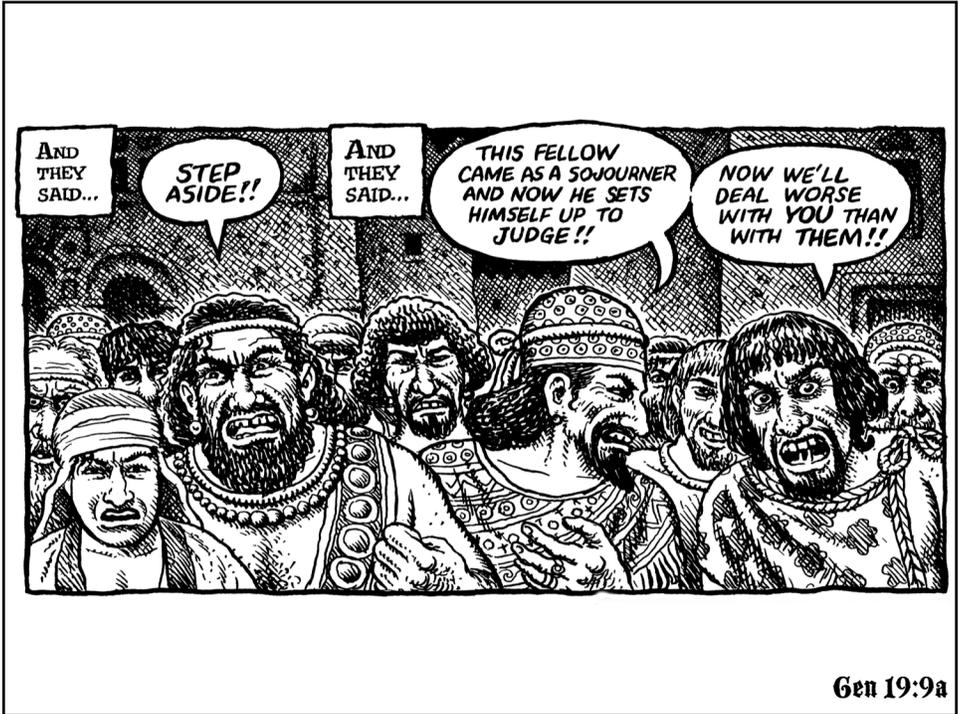
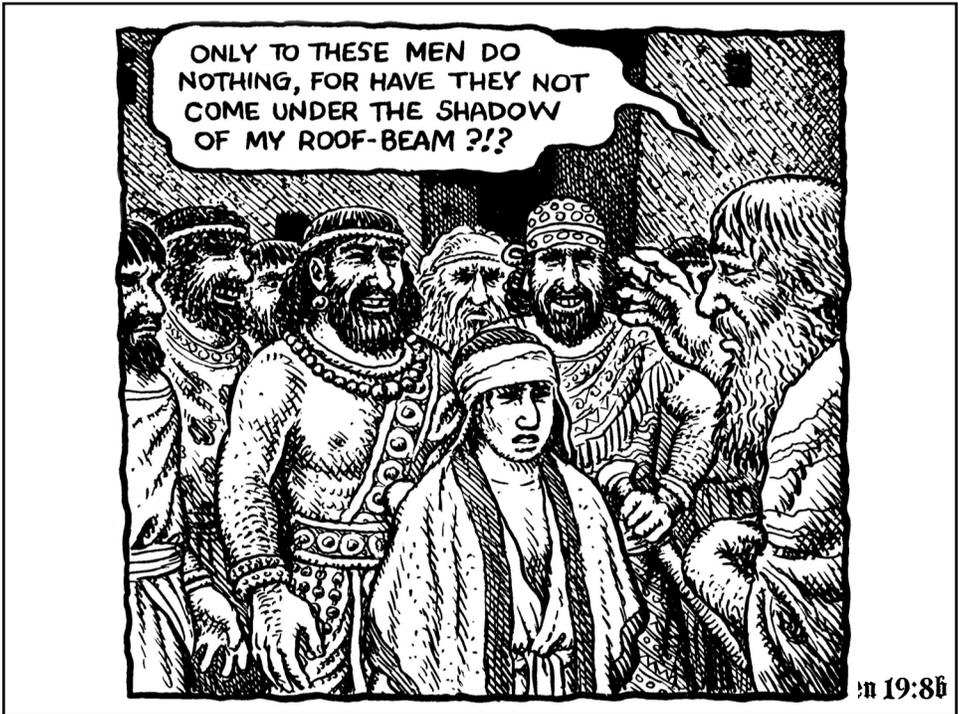
Gen 19:36

