

BIBLICAL TEXTS RELATED TO “HOMOSEXUALITY”

“The Classic Seven”

Genesis 19:1-11 (4-8) “... the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house, 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.’ Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, and said, ‘I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. 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.’”

Judges 19:16-30 (22, 25) “... the men of the city, a perverse lot, surrounded the house, and started pounding on the door. They said to the old man, the master of the house, ‘Bring out the man who came into your house, so that we may have intercourse with him.’ ... So the man seized his concubine, and put her out to them. They wantonly raped her, and abused her all through the night until the morning.”

Leviticus 18:22 “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.”

Leviticus 20:13 “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”

Romans 1:26-27 “For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their errors.”

I Corinthians 6:9-10 “Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers – none of these will inherit the kingdom of God.”

I Timothy 1:9-11 “... the law is laid down not for the innocent but for the lawless and disobedient, for the godless and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their father or mother, for murderers, fornicators, sodomites, slave traders, liars, perjurers.”

Alternate Views and Texts

In both Genesis & Judges the issue is violence, abuse, rape, and humiliation of the outsider – unrelated to the question of homosexual persons in committed relationships. In Judges, the concubine is raped, abused, and ultimately killed -- acts of *heterosexual* violence.

Leviticus forbids conduct we would call “homosexual.” Note that other words translated “abomination” are used in Leviticus and Deuteronomy for harnessing two kinds of animals together, planting two kinds of seed in a field, wearing clothing made of two kinds of fabric, and men wearing women’s clothing or women, men’s. Do we recognize the cultural element in these “laws”, or have a holistic view of the “purity laws?”

In the early chapters of Romans, Paul points out that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”, in order to underline the incredible good news that “they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Verses 26-27 are part of a long list including idolatry and “... evil, covetousness, malice ... envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful ...” In this long passage, St. Paul makes it clear that all are equally guilty, and when we condemn others, we also condemn ourselves.

“Vice lists” as in I Corinthians and I Timothy are intended to deter Christians from conduct that harms the community. Yet we should note that our society seems to accept “the greedy” and have a new understanding of “drunkards.” More to the point, there are a great many non-heterosexual Christians who are not “lawless and disobedient, ... godless and sinful, ... unholy and profane,” and anyone who applied such terms to them might well be guilty of malice and slander, violating the 8th Commandment (refer again to the list in Romans 1).

SEE ALSO:

John 15:12 “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

Romans 13:9-10 “The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet’; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.”

Galatians 5:14 “For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”