

The Lost Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah **Question and Answers**

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SECTION C:

THE LOST CITIES OF

SODOM AND GOMORRAH

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SECTION C: THE LOST CITIES OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH

INTRODUCTION

That Day in 1897 BC

It is early morning. The five cities of the Jordan Plain awaken. The merchants are opening their shops. Men are going to work, children to school. Mothers are making beds, preparing laundry.

But, suddenly, a hush falls over the countryside. The jubilant chatter of the birds and the boisterous crowing of the roosters are silenced. Lot, his wife and two unmarried daughters are literally dragged from the city of Sodom by the strangers who arrived in the city the day before. The animals begin to stir uneasily. But no one notices the "sense of impending doom"...

Without further warning, the sky darkens and myriads of balls of fire begin to fall. The sound of a mighty wind is heard as it sweeps the tempest of fiery rain upon the cities and the surrounding plain. In only an instant, these varying-sized missiles of burning brimstone cascade down upon the buildings, the animals and the people. Everywhere they fall, they stick and completely consume whatever they fall upon. The terrified screams of man and beast fill the air but for a moment, for in minutes the entire plain and the cities upon it are reduced to pure ash!

The Search for Sodom & Gomorrah

The book of Genesis tells us that five cities -Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zoboim and Zoar - sat on a fertile watered plain near the Valley of Siddim (the present Dead Sea). The region was like the Garden of Eden (Gen. 13:10).

There are recorded two interesting events:

1. **A battle** between these 5 cities and 4 other kings. "*Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar [bitumen] pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills*" (Gen. 14:10).

2. **The cities' destruction.** "*The Lord rained down brimstone and fire [burning sulfur] upon them*" (Gen. 19:24).

Lot, a nephew of Abraham, moved into Sodom to live. The afternoon before the fiery judgment, came two strangers. Lot invited them to lodge in his house overnight. That evening they disclosed their errand and urged Lot to leave the city. A band of homosexuals banged on the door, demanding that the visitors be surrendered to them. The fast-action account is charged with emotion. Lot's family had to be literally pulled out of the city for their own safety, leaving behind two sons-in-law, to whom Lot's pleadings were as from one gone mad.

The raining of fire and brimstone (sulfur), in which the land was "smoking like a furnace", utterly destroyed the cities and turned the countryside into desert.

The "Sin of Sodom"

Most people associate Sodom & Gomorrah with only one sinful passion - that of sexual perversion. And they were guilty of that, as are a large number of people not only today, but down through the ages. But the Bible states that their sin was something else: *"Behold, THIS was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, PRIDE, FULNESS OF BREAD, and ABUNDANCE OF IDLENESS was in her and in her daughters, NEITHER DID SHE STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THE POOR AND NEEDY. And they were HAUGHTY, and COMMITTED ABOMINATION before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good" (Eze. 16:49, 50).*

In the above passage, we learn that the root of their sinfulness stemmed from their great wealth which led them to idleness and a disregard for those less fortunate than they. They were full of pride and haughtiness, thinking they were better than others.

Why were they so wealthy? The mention of the "slime pits" may provide the answer for it was a most valuable commodity in those days, being used extensively all over the ancient world. Not only was it used as a coating for burnt mud bricks (as a preservative), it was used in the mortar; it was used to provide a water-tight covering for things such as the "reed ark" Moses was placed in as a baby. Even today, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *"In its various forms bitumen is one of the most widely distributed of substances"*. In the Ebla tablets, one tablet listing some purchases and the price for each item in silver, shows that the highest price was paid for bitumen. And the people of these cities had only to walk out in their "front yard" and gather it. They had no reason to engage in hard work. They had a "gold mine" just there for the taking. This also explains why the kings of the great nations wanted to make them vassals - to participate in their great wealth through the extraction of tribute in the form of bitumen.

This bitumen could also possibly have provided a hint as to a catalyst in the conflagration which occurred in this plain. Bitumen, or slime pits, results from an underground petroleum reserve oozing through to the surface. And all oil reserves have natural gas associated with them, which also can seep into the air. All of this is speculation, but the region yields the elements and evidences of an extremely cataclysmic occurrence - one in which a lake was formed, blocking the river from its continued flow and which devastated the entire plain to the extent that nothing grows there.

This is the deepest spot on earth. It dips down between Israel and Jordan, some 1,300 feet (400 meters) below sea level, to what is known as the DEAD SEA.

In this lake no fish can live. The waters are 28 per cent salt, six times saltier than the ocean. Any careless fish that ventures from the River Jordan down into this evil lake chokes to death and is pickled.

In this water you cannot sink. When you jump in, you feel as if you are being thrown out again.

The scorching sun dries your skin almost at once. The thin crust of salt which the water has deposited on your body makes you look quite white. You must rinse this off quickly, or risk severe burning.

Virtually nothing grows here. The shore is utterly desolate... and in summer it bakes like an oven.

The shallow water close to shore was choked with the stumps of ancient trees, encrusted in salt. There was a bizarre beauty about it.

It is hard to believe that this whole area was once like a beautiful garden, exceptionally fertile.

Remains of Cities

For centuries travelers passed through this desolate waste, oblivious to the fact that the shapeless ruins close by were those of a city, so thorough had been the destruction.

The identification was made in 1989.

There is a mountain called Mount Sodom. This long, narrow mountain is a salt dome - made entirely of salt. Behind it is the squarish shape of an ancient city. Since the mountain is called SODOM, could this city have been SODOM?

In this region are five sites which share one thing in common. In the entire world, only these five sites share this common feature. Within their perimeters everything has been totally burned to ASH.

According to the Bible, five cities which lay in this region were destroyed by falling fire and brimstone (sulfur) and turned to ash.

Of these five cities, Sodom is always listed first. Presumably, it was the most important, or largest, of the five. And of the five sites we have found, the largest is adjacent to Mount Sodom.

Nearby is the smallest of the sites. The Bible relates that when Lot fled Sodom to escape its destruction, he wanted to go to Zoar, which was close by and was just "a little city". Again, this site has been totally turned to ash.

The second largest, as well as the best preserved of the sites, lies between Masada and the Dead Sea. Since Gomorrah was listed second in the biblical account, we conclude that these ashen remains qualify to be the remnants of Gomorrah.

This has to be the eeriest ghost town on earth. An oven by day, and at night the stark silence of death.

This whole region reeks of some ancient curse.

Structures

There was a distinct form here. Remains of buildings. One of them was five stories high. All ash now. This place had suffered tremendous destruction.

Periodically there were openings in the walls, entrances to the city, where you see actual streets. These wide avenues had buildings on both sides, and they led to other side streets. The large piles of ash made walking difficult down these streets.

Sodom and Gomorrah were Canaanite cities, according to the Bible. And the cities of the Canaanites were constructed with double walls, with buildings atop them.

And were these shapes once windows? One was aware that nothing before one's eyes was stone... or earth... or sand. Ash from some tremendous fire.

And there was the city wall - a double wall, with buttresses coming out from it at right angles. These had been built to strengthen the wall.

There were traces of sphinxes. And close by the clear remains of a ziggurat, or stepped pyramid. This was built upon a rectangular platform, just as were the ziggurats of ancient Mesopotamia.

One of the interesting features of these sites is the layering present in ALL of the ashen material. Hundreds and thousands of layers are present, none very thick. In very high temperature fires, and/or in very hot flames containing alkali metals or alkaline earth materials (for example, sodium and calcium) the positive and negative ions attract and repel, resulting in this layering effect. We know the flames had to be extremely hot in order to completely burn stone and metals; and we know there is a tremendous amount of sodium (salt) in the region - the Dead Sea has the highest concentration of salt of any body of water on earth. And the largest salt dome, Mt. Sodom, is also in the area.

Mary Nell Wyatt reports:

"In 1989, we visited the site just below Masada and took samples of the whitish material which we all discovered broke right off in our hands and disintegrated into particles the consistency of talcum powder. It certainly LOOKED like ash! But what to do about this information was a puzzle. After all, these sites have been right out in plain sight since their destruction in about 1897 BC.

"Samples taken for testing DID prove to be ASH! We were convinced, but we knew there had to be better evidence than just this - evidence that would convince a skeptical world. We began to pray that the Lord would help us to find this (unknown) evidence."

The Clinching Evidence

Ron had encountered this experience -of going in, not seeing it - then praying - and going back, quite separately, to find that RAIN HAD JUST FALLEN!

In the desert? Rain is a rare occurrence in this area. There is as little as 1/4 to 1/2 an inch of rain a year. (That's just 6.25 to 12.5 millimeters.)

The rain had splashed away the thin film of ash that normally blows on top of the evidence, concealing it from sight.

But now, there they were: embedded in the ash were balls of burnt sulfur - brimstone - probably millions of them! Here was actual evidence that fire and brimstone once rained upon this area!

As Ron picked up a block of ash, he noticed these small yellow balls embedded in it- each ball was (or had been) surrounded by a black crystalline shell, and around that was a reddish-black ring in the ash.

Prying one out, he recognized it as sulfur. Smelling it, he KNEW it was sulfur. Here was the physical evidence. All through the ashen remains were round balls of sulfur encapsulated in burnt (crystalline) sulfur.

As he scanned the site, at first not knowing what to look for, he saw these sulfur balls literally everywhere.

Before, he hadn't been able to see them because the loose ash had covered everything. But now the rain washed away the loose ash and caused this section to fall away, revealing these sulfur balls embedded through the ashen material. The reddish-black crystalline material surrounding the sulfur balls showed that they had once been on fire. It seems that as these burning balls of brimstone fell from the sky, they set everything ablaze.

And they burned right through everything. And as they burned, after a while, molten material surrounding the sulfur cut it off from the oxygen, preserving it in the interior of the ashes.

What we call a "burn ring" surrounds each capsule -suggesting that the ash itself was vitrified.

What was discovered was that as the ashen material erodes and these sulfur balls become exposed to the surface, they fall out of their capsules and can be found lying all over the ground. But we hadn't been able to see them before because they had been covered with the loose layer of ash.

The Bible says that "the Lord rained brimstone and fire" on the cities. And how does rain fall? In drops, of course!

This burning brimstone DID fall in drops, which landed in the pattern that rain would fall.

This burned sulfur covers the remains of the five cities discovered.

One may deny the find, but that does not alter the fact that Ron Wyatt and team have discovered the ashen remains of the cities of the plain - and Jonathan Gray and team have confirmed the discovery in person.

The clinching evidence is the pressed powder balls of brimstone inside burn capsules, and surrounded by burn rings embedded in ash - found NO WHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD.

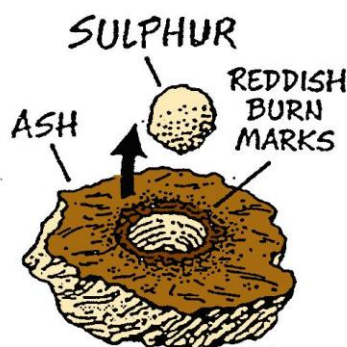


Figure 1 Sulfur balls of brimstone inside burned capsules, surrounded by burn rings embedded in ash.



