THE SEARCH FOR ADAM AND STEVE IN GENESIS

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It should seem obvious to even the casual observer that homosexuality appears to be on the increase in America, both numerically, and in acceptance. In light of pro-homosexual groups' visibility in public support of their cause, and increasing boldness of individuals to "come out of the closet," swelling ranks could be real, or only apparent. But increasing national acceptance--and indeed, promotion--of them are undeniable. Consider Hollywood's profuse inclusion of that lifestyle in movies and television sitcoms, and the choice of certain religious denominations to condone and support same sexually oriented people in marriage, church membership, and even the wearing of the clerical collar. The premise is strong.

One can no longer ignore the issue of homosexuality. It is real. It is gaining public and legal support. It is touching the lives of all, as family members are found to be gay, troubled homosexuals are seeking help, and devout militants increasingly stand ready to challenge any minister who opposes that lifestyle.

One key issue determining whether one should stand in support of, or in opposition to homosexuality, is "What causes it?" Or, indeed, is there a cause? Is it natural? One would do well to go to the book of origins, Genesis, and seek for the first recorded practices of homosexuality. In searching out and discovering the roots, one would then be able to determine the quality of the fruit: whether profitable or perverse.

However, in preparation, it is needful to first establish God's judgment of the practice of homosexuality. If God's New Covenant Word approves it, then surely the discovered root in Genesis will be favorable and delightful. Otherwise, God's condemnation in the New Testament must be accompanied by the uncovering of a detestable and perverse origin and practice in the Old. Based upon a pre-established position of the continuity and agreement of the entire inspired Word of God, and the literal-historical method of interpretation, Genesis can only agree with the New Testament commentary thereto.

Nothing could be clearer than that the New Testament is profuse with condemnation and judgmental decrees concerning homosexuality. Many have attempted, and others continue their efforts, to dilute the "milk of the word," concerning this matter. One is not privileged to judge their motives in their approach to the work of interpreting, and in their stated conclusions. But knowing Satan's devices (II Cor. 2:11), the ultimate design does seem to shout at us.

Romans 1:18-31 is succinct, but exact in its condemnation of homosexual practices (as is demonstrated below). Add to this passage the clear judgment of I Corinthians 6:9; I Timothy 1: 1; and II Timothy 3:3, and God's rejection of homosexuality is multiplied unto finality, even by decree barring the lifestyle participants from heaven's pure home. Note I Corinthians 6:9: " . . . effeminate . . . abusers of themselves with mankind . . . "(KJV), and I Timothy 1:10, ". . . them that defile themselves with mankind . . ." (KJV), and II Timothy 3:3". . . without natural affection . . . " (KJV).

Malick points out that the 1948 Kinsey report " . . . changed the general attitude toward homosexuality and heterosexuality . . . " (327). Some contend that homosexuality is normal, and the condemnation only concerns

perversion of the act, as adulterers pervert their marriage vows. He also demonstrates that the first three New Testament references listed above are not merely rejecting a perversion of the norm, but the conduct as a perversion of God's plan for human sexuality (327).

Whatever target is the object of those who reject the New Testament condemnation of homosexuality, their aim is off; their participation is disqualified for not following the rules. For the purposes of this work, this writer is committed to the literal-historical approach in interpreting scripture. This method applied to these New Testament passages exegetes the plain and retributive condemnation of homosexuality. Based on that conviction, one may turn to seeking the root of the practice in Genesis, now knowing that it will be rooted in defilement.

Adam, newly created, watches a parade of animals pass by. In wisdom that is highly underrated by modern man's pride filled intellectualism, Adam is able to immediately and easily identify characteristics of animals, and appropriately name them (Whitcomb Lecture). Doubtless, as he does so, three things must catch his attention. He wonders at the creative genius of God; he notices that each animal has it's own companion; that they are also male and female. And, as Dr. Whitcomb points out, he realizes that none is worthy of being a companion to him (9). God graciously creates Adam a companion, and originates the uniqueness of Adam and Eve, called Man, both " . . . male and female. . ." (Genesis 1:27 KJV).

