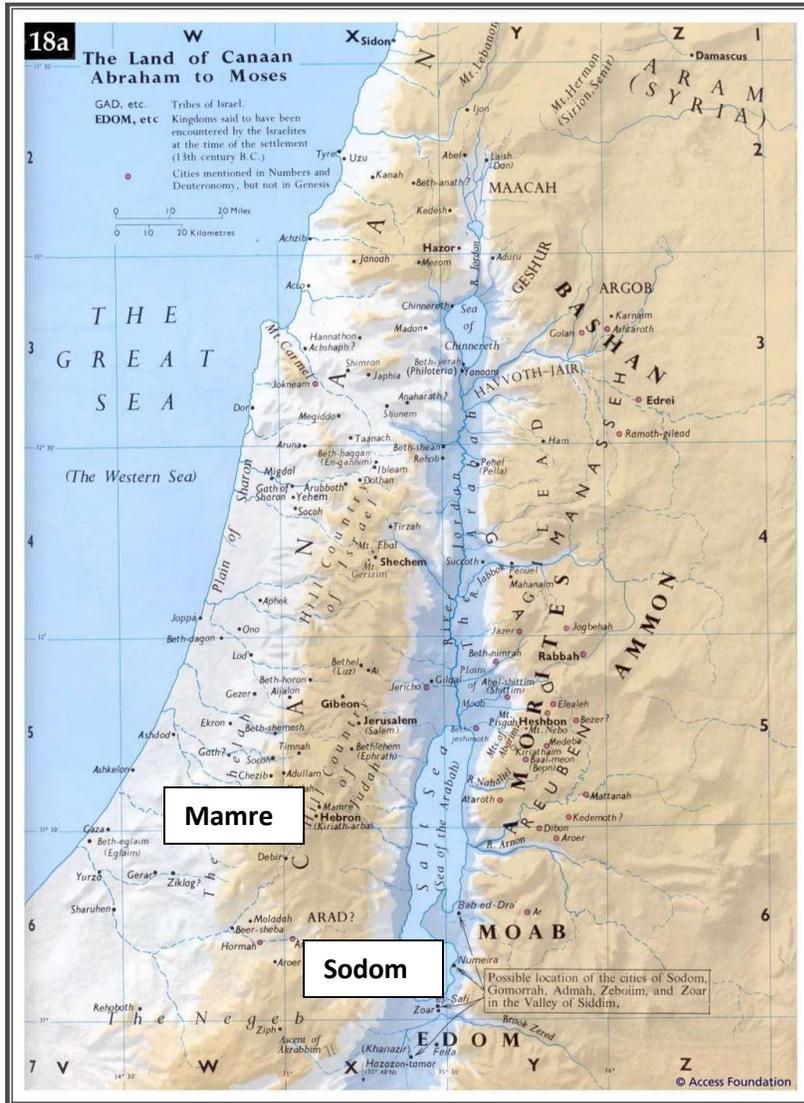


**Westboro Baptist Church**  
**April 20, 2014**

**I. The Role of Christ at Sodom:**



The phony, backslidden, lukewarm Christians of today would have you believe that Christ, the very Son of God and Heir of the universe, is in the role of waiting on humans, the creatures, to use their free will to make up their minds regarding their salvation. They have relegated the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, who can open the Book and loosen the seals (Rev. 5:5) to being a long-haired, hippy, conductor on *It's A Small World After All* ride at Disney World. "Here's your seat, let's all sing together, and see how we are really all the same over the whole world and hold hands and go round and round and have fun in life." It is ridiculous.

*And the LORD (Jehovah/the Lord Jesus Christ/a Christophany) appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre: and he (Abraham) sat in the tent door in the heat of the day (around noon); and he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men (a company of three – Christ and two angels) stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground (Gen. 18:1-2).*

This is the Captain of the hosts that appears to Abraham (Joshua 5:14). Beloved, leaders lead. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and He is going to make a statement here at Sodom. This is like Chief Justice John Roberts writing for the majority in an important United States Supreme Court decision. When the President is in the room, he has the last say on all matters. The Lord Jesus Christ is in charge here and he is going to make all the calls and when you read the entirety of Gen. 18 you see that Christ is the one leading the conversation and leading the events that occur.