Figure 2 Sodom & Gomorrah Buildings

SODOM & GOMORRAH QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

ISN'T IT ONLY A FABLE?

1. A Professor told me that Sodom and Gomorrah never existed, but the stories of fire were invented by temple priests to frighten the common people into submission. Is there any evidence outside the Bible that these cities were real?

When the archives at ancient Ebla (in present day Northern Syria) were first discovered in 1975, the translator, Giovanni Pettinato, reported he had found that the names of the 5 cities of the plain were not only listed, but in the same order as in Genesis. However, the Syrian government was *"angered at the emphasis placed in the West on the tablets' alleged Biblical significance"*. (*Biblical Archaeology Review*, May/June 1980, p.48) A rather large controversy then began over these tablets, which the Syrians felt were being used to link the biblical patriarchs with Syrian history, something they would not stand for.

This finally resulted in Pettinato's resignation and letter of recantation as to many of the translations.

It was explained that translation of the tablets presented some problems given the peculiarities of the Eblaite language. Pettinato's revision of many of his earlier readings of the tablets included those of the "Cities of the Plain".

Trevor Peters of Queensland has been conducting research on the most recent scholarly discussions of this issue. He informs us that the name Sodom (Si-damu in Eblaite) is mentioned in two separate tablets (*TM. 76. G. 524* and *TM. 75. G.2377*).

Scholars suggest, however, that its association with other listed place names would indicate its location to be in northern Syria, not the Jordan plain. This would mean that the Sidamu mentioned in the tablets is not the Sodom of the Bible. It is also stated that Gomorrah would appear as Imar-at and is not found in this form in any tablet.

Dr. Alfonso Archi, head of the international committee appointed to take over the earlier work of Pettinato comments that *"No place name among those quoted by Pettinato may, therefore, be identified with the 'Cities of the Plain.'"* (*Studi Eblati*, 4, 1981, p.12)

It is possible, however, that these tablets do reveal evidences that positively confirm the biblical account, and that the forces of Satan are fighting hard to suppress it. The later appointed director of the Italian mission excavating at Ebla issued a statement which shows why Pettinato was forced to recant:

"These allegations [linking the Ebla tablets with the Bible] were propagated by Zionist-American centers to be exploited for atrocious purposes aimed at proving the expansionist and colonialistic views of the Zionist leaders. " (Biblical Archaeology Review, May/June 1980, p. 49)

When Pattinato, the original translator of the texts, made his recantation, he still insisted that the 2 cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were correct. In light of the serious objections made by the Syrian government, which was communist at that time, and their intense hatred of the Israelis, I think we can confidently accept the evidence as it was originally published. And in his original publication, he writes that a king of one of the cities is mentioned, "Birsha", which is exactly what the Bible states: *"That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboum, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar"* (Gen. 14:2).

Scholarly debate of this issue has generally stalled due to the delay in publication of the relevant tablets. In 1980, Freedman commented that *"neither Pettinato, nor Matthiae, nor Archi has provided a single case where the actual signs are given in photographic, or hand copy reproduction, and until those are available to the scholarly community, I think it is no longer possible to say what they are. "* ("Interview with David Noel Freedman", *Biblical Archaeology Review*. May/June 1980, p.52) Approximately 20 years ago, Smithsonian Curator of Old World Archaeology, Dr. Gus Van Beek, predicted that publication of the relevant tablets would not be achieved for 20 years or more. ("Ebla Evidence Evaporates", *Biblical Archaeology Review*, November/December 1979, p.53)

His prediction has thus far proved correct and, in a situation similar to the Dead Sea Scrolls debacle, photographs of the tablets in question have yet to be made available for further scholarly study.

In light of the above information, it would be extremely unwise to rely upon the Ebla tablets to provide support for the existence or location of the 'Cities of the Plain'.

Nevertheless, what is so exciting about these tablets is that they come from a well established city, 140 acres in size, that existed during the time Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed just 24 years after Abraham left Haran, which is within 150 miles of ancient Ebla. And mentioned in the Ebla texts, uncontested, are cities whose names reflect Abraham's relatives: Phaliga=Peleg; Til-Turakhi=Terah; Nakhur-Nahor; and Haran. Not only that, but they mention "Ur in the region of Haran", which is the city Abraham left from originally. It is appropriate to mention that other ancient writers have documented the existence of the biblical 'Cities of the Plain'. These include Diodorus, Philo, Strabo, Tacitus and Josephus. Other sources of extra biblical evidence are the *Koran* and the Madaba Mosaic Map.

WAS IT EVER FERTILE?

2. The Dead Sea region is like a lunar landscape - dry and forbidding. How can one ever believe the Bible depiction of the area as a well-watered, fertile land that could sustain giant herds of cattle; that was watered by five rivers supporting five cities, and where a pair of Bedouin stockmen become rich inside of a generation?

It is naive to imagine that the climate of Palestine has remained unchanged over thousands of years. There is much evidence that prior to 1000 BC, large forest trees covered especially the higher elevations. This would have resulted in a much greater rainfall than exists today. Grasslands in the Jordan area would have supported a wide range of domesticated animals. There is also much evidence that the land supported a wild animal population that is not unlike that of North Africa. Elephant herds even roamed Northern Syria. The demand for tusks was so great that they became extinct by the eighth century BC.

As a result of deforestation, by 1000 BC the climate had changed dramatically.

Evidence of the lushness of the region can be seen from the cemetery at the ruins of Bab edh Dhra and neighboring sites to the southeast of the Dead Sea. They all had very large cemeteries, containing tens of thousands of burials. These people all depended on the fertility of the surrounding countryside. Examination of skeletal remains indicates that they were robust, healthy people.

From study of remains at Bab edh Dhra we know that the people were growing and harvesting wheat, barley, grapes, olives, figs, lentils, chickpeas, flax, pistachio, almond and assorted wild plants. There is strong evidence that irrigated agriculture was practiced.

In analyzing the sediment core from the Sea of Galilee, researchers *found that the $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ isotope was depleted in the deposits... (from) around 2000 years BCE. Such depletion reflects colder, therefore wetter, climate conditions.* " (A.S. Issar and D. Yakir, "The Roman Period's Colder Climate ", *Biblical Archaeologist*, Vol. 60, No. 2, June 1997, p.104; also M. Stiller, "The Late Holocene Sediments of Lake Kinneret (Israel): Multidisciplinary Study of a 5m Core," Geological Survey of Israel, Ministry of Energy, Jerusalem, 1984)

Indeed, the biblical account has the ring of authenticity.



Figure 3 Sodom & Gomorrah was paradise!

LOCATION

3. Are not the ruins under the deep waters of the Dead Sea?

In 1960, an American explorer, with the friendly cooperation of the Jordanian monarchy, attempted to make a search of the north, middle and south end of the Dead Sea bottom. He located, photographed and displayed a

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few poorly identifiable objects that he claimed to have found at depths and locations that are INCOMPATIBLE with the actual depths in the named locations.

The only certainties that emerged were that there were once trees growing on the land now covered by water. And there was no evidence of any remains of cities. But these efforts and published data have led many to incorrectly believe that the cities rest beneath the Dead Sea.

Peter, writing in the first century, says:

"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, MAKING THEM AN ENSAMPLE unto those that after should live ungodly" (2 Pet. 2:6).

The Greek word translated to read "ensample" is "hupodeigma" which implies something "that is shown or visible". This implies that it could literally BE SEEN.

Jude also writes along those same lines, presenting these cities as proof of the reward of the wicked: *"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, 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"* (Jude 7). Again, the word he used, "deigma", signifies "a thing shown, a specimen", from the root word "deiknumi", "to show". Peter and Jude both say the ruins were VISIBLE IN THEIR DAY! -not hidden away under a sea.

Josephus (first century) agrees: *"The length of this lake is five hundred and eighty furlongs, where it is extended as far as Zoar in Arabia; and its breadth is a hundred and fifty. The country of Sodom BORDERS UPON IT..."* He goes on to say that the lake *"throws up black lumps of bitumen in many parts of it. These swim at the top of the water..."* Then he adds: *"There are still the REMAINDERS [remains made of ash] of that divine fire; and the traces (or shadows) of the free cities are STILL TO BE SEEN..."* (Wars of the Jews, Bk. IV, ch. 8. Sec. 4)

Did you notice? Josephus says here that:

1. The ruins were VISIBLE IN HIS DAY - ON THE BORDERS OF THE DEAD SEA, not hidden under it!
2. The bitumen pits (of the old Vale of Siddim) were SUBMERGED - but NOT THE RUINS OF THE CITIES.
3. His description of the remains perfectly describes what can be seen in these five ashen sites. They are all whitish in color; the shadows and shapes display all the visual characteristics of ancient cities and walls.

THE ASHEN REMAINS are still A VISIBLE EXAMPLE, AT THE EDGE OF THE DEAD SEA. The Bible said they were turned "into ashes" (2 Pet. 2:6). And that is what's seen.

From surveying, mapping and dating the ancient shore lines in the salt caves of Mount Sedom (Mount Sodom), Hebrew University speleologist Amos Franklin concluded that the sea level about 2,000 years ago was higher than at present. (A. Frumkin, *Holocene Environmental Change Determined from Salt Caves of Mount Sedom, Israel. The Holocene, 1, 1991. pp.191200*)

If the remains of Sodom and Gomorrah were VISIBLE in the first century (when the sea level was higher), then the same remains CANNOT BE UNDERWATER TODAY, when the sea level is lower.

4. But doesn't the Bible say that Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities were in the vale of Siddim, which is now the Dead Sea?

Proof: "These made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Adman, and Shemeber king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. ALL THESE WERE JOINED TOGETHER IN THE VALE OF SIDDIM, which is the salt sea" (Genesis 14:2,3).

The text does NOT say that the CITIES were joined together in the vale of Siddim. But it says they joined in battle in the Vale of Siddim. Let's read the whole passage:

"And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Adman, and Shemeber king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea" (Gen. 14:1-3).

According to this whole passage, it is the two opposing confederacies of kings that fought in battle in the Vale of Siddim.

VERIFICATION: verse 8: *"And there WENT OUT the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Adman, and the king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar); and THEY JOINED BATTLE WITH THEM [the invaders] IN THE VALE OF SIDDIM. "*

The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were ON THE PLAIN OF JORDAN (*Gen. 13:10-12*). Thus they were called "cities of the plain".

Gen. 14:8 says the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah WENT OUT of their cities, to go into the Vale of Siddim. They had to GO OUT of their cities to get into the valley. The cities themselves were not physically in the valley - but the battle was!



Figure 4 Map of Middle East

5. Could the ruins be under the water of the drowned plain to the south of the Dead Sea?

The Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea, but there is no outflow from the sea. Thus, over the ages, the level of the sea had risen to cover the flat plain to the south, and scholars hopefully suggested that the cities lay beneath these shallow waters.

More recently, however, the Jordan waters have been siphoned off for irrigation purposes. This lowered the lake level and largely exposed the southern plain, but there was no sign of any ruined cities there.

