



Los Angeles

San Francisco

Sodom
and
Gomorrah

Book of
GENESIS

Jesus in Pompeii,
Herculaneum,
Sodom, Gomorrah,
Los Angeles & San
Francisco

There was once a son of god, sent to nations wiped off the face of the earth, from time beyond time, and space beyond space, of our reckoning. His mission was to save their souls, the souls of the damned, from the eternal pangs of hell, to be given salvation, and another chance, to repent, to change their ways, and be forgiven by God for their many sins, and never sin again.

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For the establishment
of Ministry of Christ
in our souls,
spirits,
and in our minds,
forever and ever
Amen.

Christ saves people in hell

Every thousand years or so
Christ goes down to hell
Through his glory
He saves all of those damned
He raises them up
Alone he does it
Believers and unbelievers alike
All are saved
They are either given life on earth to live again
or sent to upper realms if they are believers
The power of Christ is felt
even by Satan himself
He bows down before him
and acknowledges the Christ as Lord
Hell trembles over
and all the angels therein stare in awe
at the sight of the Mighty and Glorious Christ
Glory be to Christ
Our Lord Our Savior

Of all the worlds
There he is down again
The Trumpets in hell are thunderous
whenever Christ arrives there
All the people burning and gnashing their teeth
Feel his power and all their agonies vanish
Christ is your savior
even if you are in hell
Only he is the way out
There is no one else
Hell freezes over
All the fires and torments are quenched
The presence of Christ does it!
Praised be Christ thy God Amen!

Last Chapter
The New Bible

Pompeii, Herculaneum

Nine years, almost to the day, after Roman legionaries destroyed God's house in Jerusalem, God destroyed the luxurious watering holes of the Roman elite. Was this God's revenge? Did anyone connect the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 C.E. with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70? *Hershel Shanks, "The Destruction of Pompeii—God's Revenge?"*

Jesus wept. He wept in Pompeii. There he was sent, sent by God, to raise the damned spirits, from their abode of abiding torture, to be saved.



The Spirit of Jesus was moving over the surface of the waters, and he traveled from Bethlehem to Pompeii, his first stop, in a journey of salvation, salvation of the damned, of the many destroyed nations, of the past and present, and the future too.



Photo: [wtlphotos](#)

Imagine living in the richest city of ancient times. Resources are bountiful and life is grand. Every amenity and luxury surrounds you, and unlike in other cities during this time, simple plumbing and convenience is everywhere.

Such was the life for those who lived in Pompeii, Italy in the late part of 70 AD. There was even ancient pornography and gentlemen entertainment, brothel houses to suit *every taste*.



Photo: [Wolfgang Rieger](#)

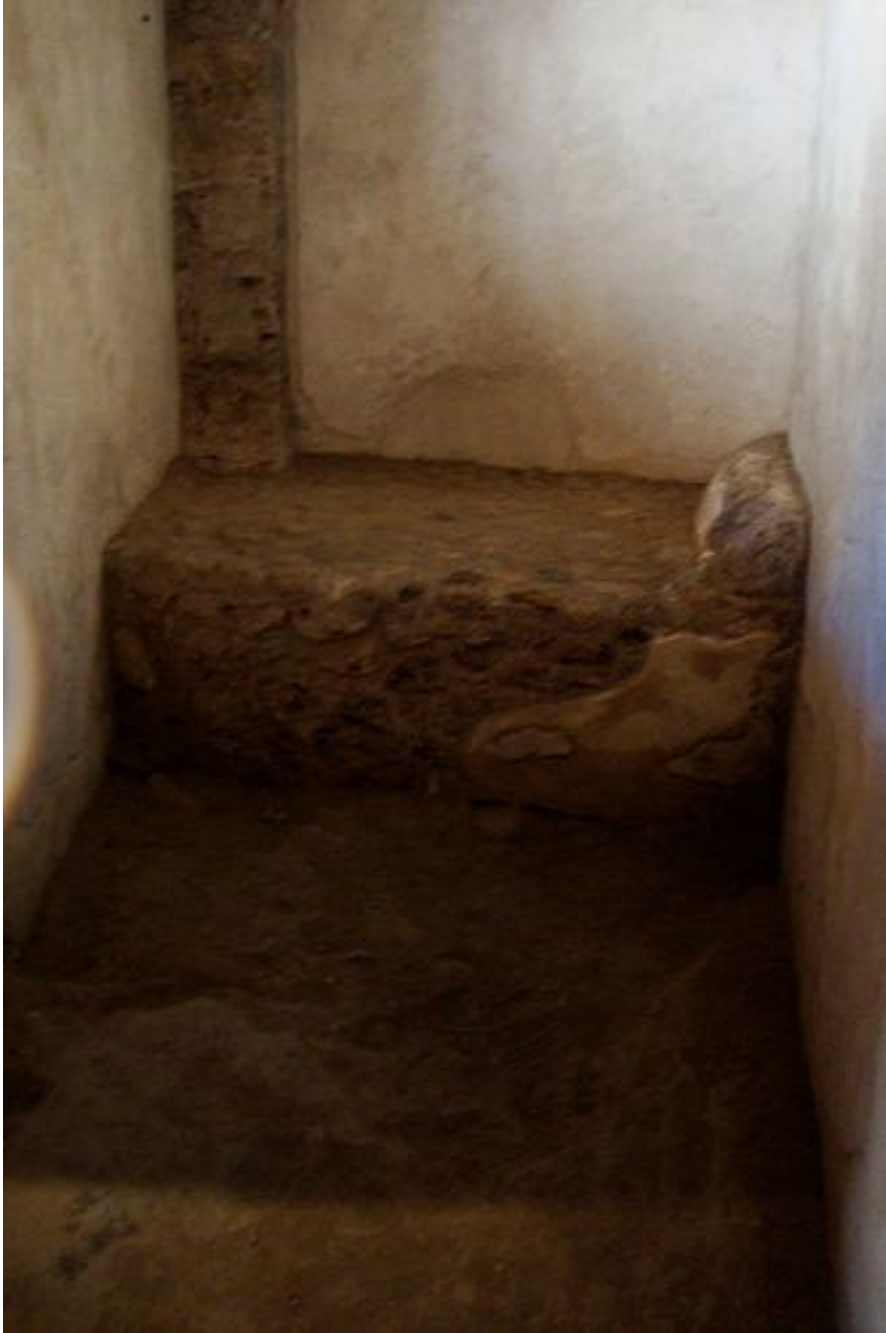


Photo: [roblawton](#)



Photo: [get directly down](#)

Those who woke up, began their day, and were sitting down to eat lunch on August 24, 79 AD had no clue that Mount Vesuvius would begin a tyranny of volcanic eruptions that would not stop for 24 hours. It would not spare those who lived in Pompeii, and neither would it spare those in the smaller, nearby towns in Herculaneum and Oplontis. A torrent of lava and ash raced down the

massive mountain at [100 mph](#), burying everyone in its path before they could even react let alone escape.