They then get lunch and talk about Sarah having Isaac. *And the LORD (Lord Jesus Christ) said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I (Lord Jesus Christ) do (Gen. 18:17). And the LORD (Lord Jesus Christ) said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; **I (Lord Jesus Christ) will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I (Lord Jesus Christ) will know.** And the men (the two angels) turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD (Lord Jesus Christ) (Gen. 18:20-22). So the Lord Jesus Christs' two companions (the two angels) go toward Sodom (this is about a 25-40 mile trip) without Him, while Abraham negotiates seemingly for Lot's life. *And there came two angels to Sodom at even (Gen. 19:1).**

*And the LORD (Lord Jesus Christ) said, If I (Lord Jesus Christ) find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I (Lord Jesus Christ) will spare all the place for their sakes. (Gen. 18:26).* Then, there are more negotiations and they get to that Christ will not destroy these cities for ten's sake. *And the LORD (Lord Jesus Christ) went His way, as soon as He had left communing with Abraham... Gen. (18:33).*

Where did Christ go? What is Christs' mission? His mission was to: 1. To personally go to Sodom to see for himself on the ground if it is as bad as the cry of it seems; (Gen. 18:21); 2. To find and/or look for a minimum of ten righteous souls there; (Gen. 18:32); and, 3. As a by-product of 1. and 2. he will establish the condition of Sodom so He can report in Luke 17:28 that *they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded.* Ostensibly, to do those things you have to go into the city of Sodom and see for yourself and that is exactly what He said He was going to do. He as much as said, *I want to see it with my own eyes.* To find something you have to look for or at it. Gill says there is no question Christ went into Sodom; (at verse 18:33) *the Son of God in an human*

*form, as soon as he had done talking with Abraham, perhaps disappeared to him, and went his way to Sodom, for there we find Him in the next chapter.*

Christ has the same countenance as the angels. Christ either joined up with his two friends/companions/angels at Lot's house, which if that was true would put new meaning to why Lot offered his daughters up to the Sodomites (the expositors are very critical of Lot for this) or He was in the streets of Sodom evaluating the condition of things and to see if there were ten righteous there. And, He is doing this wondering and observing in the streets at about the same time the men of Sodom are whipped up for a night of rape and sex and trying to break down Lot's door. Remember, he is behind his companions and they got to Sodom at even. Did he stay at Lot's house, did he lodge in the streets, did the men of Sodom try to rape the Lord Jesus Christ like they wanted to do to his two companions/angels?

We do not know for sure what happened, but after the men of the Sodom tried to break down the door to rape the angels and threatened Lot, the angels - smote the men that were at the door with blindness. At that point the evaluation period is over – we are destroying this place – that feels like a decision the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain, would make the call on (Gen. 19:12-13). *For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD (The Lord Jesus Christ); and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.*

Whatever happened, by morning time, the Lord Jesus Christ is ready to light it up and in a big way. The Lord Jesus Christ is making a statement here that will be told forever. He is going to make an example out of Sodom beloved. Jude 1:7 *Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.* This was done at none other than the personal hand of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Biblical history this is the only time a city is destroyed like this. The Lord God is usually extraordinarily merciful, patient and longsuffering, but not at Sodom. Christ was not sent to Sodom to “win them to Christ.” MHC: *It was a strange punishment. Never was the like before nor since. Hell was rained from heaven upon them. Fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest, were the portion of their cup; not a flash of lightning, which is destructive enough when God gives it*

*commission. Something made the Lord very, very angry, and he was not going to wait another day.*

*Gen. 19:16 And while he (Lot) lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD (the Lord Jesus Christ) being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. 17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that He (the Lord Jesus Christ) said, Escape for thy life... They (the Lord Jesus Christ and the angels) took him by the hand and his family and personally escorted them out of Sodom. This is desperate stuff here! Beloved, this is literally the nuclear option. When Christ is done here, no one is going to forget it and this act will be talked about for eternity.*

*Gen. 19:17...(Lord Jesus Christ still talking) look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. Now that beloved, puts a little bit of a new face on *Remember Lot's wife* (Luke 17:32). Gill says this is the Lord Jesus Christ here making this warning to Lot, his wife and his daughters to not be concerned with their goods and substance, their sons-in-law much less the inhabitants of that city.*

*Gill: That he said, escape for thy life; not one of the two men or angels that had been with him all the night past, for they had now left him, and were gone back to the city: but Jehovah the Son of God, who had been communing with Abraham, and now came to Sodom, and appeared to Lot, just at the time the two angels left him, and bid him escape with all haste, if he had any regard for his life, and that of those with him.*

*Lot then pleads with Christ to flee to Zoar because he can't make it to the mountains. Gen. 19:21 And he (the Lord Jesus Christ) said unto him (Lot), See, I (the Lord Jesus Christ) have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I (the Lord Jesus Christ) will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. 22 Haste thee, escape thither; for I (the Lord Jesus Christ) cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. 23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.*

*Gen. 19:24 Then the LORD (Lord Jesus Christ) rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD (Jehovah His Father) out of heaven;*

*25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.*

Gill: *This was a righteous judgment on those cities, and a just retaliation for their sin; their sin was an unnatural one, and nature is inverted to punish them, fire comes down from heaven, or hell from heaven... they burned with lusts one against another, and flaming sheets of sulphurous fire fall upon them, burn and destroy them...; and this destruction was brought upon them by Jehovah the **Son of God**, who had appeared to Abraham in an human form, and gave him notice of it, and heard all he had to plead for those cities, **and then departed from him to Sodom, and was the author of this sad catastrophe; this amazing shower of fire and brimstone was rained by him from Jehovah his Father, out of heaven...***

There is a connection here Beloved between Christ being on the ground at Sodom and destroying it and tying that sin to his Return in judgment at his Second Coming (Luke 17:29-30). If Christ had wanted to give repentance to the hundreds of thousands at Sodom & Gormorah, he could have – he did not – he instead decided to make an example out of them to warn others of that sin. Once a people cross the line, it's example time.