No change in this created order occurs prior to the Fall, recorded in Genesis 3. Christ confirms this order in Matthew 19:4-6, in one stroke approving marriage, fidelity, and male-female relationships as the original will of God. So any change that transpires contrary to this plan will stem from corrupt humanity's deviation from that which is natural. It is clear then that homosexuality is not natural. Malick says, "Homosexuality is no more godly, and thus is no more 'natural,' than any of the other evils mentioned" (337).

This writer also recalls hearing of a report, just a couple or so years ago, claiming that the source of homosexuality had possibly been located. The hypothalamus gland was found in homosexual men to be less than half the size of a typical one in a heterosexual man. Many claimed this to be irrefutable proof that homosexuality is innate. But this study by Dr. Simon Levay, in the view of Gudel (30), was seriously flawed. Was the gland's alteration prenatal or neonatal? A change occurring in childhood? Puberty? Furthermore, all 19 homosexuals involved in the test had died of AIDS. What role did that disease play in the size of the gland?

In one's search for the origin of homosexuality in Genesis, no evidence is found that it is by creation or birth. The next potential origin might be seen in Genesis 6, though in no source searched has this writer uncovered any suggestion of homosexuality in this context. Indeed, there is nothing in the text to suggest it. Yet, considering that sexual sin was a predominant cause of the judgment that fell, can one at least not see the possibility of it's inclusion? Granted, all the sexual sin that is mentioned in the chapter, and by the Lord in Matthew 24, either statedly involves male-female relationships, or by standard usage infers it. Genesis 6:5 informs that man's wickedness was great, and seems to imply the outward, wicked conduct resulted from inward, evil imaginations. This opens the door for the possibility of homosexual practices, along with the stated sin of verse two. However, the Word is silent, so frail humanity will do well to be also. Actually, it is a mute question. Whatever took place is for time buried beneath the silt and mud of a universal flood. The world of Noah has no connection with the world that now is. The only exceptions being that both man's nature and God's holy standards remain unchanged from that side of the Deluge to this.

Another possible root surfaces in Genesis 9:20-27. Standard interpretation views Noah cursing his grandson, Canaan (verse 25), for what his youngest

son, Ham (verse 24) did to him. First, let's consider these identities. Was it Ham or Canaan who did it? One author of antiquity says it was Ham: " . . . not only falling victim to drunkenness, but exposing himself in that state to the impious and vile conduct of his son Ham" (Edersheim, 55). He also quotes Martin Luther: "Ham would not have mocked his father, when overcome with wine, if he had not long before cast from his soul that reverence . . .” (55), and goes on to explain the conditions, believing Ham did the misdeed. Matthew Henry also concurs: Ham “. . . pleased himself with the sight . . . (73).

But Whitcomb offers an alternative view: "Since Canaan, the son of Ham, was specifically cursed by Noah, we may assume that he is the one referred to (sic) in vs. (sic) 24, and that he took the lead in dishonoring Noah" (15). Murray mildly argues for the same: "Yet many writers of great authority, both Jewish and Christian, understand by the term here used, ' his younger (lit. little) son,' not his son Ham, but his grandson Canaan" (81). The expressed thesis is not, however, to determine the identity of the sinner, but the nature and origin of the sin. So the former conclusion is left for the reader to draw.

Secondly, what sin was committed? Did Ham or Canaan instigate Noah's drunkenness? Did the guilty one mock his father's nakedness before his brethren? Or, did he commit a sexual act with Noah—a homosexual act? As Dr. Whitcomb suggested in an oral, classroom examination of the subject, the principle established in Habbakkuk 2:15 could enter into it, suggesting that the perpetrator may have given the wine to Noah for the purpose of unveiling his nakedness (Lecture). If so, why? Were homosexual desires involved? The above quotes from both Edersheim and Matthew Henry suggest that they may have seen in the account something more sinister than the simple mocking of a drunk man. Again an impasse. There is just no certainty concerning it. Neither is there yet found a certain origin for Homosexuality.

