

WHEN GOD SAYS “ENOUGH”

By

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How does one reconcile the God of love and mercy, who gave His own son to die that sinful man might live, with the God who twice in sacred history ordered the total destruction of a city and a people?

John 3:16, which declares God’s love, is known to all, but little known and understood is God’s command to King Saul concerning the Amalekites: “Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have and spare than not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (1 Samuel 15:3).

Critics have said that the God of the Old Testament is vindictive and cruel, while the God of the New Testament is loving and compassionate. They simply do not know God.

The God who engineered the saving work of Jesus on the cross is the same God who rained fire and destruction upon Sodom and Gomorrah to destroy every human being found in those cities when judgment fell. God did not change in the millenniums between the time of Lot and the time of Peter and Paul. Nor has He changed since then. He is still the God of mercy and justice.

Instead of trying to justify man and find fault with God, critics should examine the record and circumstances of God’s judgment.

All sin is grievous, but in the case of Sodom, God said, “their sin is very grievous” (Gen. 18:20). The city was guilty of tolerating the worst evil practiced by human beings, a sin which totally degrades man who is made in the image of God. When the angels of God (in the guise of men) entered Sodom they found lodging in Lot’s house, but right away the homosexuals converged on the house and demanded, “Where are the men that came in to you this night? Bring them out unto us that we may know them” (Gen. 19:5).

Lot certainly had his faults, but he had not abandoned his faith in God. Peter, in writing of God’s judgment on Sodom, said that God “condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example to those that afterwards should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conduct of the wicked; for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds” (2 Pet. 2:6-8). He begged the mob to leave the men alone, but his pleas only infuriated them as they demanded the right to defile the angels. They would have vented their lusts upon Lot himself had not the angels rescued him from their bestial passions.

The angels led Lot, his wife and two daughters out of the city before fires of judgment fell from the skies, and by morning only smoking ruins were left of what had been two prosperous and proud cities.

God has repeatedly punished with total destruction those guilty of the sin of homosexual acts, which is called “sodomy,” after the city of Sodom. Not only did judgment fall on

those who practiced this evil, but it included all those who tolerated it in their midst. God expects us all to have the same attitude toward this dehumanizing sin that He has, and has demonstrated that those who condone the sin are also under condemnation.

Another example of this fact is found in I Samuel 15, when God ordered Saul to destroy the Amalakites, as cited above.

When Israel left Egypt to move into the Promised Land, God commanded: “Then shall you drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures and destroy all their molten images, and pluck down all their high places.” The archeologists have discovered the ruins of Baal temples and other places of worship at Megiddo, Gezer, Jericho and other locations in Canaan. They found the images and signs of the religious rites conducted there, all indicating that homosexuality was a prominent part of the lives of the citizens.

God was not merely clearing a place for Israel to live, but was bringing judgment upon a people for the sin of sodomy, which degrades His creatures and perverts His intended use of the sexual union.

With Joshua and the men of Israel as His instruments, God destroyed or drove out nearly all the people save the tribe of Amalekites, who escaped destruction because of their nomadic wanderings in the desert. Wherever they went they took their vile worship and homosexual practice with them. Years later, when Saul became king he was assigned the task of completely ridding the country of this obnoxious people. None were to be spared. As Paul later would write, such people “deserve to die” hence God’s command to “utterly destroy” them and all that they had.

As far as the record goes, homosexuality is the only sin for which God ever condemned a whole city or people to annihilation. Such harsh judgments should cause us to consider the following realities:

First, God’s justice is based upon His goodness. Man created in His image was pronounced “good,” but the practice of sodomy turns him into an enemy of God and of the human race. To allow it to continue unchecked is to allow all humanity to be corrupted. Only four people were found in Sodom that were fit to save, and one of them, Lot’s wife, turned back to destruction as the cities were destroyed. Such was the influence of the Sodomites that the cities were beyond salvaging, and were destroyed to keep their influence from corrupting the rest of the world.

Second, the evil of sodomy is not limited to the degradation of the human body, but has far-reaching ramifications. As homo sexuality increases, natural affection decreases. Love of wife or husband, of children and parents, disappears. Archeologists discovered in the places of Baal worship that the sacrifice of children was common. Since the homosexuals have “come out of the closet” in our nation, there has been a steady decline in marriage fidelity and a rise in child abuse and abortion.

This is exactly as Paul described them in the first century: “God gave them up unto vile passions: for their woman changed the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one

toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due...being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful: who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practice them” (Rom. 1:26-27, 29-32).

Third, not only are the homosexuals themselves condemned, but so are those who “consent with them,” meaning all those who do not take a stand against this evil. This brings a great portion of the people of this nation under condemnation. In fact there are very few today who take a stand and raise their voices against this filthy and evil practice. The President has boasted of the appointment of openly “gay” men and women to high positions in government. In the civil service system these perverts receive preferential treatment. Same-sex “marriages” have been approved in many states and even by many mainstream churches.

Some say that out of love we must tolerate that which God has labeled an abomination. But it is out of God’s love that He established laws against the practice of such degrading and destructive acts. To love (agape) our fellow man is to seek his good, and to warn him if he is on the road to death and destruction. Those who clamor for “rights” for homosexuals are only encouraging them to reject the purpose of God and continue on their way to judgment.

Yet, there is hope for the homosexual, and that is for him or her to repent and seek forgiveness through Christ, for “he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). After Paul wrote to the church at Corinth that neither “effeminate nor abusers of themselves with men” should inherit the kingdom of God, he then wrote, “But such were some of you: but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11). He concluded, “Therefore, glorify God in your body” (Vs. 20).

Many of the great thinkers admit that we are living in the twilight of a great civilization, and that our nation is dying. Perhaps God has already said, “Enough.”

“But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (Jude 20-21).

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