I now want to shift to the second topic of today's discussion. It may seem that these topics are unrelated... the destruction of Sodom by the Lord Jesus Christ and Christ's instruction to his people to love their enemies and do them good. Rom. 12:19 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

## **II. How We Should Treat Our Enemies**

The New Testament and Christ in particular includes a lot of scripture on the topic of how we are to treat all men and in particular how we treat our enemies. The first thing of interest is that Christ says we will have enemies. How many times have we heard, "he/she had no enemies in the world." When you say that, you have spoken against your own interests. If you are preaching right, you will as a matter of right, have enemies. Christ spends ten verses in Matthew 5 and nine verses in Luke 6 on the subject.

Mt. 5:38-39 *Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not [an] evil [man – with violence]; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

The Lord knew His followers would come under physical attack from their enemies. If you are preaching right, this will happen. This is what good looks like.

Calvin: *The present subject [in verse 39] is [physical] retaliation. To restrain his disciples ... he forbids them to render evil for evil. He afterwards extends the law of patience so far, that we are not only to bear patiently the injuries we have received, but to prepare for bearing fresh injuries. The amount of the whole admonition is, that believers should learn to forget the wrongs that have been done them, — that they should not, when injured, break out into hatred or ill-will, or wish to commit an injury on their part, —but that, the more the obstinacy and rage of wicked men is excited and inflamed [against them], they should be the more fully disposed to exercise patience.*

Matthew Henry - *We must not be revengeful (#Mt 5:39); ... and yet this does not repeal the law of self-preservation, and the care we are to take of our families; we may avoid evil, and may resist it, so far as is necessary to our own security; but we must not render evil for evil, [no offense] must not bear a grudge, nor avenge ourselves, nor study to be even with those that have treated us unkindly, but we must go beyond them by forgiving them. Instead of avenging that injury, prepare for another, and bear it patiently: give not the rude man as good as he brings; do not challenge him, nor enter an action [law suit] against him; if it be necessary to the public peace that he be bound to his good behaviour, leave that to the magistrate; but for thine own part, it will ordinarily be the wisest course to pass it by, and take no further notice of it: if there are no bones broken, no great harm done, forgive it and forget it; and if proud fools think the worse of thee, and laugh at thee for it, all wise men will value and honour thee for it, as a follower of the blessed Jesus, who, though he was the Judge of Israel, did not smite those who smote him on the cheek.*

Gill says we cannot render evil for evil, or repay him in the same way – that is, if a man should pluck out one of our eyes, we must not in revenge pluck out one of his. We cannot go on the offensive for private revenge and he says we have the

right to lawfully defend ourselves. He says we must patiently bear the affront, or seek for satisfaction in another way such as appearing to a civil magistrate for redress of grievances.

Mt. 5:40 *And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.*

Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ prepared us and gave us heavenly knowledge regarding what we as God's people should expect on this earth and how to handle it, how to frame it right and how to properly think about it. He knew they would sue us. If you are not getting sued for your preaching, you are doing it wrong, you have the subject matter wrong and at best you are lukewarm (Rev. 2).

*Calvin – This verse is about him who wishes to enter into a lawsuit with thee. Christ now glances at another kind of annoyance and that is, when wicked men torment us with lawsuits. He commands us, even on such an occasion, to be so patient and submissive that, when our coat has been taken away, we shall be prepared to give up our cloak also. None but a fool will stand upon the words, so as to maintain, that we must yield to our opponents what they demand, before coming into a court of law... [w]hen Christians meet with one who endeavors to wrench from them a part of their property, they ought to be prepared to lose the whole. Hence we conclude, that Christians are not entirely prohibited from engaging in lawsuits, provided they have a just defense to offer. Though they do not surrender their goods as a prey, yet they do not depart from this doctrine of Christ, which exhorts us to bear patiently "the spoiling of our goods," (#Heb 10:34). It is, no doubt, rare to find a man who proceeds, with mild and proper feelings, to plead in a court: but, as it is possible for a man to defend a just cause with a view to the public advantage, we have no right to condemn the thing in itself, because it appears to be directed by improper feelings.*