But, progressing now into Genesis 19, one steps onto a more sure footing. Here homosexual debauchery is undeniable, though some seek to shift the blame for ensuing judgment to another cause. Davies cites five arguments opponents use against those who view this passage as condemnatory toward homosexuality (27).

Simply stated, they are:

1. The sin was one of no hospitality;

2. It was the element of attempted rape that God judged;

3. They were not under the law of Moses;

4. It was a cultural matter;

5. It was an inborn (natural} trait (27).

It is true, the men of that place were not hospitable, by current standards. Surely, however, they must have treated all newcomers this way. It was the way of their world. Regardless of the extent of inhospitableness, in either degree or length of time, this was not the sin for which their city was destroyed. Does so simple a sin deserve such a payment, the destruction of the whole place? What about the matter of attempted rape? This too was the way of their world; had they not done it many times before? Why the judgment at this point? Surely they had also raped women, as they apparently were bisexual, rather than strictly homosexual. Otherwise, would Lot have offered them his two daughters in lieu of his two house-guests? (verse 8). Rape is no doubt involved in God's indictment of them, but not the total case against them.

Their sin is specifically the sin of homosexuality. Verse four emphasizes ". . . the men of the city, even the men of Sodom. . . ." Their very name of identification has today become the moniker of those who engage in this perversion. As for them not being under Mosaic Law, neither was the Antediluvian world, or the postdiluvian folk at Babel. Nor is anyone today, but the New Testament clearly condemns the practice. It was their culture indeed; one they had created in their rejection of God's natural order of sexual fidelity. Men are not judged by cultural standards, but by God's. The concept of homosexuality being inborn will be considered in due time.

One would think a more tempting objection to raise might be that they were judged because it was two angels whom they were seeking to assault? Yet, that will not stand, for the sin had been in progress long prior to the arrival of the angels (note Genesis 18:20 - 22a). Peter speaks of Lot: "(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)" (II Peter 2:8), showing clearly that whatever their sin, it had been practiced for a good while. Their involving of the heavenly messengers surely did not help their case any, but the cause of God's judgment falling upon them is deeper than that. One might expect that eyes that properly view the Biblical record will have no problem in discerning that God judged the wicked homosexual lifestyle in Sodom. Gudel's assertion then is of interest: "It is extremely revealing to note that almost every pro-gay group within the church shares one thing in common: They reject the Bible as being fully the Word of God" (11). He further states that neither the United Church of Christ (UCC), the Episcopal Church or the Evangelical Lutheran Church " . . . believe(sic) that we have God's inerrant Word in the Old and New Testaments" (11). But look at these contrastive positions: "The Canaanitish nations in general, and the cities of the plain especially, were addicted to those deadly sins so strictly forbidden to the Israelites" (Murray 81), and Matthew Henry, " . . . the old were not past it, and the young had soon come up to it" (122). These are men who approach the Bible correctly and see the truth plainly. The latter naturally results from the first.

Sodom was judged for their wicked practice of homosexuality. This indeed was the sin of Sodom, as the rophet declares, ". . . they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have ewarded evil unto themselves" (Isaiah 3:9). It is obvious that to Isaiah, the sin of which he speaks is obvious to his audience. The name of the city declares it. The "rewarded evil" clearly comes because of this sin.

Having reached this point, one might feel ready to conclude the root has been uncovered and begin to draw some conclusions. A root has been exposed. This is the first mention of homosexuality in Genesis.
There are other possible occurrences, but the Genesis record does not clearly establish them. However, the uncovering of the tap root has not yet been achieved. There is an origin of homosexuality recorded in Genesis. It will indeed set the perverse standard and reveal the very character of the practice. But a call to the New Testament commentary is needed to discover it.

Exegesis convinces this writer that the historical context Romans of 1:18-32 is a commentary on the time period of the Tower of Babel, which account is recorded in Genesis 11:1-9. Davies concurs, also placing the passage in this era (27). He demonstrates three steps downward for mankind:

1. Man exchanging the worship of God for idols:
"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things" (Romans 1:21-23 KJV);

2. Man exchanging the Truth of God for lies: “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen" (Romans 1:25 KJV);

3. Mankind exchanging natural sex for perverted sex: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into 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 meet" (Romans 1:26,27 KJV).