6. Could the remains of Numeira and Bab edh Dhra on the east side of the Dead Sea be the sites of Sodom and Gomorrah?

The remains of Numeira and Bab edh Dhra represent two of five ruined sites in that area.

There are several reasons - IF you believe the biblical account - that these sites do not qualify.

The first reason is simply this - they are not "in the plain" but instead on the plateau, some 500 feet above the plain. When William Albright and Melvin Kyle discovered the site of Bab ed-Dra in 1924, they understood immediately that this site was not a candidate for Sodom, Gomorrah or any of the cities of the plain: *"It is most emphatically not a city, but rather a temporary encampment, like Gilgal, or perhaps rather like the somewhat shadowy Baal peon of Moab. Since the plain of Bab ed-Dra is not suitable for cultivation, and is high above the gorge of the Seil ed-Dra, it would in any case be a very unsatisfactory place for a town. As a festival site for the inhabitants of the oases below it is admirable, since it is situated on the first convenient rise of terrain above the central oasis of el-Mezra `ah, some five hundred feet above the level of the Dead Sea. "* (William Foxwell Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible*, 1932, p.136)

The second reason that these sites don't qualify as candidates for the cities of the plain is their size - the largest site, Bab ed-Dra is just 10 acres, while Numeira is only 2! Think about it- that's not large enough to even qualify as SMALL towns. The evidence shows that these sites were indeed high places, or places visited by pilgrims. The cemetery at Bab ed-Dra is said to contain over 20,000 graves which hold over 500,000 people. Could that many people live in a 10 acre town? Of course not. But the possibility that they were high places and cemeteries of the cities of the plain is a possibility, in our opinion. With the cities completely destroyed, perhaps God allowed their cemeteries and high places to remain as a testimony of the fact that an extremely large population once lived in the area.

Thirdly, Peter mentions the condition of the remains of Sodom and Gomorrah during the time of Christ: *"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly"* (2 Pet. 2:6).

This verse is full of information - for one thing, it tells us that the cities were ASHES.

That may seem like a logical conclusion since they were destroyed by fire. However the adherents to the theory of the five sites on the Jordanian side of the Dead Sea (Bah edh Dhra, Numeira, etc) have failed to note that these are NOT ashen.

These sites show evidence of being burned; archaeologists unearthed a thick layer of black ash. But the sites are NOT ash, as the Bible tells us Sodom and Gomorrah were. They contain a large number of burnt artifacts but they also contain foodstuffs (including carbonized grapes which still have their skins) and other articles that are still intact.

Careful examination of the remains of these cities shows them to be typical of those destroyed in war. Archaeologists have found wood and other flammable materials in VARYING STAGES OF DECAY, and this is not compatible with the destruction of the "cities of the plain" as described in the Bible! There is no evidence whatever that sulfur (brimstone) was involved in their overthrow! There is no evidence of fire from the heavens.

Fourthly, the land east of the Dead Sea was anciently known as Moab, Ammon or Seir (Edom). Deuteronomy 2:8-12 states that the traditional inhabitants of Moab were Emims, and those inhabiting Seir were a group called Horims, who were later dispossessed by the descendants of Esau. Thus the lands bordering the east side of the Dead Sea were not Canaanite.

Now the 'Cities of the Plain' were unquestionably Canaanite cities, since they are listed to define the borders of Canaanite territory (Gen. 10:19). The Canaanite territory was to the west of the Dead Sea

7. So where are the remains?

1. **SODOM** is always listed first among the cities of the plain, presumably because it was the largest and most important. The largest of our ashen sites is indeed adjacent to Mount Sodom. Close to it southward is the smallest of the five sites. And the Bible does say that Sodom (the largest?) and Zoar (the "little" city) were close to each other (Gen. 19:20-22).

It so happens that our site is:

(a) the largest of the five; (b) adjacent to Mount Sodom; (c) close to the smallest.

2. **GOMORRAH**: The second largest site lies between the Masada heights and the Dead Sea. We believe this is Gomorrah.

3. **ZOAR**: This smallest of the sites lies just a few miles south of the largest.

4. **ADMAH AND ZEBOIM**: The other two sites are north of the Dead Sea. Not only are these five sites all turned to ASH. Balls of brimstone lie over each of them.

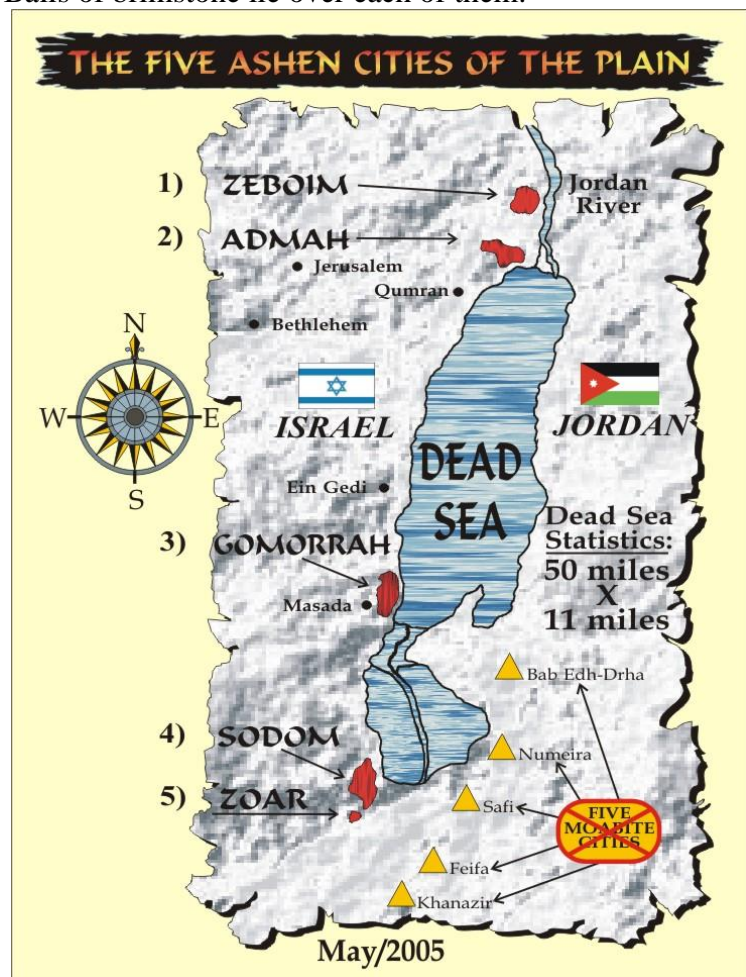


Figure 5 Locations of the Cities of the Plain

8. But weren't those cities all grouped together? You have them scattered over a distance of 50 miles or more?

Yes, the ashen sites have been found scattered over a distance of 50 or more miles (80+ kilometers). However, it is the location of Zeboim that we found the most incredible. It was several miles above the northern end of the Dead Sea, past Jericho.

This scenario certainly "bucks" the establishment's theories. We are placing these cities from one end of the Dead Sea to the other, and beyond.

In searching the Bible for clues to their locations, we found a passage where four of the cities were mentioned as forming part of the boundaries of the Canaanites:

"And the border of the Canaanites was from SIDON, as thou comest to GERAR, unto GAZA; as thou goest, unto SODOM, and GOMORRAH, and ADMAH and ZEBOIM, even unto LASHA " (Gen. 10:19). .

The location of Sidon, Gerar and Gaza are well established.

From Sidon, the most northerly point along the coast of Palestine, Gerar and Gaza are situated progressively southward. From Gaza to Sodom, the border turns eastward.

One can reasonably expect the remaining cities to be similarly spaced geographically, since they are mentioned merely to delimit the extent of Canaanite occupation.



Figure 6 Location of the Valley of Siddim

In viewing a map, it seemed strange that Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim would each separately be listed if they were all in the same general location, at the south end of the Dead Sea. Had such a close grouping been the case it would have been sufficient to mention only one of the cities, probably the largest. Since Zoar was in close proximity to Sodom and a much smaller city, its mention is unnecessary and it has thus been omitted from the list.

Thus one would expect to find the 'Cities of the Plain' located at intervals along the boundary of Canaan, beginning with Sodom and progressing to Gomorrah, thence to Admah, and finally Zeboim, further along the boundary of Canaan.

Genesis 10:19 seems to best support a geographically spaced distribution for Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, rather than a close geographical grouping.

We searched the Bible for any clues and found a most exciting one in 1 Samuel:

"And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people that were present with them, abode in Gibeah of Benjamin: but THE PHILISTINES ENCAMPED IN MICHMASH. And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned unto the way that leadeth to Ophrah, unto the land of Shaul: And another company turned the way to Bethhoron: and ANOTHER COMPANY TURNED TO THE WAY OF THE BORDER THAT LOOKETH TO THE VALLEY OF ZEBOIM TOWARDS THE WILDERNESS" (1 Sam. 13:16-18).

Examining a map, you see this description of the Philistines coming out of Michmash had one company going north, one going west, and the last one heading directly east - and the one heading east to the Valley called "Zeboim" was heading to the same place that Ron found the last site!

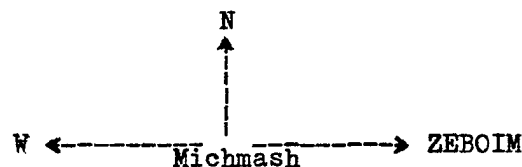


Figure 7 Michmash to Zeboim

It made perfect sense that the name of the city was preserved throughout the years even though the city was long ago destroyed, just as Mt. Sodom even today still bears the name "Sodom". Israel had displaced the Canaanites - Zeboim was a border city of Canaan, and now its ashen remains were a border of Israel.

Here is another clue.

Hosea (11:8) mentions Admah and Zeboim in association with Ephraim. While they are here used to exemplify the type and magnitude of destruction which God is reticent to bring upon Ephraim, the more common use of Sodom and Gomorrah in reference to this destructive event could have served just as well, unless a further reason exists for their use. It seems likely that the use of Admah and Zeboim was favored due to a geographical association. The boundaries of Ephraim are defined in Joshua (16-17). Ephraim's lower boundary shows points of confluence with the plain of the Jordan where it runs from the Jordan and Jericho inland to Bethel. This would suggest that Admah and Zeboim were located in the northern Jordan region. Their joint mention seems to indicate both their proximity to each other and to the southeastern border of Ephraim.

The Scripture offers us yet another clue. We have shortened some of the following verses to make the reading apply to the point we wish to demonstrate. Please read the entire passage in your own Bible:

"And Abram ...went ... to Bethel, ... between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD... " (Gen. 13:2-4). This is to show where Abraham went when he returned from Egypt. He went to the region of Bethel. And with him was Lot, his nephew. At this time, the decision is made that they should split up because the land simply wouldn't accommodate all of their herds, along with the herds of the native inhabitants of the region. So, Abraham asks Lot what land he wants, giving him first choice. While standing there: "...Lot LIFTED UP HIS EYES, AND BEHELD ALL THE PLAIN OF JORDAN, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then LOT CHOSE him all THE PLAIN OF JORDAN,' and Lot JOURNEYED EAST.' and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and LOT DWELLED IN THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN, and PITCHED HIS TENT TOWARD SODOM" (w. 10-12).