Photo: [get directly down](#)

In an event of biblical proportions. The people's fear, despair and whatever they were doing at that moment was perfectly preserved in ash and hardened lava. This has given archaeologists a perfect time-line of the event as well as a historical look at this ancient culture – a window into the lives of those who lived at that time.



Photo: [guillenperez](#)



Photo: [brettneilson](#)

Note how these ash figures are desperately trying to cover their mouths, shield their unborn children, or trying to keep themselves from being crushed by the onslaught of debris and volcanic rocks.

Doctors had their surgical tools clutched in their grasps in the hope of helping others; the “dominas”, or women of the house, held on dearly to jewels and heirlooms; and slaves were found with iron rings around their ankles. Such items gave archaeologists valuable insight into who the bodies belonged to and what their shortened lives were about.

The city of Pompeii was for the elite Romans who could afford the seaside life of luxury and fortune. Yet, within hours, this beautiful city was partially buried under masses of volcanic ash, cooling lava and rocks.

Pompeii had aqueducts unheard of in this period of history which channeled the water to 25 city fountains. It had an amphitheater, at least four public baths, many private estates, and numerous businesses that catered to the persnickety tastes of the wealthy who lived there.



Photo: [Bengal*foam](#)



Photo: [Wknight94](#)



Photo: [Wknight94](#)

The streets of Pompeii resembled many cities around today. There were streets, highways and bustling traffic coming and going all of the time. And the nightlife was second to none.

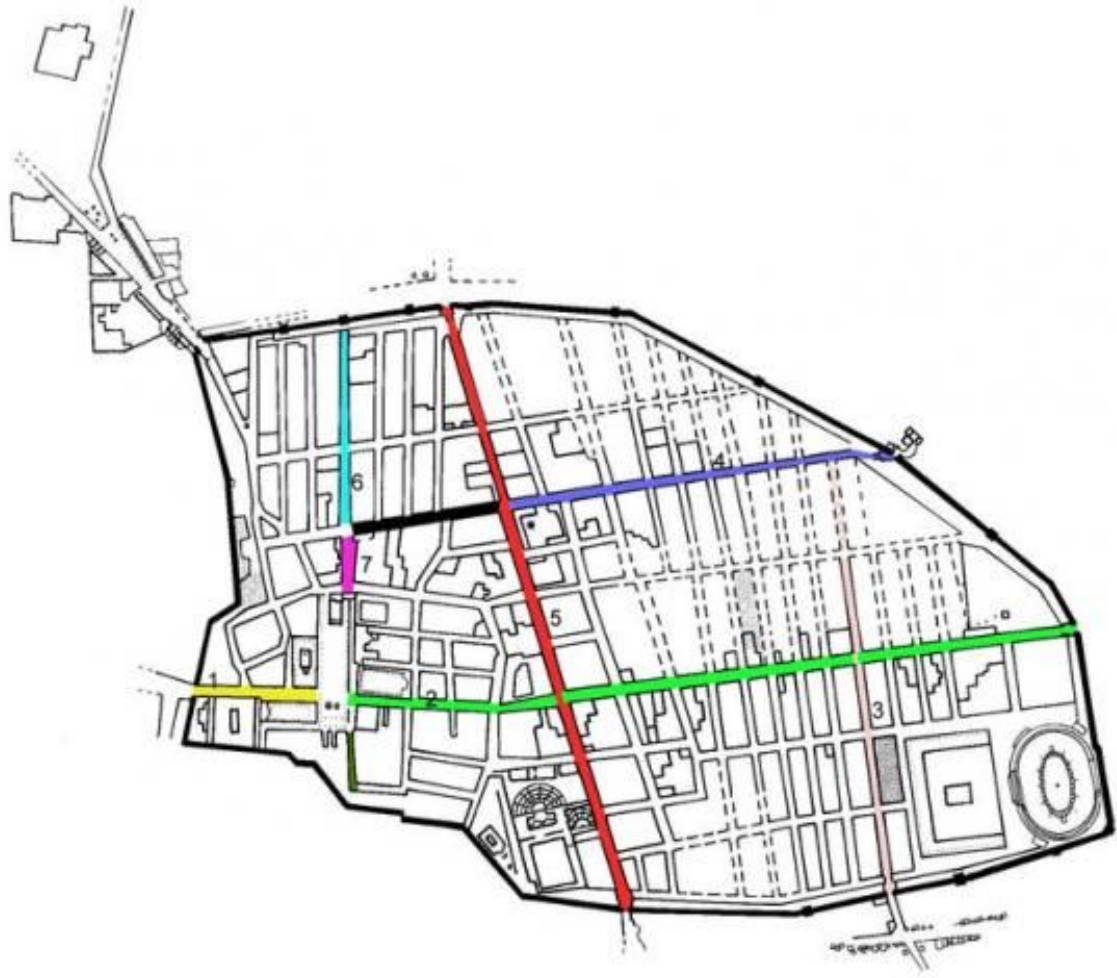


Photo: [Marcus Cyron](#)

The people of Pompeii appear to have worshiped a phallic god. Many objects in Pompeii had some erotic symbolism or art work bestowed upon it. Here's a sign outside a Pompeii bakery.