If there is no anachronism here, this clearly establishes in Genesis both the seed, tap root, and fruit of homosexuality in the world. For here the New Testament commentary names the ultimate sin, in the decline of that generation, that brought the judgment of God upon it. Its character is sordid. Herculean terms of contempt are used to describe this civilization: "[un]thankful . . .vain . . . foolish . . . fools . . . uncleanness . . . vile affections . . . unseemly . . . error . . . reprobate . . . filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful . . . worthy of death . . . [having] pleasure in them that do them" (Romans 1:18-32 KJV).

The seed of homosexuality is seen in the religious perversion of a society determining to devise its own way to God. Nimrod (Genesis 10:8) is the leader of this movement. Morris defines his character and purposes in defining his name, " Let us rebel! ," and lays out the historical picture for us (251-253). Nimrod began the kingdom of Babel. The towers they built seem to have been for a twofold purpose. One purpose was to get closer to the gods they conjured up in their corruption of the Zodiac. The Genesis statement: " . . . whose top may reach unto heaven . . . ," taken with the Romans passage in chapter 1, verses 19 and 20, shows the downward trek from their knowledge of God, to the initiation of organized religion. In their case, it is the worship of invented gods, and associated with the stars. Mount says, in referring to this era, "The gospel which once was clearly understood from the stars has now been almost lost in a maze of pagan astrology" (14). They had said, " . . . Let us make us a name . . . ," perhaps indicating some fear that God's promises to Shem (which is also the Hebrew word translated "name" in the KJV), might come true, unless they took matters into their own hands. They set out to make a "Shem" for themselves, lest they indeed take second place to their kinfolk.

A second purpose, perhaps, seen in the design of the many towers built, was to provide a landing platform for the gods that they might come down to dwell with men on earth. The spiral ramp incorporated into the tower provided man's access to the observatory, and the gods an invitation to descend to walk on earth among mankind. Support for such a theory may be suggested by Genesis 11:5, which tells us: " And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded." He came down to see both the tower and the city they had built. It is as though God took them up on their invitation, but not with the mfavorable results they anticipated.

Adam and Eve invented religion with their fig leaf coverings. Their son, Cain, continued the endeavor, showing the character of inherited depravity. But Nimrod and his band organized it into a religious system that still resides with us today (Morris 265).

This is the generation that traded the truth for "the lie" ("τω ψευδει" II Thessalonians. 2:11. The New Testament). They turned off the light, and plunged themselves into the dark abyss of spiritual darkness. They rebelled

against God's wisdom, revised His Word, and rejected His ways. God gave them up to moral uncleanness, ungovernable desires, and over to a mind whose thought processes are utterly disapproved by God. It was a civilization given over to sexual perversion.

This is the generation that invented homosexuality as a lifestyle. Other societies previously considered may or may not have engaged in the practice. But this is the society that made it the common, everyday manner of living; utterly corrupt, and under the full judgment of God.

The same-sex drive is only inherent in the sense that one's fallen nature provides the potential for one to succumb to any evil to which he might be subjected. I Corinthians 10:13 establishes that principle. All temptations are common to all mankind.That being true, a second principle is in evidence: One may note both in the Biblical record, and in the observance of nature, that as the light of truth is suppressed, the agents of the kingdom of darkness become more active. The presence of Godly people (and in this age, the Holy Spirit's presence here, indwelling His people) and their influence (testimony) restrains sin. II Thessalonians shows the restraining work of the Holy Spirit: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." Taken with the Lord's declaration: "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14a KJV), we certainly should be a rebuke and a restraining force against the spread of leaven in the world. It is sad that Lot was "worn down" (Whitcomb's insight into the Greek "vexed," in II Peter 2:7 KJV) by the gross immorality around him, rather than influencing some to come to God. As he did call it wickedness (Genesis 19:7 KJV), perhaps Edersheim says it best: "It is true there is no evidence that his opposition had been of the slightest avail. How could it avail with men who knew perfectly well that with all his denunciation of their wicked ways, he preferred their money making company to the desolation of the hills, where he would be vexed with no filthy conversation, but would also find no markets?" (51).