While standing in the region of Bethel, obviously high on a hilltop, Lot looked and saw the Jordan Valley. Now this is quite a distance away, and because of the mountains, only the northern end of this valley could be seen - certainly not as far south as Sodom or Gomorrah. One author in the late 1800s checked this out for himself, and this is what he wrote: "... what can there be seen is the Northern end of the Dead Sea, the Jordan Valley, and the river running like a blue thread through the green plain. The hills of Engedi shut out completely all view of the southern end of the sea; but as I before said, the northern end, where the Jordan runs in, and about two or three miles of the sea, can be seen. I have wandered all over the Bethel hills and tested this question. " (*The Bible and Modern Discoveries*, by Henry A. Harper, a Member of the Palestine Exploration Fund Society, 1891). What this means is that the area Lot saw WAS the northern end of the area now occupied by the Dead Sea. When he travelled EAST, this is where he journeyed to. And then, it said he "dwelled in the cities of the plain", which is not a specific designation, and then that he "pitched his tent towards Sodom", or went in that direction. We later learn that he took up residence in that city.

So, the biblical account shows that the "Plain of Jordan" did indeed cover a large area since the northern region is what caught Lot's eye. Then, it describes Lot "dwelling" in the "cities of the plain" and then pitching his tent "toward Sodom". Perhaps this is describing Lot's travels, with him first staying in other cities and finally continuing on in the direction of Sodom, where we know he finally settled. We must remember that Lot had a tremendous amount of animals because the whole reason he separated from Abraham was because their combined flocks were too much for the land around Bethel. So, as Lot journeyed through the plain, he had to travel slowly, taking his flocks with him. Wherever he stopped along the way, he had to have enough pasture land for the animals. And when he finally settled in Sodom, he still had to have pasture land for his flocks. This indicates that there was pasture land near the city. The sites Ron located are all several miles apart, with plenty of land between them.

HOW MANY CITIES WERE DESTROYED?

9. Doesn't the Bible speak of two cities? Why do you say that five were destroyed?

The Bible refers to 5 cities of the plain: "Sodom ...Gomorrah...Admah...Zeboim, and ...Beta, which is Zoar" (Gen. 14:2, 8). Hosea mentions the fate of "Admah...Zeboim" (Hosea 11:8). Deuteronomy speaks of the overthrow of "Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim" (Dent. 29:23). And Jer. 50:40 says: "As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities thereof. " Also Jude 7: "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them. " Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Book 4, Chap. 8, Sect. 4: "And the country of Sodom borders on it [the Dead Sea, which he calls "Lake Asphaltis "]. It was of old a most happy land, both for the fruits it

bore and the riches of its cities, although it be now all burnt up. It is related how for the impiety of its inhabitants, it was burnt by lightning; in consequence of which there are still the remainders of that divine fire, and the traces (or shadows) of the five cities are still to be seen... "

10. Was Zoar destroyed?

When you say you have found the remains of Zoar turned to ash like Sodom, doesn't this contradict the Bible, which says that Lot and family fled from the burning Sodom to a safe refuge at Zoar?

Zoar was not destroyed at precisely the same time as Sodom and Gomorrah.

Again, we find the answer in the biblical account. *"And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for HE FEARED TO DWELL IN ZOAR: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. And the firstborn said unto the younger, our father is old, and THERE IS NOT A MAN IN THE EARTH to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father"* (Gen. 19:30-32).

For some reason, Lot became afraid to continue to stay in Zoar, so he and his daughters left. The next thing we read is that they dwelt in a cave and his two daughters state that there are no men left "in the earth" to "come in unto us after the manner of all the earth", or in short, to make them pregnant. This tells us that for some reason, shortly after leaving Zoar, they believe they are the only people left on earth. Why would they think this unless they had just witnessed the destruction of Zoar? The area of land that had been affected by the conflagration which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was extremely large, and to Lot and his daughters, it probably looked as if the entire world had been destroyed, except for little Zoar. Then, as they dwelled in Zoar and witnessed the fact that its inhabitants were just as wicked as those of Sodom, they expected it's soon destruction, which is exactly what occurred. Whether this happened the next day, or week or month, we have no way of knowing.

That Zoar was finally reduced to ashes in the same manner as the other four cities is seen in the remains of the 5 sites - all identically reduced to ash, and all 5 with balls of brimstone laid throughout the ash. There is no other way these physical remains can be explained.

The fifth site we have found is extremely small, compared to the other four, and it is in a perfect square. Is this Zoar?

That this fifth site constitutes the remains of Zoar is suggested by the fact that:

- (a) Zoar was close to Sodom (Gen. 19:20) - as are these ruins.
- (b) It is identical in condition to the other four sites.
- (c) It is the smallest of the 5 sites (compare with Gen. 19:20 - "a little one" - and in Gen. 14:2,8 it is listed last, implying its inferiority).
- (d) It was also close to the mountains (to which Lot finally fled).

Lot dwelt but a short time in Zoar. Iniquity prevailed there as in Sodom, and he feared to remain, lest the city should be destroyed. Not long after, Zoar was consumed, as God had purposed.

11. How can you say Zoar was destroyed, when it is mentioned as a place long after the destruction of the cities of the plain?

Just as Zoar is mentioned as a place name subsequent to the destruction of the cities of the plain, so is Zeboim (one of the five cities of the plain). In 1 Samuel 13:18 the name survives as a location in the time of the Philistines, and in Nehemiah 11:34 Zeboim is again mentioned as one of the habitations of the children of Benjamin after the Babylonian captivity. It was customary for names to linger in the same locality even though a city might no longer exist there.



Figure 8 Ruins of Zoar

WHY ONLY FOUND NOW?

12. How is it that they were discovered only after all this time?

Some years ago, a German visiting Palestine emerged from the desert below Masada and mentioned to one of the other visitors, "Do you know, there's the remains of a city down there!" The other man did not think much of that statement until recently, when our discovery was announced. The time had not yet come.

Viewing from a distance, one may be forgiven for mistaking the remains for some type of geological formation.

Such impressions are not uncommon when approaching the remains of other ancient sites from a distance.

One recalls that for centuries explorers travelled over the ruins of once mighty Nineveh, as though with scales over their eyes, assuming that what they were passing over was no more than a natural mound - when all the time, under their feet lay the remains of a vast city, with palaces, library, streets and walls.

Why were not Sodom and Gomorrah discovered until now?

That's an interesting question. Biblical prophecies suggest that man's rule of this planet is soon to be interrupted.

God has also interrupted history in the past. One of these key interventions was with Sodom and Gomorrah. Currently there are many doubts concerning the truth of Scripture - and this is the reason why certain biblical events are going to be VERIFIED BY PHYSICAL EVIDENCE - just when they are needed.

If the true location of these major interventions had been known all along, they would probably have been looted by now, with no evidence left.

Over 12 years, biblical archaeologist Ron Wyatt had driven by at a distance, at least 30 to 40 times -without being aware of what he saw. Then, one day, it was as if the scales fell off his eyes - and suddenly, what he had assumed to be something natural, now looked like the shapes of city walls and buildings! So he stopped and trekked over to this desolate area.

Jesus Himself cited the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as a warning to those who should be living in the latter part of history (see Luke 17:28-30).

In His love and mercy, God was (in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah) "blinding" men to the evidence right before their eyes, to provide the evidence at the right time - at the point in history just prior to the next, greatest intervention of all.

Jude (v.7) says that Sodom and Gomorrah are an "example... of eternal fire" - a fire which, when everything was consumed, went out, leaving ashes only. The fire did an eternal job, from which there was no recovery.

"For, behold, the day cometh, that SHALL BURN AS AN OVEN- and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, SHALL BE STUBBLE: and the day that cometh SHALL BURN THEM UP, saith the LORD of hosts, that it SHALL LEAVE THEM NEITHER ROOT NOR BRANCH. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And YE SHALL TREAD DOWN THE WICKED; FOR THEY SHALL BE ASHES UNDER THE SOLES OF YOUR FEET in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 4:1-3).

What the Lord is emphasizing by helping us find these remains now, is that He will destroy the wicked. It is not an empty threat.

ONLY A GEOLOGICAL FORMATION?

13. Someone told me that what you say is the remains of cities is nothing more than deposits formed when the Dead Sea had once covered the entire area?

Firstly, several labs have tested the whitish material and told us it is ash.

Secondly, the Dead Sea is composed largely of potassium chloride. Potassium is not present in the ash samples.

Thirdly, if the whole plain area between the Dead Sea and the mountains had once been underwater, then these formations would be evenly distributed over the entire area that had been covered. But they are not. They are isolated.

14. Some person told me that what you call city remains is only a geological formation formed by erosion?

Well, consider Gomorrah, the best preserved site.

Ask your friend to explain why it is that the symmetrical raised platform areas inside the city run from north to south in length, whereas the erosion from water run-off from the mountains to the west runs west to east.

No, these were not formed by erosion.

However, the ruins themselves have experienced a tremendous amount of erosion over the past 3,900 years, and on our first visit in, we didn't expect too much.

But we were in for a tremendous surprise. As we parked and followed along what looked like the northern wall, we soon saw a very interesting object setting by itself, a few hundred yards from what we believed was a wall. As we neared it, its shape became obvious. It was shaped like a sphinx. And from this sphinx, we saw that we had arrived at a place where the "wall" had an open place exactly like an entrance -probably the main entrance.

Walking down the "streets" we discovered that they truly did communicate with each other like streets. If these had only been gullies from the flash floods, they would have washed down from the mountainside in a random pattern. But there was an order to all we were seeing.

Another interesting thing was that it appeared that the structures (buildings, etc) were set quite a bit higher than the level we were walking on, and that below a certain level everything looked like heaps of white powder. Digging down, we discovered that we were walking on a level very close to the bedrock. This indicated that not only had the cities been burned, but even the ground dirt had been turned to ash right down to the bedrock. This caused the paths we were walking along to be eroded down to a much lower level than the sections that looked like structures.



Figure 9 A structure in Sodom and Gomorrah

It is possible to ride a cable-car to the top of Masada and view the remains from an aerial point of view. The road turning off the main Dead Sea road which leads to Masada cuts through the remains of the site of Gomorrah. From atop the mountain, the remains reveal features that we cannot distinguish from ground level. From here, one can see sections which look exactly like artificially-raised platform areas of other ancient cities which were temple areas.



Figure 10 Looking down from Masada

These "platform areas" show vast flat areas with ziggurat shaped masses on them, as well as large ashen "chunks" which bear the overall resemblance of the sphinx we first saw, only these are much larger. On areas where the ground level rises, the ashen structures seem to be terraced, following the lay of the land.

The walls extending around this site display one feature that is very exciting - it is "double-walled" exactly like the Canaanite city walls of other excavated sites. Where the wall has an opening in it on the northern side (which we believe was where the gate was, and therefore an entrance into the city) there is a tall structure on the western edge of this opening, exactly like a gate "tower". There is no doubt that all of these features-and these are just a few of many -are simply beyond the realm of simple coincidence.



