

Jeremiah 50:40

As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah And their neighbors," says the LORD, "So no one shall reside there, Nor son of man dwell in it.

It seem every day we hear on the news about shootings, stabbings, beatings, robberies, rape, stealing, etc. and I don't know about you, but I get tired of hearing about it all the time. Unfortunately, that is what the world has become.

But, I remember growing up as a kid in the 60's and 70's where we would go outside and play with our friends, and our parents were not worried about us, nor did we have to check in with them letting them know where we were. If I remember right, I think the one main rule was, when the street lights go on, that means you need to be back home. Yet our parents did not worry and neither did we, because, for the most part (other than bullies) we felt safe being outside with our friends.

But not today, even as grown up we don't even feel safe going out to the store or just to get gas for our car, because the world has become so corrupt. When I read today's verse, I had to stop and ponder these things, and what the verse is saying. Read it again:

† *“As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah And their neighbors," says the LORD”*

I think we all know the story in Genesis of how God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, but we don't tend to think that it wasn't just those two towns, but also *“their neighbors”*, or as we would think now a days, the surrounding neighborhoods or even cities.

If we look out of our windows of our homes, we see the houses around us, or the block of houses that we live in. But if we go out in our cars or even take a walk, we see surrounding blocks of houses as well.

Maybe you live on a fairly safe block or neighborhood, compared to other neighborhoods in your town, but still we can see the corruption of the other town creeping in.

I think of the neighborhood we live in and the surrounding ones. As we have heard that there are those who are breaking into mail boxes in the surrounding neighborhoods (Think apartment style mail boxes where there are many mail boxes in one location for the neighborhood to go to).

Since this has been happening in the surrounding neighborhoods, they have installed a light right over our group of mail boxes, to help prevent them from being broken into. I know that sounds subtle compared to other things going on, but it's just an example of how one neighborhood affects the surrounding neighborhoods.

But here is a thought, what if the godly men and women from the surrounding neighborhoods went to Sodom and Gomorrah and shared God with them? Would things have been different? Would Sodom and Gomorrah have repented?

Jesus said, ***“And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.”*** Matthew 11:23

Our surrounding neighborhoods are becoming more and more corrupt, and we are told to go and share Jesus with our neighbors, as well as throughout the world. But if we sit in the comfort, and safety of our own homes and do nothing, should we be surprised that our neighborhoods, towns, cities, state and country are falling apart?

“*So do I have to go door knocking in my neighborhood?*” you may be thinking. No, I don’t think so, unless you feel compelled to by the Lord. But have we ever prayed for our neighbors, or do we pray for them daily? Do our neighbors even know that we are Christians?

† **Luke 10:29 & 37** *But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”*

God may want to do wonderful things in our neighborhoods, and He probably will, and it may all start with simply including our neighbors in our daily prayer life.

† **Ezekiel 18:21-22 (NLT2)** *But if wicked people turn away from all their sins and begin to obey my decrees and do what is just and right, they will surely live and not die. All their past sins will be forgotten, and they will live because of the righteous things they have done.*

† **Proverbs 3:29** *Do not devise evil against your neighbor, For he dwells by you for safety's sake.*

† **Zechariah 3:10 (NLT2)** *“And on that day, says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, each of you will invite your neighbor to sit with you peacefully under your own grapevine and fig tree.”*