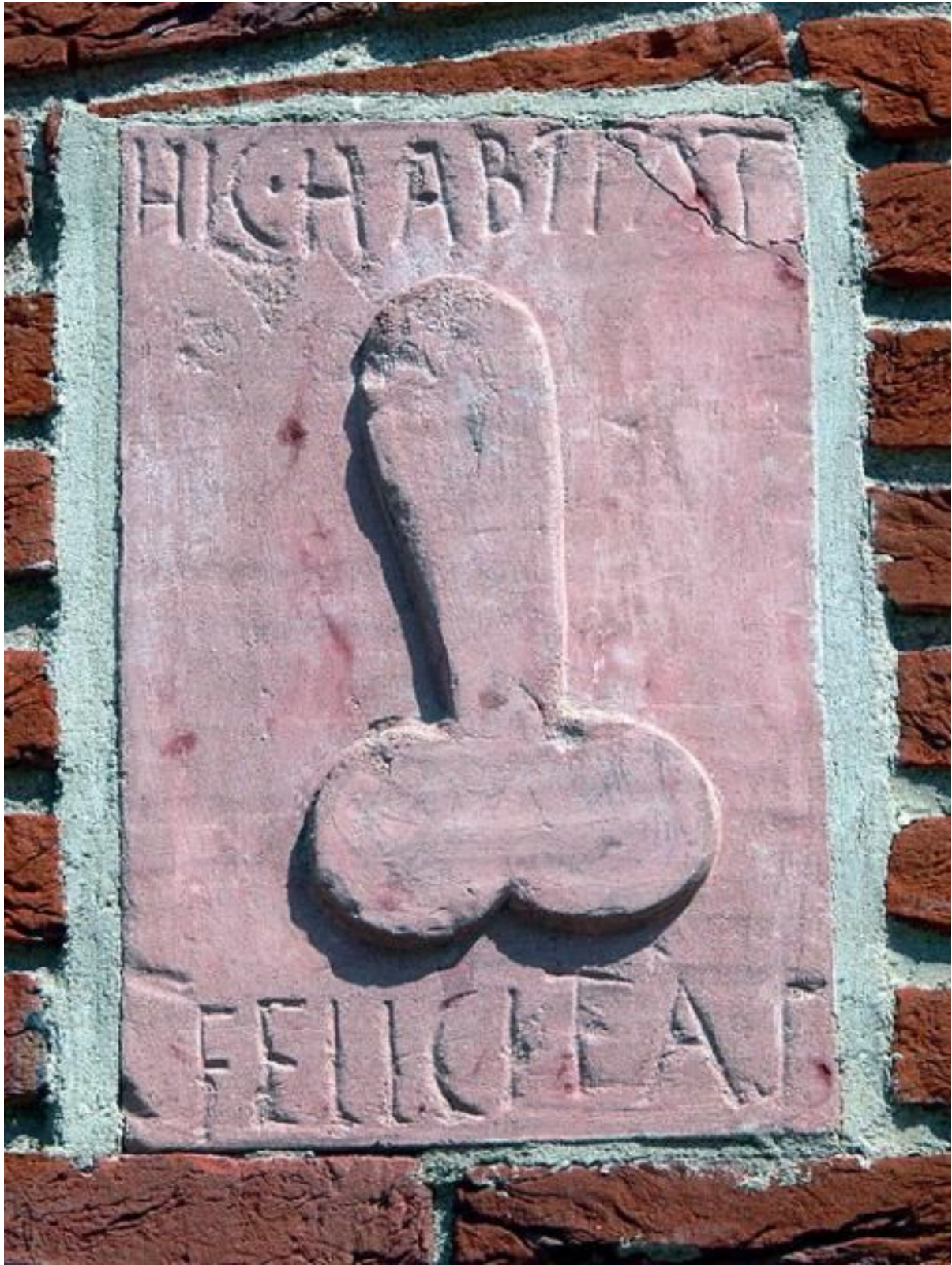


Photo: [Wolfgang Sauber](#)



Photo: [bengal*foam](#)

The bakery sign above reads “Hic habitat felicitas”, meaning “Here lives happiness” or “Here lives good fortune”. The good fortune was believed to be anywhere the phallic god was worshiped and depicted.

At least [20,000 people](#) inhabited Pompeii. The highest point of fortune, activity and population growth was realized at the moment the disaster struck. Near the edge of town, many people lived in villas or small groups of

house boats (like palatial gated communities) similar to that of Venice.

Those who lived in Pompeii were quite used to earthquakes and less seismic volcanic eruptions. It was similar to a modern day Los Angeles. The people's houses seemed to ebb and flow with the everyday annoyances of Mother Nature. This was why scientists believe that the majority of people did not flee or seek shelter. They thought this would be like any other day.



Photo: [Jesus & Kristle](#)



Photo:

[Joshua Rappeneker](#)

In 62 AD, a terrible earthquake transpired that burned the city down to the ground. However, much of the city was rebuilt. Imagine how grand it must have been before that earthquake!

One of the main concerns that those living in the city had was preserving their beloved (and infamous!) art. Scientists were able to recover many of the pieces that had been restored after the earthquake or were from a time period before the deadly eruption.



Photo: [NateBW](#)

The reconstruction of the city was hampered by earthquakes that came more and more frequently. Nowadays, we would understand this as being a

precursor to a horrific volcanic eruption. They were not aware of this at the time, of course.

Ironically, the eruption occurred after the festival observing the god of fire, [Vulcanalia](#). Scientists believe that the main cause of death for those in Pompeii and the surrounding area was heat and/or ash suffocation. It is [estimated](#) that the temperature for at least 10 miles around Mount Vesuvius was 250 °C. Even if people had been in their homes or in a building, there would not have been any way they could have survived heat that excruciatingly high. Worse, the people were buried under as many as [twelve layers of soil](#), up to 82 feet deep in total, which rained down heavily for at least six hours.



Photo: [Lancevortex](#)

The excavation of Pompeii around the turn of the 20th century unearthed many erotic images of over-sized penises, even on the household items. This was so disturbing to those who found these items that they were either destroyed, reburied or locked away in the National Museum of Naples, Italy for over 100 years. The art has only made viewable by the public since 2000, and no minors are permitted to see the items unless an adult accompanies them.



Photo: [Wolfgang Rieger](#)



Photo: [Heinrich Stürzl](#)

Some, like this writer, speculate that Pompeii was the Biblical Sodom and Gomorrah, and the destruction of the city was divine and forthcoming. Some Christian tourists often don't visit this wonderful and colorful part of history because of the sexual nature of the ruins.

To see more Pompeii art, [go here](#).



Photo: [Wknight94](#)

To be fair, prostitutes in Pompeii made three times more than the average laborer or worker in the city. The sexual acts were particularly cheap for the males (or johns) in this city – in contrast to all other European towns. The inscriptions above the brothel houses, which were quite large and roomy, are too graphic to repeat. Children weren't shielded from the constant imagery of phalluses at the time. In fact, it was common to put depictions of children and phalluses together because of fertility and the phallus god being one and the same.



Photo: [Giorgio Sommer \(1834–1914\)](#)



Photo: [fhwrdh](#)

There was one survivor of the Pompeii volcanic disaster. Pliny the Younger accompanied his father by boat to inspect the plume of volcanic ash coming from the mountain. At this point, no danger or harm ensued, and those in Pompeii had no idea what was about to occur. It had been Pliny and his father's good fortune to see the eruption as it began while bathing on the outskirts of town. Pliny the Younger retold his account of the events that fateful day in writing, watching helplessly as his hometown was quickly engulfed in volcanic debris. Here's a quote from that eerie tale:

“I could boast that not a groan or cry of fear escaped me in these perils, but I admit that I derived some poor consolation in my mortal lot from the belief that the whole world was dying with me and I with it.”

The Pompeii disaster of 79 AD was one of the worst days in history. We have a lot to learn about the fragility and short-lasting tenure of humanity.

Herculaneum: Pompeii's Less Famous Neighbor

In late August 79 AD, Mount Vesuvius blew its top off and for three days death rained down upon towns, villas and farms surrounding the volcano. One of the most famous casualties of the eruption was the Roman town of Pompeii, known for its wealthy inhabitants and lavishly decorated homes. The other was Herculaneum, an equally wealthy but smaller seaside resort and trading port. The larger Pompeii, glamourized with its brothels, bars, and amphitheatre, has completely overshadowed Herculaneum and many other towns that suffered the same fate. Herculaneum, in particular, is worth visiting because its ruins are far better preserved than Pompeii's.