THEY HAD NOT YET LAIN DOWN WHEN THE TOWNSMEN, THE MEN OF SODOM, FROM LADS TO ELDERS, EVERY LAST MAN OF THEM, GATHERED ABOUT THE HOUSE.



Gen 19:4





AND THEY PRESSED HARD AGAINST THE PERSON OF LOT,  
AND PUSHED FORWARD TO BREAK DOWN THE DOOR.



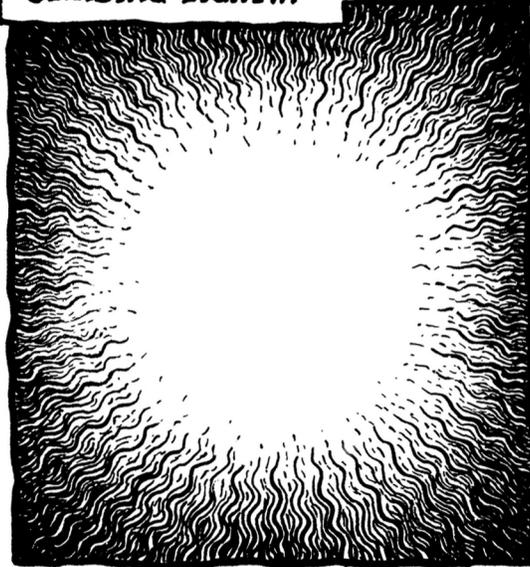
Gen  
19:8b

AND THE TWO MEN REACHED OUT  
THEIR HANDS AND PULLED LOT IN-  
TO THE HOUSE WITH THEM AND  
CLOSED THE DOOR.



Gen 19:10

AND THE MEN AT THE ENTRANCE  
OF THE HOUSE THEY STRUCK WITH  
BLINDING LIGHT...



Gen 19:11a

...FROM THE SMALLEST TO THE BIGGEST, AND THEY  
COULD NOT FIND THE ENTRANCE.



Gen  
19:11b

## Genesis 19:4-9

4 טרם ישכבו  
ואנשי העיר אנשי סדם<sup>a</sup> נסבו על הזכות מנער  
ועד זקן כל העם מקצה: 5 ויקראו אל לוט ויאמרו  
לו איה האנשים אשר באו אליך הלילה הוציאם  
אלינו ונדעה אתם: 6 ויצא אליהם לוט הפתח  
והדלת סגר<sup>a</sup> אתהיו: 7 ויאמר אלגא אחי תרעו: 8  
הנהגא לי שתי בנות אשר לא ידעו איש  
אוציאהגא אהתן אליכם ועשו להן כטוב בעיניכם  
רק לאנשים האל<sup>a</sup> אל תעשו דבר קיעל-כן באו  
בצל קרתי: 9 ויאמרו גש-הלאה ויאמרו<sup>a</sup> האתר  
באלגור וישפט שפוט עתה נרע לה מתם ויפצרו  
באיש בלוט מאד ויששו לשבר הדלת:

4 But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house; 5 and they called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, so that we may know them." 6 Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, 7 and said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. 8 Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof." 9 But they replied, "Stand back!" And they said, "This fellow came here as an alien and he would play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near the door to break it down.

WERE THE MEN OF SODOM GAY?  
WAS THEIR CRIME "HOMOSEXUALITY"?