Figure 11 Ashen remains of a Sphinx



Figure 12 Ashen remains of a Ziggurat

15. "Creation Science" ("Answers in Genesis") writes that one of your supporters sent them two samples of `ash' from the alleged site of Sodom and Gomorrah. But when they sent them to a reputable lab, they turned out to be "an evaporate deposit of gypsum-type minerals (NOT ASH); including an abundance of carbonates, which would be broken down by heat."

The writer adds that "lab testing of alleged `ash' samples definitely confirms that these are not `burnt buildings'."

So could you be wrong about your sites being ash? Here are the two analyses; they differ in composition.

	Sample 1	Sample 2
Gypsum	5	99
Sulfur	-	-
Aragonite	60	-
Calcite	3	-
Dolomite	1	-
Quartz	3	0.5
Plagioclase	1	-
K-feldspar	1	-
Unidentified clay	25	-
Halite	1	
TOTAL	100	100

Well, what DID the lab testing show?

"Creation Science" ("Answers in Genesis") says they sent their samples to Amdel Laboratories Ltd., South Australia. So on May 13, 1999, we spoke to that lab.

They told us, "Someone may give us a lump of coal, or a lump of dirt, or a lump of ash, to analyze. In our report we say, 'he sample was supplied by...' then we print out a list of ten minerals tested for, with their percentages within the sample. We report, 'This is what's in that sample as supplied by ... (whoever)'. We DO NOT write on the analysis, 'This is ash' or 'This is not ash'. We CAN tell if it's an ash sample, just by looking at it. But ash samples vary."

Note that a lab analysis does NOT define whether a sample is ash or not.

Furthermore, contrary to "Answers in Genesis" ("Creation Science")'s allegation, a lab analysis DOES NOT confirm whether remains are 'burnt buildings' or not. It does no more than list ten minerals tested for.

Now, the critic made a big fuss over the fact that a large proportion of one sample was GYPSUM... The critic's verdict: "not burnt buildings".

We can state that "Sample 2" is consistent with other ash samples. White ash at Gomorrah is calcium sulfate (gypsum) with some sodium chloride in it. The burning process is:

Limestone + sulfur + great heat = GYPSUM (calcium sulfate). (Crystalline limestone is marble. Add great heat and you have "burnt marble".) There are many other reactions as well, but that is the important one.

Note that gypsum has long been quarried for building (for example, as modern "gyp-board").

Also, the presence of sulfur balls inside burn skins (capsules) surrounded by vitrification rings lying all over the sites is clear evidence that the sites were incinerated.

Again, Ron had a number of samples tested - and they are ash.

Mary Nell recalled, "I went to the assayer's lab in Nashville, Tennessee. Firstly, I gave the man a piece of sulfur. .It tested at 98.5% sulfur. I then gave him a sample of the white material. He analyzed it.

"Lady, it's just ash!" he said.

NOW THIS IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND. ALL YOU GET BACK FROM THE LAB IS A LIST OF PERCENTAGES. One analysis covers everything. They're not going to say in the analysis, "This is ash."

Ron took samples to Galbraith Labs near Knoxville. A sulfur ball was found to be 95.72% sulfur, with traces of several other elements, all of which, he was told would contribute to an extremely high temperature fire. Once again, the material around it was ASH.

At the sites, even the ground dirt has been turned to ASH right down to the bedrock.

At Admah, Keith Patterson found evidence among the ashen remains of fired clay and charcoal.



Figure 13 Ashen remains



Figure 14 More ashen remains

NO MAN MADE ARTIFACTS FOUND?

16. What do you say to a critic's assertion that the sites have yielded no man-made artifacts?

Considering their extent the ashen sites have scarcely been probed. Yet already they have yielded some remains that indicate people once lived there, such as:

1. A statue of human form, badly decomposed but recognizable.
2. A statue (formerly bronze) of a stag with horns, which looks similar to that which the Hittites worshipped.
3. Sphinxes. A sample of the substance from one sphinx-like object was subjected to chemical analysis and stated to be burnt marble.
4. An oxidized (burned) Sodomite bronze spear-head. There were several of these.
5. In the southern section of Gomorrah , a pedestal was examined. On top of it was a crystalline material.

Flakes and pieces of this material were brought back for laboratory testing. These fragments were found

to be vitrified gold (gold salts) - a byproduct of vaporized gold. We conclude that there was possibly a statue upon the pedestal, either made of gold, or coated with gold.

6. Grave sites opposite the remains of Gomorrah.

In May, 1999, Aaron Sen reported to Jonathan:

"We visited ancient grave sites opposite Gomorrah too. You wouldn't believe it!! There are hundreds of graves that have been excavated by Scandinavian archaeologists, and they say there must have been a 'sudden disaster' in that area, as suddenly they stopped burying people there! They date it to the time of Sodom and Gomorrah, too. They put it down to an earthquake.

"For more information, call Elin Burgland on: Norway (47) 639 550 88 (change the last digit to 7 for fax) or E-mail them on mvv.teamcon@riksnett.no".

Aaron adds:

"There was one ashen structure next to one of the grave sites! I thought it may be of a pagan temple that God destroyed. But in His precision, He did not destroy the graves. Many of the graves were tiny, must have been for babies. I know about the child sacrifices they used to perform, so I wondered if they used the building for sacrifices, and then buried the children next to it, so God destroyed the place of sacrifice? "

17. What evidence is there that the humps and bumps were buildings?

A person familiar with archaeological sites will tell you that to begin with the sites are usually humps and lumps. It's only after excavations that evidences of buildings, etc., appear. In Gomorrah (the best preserved of all five sites of the cities of the plain) some of the "humps and lumps" that are joined together are more difficult to recognize unless one is familiar with ancient cities and the way they were built. The separate free standing "humps and lumps" are easier to recognize as remains of buildings (and especially when not smothered over with ash).

18. Why are the present street levels so far down below the buildings?

This is interesting. The structures (buildings, etc) appear to be set quite a bit higher than the level you walk on, and then below a certain level everything looks like heaps of white powder. Digging down, we discovered that we were wanting on a level very close to the bedrock. This indicated that not only had the cities been burned, but even the ground dirt had been turned to ash right down to the bedrock. This caused the paths we were walking along to be eroded down to a much lower level than the sections that looked like structures.

19. What has caused the layering effect?

It is evident in ALL the ashen remains. It is the result of THERMAL IONIZATION, which takes place when an object is burned at extremely high temperature fires and/or in very hot flames containing alkali metals or alkaline-earth metals (for example, sodium and calcium). The positive and negative IONS of the various substances being burned attract and repel, resulting in this layering effect.

Also the layers of ash were gas fluidized to create the swirling patterns seen, not liquid fluidized, because these layers mix rapidly in water, and water would have turned the calcium sulfate into rock hard plaster of pans.



Figure 15 Layering effect caused by ionization



Figure 16 More examples of Layering and spiraling caused by ionization

20. But stone doesn't turn to ash does it?

You insist that the stone houses in Sodom and Gomorrah turned to ash. The difficulty is that there is no chemical way a rock can be turned to ash; it doesn't make any geological sense. Nor is there any way it can be done in the laboratory. Even if you decompose a rock using strong acids or dissolve it in molten salts, it doesn't turn to ash. It is not burnable at any temperature. It is simply not chemically possible to turn a rock to ash.

Volcanoes turn billions of cubic yards of stone to ash (tufa) daily. While it may be tempting to speculate on the method by which the Creator reduced these cities to ash (2 Peter 2:6), we shall refrain from doing so. An engineer wrote to us, insisting that stone DOES turn to ash! He says, *"In our engineering work, we occasionally directed an oxy flame onto concrete (with oxy acetylene torch). In a very short time the heated area was severely burnt and turned to ASH. Sometimes there would be a thin layer of glass like crust on top. However, the localized area turned to ASH."*

As far as I can remember, similar applications of heat to stone produced similar results. With stone, AND also concrete, at times, there is likely to be a violent reaction when such heat is applied, and the material EXPLODES.

'However, there are thousands of BASALT ROCKS around North Queensland that have been heaved out of volcanoes, and they all have the very strong appearance of ASH on the outsides. I am firm convinced that the man who questioned the possibility of the Cities of the Plain being burned to ash has snot got a leg to stand on. If suitable tests were carried out with intense heat and stone, concrete and other materials, similar to the tremendous conflagration at Sodom, etc, I am sure the results would be very similar.

"Perhaps the extreme fervent heat of burning SULFUR would do things to such materials that not even oxy could do."

21. Could the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah have been caused by a volcanic eruption?

There is a distinct difference between the sites of Sodom and Gomorrah and any other sites on earth -even those destroyed by volcanic eruptions.

Firstly, they are TOTALLY turned to ash -people, included. TOTALLY.

Compare this with Pompeii, a city destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius; here you see ash covering over a city. The ash came down and smothered everything. The buildings were dug out from under that ash - but they were still stone. On the walls of some of these stone buildings you could still see murals.

But in Sodom and Gomorrah, everything was turned to ash. The ash is not covering the cities. The cities themselves are ash - buildings, artifacts, everything.

Secondly, lying through the ash are balls of pressed-powder sulfur in shells (capsules), surrounded by burn rings. We have not been able to find these anywhere else on earth. We are not aware of a scientific explanation for these.

The uniqueness of this type of sulfur ball, surrounded by burn rings embedded in ash, tells us that the event occurred exactly as the Bible says.

22. If the cities were turned to ashes (1 Pet. 2:6), how could the remains have been able to survive all these 3,900 years?

The destruction of these cities took place approximately 3,900 years ago, so it is quite amazing to find ANY remains of ashen heaps. That they were destroyed in a Divine manner is understood, but it appears that they were also preserved in a Divine manner. These are not composed of the kind of ash we commonly think of, that blows away into the wind. It is compacted ash - the material is densely-packed and crusty on the outside. But when broken open, the substance is much softer, and with continual crushing, is soon reduced to powder.

The French scientist, Lavoissier, when studying the nature of combustion (a chemical process), discovered that substances burned with sulfur (brimstone) had a remaining ash that was HEAVIER than the original, unburned substance.

Further study into combustion gets extremely complicated - much too much to get into here - but indicates that the event of the destruction of these cities was the result of a carefully controlled chemical reaction that took place VERY rapidly, yet maintained an equilibrium that didn't result in an explosion.

SULFUR BALLS

23. Isn't it true that sulfur balls have been found in other places along the Jordan Valley?

Actually, other researchers have found them more distant from, yet adjacent to the ashen remains. And the reason that these sulfur balls are found throughout the entire plain is simple- the Bible says the entire plain was included in the destruction of the cities: *"And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground"* (Gen. 19:25).