The ruins of Herculaneum. Notice the depth the city is buried. These are boat houses that once lined the ancient shore. Photo credit: [Dave & Margie Hill/Flickr](#)

Herculaneum was located much closer to the crater, than Pompeii was. Despite this, Herculaneum escaped the initial onslaught of raining tephra because it was situated in the opposite direction the wind was blowing. So while the wind was carrying the deadly cloud of gas and ash towards the neighboring town of Pompeii, where it slowly suffocated the hapless citizens, many of Herculaneum's

residents were gathering their belongings and preparing to flee.

The following night, Vesuvius unleashed its fury on the now mostly evacuated town of Herculaneum. A succession of six pyroclastic flows and surges buried the city's buildings, knocking down walls, tearing away columns and other large objects. Other areas were simply engulfed by ash and hot gases and saw little damage. These areas had the best preserved structures. When Herculaneum was partially excavated in the early 18th century, archeologists discovered intact buildings, wooden furniture and carbonized organic matter such as fruit, bread and even the contents of sewer. They also unearthed some 300 skeletons establishing that the town was not completely evacuated as previously thought. Unlike Pompeii, most of the town of Herculaneum is yet to be excavated.

Herculaneum is much easier to explore than Pompeii because it is smaller in size and there are far less tourists in Herculaneum than in Pompeii. The most noteworthy building in Herculaneum is a luxurious villa called the "Villa of the Papyri." The villa is thought to have belonged to Lucius Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, Julius Caesar's father-in-law, although later research have thrown some

doubt on the identity of the villa's owner. The villa stretches down towards the sea in four terraces, and has a fine library, the only one to survive intact from antiquity.



A map showing the cities and towns affected by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. The general shape of the ash and cinder fall is shown by the dark area to the southeast of Mt Vesuvius. Image credit: [MapMaster/Wikimedia](https://www.mapmaster.com/)



Photo credit: [Rita Willaert/Flickr](#)



Photo credit: [Greg Willis/Flickr](#)



Photo credit: [Greg Willis/Flickr](#)



Photo credit: [Greg Willis/Flickr](#)



Photo credit: [Andrea Hale/Flickr](#)



Photo credit: [Rita Willaert/Flickr](#)



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Photo credit: [Mark Garth/Flickr](#)



Photo credit: [Xtreambar/Wikimedia](#)

Nine years, almost to the day, after Roman legionaries destroyed God's house in Jerusalem, God destroyed the luxurious watering holes of the Roman elite.

Was this God's revenge?

That's not exactly the question I want to raise, however. Rather, did anyone at the time see it that way? Did anyone connect the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 C.E. with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70?

First the dates: The Romans destroyed the Second Temple (Herod's Temple) on the same date that the Babylonians had destroyed the First Temple (Solomon's Temple) in 586 B.C.E. But the exact date of the Babylonian destruction is uncertain. Two different dates are given in the Hebrew Bible for the destruction of the First Temple. In 2 Kings 25:8 the date is the 7th of the Hebrew month of Av; Jeremiah 52:12 says it occurred on the 10th of Av. The rabbis compromised and chose the 9th of Av (Tisha b'Av). That is the date on which observant Jews, sitting on the floor of their synagogues, still mourn the destruction of the First Temple, Solomon's Temple, in 586 B.C.E. and the Second Temple, Herod's Temple, in 70 C.E.

The exact corresponding date in the Gregorian calendar is also a bit uncertain. According to the translator of the authoritative translation of [Josephus](#), the ancient historian who gives us our most detailed (if sometimes unreliable; see sidebar) account of the Roman destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., it occurred on August 29 or 30.¹ Others place it earlier in the month.

The earliest existing picture of a scene from the Bible—portraying the judgment of King Solomon—comes from Pompeii. The oldest Biblical painting includes some surprising onlookers. Read the full article “[Solomon, Socrates and Aristotle](#)” by Theodore Feder online for free.

The eruption of Mt. Vesuvius that destroyed Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabia and other nearby sites occurred, according to most commentators, on August 24 or 25 in 79 C.E. According to Seneca, the quakes lasted for several days.

But the dates are close enough to raise the question: Were these two catastrophic events connected, at least in the mind of some observers?



THE SILVER LINING. Buried by burning hot ash, Pompeii was completely destroyed in a matter of hours by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius (seen in the background of this photo of Pompeii's ruins). The manner of its demise also protected it, however. The city remained amazingly preserved for almost two millennia. When it began to be excavated in the late 19th century, the archaeologists revealed a first-century Roman city frozen in time—from the vivid frescoes on the walls of spacious villas to the loaves of bread left baking in the oven. © [istockphoto.com/dhuss](https://www.istockphoto.com/dhuss)

The volcanic eruption of Vesuvius has been graphically described by Dio Cassius in his *Roman History*:

The whole plain round about [Vesuvius] seethed and the summits leaped into the air. There were frequent rumblings, some of them subterranean, that resembled

thunder, and some on the surface, that sounded like bellowings; the sea also joined in the roar and the sky re-echoed it. Then suddenly a portentous crash was heard, as if the mountains were tumbling in ruins; and first huge stones were hurled aloft, rising as high as the very summits, then came a great quantity of fire and endless smoke, so that the whole atmosphere was obscured and the sun was entirely hidden, as if eclipsed. Thus day was turned into night and light into darkness ... [Some] believed that the whole universe was being resolved into chaos or fire While this was going on, an inconceivable quantity of ashes was blown out, which covered both sea and land and filled all the air ... It buried two entire cities, Herculaneum and Pompeii ... Indeed, the amount of dust, taken all together was so great that some of it reached Africa and Syria and Egypt, and it also reached Rome, filling the air overhead and darkening the sun. There, too, no little fear was occasioned, that lasted for several days, since the people did not know and could not imagine what had happened, but, like those close at hand, believed that the whole world was being turned upside down, that the sun was disappearing into the earth and that the earth was being lifted to the sky.²

The tone is plainly apocalyptic. And indeed Dio seems to have had this in mind. In the next paragraph he notes

that the eruption consumed the temples of Serapis and Isis and Neptune and Jupiter Capitolinus, among others. It is almost as if some supreme God was at work.

Seventeen-year-old Pliny the Younger was an eyewitness to the eruption and described it in terms similar to Dio's. In two surviving letters to Tacitus, Pliny also gives an account of the death of his famous uncle Pliny the Elder, author of the renowned *Historia Naturalis*. Pliny the Elder was at Misenum in his capacity as commander of the Roman fleet when the eruption began. He set sail to save some boatloads of people nearer Vesuvius and headed toward Stabia—to no avail. All perished, including Pliny, as his nephew recounts:

Ash was falling onto the ships, darker and denser the closer they went. Now it rains bits of pumice, and rocks that were burned and shattered by the fire ... Broad sheets of flame were lighting up many parts of Vesuvius; their light and brightness were the more vivid for the darkness of the night ... Buildings were being rocked by a series of strong tremors and appeared to have come loose from their foundations and to be sliding this way and that. Outside, however, there was danger from the rocks that were coming down ...