At Babel, instruments of shining truth were certainly scarce. Darkness increasingly prevailed. As darkness ruled, the agents thereof became bolder and more powerful. This suggests a third principle: As wickedness increases, the boredom with sin and the search for new activities of iniquity intensifies. Was it not apparently so in Genesis 6? Man became so overtaken by sin, so wicked, the lowest depth possible was reached. Perhaps homosexuality, though it is not so stated. They did however invent a new form, the sons of God taking the daughters of men in marriage. Whatever one's interpretation of that activity may be, it was wicked enough to move God to destroy that (un)civilization. Consider Judges 19, recording the account of the Levite and his concubine. It was a day in which ". . . every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25 KJV). Israel's historical record recounts the same sad story, as in Psalm 106:13:

They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul. They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD. The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram. And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked. They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea. Therefore he said that he would destroy them.

Having established the pattern of increasing sin and degenerating acts where the light of Truth is being rejected, one may advance to consider what the ultimate act of societal wickedness is that calls down the judgment of God on a nation. Vander Lugt addresses the issue: Romans one shows us ". . . that homosexuality is the final state of sexual debauchery reached by people who willfully reject God" (77). The following signify the truthfulness of this assertion: The generation at the time of Babel, judged with dispersion and

confounding of their enterprise. (This was great mercy from God, that he did not go against them as He did the Antediluvians.); the Sodomites of Lot's day, whose cities God cleared from the face of the earth--such destruction that Abram could see the smoke from Mamre, or perhaps from the top of a mountain East of there (as he went part of the way toward Sodom with his heavenly visitors); the end of the era of the Judges, in the sordid affair at Gibeah, belonging to Benjamin (Judges 19:21-25). And Jones points out that "This sin was one of the primary reasons why the Lord cast out the Canaanite tribes and ordered their complete destruction . . . "(1).

Consider these warnings of Mosaic Law and other prophets against this evil practice: Ezekiel 16:49,50:

"Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom . . . they . . . committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good."

Or, Lev 18:22: " Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination."

Then Peter, in his second chapter, tells us that God knows how " . . . to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (verse 9). The principle is strongly implied in Genesis 15:16, " . . . the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." God doesn't judge fully until the bottom of the abyss of iniquitous practices is reached. Then judgment falls without reprieve.

Homosexuality appears as the low level of living that brings judgment on a society. Marriage is a holy act ordained and sanctioned by God. His plan and sanction extends to one man for one woman for life. Marriage is shown by Paul to be a type of the relation of Christ to His Bride. The imagery he uses in Ephesians 5, involves the genders of male and female. In the "union" of two of the same sex, there is a defiling of the union God blessed. Such perverted union is unnatural and forced--and unhealthy: in lesbianism, impossible. There is not the even the remotest possibility of procreation, a purpose for which God established marriage. As Adam felt incomplete, he was fulfilled in Eve. Biologically, what Eve lacked physically, Adam had. In the union of male and female, a physical void in the female is filled. The need of the man is met. A union occurs. The blessings of God are upon a union consummated within the guidelines summarized in Hebrews 13:4. Homosexuals can't possibly accomplish the worthy purpose established by God. They can't become one flesh. It is like trying to attach a screw to a screw. A screw is made to fit into a nut. The first is unnatural and forced a perversion of the intended purpose. The latter is normal and profitable. Even the animals do not pervert God's order. Yates says, "The animals are too much 'other' to allow such fellowship." He continues,"…only the woman is of man, and yet different from man. The act of sexual intercourse is purposefully . . . represented as a sort of 'reunion' between the man and that which has been taken out of him" (84).

Homosexuality finds its seed in rejection of God, its root in surrender to the rule of the flesh, its fruit in the corruption of society, and its end, the sure judgment of God. The Romans One commentary on the Genesis 11 record of Babel, the earliest certain account of homosexual practices, makes it clear.

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