

Westboro Baptist Church

Pastor Fred Phelps

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Vine of Sodom & Grapes of Gall

Deuteronomy 32:32: For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter.

Barnes: The nature and character of Israel is compared to these emblems of utter depravity.

Calvin: He calls them an offshoot from the vine of Sodom and Gomorrah, inasmuch as they resemble in their nature both those nations, as much as if they had sprung from them.

Clarke: Their actions are gall and wormwood, producing nothing but mischief and misery to themselves and others. Their united exertions, as well as their individual acts, are sin, and only sin, continually. It is very likely that the grapes

produced about the lake Asphaltites, where Sodom and Gomorrah formerly stood, were not only of an acrid, disagreeable taste, but of a deleterious quality, and to this, it is probably, Moses here alludes.

Gill: Who has not heard of the apples and fruits of Gomorrah, which are said to look very fair and beautiful without, but when touched, turned into ashes?

Jamieson, Fausset,

Brown: This fruit, which the Arabs call “Lot’s Sea Orange,” is of a bright yellow color and grows in clusters of three or four. When mellow, it is tempting in appearance, but on being struck, explodes like a puffball, consisting of skin and fiber only.

Matthew Henry: They were planted a choice vine, wholly a right seed, but by sin had become the degenerate plant of

a strange vine (Jer. 2:21), and not only transcribed the iniquity of Sodom, but outdid it (Ezek. 16:48). God called them his vineyard, his pleasant plant (Isa 5:7). But their fruits were, 1) very offensive, and displeasing to God, bitter as gall; and, 2) very malignant, and pernicious one to another, like the cruel venom of asps.

Bible dictionaries: *Vine of Sodom:* Among the many conjectures as to this tree, the

most probable is that it is the osher of the Arabs, which grows from Jordan to southern Egypt. Another conjecture equates it with the colocynth. Its fruit are called "apples of Sodom," which, though beautiful to the eye, are bitter to the taste.

***Apples of Sodom:* The fruit is described by Josephus, who saw it growing near Sodom: "Their have a color as if they were fit to be eaten, but if you pluck them with your hands,**

they dissolve into smoke and ashes." The fruit resembled a large, smooth apple or orange, hanging in clusters of three or four. When pressed or struck, it exploded with a puff, like a bladder or puff-ball, leaving in the hand only the shreds of the thin rind and a few fibers.