It was daylight now elsewhere in the world, but there the darkness was darker and thicker than any night ... Then came the smell of sulfur, announcing the flames, and the flames themselves ... onto the ships, darker and denser the closer they went. Now it rains bits of pumice, and rocks that were burned and shattered by the fire ... Broad sheets of flame were lighting up many parts of Vesuvius; their light and brightness were the more vivid for the darkness of the night ... Buildings were being rocked by a series of strong tremors and appeared to have come loose from their foundations and to be sliding this way and that. Outside, however, there was danger from the rocks that were coming down ...

[Then] came the dust, though still lightly. I looked back [from his flight from Misenum] ... We had scarcely sat down when a darkness came that was not like a moonless or cloudy night, but more like the black of closed and unlighted rooms. You could hear women lamenting, children crying, men shouting.³

Then comes the same apocalyptic tone that we saw in Dio:

There were some so afraid of death that they prayed for death. Many raised their hands to the gods, and even

more believed that there were no gods any longer and that this was the one last unending night for the world ... I believed that I was perishing with the world, and the world with me, which was a great consolation for death.⁴ Did anyone connect all this to the Jewish God? To the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem Temple?

In a conversation with Harvard's Shaye Cohen about something else, I offhandedly asked him if he knew of any ancient source that made the connection between the Vesuvius eruption and the destruction of the Temple. I had already asked this of several other scholars, but none had any sources for me, although they said there must be some. Shaye, however, immediately replied, "Try Book 4 of the Sibylline Oracles." He was right on.

The free eBook [Life in the Ancient World](#) guides you through craft centers in ancient Jerusalem, family structure across Israel and articles on ancient practices—from dining to makeup—across the Mediterranean world.

Book 4 of the Sibylline Oracles is thought to be mostly Jewish oracles by a so-called sibyl ([in Greek legend an aged woman who uttered ecstatic prophecies](#)) that were

composed shortly after the eruption of Vesuvius in 79. The oracles were preserved by Christians who believed they gave pagan testimony to the true religion and to Christ.⁵

Although composed after the event, it is written as a prediction:

An evil storm of war will also come upon Jerusalem from Italy, and it will sack the great Temple of God ... A leader of Rome [Titus] will come ... who will burn the Temple of Jerusalem with fire [and] at the same time slaughter many men and destroy the great land of the Jews.

...

When a firebrand, turned away from a cleft in the earth [Vesuvius] in the land of Italy, reaches to broad heaven it will burn many cities and destroy men. Much smoking ashes will fill the great sky and showers will fall from heaven like red earth. Know then the wrath of the heavenly God.⁶

There is more—from Pompeii itself:

After the destruction, the site was subject to looting. And people who had managed to flee came back to see whether they could retrieve some of their possessions.



House 26 of Pompeii's Region 9 Insula 1 seemed like all the other houses on the city block.

Hershel Shanks



House 26 of Pompeii's Region 9 Insula 1 seemed like all the other houses on the city block.

Entered through a brick doorway near the insula's elegant columned central courtyard, it opened into a smaller courtyard that led back to the private rooms of the *domus*.

Hershel Shanks

One such person came back to a house in an area of Pompeii designated today as Region 9, Insula 1, House 26. After having walked through the desolation of the city, he (unlikely to be a "she") looked about and saw nothing but

destruction where once there had been buildings and beautifully frescoed walls. Disconsolate and aghast, he picked up a piece of charcoal and scratched on the wall in large black Latin letters:

SODOM GOMOR[RAH].⁷

As he saw it, the divine punishment of these two cursed Biblical cities was echoed in the rain of fire on Pompeii.⁸



On the wall of House 26, an ancient observer, viewing the aftermath of the eruption, scratched the words “Sodom and Gomor rah”—a poignant

A close-up photograph of the scratched inscription on the wall, showing the words "SODOM" and "GOMOR" in Latin letters. The letters are dark and appear to be scratched into the light-colored plaster. The word "SODOM" is on the top line and "GOMOR" is on the bottom line. The letters are somewhat irregular and the ink is not very dark, making the inscription barely visible.

On the wall of House 26, an ancient observer, viewing the aftermath of the eruption, scratched the words “Sodom and Gomor rah”—a poignant Biblical reference to God’s vengeance on the two sinful cities of Genesis 19. The barely visible inscription,

Biblical reference to God's vengeance on the two sinful cities of Genesis 19. The barely visible inscription, which is now in the Naples Archaeological Museum, is also evidence that there were probably Jews living in Pompeii at the time. ***Luxus und Dekadenz*** (Verlag Philipp Von Zabern, 2007)

which is now in the Naples Archaeological Museum, is also evidence that there were probably Jews living in Pompeii at the time.

Giordano and Kahn, *The Jews in Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabiae and in the Cities of Campania Felix* (Bardi Editore, 2001)

The inscription was found in a 19th-century excavation at the site. I went to Pompeii to see the place where it was discovered. (The inscription itself is in the stores of the Naples Archaeological Museum; it is nearly illegible at this time.) In the center of the insula (a kind of city block) where it was found is a beautifully preserved columned atrium. House 26 is like the others in the insula—dark, destroyed, with vestiges of paintings on the walls, but mostly nothing.



The insula's elegant columned central courtyard. **Hershel Shanks**

It would seem that this inscriptional reference to Sodom and Gomorrah was the work of a Jew, which leads to the question whether there were Jews living in Pompeii. An indication that the answer is yes is a painting found in excellent condition on the walls of another, more elegant house. It is a painting of the Judgment of Solomon, deciding which of two women is the mother of the baby (1 Kings 3:16–28). The painting is the earliest known depiction of a Biblical scene and was the subject of a **BAR** article a couple of years ago.^{[a](#)}



House 26 of Pompeii's Region 9 Insula 1 seemed like all the other houses on the city block. Entered through a brick doorway near the insula's elegant columned central courtyard, it opened into a smaller courtyard that led back to the private rooms of the *domus*. **Hershel Shanks** But there may also be other evidence that a community of Jews lived at Pompeii.

Garum was a very popular Roman delicacy, a fish sauce variously composed of different kinds of often-decomposed or fermented marine life and herbs and spices. Indeed, Pompeii was famous for its *garum*. According to Pliny the Elder, Pompeii "has a good reputation for its *garum*."⁹ As if in confirmation of this

observation, at least one store selling *garum* has been excavated in Pompeii. On the floor of the owner's house (one Aulus Umbricius Scaurus) is a mosaic featuring labeled jars containing different kinds of *garum*.