## The Men of Sodom Had Wives

- Lot marries a woman “from the Jordan plain”; he’s a foreigner, and she gains him protection (no wife 13:1; has wife 19:15)
- Abraham liberates not just the men of Sodom and Gomorrah but also “the women and the rest of the people” too (14:16)
- “young men to elders” gather around Lot’s door (19:4)
- Lot’s two virgin daughters are engaged to two men of Sodom (19:14)

*Why are these women ignored  
when people talk about this story today?*

## Granting the Men aren’t Gay... Is their sin still “homosexuality”?

- If the sin of Sodom is homosexuality, why are the women and children killed too?
- Is it the same-sex nature of the act or the violence to vulnerable strangers that merits punishment?
  - Did the men have reason to fear foreigners?
  - How *should* they have treated them, and how do we know?

*Why is rape replaced by homosexuality  
when people talk about this story today?*

*Why are vulnerable foreign victims erased  
in favor of men as victims in our debates today?*

## Granting the Men aren't Gay...

### Is their sin still "homosexuality"?

- If the sin of Sodom is homosexuality, why are the women and children killed too?
- Is it the same-sex nature of the act or the violence to vulnerable strangers that merits punishment?
  - Did the men have reason to fear foreigners?
  - How *should* they have treated them, and how do we know?
  - How do other biblical books "read" their crime?

## The Story of Sodom

### Its "crime" isn't unique

*The 8<sup>th</sup>-century prophet Amos denounces the northern kingdom Israel for its crimes against the covenant with God*

<sup>11</sup> I overthrew some of you,  
as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,  
and you were like a brand snatched from the fire;  
yet you did not return to me,  
says the Lord.

- Amos 4:11

## The Story of Sodom

### Its "crime" isn't unique

*160 years later, the prophet Jeremiah explains why Jerusalem is about to be destroyed by Babylon in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE*

<sup>14</sup> But in the prophets of Jerusalem  
I have seen a more shocking thing:

they commit adultery and walk in lies;  
they strengthen the hands of evildoers,

so that no one turns from wickedness;  
all of them have become like Sodom to me,  
and its inhabitants like Gomorrah.

- Jeremiah 23:14

## The Story of Sodom

### Its "crime" isn't unique

*After Jerusalem WAS destroyed by Babylon in 587 BCE,  
the Judeans were comforted by the prophet.*

<sup>6</sup> For the chastisement of my people has been greater  
than the punishment of Sodom,

which was overthrown in a moment,  
though no hand was laid on it.

- Lamentations 4:6

## The Story of Sodom

### So why WAS Sodom destroyed?

*Facing the same Babylonian threat,  
another prophet denounces the Judeans for their actions.*

*[God speaking]*

<sup>49</sup>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. <sup>50</sup>They were haughty, and did abominable things before me; therefore I removed them when I saw it. <sup>51</sup>Samaria has not committed half your sins...; because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they, they are more in the right than you. So be ashamed, you also, and bear your disgrace, for you have made your sisters appear righteous.

- Ezekiel 16:43c-52;

See also Q 17:28-33 for a New Testament example

## The Story of Sodom

### So why WAS Sodom destroyed?

*In this late 1<sup>st</sup>-century CE letter attributed to Jesus' brother Jude, the author imagines that the fate of Sodom will also be the fate of false Christian teachers*

<sup>5</sup>Now I desire to remind you, though you are fully informed, that the Lord, who once for all saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. <sup>6</sup>And the angels who did not keep their own position, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgment of the great day. <sup>7</sup>Likewise, **Sodom and Gomorrah** and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, **indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust**, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

- Jude 5-7;

See also 2 Peter 6, which largely copies Jude

# The Story of Sodom

## So why WAS Sodom destroyed?

*Tertullian is an early church author writing in the third century CE. Here, he is arguing against second marriages, claiming that even the FIRST marriage gives in to lust*

Is it not enough for you to have fallen from the highest rank of immaculate virginity to a lower one by marrying? Doubtless you will tumble down still further to a third marriage or a fourth, or maybe even more, after you were not continent (because you married once).... **Therefore let us marry daily—and marrying, let us be caught by the Last Day, like Sodom and Gomorrah,** by that day when the “Woe!” pronounced on those who are pregnant and nursing shall be fulfilled, \* that is, the “Woe!” pronounced on the married and the unchaste, for from marriages come wombs and breasts and babies!