*Matthew Henry - It is common for legal processes to be made use of for the doing of greatest injuries. Though judges be just and circumspect, yet it is possible for bad men who make no conscience of oaths and forgeries, by course of law to force off the coat from a man's back. Marvel not at the matter, but, in such a case, rather than go to the law by way of revenge, rather than exhibit a cross bill, or stand out to the utmost, in defense of that which is thy undoubted right, let him*

*even take thy cloak also. If the matter be small, which we may lose without an considerable damage to our families, it is good to submit to it for peace' sake. "It will not cost thee so much to buy another cloak, as it will cost thee by course of law to recover that; and therefore unless thou canst get it again by fair means, it is better to let him take it."*

*Mt. 5:41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.*

Gill says back in the day there were messengers for the king (the government) that had the authority to commandeer a horse or carriage or force men into their service if need be (think a police man commandeering a vehicle in the movies). Christ advises, rather than to contend and quarrel with such a person, that obliges to go with him a mile, to not to dispute such a matter, though it may be somewhat laborious and disagreeable, comply, for the sake of peace.

Matthew Henry: *The sum of all is, that Christians must not be litigious; small injuries must be submitted to, and no notice taken of them; and if the injury be such as requires us to seek reparation, it must be for a good end, and without thought of revenge: though we must not invite injuries, yet we must meet them cheerfully in the way of duty, and make the best of them.*

*42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

Matthew Henry - *We must be charitable and beneficent. We must not only do no hurt to our neighbours, but labour to do them all the good we can. We must be ready to give; "Give to him that asketh thee. If thou hast an ability, look upon the request of the poor as giving thee an opportunity for the duty of alms giving." When a real object of charity presents itself, we should give at the first word.*

Gill: *Give to him that asketh thee - To every man, whether Jew or Gentile; friend or foe; believer or unbeliever; a good, or a bad man; worthy or unworthy; deserving or not, that asketh alms, whether food or money; give it freely, readily, cheerfully, according to your abilities, and as the necessity of the object requires: for such rules are always supposed, and to be observed; and though all are to be relieved,*

*yet the circumstances of persons, and their relation to men, are to be considered, and special regard is to be had to the household of faith.*

*Mt. 5:43-48 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

### **Love Your Enemies –**

*Jamison Fausset and Brown - The word here used denotes moral love, as distinguished from the other word, which expresses personal affection. It denotes the benignant (kindly and benevolent) compassionate outgoings of desire for another's good.*

*Gill - But I say unto you, love your enemies - That is, as the Apostle Paul may be thought to interpret the words of Christ, #Ro 12:20. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink"... the actions of a man may be hated, and just indignation be expressed against them, and yet his person be loved, tenderness be used to him, and pity shown him: all men, even enemies, are to be loved with a natural love, as men; though they cannot be loved with a spiritual affection, as brethren in Christ: and in natural affection there are degrees, according to the relation and circumstances that persons stand in to one another.*

*Matthew Henry: We must have a compassion for them, and a good will toward them.*

*Calvin - He who shall bring his mind to love those who hate him, will naturally refrain from all revenge, will patiently endure evils, will be much more prone to assist the wretched.*

Trapp - *A hard task [to love your enemy], I must needs say, but, hard or not hard, it must be done, be it never so contrary to our foul nature and former practice. "The spirit that is in us lusteth after envy, but the Scripture teacheth better things," #Jas 4:5,6. Be tenderly affected toward them as heartily wishing their good every way; being glad of their welfare, and grieved when it happens otherwise.*

Clark - *Love your enemies - This is the most sublime (elevated or lofty thought) piece of morality ever given to man. Has it appeared unreasonable and absurd to some? It has. And why? Because it is natural to man to avenge himself, and plague those who plague him; and he will ever find abundant excuse for his conduct, in the repeated evils he receives from others; for men are naturally hostile to each other. ...This is therefore one of the most reasonable precepts in the universe. But who can obey it? None but he who has the mind of Christ. But I have it not. Seek it from God; it is that kingdom of heaven which Christ came to establish upon earth. This one precept is a sufficient proof of the holiness of the Gospel, and of the truth of the Christian religion. Every false religion flatters man, and accommodates itself to his pride and his passions. None but God could have imposed a yoke so contrary to self-love; and nothing but the supreme eternal love can enable men to practice a precept so insupportable to corrupt nature*

*Mt. 22:39 ... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

Beloved, while we are to love our enemies and treat them well, and take no revenge against them, it does not mean that we should partake of their leaven (Mat. 16:11), or that we should not withdraw ourselves from those that walk disorderly (2 Th. 3:6), or not withdraw from *perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness* (1Ti 6:5). We still have to put a separation, but once Saul, turns to Paul, then we have a duty like Barnabas to receive them and accept them as a brother. We will continue this discussion next week, the Lord willing.

I love you all. Amen.