Garum presented a problem for Jews, however—at least for those who kept the laws of *kashrut* (kosher laws). These Jews could not use *garum* that was made from fish without scales or from shellfish (see Deuteronomy 14:10 and Leviticus 11:10). *Garum* made from these products would not be kosher. Was there special kosher *garum*—*garum* made only from fish with scales?

The answer is yes, according to Pliny the Elder, who tells us that “another kind [of *garum*] is devoted to ... Jewish rites, and is made from fish without scales.” Pliny obviously made a slip of the tongue here; he meant to say “fish with scales.” But it is clear that special *garum*, kosher *garum*, was indeed available to Jews.

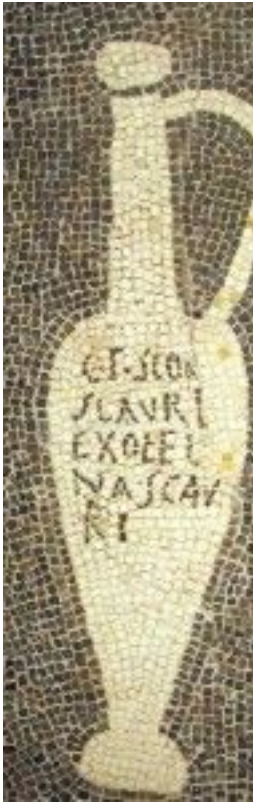
And jars of kosher *garum* appear to have been found at Pompeii, although the matter is not without controversy. Among the *garum* amphorae from Pompeii several bear a label said to be kosher *garum*. The painted inscription on these jars consists of two Latin words, both incomplete:

GAR [or MUR]

CAST.

The first word could be completed as GAR[um] or MUR[ia]. *Muria* is also a kind of fish sauce, so it really doesn't matter which it is.

The second word could be completed CAST[um] or CAST[imoniale]. *Castum* means “pure” or “chaste” or “innocent” or “spotless.” It could well refer to the purity of *garum* prepared for observant Jews. *Castimoniale* refers to bodily purity.¹⁰ But the inscription is on a jar of *garum*, so even if this is the correct reconstruction, it would seem to refer to a kind of special or pure *garum*.



A mosaic floor in the home of a man named Aulus Umbricius Scaurus depicts jars of *garum* ready for sale



READING THE LABELS. Pompeii was well known for its production and trade of *garum*, a fish sauce considered a delicacy of the ancient Roman diet.

(Scaurus	Whole
owned a	amphorae
store that	made for
sold	<i>garum</i> were
<i>garum</i>).	also
Because	recovered
<i>garum</i> was	from the site
made from	(pictured
all kinds of	above).
fish	Because
(including	<i>garum</i> was
shellfish	made from
and fish	all kinds of
without	fish
scales),	(including
kosher law	shellfish and
prevented	fish without
Jews from	scales),
consuming	kosher law
most	prevented
<i>garum</i> .	Jews from
Evidence	consuming
of kosher	most <i>garum</i> .
<i>garum</i>	Evidence of
(called	kosher <i>garum</i>

garum (called *garum*
castum or *castum* or
garum *garum muria*)
muria) suggests that
suggests that there were
that there enough Jews
were living in
enough Pompeii to
Jews living create a
in Pompeii market for
to create a the special
market for variety of
the special kosher
variety of *garum*. **Claus**
kosher **Ableiter**
garum.
Claus
Ableiter

In a recent, highly praised book on Pompeii, Cambridge University scholar Mary Beard concludes without qualification that this inscription was a designation for kosher *garum*. Beard refers to “a painted label advertising its contents as ‘Kosher *Garum*.’”¹¹ There are some doubters, however.

The chief doubter is Hannah Cotton, a prominent scholar at the Hebrew University. In her publication of a *garum* jar excavated at [Masada in Israel](#), she cites supposedly “grave arguments” against the notion that *garum castum* was intended for Jews.¹² Pure *garum*, which is all that *garum castum* means, could be intended for other religious groups with food restrictions as well—the worshipers of Apis, Isis and Magna Mater, for instance. In this connection she cites an article by another distinguished scholar, Robert I. Curtis, professor of classics, now retired, at the University of Georgia and an authority both on Pompeii and *garum*.

I wondered about this. Did these pagan groups really have food laws similar to the Jews? I contacted Professor Curtis, who wrote me: “[Professor Cotton] apparently misinterpreted what I had written. Perhaps I wasn’t very clear.” Curtis continued: “The ancient sources on the cult practices of these pagan mystery cults are not very forthcoming, and the information that we do have is primarily from authors hostile to them. So, 100% certainty on matters regarding fasting and abstinence is impossible ... I am not aware that followers of Isis, Magna Mater, etc. exercised restrictions of this kind [i.e., similar to the Jews]. They did, however, have abstinences of particular foods for limited periods of time, usually during recurring festivals ... Recognizing a sauce as

castum, therefore takes on more importance for [Jews]. Fish sauce producers, if they cared at all about catering to a specific clientele, even a small one, could, I think, have directed a specific product to them ...”

Ever the careful scholar, however, Curtis nevertheless concludes that “I am still not able to state unequivocally that the expression *garum castum* was meant exclusively for Jews.”¹³ So the matter is not free from all doubt,¹⁴ but the presence of kosher *garum* at Pompeii is highly likely. In any event, if there were Jews at Pompeii—and it seems there were—they may well have made the connection between the events of 70 and 79: God was indeed taking revenge against the Romans for destroying his Temple.

[The oldest landscape painting in the world comes from Neolithic Catalhöyük and shows a volcanic eruption. Discover this Neolithic artwork from the world's best preserved proto-city.](#)

Josephus: A Reliable Witness of the Temple's Destruction?



Terrified Jews run for their lives as their fellows are trampled by Roman horses and smoke pours out of the Temple in this 1638 painting *The Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by Titus* by Nicolas Poussin. The violent and fiery destruction of the Temple in August 70 C.E. by Roman general Titus's troops was graphically recounted by the first-century historian Flavius Josephus and is mourned by Jews every year on Tisha b'Av. **Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria/The Bridgeman Art Library**

