**Sodom & Gomorrah**

* **Questions to be Answered**:
  + **What is the significance or importance of the Story of Sodom & Gomorrah for us today?**
  + **What is the main & important lesson and message of the story of Sodom & Gomorrah?** (Gen 18-19 CR Ezekiel 16:46-50)
  + **How specifically did the Savior use the Sodom & Gomorrah experience (Lot’s Wife) in His teachings about the 2nd Coming?** (Luke 17:32)
  + **What have Modern Prophets said about Sodom & Gomorrah and how it relates to us today?** (See below)

**Scripture Chain used in Podcast & Presentation:**

**Genesis 18—19, Ezek 16:46-50, Luke 12- 18, Mormon 8:35-39, 2 Nephi 28:8-14, 1 Nephi 14:10, 1 Nephi 13:6-9, Isaiah 3:16-24, Rev 17 &18, D&C 121:34-40, Luke 17:3, Pres. Hinckley Oct 1998, Brigham Young Quote, Luke 18:18-30/Matt 19:24, Seminary Student, Jacob 2:18-19, D&C 56:16, Elder Packer Quote, Luke 17:3!**

**Quoted References:**

**Book of Genesis** **18-19 (Ezek 16:46-50; Isaiah 3:16-24)**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/ot/gen/12?lang=eng>

**Luke 12 (Revelation 17-18)**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/nt/john/8?lang=eng>

**Mormon 8:35-39 (2 Nephi 28:8-14; 1 Nephi 14:10; 1 Nephi 13:6-9)**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/16?lang=eng>

**Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible**; Genesis 19:9-15 <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/jst/jst-gen/14?lang=eng>

**Doctrine & Covenants 121:34-40**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/107?lang=eng>

**Stephen E. Robinson, Ensign, January 1988**, “Warring against the Saints of God”

[**https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1988/01/warring-against-the-saints-of-god?lang=eng**](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1988/01/warring-against-the-saints-of-god?lang=eng)

**President Gordon B. Hinckly Oct. 1998, GC Talk** <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1998/10/to-the-boys-and-to-the-men?lang=eng>

**President Thomas S. Monson, 1st Pres Message**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/pornography/audiences/spouses/pornography-the-deadly-carrier?lang=eng>

**President Gordon B. Hinckly Oct. 2001, GC Talk**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2001/10/living-in-the-fulness-of-times?lang=eng>

**Brigham Young Quote in Q&A: “Is it Morally Wrong to be Rich in a World where so many are Poor?”**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/liahona/2002/04/questions-and-answers?lang=eng>

**Camel through the Eye of a Needle (Matt 19:24 / Luke 18:18-30)**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1985/03/i-have-a-question/can-you-give-me-some-background-on-matthew-19-24?lang=eng>

**QUOTES:**

“As for Lot’s wife, she looked back; that is, she turned again to the things of the world, and she too was destroyed with the wicked. So shall it be at the end of the world.” (**Elder Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah*** [SLC: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 361-61); \*See also Luke 17:31

**“**…individual orientation to the Church of the Lamb or to the great and abominable church is not by membership but by loyalty… **Membership is based more on who has your heart than on who has your records.”**

(“*Warring against the Saints of God*”, **By Stephen E. Robinson**, Ensign, January 1988)

President Brigham Young (1801–77) said: “The worst fear that I have about [members of this Church] is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and his people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true. But my greater fear for them is that they cannot stand wealth; and yet they have to be tried with riches” (quoted in Preston Nibley, ***Brigham Young: The Man and His Work*[1936], 128**).

“Today we have a rebirth of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah. From seldom-read pages in dusty Bibles they come forth as real cities in a real world, depicting a real malady—pernicious permissiveness.” (**Pres. Thomas S. Monson**, **“*First Presidency Message: Pornography, the Deadly Carrier*”, July 2001, Ensign)**

“We live in a season when fierce men do terrible and despicable things. We live in a season of war. We live in a season of arrogance. We live in a season of wickedness, pornography, immorality. All of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah haunt our society. Our young people have never faced a greater challenge. We have never seen more clearly the lecherous face of evil.” (**Pres. Gordon B. Hinckley, “*Living in the Fullness of Times*”, Oct 2001, General Conference following 9/11)**

“The world is spiraling downward at an ever-quickening pace. I am sorry to tell you that it will not get better. It is my purpose to *charge* each of you as *teachers* with the responsibility—to put you on alert. These are days of great spiritual danger for our youth. I know of nothing in the history of the Church or in the history of the world to compare with our present circumstances. Nothing happened in Sodom and Gomorrah which exceeds in wickedness and depravity that which surrounds us now…Unspeakable wickedness and perversion were once hidden in dark places; now they are in the open, even accorded legal protection. At Sodom and Gomorrah these things were localized. Now they are spread across the world, and they are among us.” (**Boyd K. Packer, Address to CES Religious Educators • 6 February 2004)**

“As for Lot’s wife, she looked back; that is, she turned again to the things of the world, and she too was destroyed with the wicked. So shall it be at the end of the world.” (**Elder Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah* [SLC: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 361-61); \*See also Luke 17:31**

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

***President of the Church***

***October 1998 “To the Boys and to the Men”***

“I wish to speak to you about temporal matters.

As a backdrop for what I wish to say, I read to you a few verses from the 41st chapter of Genesis.

Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, dreamed dreams which greatly troubled him. The wise men of his court could not give an interpretation. Joseph was then brought before him: “Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river:

“And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow:

“And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed. …

“And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: …

“And I saw in my dream … seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good:

“And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them:

“And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: …

“And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, … God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

“The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. …

“… What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

“Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

“And there shall arise after them seven years of famine;

“… And God will shortly bring it to pass” ([Gen. 41:17–20, 22–26, 28–30, 32](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/ot/gen/41.17-20,22-26,28-30,32?lang=eng#p17)).

Now, brethren, I want to make it very clear that I am not prophesying, that I am not predicting years of famine in the future. **But I am suggesting that the time has come to get our houses in order.**

So many of our people are living on the very edge of their incomes. In fact, some are living on borrowings.

We have witnessed in recent weeks wide and fearsome swings in the markets of the world. The economy is a fragile thing. A stumble in the economy in Jakarta or Moscow can immediately affect the entire world. It can eventually reach down to each of us as individuals. **There is a portent of stormy weather ahead to which we had better give heed.**

I hope with all my heart that we shall never slip into a depression. I am a child of the Great Depression of the thirties. I finished the university in 1932, when unemployment in this area exceeded 33 percent.

My father was then president of the largest stake in the Church in this valley. It was before our present welfare program was established. He walked the floor worrying about his people. He and his associates established a great wood-chopping project designed to keep the home furnaces and stoves going and the people warm in the winter. They had no money with which to buy coal. Men who had been affluent were among those who chopped wood.

I repeat, I hope we will never again see such a depression. **But I am troubled by the huge consumer installment debt which hangs over the people of the nation, including our own people**. In March 1997 that debt totaled $1.2 trillion, which represented a 7 percent increase over the previous year.

In December of 1997, 55 to 60 million households in the United States carried credit card balances. These balances averaged more than $7,000 and cost $1,000 per year in interest and fees. Consumer debt as a percentage of disposable income rose from 16.3 percent in 1993 to 19.3 percent in 1996.

Everyone knows that every dollar borrowed carries with it the penalty of paying interest. When money cannot be repaid, then bankruptcy follows. There were 1,350,118 bankruptcies in the United States last year. This represented a 50 percent increase from 1992. In the second quarter of this year, nearly 362,000 persons filed for bankruptcy, a record number for a three-month period.

**We are beguiled by seductive advertising**. Television carries the enticing invitation to borrow up to 125 percent of the value of one’s home. But no mention is made of interest.

President J. Reuben Clark Jr., in the April 1938 general conference, said from this pulpit: “Once in debt, interest is your companion every minute of the day and night; you cannot shun it or slip away from it; you cannot dismiss it; it yields neither to entreaties, demands, or orders; and whenever you get in its way or cross its course or fail to meet its demands, it crushes you” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1938, 103).

I recognize that it may be necessary to borrow to get a home, of course. But let us buy a home that we can afford and thus ease the payments which will constantly hang over our heads without mercy or respite for as long as 30 years.

No one knows when emergencies will strike. I am somewhat familiar with the case of a man who was highly successful in his profession. He lived in comfort. He built a large home. Then one day he was suddenly involved in a serious accident. Instantly, without warning, he almost lost his life. He was left a cripple. Destroyed was his earning power. He faced huge medical bills. He had other payments to make. He was helpless before his creditors. One moment he was rich, the next he was broke.

Since the beginnings of the Church, the Lord has spoken on this matter of debt. To Martin Harris through revelation He said: “Pay the debt thou hast contracted with the printer. Release thyself from bondage” ([D&C 19:35](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/19.35?lang=eng#p35)).

President Heber J. Grant spoke repeatedly on this matter from this pulpit. He said: “If there is any one thing that will bring peace and contentment into the human heart, and into the family, it is to **live within our means. And if there is any one thing that is grinding and discouraging and disheartening, it is to have debts and obligations that one cannot meet”** (*Gospel Standards,* comp. G. Homer Durham [1941], 111).

**We are carrying a message of self-reliance throughout the Church. Self-reliance cannot obtain when there is serious debt hanging over a household. One has neither independence nor freedom from bondage when he is obligated to others.**

In managing the affairs of the Church, we have tried to set an example. We have, as a matter of policy, stringently followed the practice of setting aside each year a percentage of the income of the Church against a possible day of need.

I am grateful to be able to say that the Church in all its operations, in all its undertakings, in all of its departments, is **able to function without borrowed money**. If we cannot get along, we will curtail our programs. We will shrink expenditures to fit the income. We will not borrow.

One of the happiest days in the life of President Joseph F. Smith was the day the Church paid off its long-standing indebtedness.

**What a wonderful feeling it is to be free of debt, to have a little money against a day of emergency put away where it can be retrieved when necessary.**

President Faust would not tell you this himself. Perhaps I can tell it, and he can take it out on me afterward. He had a mortgage on his home drawing 4 percent interest. Many people would have told him he was foolish to pay off that mortgage when it carried so low a rate of interest. But the first opportunity he had to acquire some means, he and his wife determined they would pay off their mortgage. He has been free of debt since that day. That’s why he wears a smile on his face, and that’s why he whistles while he works.

I urge you, brethren, to **look to the condition of your finances**. I urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt to the extent possible. Pay off debt as quickly as you can, and free yourselves from bondage.

This is a part of the temporal gospel in which we believe. May the Lord bless you, my beloved brethren, to set your houses in order. If you have paid your debts, if you have a reserve, even though it be small, then should storms howl about your head, you will have shelter for your wives and children and peace in your hearts. That’s all I have to say about it, but **I wish to say it with all the emphasis of which I am capable.**

I leave with you my testimony of the divinity of this work and my love for each of you, in the name of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.