When William Albright and Melvin Kyle set out to find the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in 1924, they, too, found these balls of brimstone; however, they were looking for the sites at the southern end of the Dead Sea. '... a region on which brimstone was rained will show brimstone. Well, it does; we picked up pure sulfur, in pieces as big as the end of my thumb. It is mixed with the marl of the mountains on the west side of the sea, and now is to be found scattered along the shore of the sea even on the east side, some four or five miles distant from the ledge that contains the stratum. It has somehow scattered far and wide over this plain.' (Dr. Melvin Kyle, *Explorations at Sodom*, 1928, pp. 52-53)

Ron also have found them on the eastern side, which we can see as an extension of Gomorrah. (And reports have come in that these rounded sulfur balls have been found quite far north, which verifies our belief that this plain was quite large.)

Anyway, influenced by the common misconception that the cities were at the southern end, these men obviously were on the very sites, yet misinterpreted them as being "marl", or an earthy limestone deposit used as fertilizer on soils deficient in limestone.

24. What do you say to D. Pennington's claim that the `sulfur balls' are due to the breakdown of organic matter containing sulfur?

(Rotting vegetable or animal matter can give off a putrid smell. Much of that smell is caused by a gas, hydrogen sulfide, known as `rotten egg gas'. Under certain conditions of restriction of oxygen, such as may exist under the layers of sediment in a lake bed, hydrogen sulfide can be converted to sulfur.) It is common phenomenon in ancient lees around the world. Not caused by fire.

Nice Try. It is not disputed that sulfur can form on lake beds, around volcanoes, and wherever. But that does not explain what we have found, and continue to find, in the ruins of these cities. **PRESSED POWDER BALLS OF SULFUR INSIDE BURN CAPSULES WHICH ARE, IN TURN, SURROUNDED BY "BURN RINGS", EMBEDDED IN ASH.** You don't get those forming on lake beds!

In January 2000 samples of sulfur from Hell's Gate (New Zealand) were analyzed in the same laboratory that analyzed samples of sulfur from Gomorrah, so that a comparison could be made. In contrast to the New Zealand geo-thermal sulfur, scientists explained, the Gomorrah sulfur had at some stage been very hot, and maintained at a high temperature for some time. They could determine this due to the crystal shapes which affects the color of the sample.

25. What do you say about the claim that sulfur balls like yours are found all over the world - so your site is not unique?

"If you go to the North Island of New Zealand, there's a little area near the great volcanoes, the 'Little Desert', and there you find sulfur balls." (8)

The alleged claimant was a man by the name of Paul Hosken. Our friend Ross Patterson cross-questioned him in detail again and again, pressing him for facts. He asked him a second time to tell us specifically where he had supposedly seen "sulfur balls" in the Taupo/Rotorua (NZ) region, so we could go and get our own samples to analyze. This time his response was, "...I cannot recall." So we can only state that his claim is **UNSUBSTANTIATED!**

It's a shame he has been quoted as an authority against us, yet when pressed he cannot prove his own claim.

For purposes of argument, let's say that sulfur is found in balls in Timbuktu (even though we haven't found that to be the case). The fact is that NO ONE has been able to find any sulfur balls that are encased in capsules that have been on fire, most especially not in areas that are solid ash. The sulfur (brimstone) found in these ashen remains are completely unique in the fact that these balls of sulfur are enclosed in crystalline "capsules". Broken open, these capsules display red and black rings. In the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1985), Vol. 13, p.816, it talks about the color changes as sulfur is heated: *"The color also changes, deepening from yellow to dark red, arid, finally, to black at about 250 degrees C (482 degrees F). The variations in both color and viscosity are considered to result in changes in the molecular structure. "*

After the burning balls of sulfur had completely consumed their directed targets (the cities), the molten (liquid) sulfur on the outermost section of the burning ball began to cool. The same encyclopedia, Vol. IX, p. 660, explained why these capsules surrounding the sulfur balls were of a crystalline structure: *"Monoclinic, or prismatic, sulfur, which is obtained when liquid sulfur is cooled slowly, consists of long, needle-like crystals. "*

And this is exactly what is found all through the ashen remains - sulfur balls surrounded by crystalline capsules of slowly cooled once-burning sulfur.

On this planet, sulfur is found:

- in layers as a result of volcanic activity;
- in crystal form;
- and in balls inside capsules surrounded by "burn rings" embedded in ash.

We began to research sulfur to see if sulfur in this latter form had been found anywhere else. Richard Rives, Ron and Mary Nell Wyatt went to the Smithsonian Institute and viewed their display of sulfur in its various forms, none being rounded balls. But just to be sure, they asked to see their other specimens, and were shown their complete collection of sulfur, which consisted of over 50 specimens. Again, none were in this form.

Sulfur in such a pure form, in rounded balls, simply isn't found anywhere else on earth except in this region, as far as we have been able to ascertain. We have talked with numerous geologists and chemists without telling them why we were asking.

So far, it has been impossible to find any other instance anywhere on earth of these being found - balls of sulfur of a pressed-powder consistency, in a capsule, surrounded by "burn rings" embedded in ash. Not anywhere.

BUT EVEN IF THEY WERE FOUND ELSEWHERE, IT DOES NOT NEGATE OUR CLAIM FOR SODOM AND GOMORRAH

26. How big are the nodules of burnt sulfur in the ashen remains?

These nodules vary in size - most are small, ranging from the size of a thumbnail to that of a GOLFBALL, others are large chunks that weigh several kilograms!



Figure 17 Sulfur balls in ashen remains



Figure 18 More sulfur balls in ashen remains

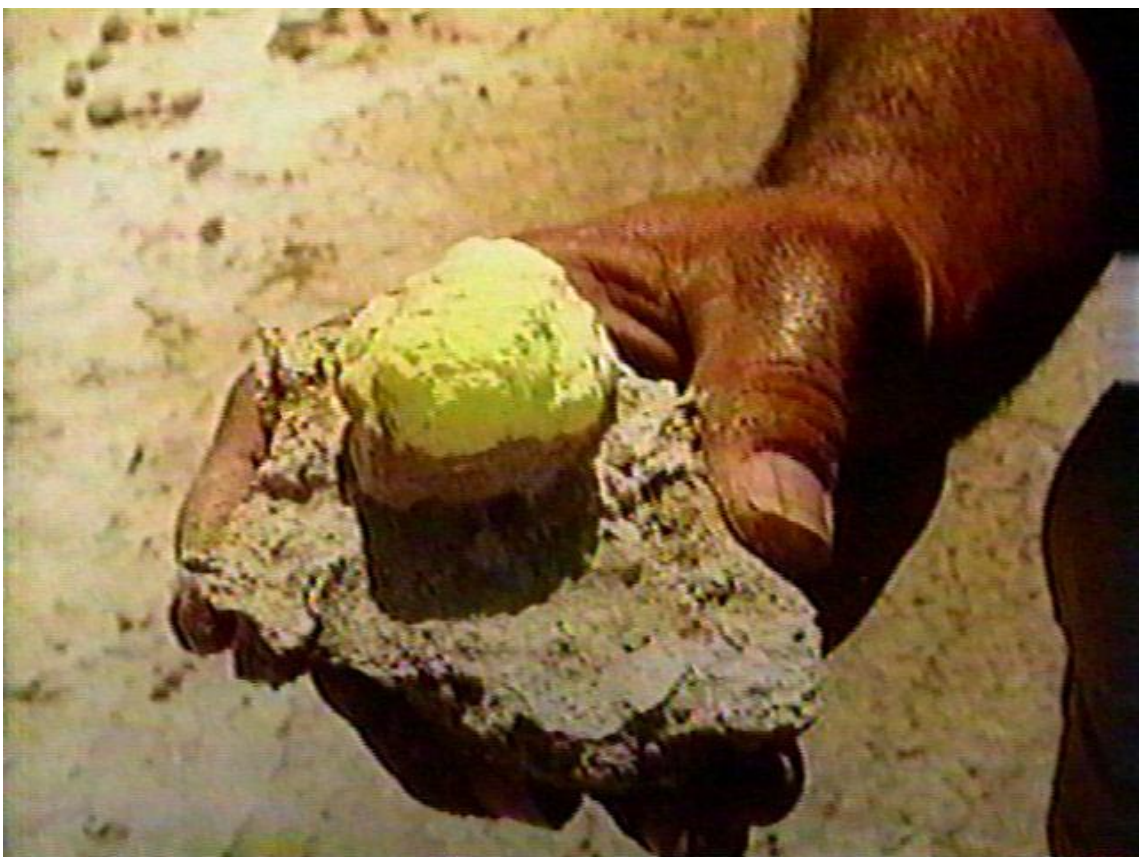


Figure 19 Example of a sulfur ball

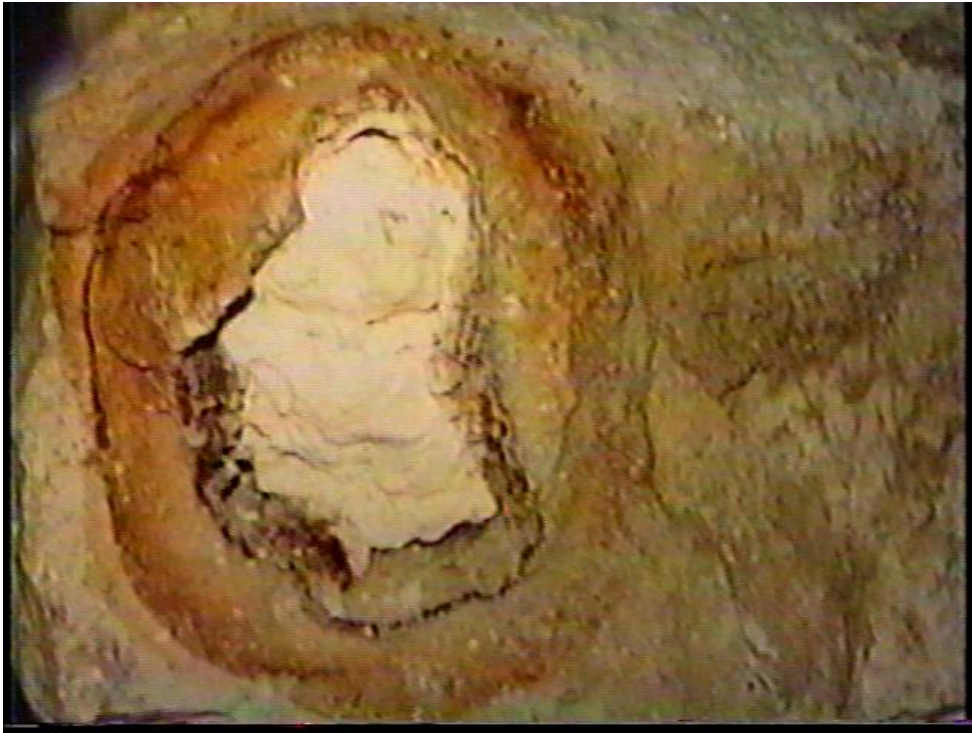


Figure 20 Sulfur ball imbedded in remains



Figure 21 Located on side of ziggurat, this brimstone in a shell is opened to reveal the unburned sulfur inside



Figure 22 Sulfur balls imbedded in rock

27. How hot would they have burned?

Several samples were taken to Galbraith Laboratories in Knoxville, Tennessee. When asked if they could conduct a B.T.U. test to determine the degree of heat this would give off, they said they couldn't, because IT WOULD DAMAGE THEIR STAINLESS STEEL TESTING CHAMBER!