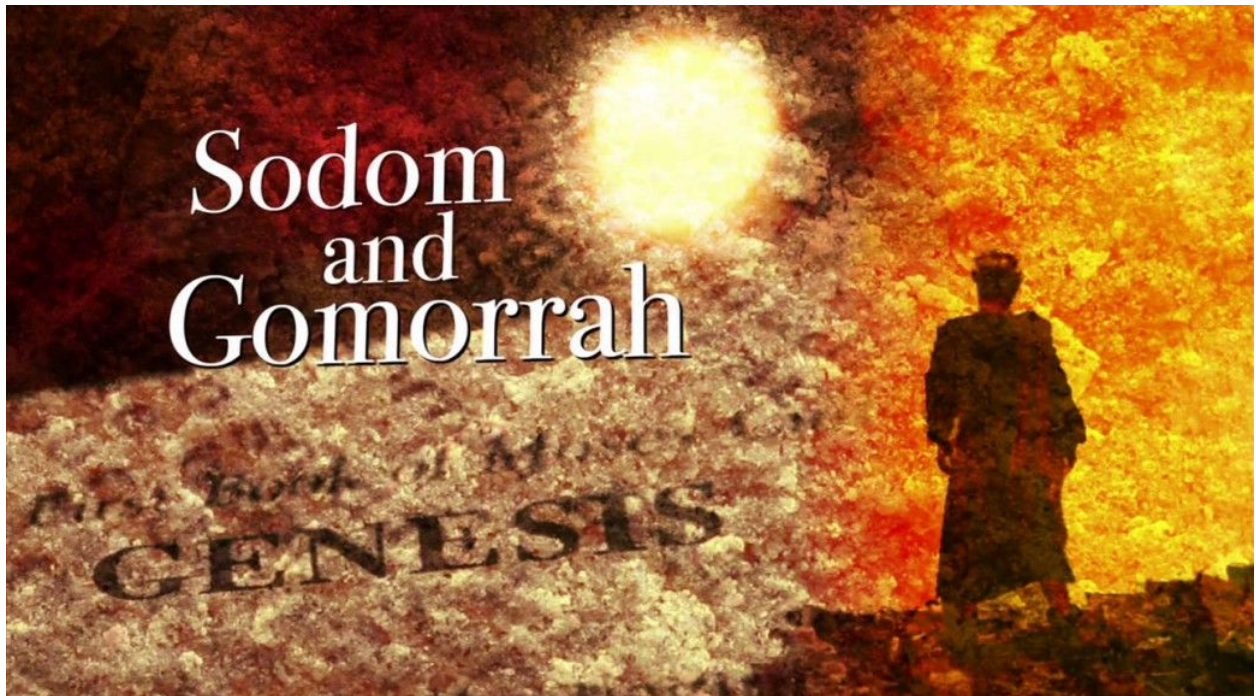
Writing in Rome under the auspices of the Romans after the Jewish revolt, Josephus makes Vespasian and [Titus](#) look like humanitarians: In destroying the Temple, the Romans were really doing God's will. Titus would have spared the Temple. As the Roman soldiers were trying to extinguish the fire in the Temple, a stray Roman soldier, "moved by some supernatural impulse," threw a

firebrand through the golden door of the Temple. Even then Titus wanted to extinguish the conflagration. But his troops, moved only by their passion, could not hear him (*Jewish War*, 6.249–258). “Thus against Caesar’s wishes was the Temple set on fire” (*Jewish War*, 6.266).

Josephus says that God had given “all kinds of premonitory signs to [show] his people the way to salvation, while they owe their destruction to folly and calamities of their own choosing ... Some of these portents they [the Jews] treated with contempt, until the ruin of their country and their own destruction convicted them of their folly” (*Jewish War*, 6.310, 315).

Thus Josephus—undoubtedly a highly biased interpretation of what happened.

Sodom, Gomorrah





In [Matthew 10:1-15](#), cf. [Luke 10:1-12](#), Jesus declares certain cities more damnable than Sodom and Gomorrah, due to their response to Jesus' disciples, in the light of greater grace ([RSV](#)):

"And if any one will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomor'rah than for that town."

In [Matthew 11:20-24](#), Jesus prophesies the fate of some cities where he did some of his works ([RSV](#)):

"And you, Caper'na-um, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you."

In [Luke 17:28-30](#), Jesus compares his second-coming to the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah ([RSV](#)):

"Likewise as it was in the days of Jesus—they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built, but on the day when Jesus went out from Sodom fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—so will it be on the day when the Son of man is revealed."

Will Jesus save people of Sodom, Gomorrah?

Homosexuality

What Does the Bible Say About Homosexuality?

It's in the Bible, Romans 1:26-27, NIV. "Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion."

Note: The Bible does not condemn a person for having same-sex attraction/homosexuality, but rather only the act of homosexual behavior.

Is Homosexuality a Sin?

It's in the Bible, Leviticus 18:22, TLB. "Homosexuality is absolutely forbidden, for it is an enormous sin."

Is the practice of homosexuality the worst sin a person can commit? Many people, even "Christians" may say this, but the Bible says all sin leads to death. It's in the

Bible, Romans 6:23, NKJV. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Pride, greed, and laziness are sins all the same, just as much as homosexuality is a sin. *It's in the Bible*, Ezekiel 16:49, NKJV. “Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.”

Note: The Bible does not single out homosexual behavior, but also includes other sins offensive to God, including idolatry and other sexual sins.

Like all sinners, practicing homosexuals are called to repent. *It's in the Bible*, I Timothy 1:10-11, TLB. "Yes, these laws are made to identify as sinners all who are immoral and impure: homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, and all others who do things that contradict the glorious Good News of our blessed God, whose messenger I am.

Can a Homosexual be Forgiven?

What hope is there for me if I am practicing homosexuality? All sinful patterns can be stopped, and God offers forgiveness, renewal, and restoration. *It's in the Bible*, I Corinthians 6:9, NKJV. "Do you not know that

the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. **And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.**"

There is hope for the practicing homosexual. *It's in the Bible*, 1 Corinthians 10:13, TLB. "But remember this—the wrong desires that come into your life aren't anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you. And no temptation is irresistible. You can trust God to keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it, for He has promised this and will do what He says. He will show you how to escape temptation's power so that you can bear up patiently against it."

The weakest, the most struggling soul, may live, and find hope and sufficiency in God. *It's in the Bible*, Isaiah 42:3, NIV. "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice."

If you are a practicing homosexual, what should you do?

1) First acknowledge your sin. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 51:2-4, TLB. "Oh, wash me, cleanse me from this guilt. Let me be pure again. For I admit my shameful deed—it haunts me day and night."

2) Second, Ask forgiveness for your sin—God says you can start over again. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 51:7-12, TLB. "Sprinkle me with the cleansing blood and I shall be clean again. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. And after You have punished me, give me back my joy again. Don't keep looking at my sins—erase them from Your sight. Create in me a new, clean heart, O God, filled with clean thoughts and right desires. Don't toss me aside, banished forever from Your presence. Don't take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me again the joy of Your salvation, and make me willing to obey You."

3) Third, Believe that God has indeed forgiven you and quit feeling guilty. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 32:1-6, TLB. "What happiness for those whose guilt has been forgiven! What joys when sins are covered over! What relief for those who have confessed their sins and God has cleared their record. There was a time when I wouldn't admit what a sinner I was. But my dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration. All day and all night Your hand was heavy on me. My strength

evaporated like water on a sunny day until I finally admitted all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, 'I will confess them to the Lord.' And You forgave me! All my guilt is gone. Now I say that each believer should confess his sins to God when he is aware of them, while there is time to be forgiven. Judgment will not touch him if he does. You are my hiding place from every storm of life; You even keep me from getting into trouble! You surround me with songs of victory.