\* Mark 13:17

- Tertullian, *Exhortation to Chastity* 9

## Leviticus 18:22

19 וְאֵל־אִשָּׁה בְגִדְתָּ  
 20 וְאֵל־אִשְׁתּוֹ עִמּוּהָ לֹא־תִתֵּן  
 21 וּמִן־בְּנֵי לֵאמֹר לֹא־תִתֵּן לְהַעֲבִיר אֲלֵיךָ  
 22 וְאֵת־זָכָר לֹא־תִשְׁכַּב  
 23 וּבְכֹל־בְּהֵמָה יֵאָדָם שִׁכְבָּתוֹ  
 לְשִׁמְאוֹהֶן וְאִשָּׁה לֹא־תַעֲמֹד לְפָנָי בְּהֵמָה לְרִבְעָה אֲתִבֵּל הוּאִי:

Lev. 18:19 You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. 20 You shall not have sexual relations with your kinsman's wife, and defile yourself with her. 21 You shall not give any of your offspring to sacrifice them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. 22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. 23 You shall not have sexual relations with any animal and defile yourself with it, nor shall any woman give herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it: it is perversion.

אֶל־תִּשְׁמְאוּ בְּכֹל־אֵלֶּה כִּי בְּכֹל־אֵלֶּה נִשְׁמְאוּ הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְשַׁלֵּחַ מִפְּנֵיכֶם:  
 25 וְתִשְׁמְאוּ הָאָרֶץ וְאֶפְסָרָה עֲוֹנֹת עַלְיָהּ וְנִקְמָה הָאָרֶץ אֶת־יִשְׁכָּתָהּ: 26 וְשָׁמַרְתֶּם אֹתָם אֲתִיבֵל וְאֵת־מִשְׁפָּטֵי וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ מִכֹּל־הַתּוֹעֲבוֹת

Lev. 18:24 Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for by all these practices the nations I am casting out before you have defiled themselves. 25 Thus the land became defiled; and I punished it for its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. 26 But you shall keep my statutes and my ordinances and commit none of these abominations.

## Leviticus 20:13

10 וְאִישׁ  
אֲשֶׁר יִנְאַף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ יְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר בֵּי יְנֵאָף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁת מוֹת־יִימָת  
כ הַנְּאֻף וְהַנְּאֻפֶת: 11 וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲבִיו עֲוֹנַת אָבִיו  
זָלָה מוֹת־יִימָתוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶם דְּמוּתָם בָּם: 12 וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־כַּלְתּוֹ  
מוֹת יִימָתוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶם תָּבֵל עֵשׂוּ דְמוּתָם בָּם: 13 וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב  
אֶת־זָכָר מִשְׁכַּבֵי אִשָּׁה תוֹעֵבָה עָשׂוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם א מוֹת יִימָתוֹ דְּמוּתָם בָּם:  
14 וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקַּח אֶת־אִשָּׁה וְאֶת־אִמָּהּ זָמָה הוּא בְּאֵשׁ יִשְׂרָפוּ אֹתוֹ  
וְאִתָּהֶן וְלֹא־תִהְיֶה זָמָה בְּתוֹכְכֶם: 15 וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן שְׁכָבְתוֹ בְּבִהֵמָה  
מוֹת יִימָת וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה תִּמְלֹגוּ: 16 וְאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרַב  
אֶל־כָּל־בְּהֵמָה לְרִבְעָהּ אִתָּהּ א וְהָרְגִיתְּ אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה מוֹת  
יִימָתוֹ דְּמוּתָם בָּם:

Lev. 20:10 If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death. 11 The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. 12 If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall be put to death; they have committed perversion, their blood is upon them. 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. 14 If a man takes a wife and her mother also, it is depravity; they shall be burned to death, both he and they, that there may be no depravity among you. 15 If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he shall be put to death; and you shall kill the animal. 16 If a woman approaches any animal and has sexual relations with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them.