28. How could sulfur with a lower boiling point melt marble which has a higher boiling point?

Marble melts at about 1,300 degrees Celsius - so the sulfur balls there could NOT have melted the marble in the building, or the rocks; some of those will melt at as little as 900 degrees, but that's still VASTLY beyond the boiling point, the melting point, of sulfur, which is only 444.6 degrees Celsius. Well? (R. Standish)

Keith Patterson ponders:

"Russell Standish thinks that because sulfur boils at 444 degrees C., that it couldn't melt metal. Does that mean that petrol which boils at 60 degrees C. couldn't be used to boil water (100 degrees)? Or butane that boils at -0.5 degrees C. would freeze things if it was to burn?

"Russell Standish misses the vital point, and that is the boiling point and combustion temperatures are not the same. We are not talking about BOILING sulfur, we are talking about BURNING sulfur. Burning is a chemical reaction which gives off more heat than merely boiling. To illustrate, take Butane. Butane is used as a fuel in cigarette lighters. It boils at -0.5 degrees Celsius, which is below freezing point. If things burned at the same

temperature which they boiled at, then how would a cigarette lighter work? Sulfur may boil at 444.6 degrees but that has nothing to do with the temperature at which it burns.

"Another point is that the brimstone from Gomorrah isn't just sulfur; it also contains magnesium, and that alters the equation. Also, when sulfur is burned on metal, there are chemical reactions that take place, so it's not merely a matter of temperature, but also reactions between the sulfur and the steel."

Ross Patterson adds an interesting point here. Perhaps it sheds some light on how Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed?

"As we know," says Ross, "the `eternal fire' which will come upon the lost, eventually, is the same as that which destroyed the cities of the plain (see 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7). Now Psalm 11:6, in describing the future destruction of the wicked, says: *`Upon the wicked he shall rain SNARES, FIRE and BRIMSTONE, and a HORRIBLE TEMPEST: this shall be the portion of their cup* [cup meaning judgment].'

"It is easy enough to understand what is meant by the fire, the brimstone and a `horrible tempest', but what does it mean by `SNARES'?"

"The marginal reading for that word `snares' is `QUICK BURNING COALS'; this word (No. 6341 in *Strong's Concordance*) has two basic meanings. Firstly, it can mean a bird trap. The second meaning has to do with thin `METAL SHEETS' (see Ex. 39:3; Num. 16:38). (Those definitions are taken from Brown, Driver and Briggs, which is the standard reference work for Hebrew word meanings.)

"Here's a suggestion: Could the `quick burning coals' be some kind of metal which burns rapidly, like magnesium or sodium? Both magnesium and sodium show up in the analysis of the ash at Gomorrah. Have you noticed that when the brimstone from Gomorrah is burned, it produces a whitish flame, which my guess is the magnesium burning, which constitutes 0.447%, of the sample. It doesn't take much metal to add color to a flame. If God rained down pieces of burning magnesium or sodium metal (the `hot burning coals', perhaps), then that would add a lot of heat to the whole reaction, would make sense of Psalm 11:6, and would explain the presence of these elements in the analysis."

29. Wouldn't the sulfur be so hot it would melt away leaving no sulfur balls?

I have no doubt that God melted those stone and marble buildings, but if He did, then any sulfur in the area would have been so hot it would have just evaporated away, and therefore I say the fact that there IS sulfur balls is evidence AGAINST the fact, because it would require SO MUCH heat that the sulfur would evaporate.

I'd be looking for a place that had NO sulfur balls, if I wanted to find the real Sodom and Gomorrah - the very fact that there are sulfur balls there is a testimony that it IS NOT Sodom and Gomorrah. If you understand the chemistry of earthly sulfur, you could NOT expect there to be any sulfur balls there at all. (Russell Standish) (8)

Jim Pinkoski responds:

Russell speaks of "earthly" brimstone, or sulfur.

Perhaps the answer is in explaining "supernatural" sulfur. After all, this whole event was the SUPERNATURAL DESTRUCTION of those evil cities by God. Pompeii was destroyed by "normal" means, a volcanic eruption, but Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God's "hands on" involvement!

The Bible verse says, *"The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven"* - which, if you look closely at it, CONTRADICTS what Russell says about sulfur!

Russell tells us that no sulfur balls should be left there at the site, because of their "boiling point," and that this fire that fell upon the cities was hot enough to melt the marble - and he says that sulfur CANNOT melt marble! But look at what he is doing - he is contradicting Scripture! Look at the wording of the Bible verse! It says that the sulfur came from God "out of heaven," which means that it had to be falling through the atmosphere of the planet, right?

Now, what happens when anything tries to enter the atmosphere of our planet and fall all the way down to the earth? Think of meteorites. Think of the space shuttle - they encounter TREMENDOUS HEAT AND FRICTION, and that heat and friction would undoubtedly be hot enough to BURN UP all the sulfur falling through the atmosphere, which "vaporizes" at 444.6 degrees, right?

Therefore, Russell Standish is saying that the Bible is a LIE when it tells us that God rained down the brimstone UPON THE CITIES. In his version the brimstone would BURN AWAY BEFORE THE BRIMSTONE HIT THE CITIES! By Russell's interpretation of the "earthly science" of brimstone, the sulfur NEVER would have reached the cities. It would have vaporized while coming down through the atmosphere of our planet. Poof, GONE!

This leaves us with having to comprehend how God might be able to affect and alter the "temperatures" of His various elements - has God ever "altered" the temperatures which some things burn at? The answer is YES!

The Bible tells us that the sun will be returned to its original condition, in the New Earth - 7 TIMES MORE INTENSE than it is now - God can VARY the temperature of things that "burn"!

Obviously, God controls the elements. And in the destruction of the cities of the plain, GOD COULD HAVE RAISED THE TEMPERATURE OF THE BURNING SULFUR - (how about 7 times hotter?) -HOT ENOUGH TO BURN THE STONE AND MARBLE, ETC.!

Ah, but how then might some of the sulfur balls survived this event?

Here's how: After the main downpour of "fire and brimstone," after everything was burned up and decimated in this fire storm, after the main barrage destroyed everything, GOD LOWERED THE HEAT -and a small remainder of sulfur balls could have fallen upon the city, embedded themselves into the soft ashen-like areas, then been cut off totally from the oxygen and then they stopped burning - and have been preserved so that we would be able to see them today.

In my opinion God is fully capable of supernaturally dealing with the sulfur that fell on the cities of the plain, and He could have prevented the sulfur from being "boiled away" or vaporized by the heat. Remember, the Bible most definitely says that "fire AND brimstone" fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah - not just "fire"! In 15th Kings 18:38 we read that ONLY "fire" fell upon Elijah's altar and consumed the stones and everything - but in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, God used BOTH fire and brimstone. And in Russell's scenario, using his "earthly scientific knowledge" of the boiling point of sulfur, there is NO WAY burning sulfur fell upon the cities of the plain.

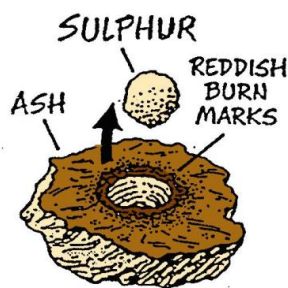
ALSO: Revelation 19:20, 20:10, and 21:8 tells us that God will use both fire and brimstone in the Lake of Fire to destroy the wicked - but remember, the people in the lake all burn for DIFFERENT DURATIONS, therefore God again can and will affect the way that sulfur burns things! God is the MAIN INGREDIENT in this volatile mixture, not the sulfur! HA!

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Aaron Sen adds:

Russell Standish is letting himself down at times I fear. I was just thinking about his theory of evaporation and if you put a lid tightly on a pot of boiling water, it will continue boiling until all the water dries up. What happens however, if you get it boiling and then later turn off the heat, then some water is still in the pot. If the fire burned itself out coz it ran out of combustible material or if God "turned down the heat" then we would be left with those sulfur balls that were embedded in the buildings.

Here is something else Mr. Standish has missed. Doesn't Deuteronomy 29:23 say that Sodom/Gomorrah DOES still have brimstone present, even after the destruction? It surely does imply remains of sulfur and salt and evidence of fire ash) and if you read further to verse 29 it says that *"the secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."* How apt for this problem - the METHOD is one of the secret things but the sulfur balls that we have all seen are those things which are revealed and they belong to us (a gift from God) to prove the Bible's authenticity and as an example to motivate obedience.



We do not know where in the atmosphere God originated the fire and brimstone. It did not have to originate in outer space and travel through the atmosphere, but could well have originated somewhere in planet earth's environs, that is a few miles up.

A first year chemistry student knows that parts of a flame have different temperatures, and that not all material that is combustible has to be consumed. An example of this is found in the internal combustion engine... not all the gas, liquid or vapor, is consumed, which produces "headaches" for the Environmental Protection Agency (no pun intended). (So Mr. Standish's claim that no sulfur should be at the sites today is not valid.)

It might be argued that at such high temperatures all sulfur would have evaporated, so none should be left. On the other hand, if sulfur balls are found at the sites of Sodom and Gomorrah, how is that possible? The solution is SIMPLE! Those remaining sulfur balls fell into the soft material AFTER the supernatural "fire storm" had burned up the cities!

Indeed the FIRE was supernatural and it was the FIRE that actually did the burning of the elements in the cities, and the sulfur is the "fingerprint" that God chose to leave behind in the area to show that it was the area that He destroyed with "fire and brimstone".

We must be wary when people state that the Lord has to accomplish such and such according to our understanding. 1 Tim.6:20 - *"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."* The Standish criticism of the Sodom and Gomorrah

site is prime evidence that he is coming from a prejudiced position: he refuses to go to the sites, yet he refutes everything the witnesses tell him.

30. Could your "sulfur balls" be the result of sulfur-reducing bacteria? -- which use SO_4 as an electron acceptor such as O_2 is used when it is available?

Keith Patterson responds:

The crystals in our Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur, (though small, are bigger than the bacteria would be. furthermore, bacteria cannot make the element sulfur; they can only concentrate what is already there. There is an enormous quantity of sulfur at the Dead Sea sites.

Bacteria in water (or air) would have access to lots of O_2 , so would not use SO_4 when O_2 is available. The Dead Sea salt is potassium chloride, but there is no significant quantity of potassium in our sulfur ball samples. The Dead Sea level could not have been up as high as Sodom and Gomorrah, at least not since it became salty. So how can all that bacteria live in such a dry environment?

31. Have you had any laboratory tests done on the sulfur balls?

A test performed on a sample by Ross Patterson in New Zealand was taken to Spectrachem Analytical Ltd of Wellington. The test by x-ray fluorescence analysis was performed on October 25, 1994, and showed that the specimen was 98.4 per cent sulfur. (See next page.)

Other tests have been conducted in the U.S.A. and in Britain.