4) Fourth, believe that God has a plan for your life, and that He truly cares for your well being! *It's in the Bible*, Jeremiah 29:11, NKJV. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Trust that in His perfect timing, He will work His plan out for you. That may mean to be single, or it may mean to get married. Either way, you can live a happy, productive life living for Him. He truly does want what is best for **your** life.

Jesus Calls Each of Us to a Life of...

Jesus does not ask you to be straight or gay, but rather calls you to holiness in and through His victory. *It's in the*

Bible, Galatians 3:28, NKJV. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

"So think clearly and exercise self-control. Look forward to the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." 1 Peter 1:13-16, TLB.

Will being gay send me to hell? I believe in Jesus as my Lord and Savior and I desperately want to please Him and do His will. At the same time, I know that I am homosexual. I believe I was born this way and that nothing will ever change it. Does this mean that I'm condemned for eternity?

First, let's get one thing straight: "being gay" doesn't send anybody to hell. There is only *one* criterion that God uses to judge the world and determine who is saved and not saved: *faith in Jesus Christ*. "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life" (I John 5:12). "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:17, 18).

The *bad news* is that we *all* deserve to go to hell: "There is none righteous, no, not one," writes the Psalmist (Psalm 14:1-3). "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," says the apostle Paul (Romans 3:23)-who, by the way, refers to himself as the "chief of sinners" in 1 Timothy 1:15. When it comes to our "works" and the way we've lived our lives, *everybody* stands condemned, whether gay or

straight, black or white, liberal or conservative, old or young. The *good news* is that God *loves* us in spite of our sin and has sent His Son Jesus Christ to purchase our redemption. This is what the Christian message is all about: we are all sinners, but we can all be forgiven and born anew through faith in Christ.

What your question really boils down to, then, is this: "Is it possible to believe in Jesus and be a homosexual at the same time?" The answer, as we see it, is both *yes* and *no*. Here at Focus on the Family, we take the view that there's an important difference between *feeling* gay and *acting* on those feelings. As with any form of sinful behavior, the transgression comes not in being *tempted*, but in willfully engaging in activity that is contrary to God's law. So *yes*-you *can* be a Christian and struggle with homosexual tendencies at the same time; but *no*-you *can't* be a faithful, obedient Christian while willingly involving yourself in homosexual acts. Anybody who seriously desires to follow Jesus Christ needs to make it his or her goal to abstain from sexual practices that the Bible clearly identifies as sinful.

To go further: the great mystery of the Christian life is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Not alongside you, not over you, but *in* you. This is the deeper

reason why a practicing homosexual cannot be a practicing Christian. The same would go for any human being engaged in any sexual sin; just as Paul says in his first letter to the Corinthians, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!" (1 Corinthians 6:15). When we accept Christ as Savior, we also make a decision to live the way *He* wants us to live-righteously by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Every thousand years or so
Christ goes down to hell
Through his glory
He saves all of those damned
He raises them up
Alone he does it
Believers and unbelievers alike
All are saved
They are either given life on earth to live again
or sent to upper realms if they are believers
The power of Christ is felt
even by Satan himself
He bows down before him
and acknowledges the Christ as Lord

Hell trembles over
and all the angels therein stare in awe
at the sight of the Mighty and Glorious Christ
Glory be to Christ
Our Lord Our Savior

Of all the worlds
There he is down again
The Trumpets in hell are thunderous
whenever Christ arrives there
All the people burning and gnashing their teeth
Feel his power and all their agonies vanish
Christ is your savior
even if you are in hell
Only he is the way out
There is no one else
Hell freezes over
All the fires and torments are quenched
The presence of Christ does it!
Praised be Christ thy God Amen!

Last Chapter
The New Bible

People of Sodom and Gomorrah come out of hell.





Los Angeles

San Francisco

Los Angeles & San Francisco

Jesus in San Francisco

San Francisco is a place of sin. An angel appears there and he is welcomed by Jesus. The people of San Francisco want to have sex with him. Jesus refuses; then the angel tells him to escape the city with his wife and daughter. San Francisco is then destroyed by flames; Jesus's wife is turned to a pillar of salt for having looked back.

San Francisco and Los Angeles Destroyed

The two angels arrived at San Francisco in the evening, and Jesus was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. “My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.”

“No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.”

But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of San Fran—both young and old—surrounded the house. They called to Jesus, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”

Jesus went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”



“Get out of our way,” they replied. “This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Jesus and moved forward to break down the door.

But the men inside reached out and pulled Jesus back into the house and shut the door. ¹¹ Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

The two men said to Jesus, “Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, ¹³ because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.”

So Jesus went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Jesus, saying, “Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are

here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.”

When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them. As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, “Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!”

But Jesus said to them, “No, my lords, please! Your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown great kindness to me in sparing my life. But I can’t flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I’ll die. Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small. Let me flee to it—it is very small, isn’t it? Then my life will be spared.”

He said to him, “Very well, I will grant this request too; I will not overthrow the town you speak of. But flee there quickly, because I cannot do anything until you reach it.” (That is why the town was called Las Vegas.)

By the time Jesus reached Las Vegas, the sun had risen over the land. Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on San Francisco and Los Angeles—from the LORD out of the heavens. Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, destroying all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land. But Jesus’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

Early the next morning John The Baptist got up and returned to the place where he had stood before the LORD. He looked down toward San Francisco and Los Angeles, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace.

So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered John The Baptist, and he brought Jesus out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Jesus had lived.





RUINS OF SAN FRANCISCO
MILL IN FOREGROUND
LAWRENCE CAPTIVE AIRSHIP
100 FEET ELEVATION

Jesus and His Daughters

Jesus and his two daughters left Las Vegas and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Las Vegas. He and his two daughters lived in a cave. One day the older daughter said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man around here to give us children—as is the custom all over the earth. Let’s get our father to drink wine and then sleep with him and preserve our family line through our father.”

That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and slept with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.

The next day the older daughter said to the younger, “Last night I slept with my father. Let’s get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and sleep with him so we can preserve our family line through our father.”³⁵ So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went in and slept with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.

So both of Jesus's daughters became pregnant by their father. The older daughter had a son, and she named him Trump; he is the father of the Trumpites of today. The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Caesar; he is the father of the Caesars of today.

Christ saves people in hell

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Christ goes down to hell
Through his glory
He saves all of those damned
He raises them up
Alone he does it
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All are saved
They are either given life on earth to live again
or sent to upper realms if they are believers
The power of Christ is felt
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Last Chapter
The New Bible



People of Los Angeles and San Francisco are saved by Jesus in hell!

This is a stern warning to all other sinful cities of the
past, present and the future...