Figure 23 Laboratory tests on sulfur balls

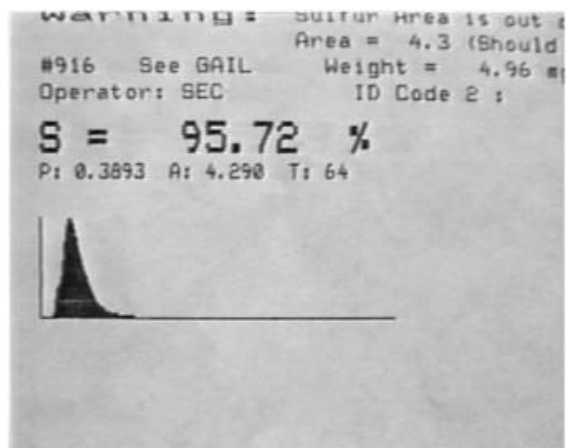


Figure 24 A sulfur ball disassembled

SPECTRACHEM ANALYTICAL LIMITED X-RAY FLUORESCENCE ANALYSIS UNIT

CLIENT : ROSS PATERSON

PROJECT : SA0560

SAMPLE : BRIMSTONE

COMMENTS : ELEMENTS H-Be,B,C,N AND F NOT DETERMINED
SULPHUR OPTIMISED

Sample: \SRS\QAN\580#1

Semi Quantitative Program: SQ34

Effective area factor: 1

SPECTRACHEM ANALYTICAL

SRS 303-AS

*** Semi Quantitative Analysis of undiluted materials ***

Sample: \$ssq Measured on 25-Oct-1994 15:19:12

H-Be	B	C	N	O	F	Na	Mg	Al	
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.150	0.220	0.032	
Si	P	S	Cl	K	Ca	Sc	Ti	V	
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
0.127	0.000	98.400	0.311	0.025	0.626	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn	Ga	Ge	
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
0.000	0.000	0.021	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
As	Se	Br	Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Mo	
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.015	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	
Rh	Ag	Cd	In	Sn	Sb	Te	I	Cs	
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Ba	La	Ce	Nd	Sm	Gd	DY	Hf	Ta	
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
W	Pt	Au	Hg	Tl	Pb	Bi	Th	U	
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Total									
%									
99.9									



Key to elements on 'SEMIQUANT' printout

H Hydrogen	Be Beryllium	B Boron	C Carbon	N Nitrogen	O Oxygen	F Fluorine	Na Sodium
Mg Magnesium	Al Aluminium	Si Silicon	P Phosphorus	S Sulphur	Cl Chlorine	K Potassium	Ca Calcium
Sc Scandium	Ti Titanium	V Vanadium	Cr Chromium	Mn Manganese	Fe Iron	Co Cobalt	Ni Nickel
Cu Copper	Zn Zinc	Ga Gallium	Ge Germanium	As Arsenic	Se Selenium	Br Bromine	Rb Rubidium
Sr Strontium	Y Yttrium	Zr Zirconium	Nb Niobium	Mo Molybdenum	Rh Rhodium	Ag Silver	Cd Cadmium
In Indium	Sn Tin	Sb Antimony	Te Tellurium	I Iodine	Cs Caesium	Ba Barium	La Lanthanum
Ce Cerium	Nd Neodymium	Sm Samarium	Gd Gadolinium	Dy Dysprosium	Hf Hafnium	Ta Tantalum	W Tungsten
Pt Platinum	Au Gold	Hg Mercury	Tl Thallium	Pb Lead	Bi Bismuth	Th Thorium	U Uranium

Spectra Chem Analytical Ltd 182 Eastern Hutt Road, Taia; PO Box 38-680, Wellington Mail Centre. Tel. (04) 577-0240 Fax (04) 569-6605

Figure 25 X-ray fluorescence analysis of brimstone

"DOESN'T MATTER"?

32. Surely it doesn't matter whether these sites are genuine or not?

Russell Standish has stated, "When it comes down to whether or not that is Sodom and Gomorrah, all I can say is that it doesn't matter... But I'm sure God's not going to hold you and me responsible for not knowing' the EXACT site of Sodom and Gomorrah." What do you say to that?

Aaron Sen responds:

He is really sidestepping the issue of responsibility for his slander [of Ron and Jonathan] by saying that God will not hold us responsible if we don't know where Sodom and Gomorrah are.

That is a mockery, because if this is meant to be used to verify the Bible and it is given by God in these last days, then it is our responsibility to at least not damn the evidence out of hand, like he is doing, even if he has a hard time accepting it.

LOT'S WIFE

33. Has the Lot's wife "pillar of salt" been found?

Lot and his family fled from Sodom to the small city of Zoar, just a few miles away.

In between the two places was a segment of Mount Sodom and this fits the picture from the Genesis account perfectly.

When Lot's wife tarried long enough to look back, she was turned into a pillar of salt, which indicated that there was another process which also took place at that time. This process, whatever it was, converted a particular area into salt, and it appeared that Lot's wife got caught up in that.

When tourist buses go down into the Sodom area, a guide may point out one of the numerous salt pillars and say, "That's Lot's wife." The truth is, no one knows whether the pillar of Lot's wife has even survived let alone which one it would be. You should take such claims with a grain of salt!



Figure 26 Supposed Lot's wife remains



Jebel Usdum

Mt. Sodom

(210 m (700 ft))

A mountain of

Halite-Halite is the mineral form of sodium chloride, NaCl, commonly known as rock salt. Halite is the mineral form of sodium chloride, NaCl, commonly known as rock salt.

Figure 27 Mt. Sodom a mountain of salt

ISRAELI KNOWLEDGE

34. Do any Israelis know of this discovery?

Some local tour companies now take visitors to the site of Gomorrah. Tourists are reportedly excited to see the remains and to pick up sulfur balls.

ASSORTED PICTURES OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH

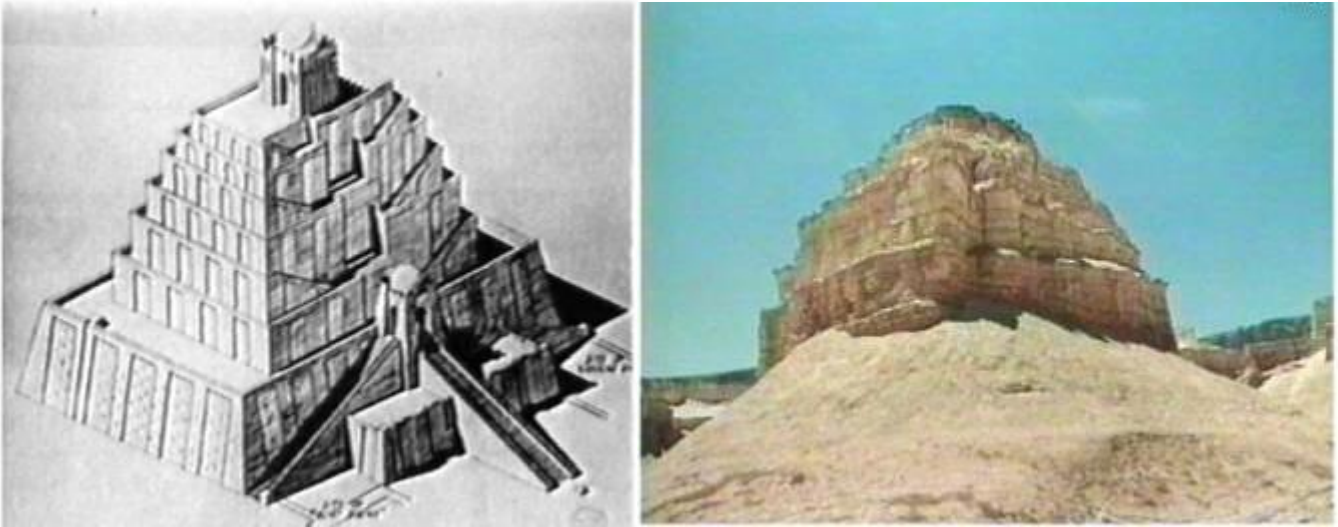


Figure 28 Ziggurat before and after



Figure 29 Building before and after



Figure 30 Fortress, before and after

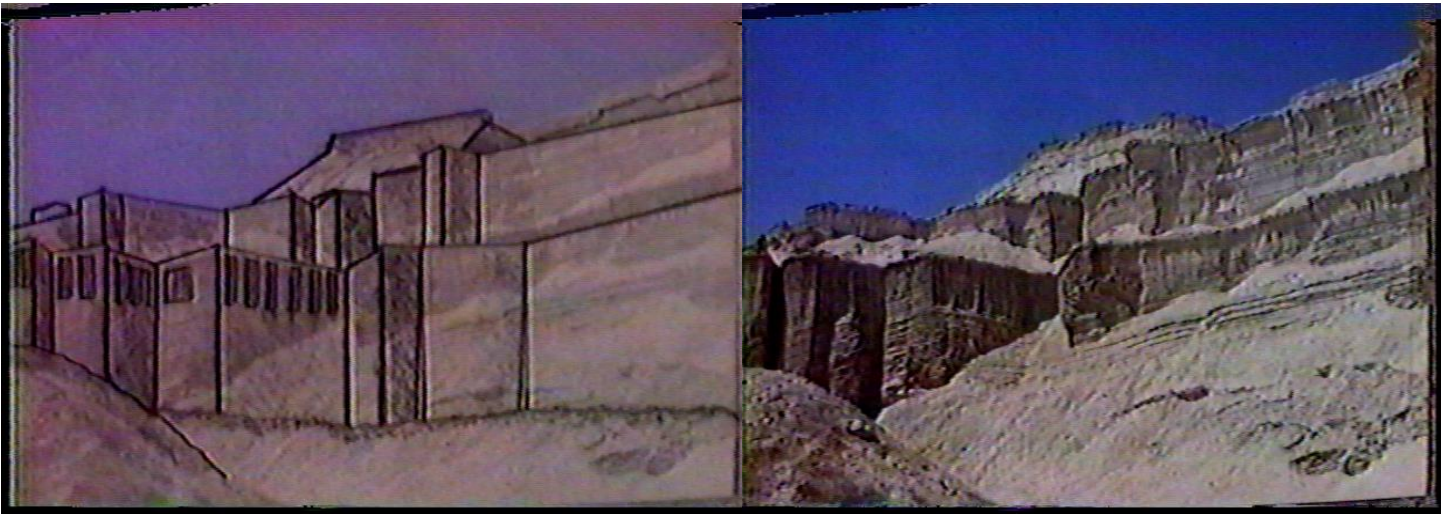


Figure 31 Building before and after



Figure 32 Ziggurat





Figure 33 Another view of Ziggurat



Figure 34 A view down a street



Figure 35 Another view down a street



Figure 36 Walking down a street



Figure 37 Another street between buildings



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CONTACT INFORMATION

**For further information about the Exodus and Red Sea Crossing Site
and other Biblical Discoveries, please contact**

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SECTION LISTING

SECTION B: HAS NOAH'S ARK BEEN FOUND?

SECTION C: THE LOST CITIES OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH

SECTION D: THE EXODUS AND RED SEA CROSSING SITE

SECTION E: THE REAL MOUNT SINAI

SECTION F: ARK OF THE COVENANT