

Genesis - Lesson 18

Genesis 18

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Memory verses for this week: *Job 23:9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: Job 23:10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*

Introduction: We continue our study on the book of Genesis this week as the Lord visits Abraham and he becomes an intercessor.

I. The Lord Visits Abraham

Gen 18:1 *And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;*

Gen 18:2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

The Lord appeared unto Abraham it says in verse 1. At this time, he was in the plains of Mamre in Hebron.

Gen 13:18 Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

There also was a man by the name of Mamre also.

Gen 14:24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

Mamre means "fatness." This encounter with God happened during the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and saw three men appear. Actually one of them was the Lord God and the other two were angels.

Gen 19:1 *And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;*

The Lord Jesus Christ appeared in bodily form a number of times in the Old Testament. These are called theophanies. Abraham recognized that it was the Lord, and bowed himself in reverence. When we come to the services of the church, we should remember why we are here and always come with an attitude of humility and a

willingness to worship God.

II. Abraham The Host

Gen 18:3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

Gen 18:4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

Gen 18:5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

Gen 18:6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

Gen 18:7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

Gen 18:8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

John Gill made this comment about the instructions Abraham gave to Sarah in verse 6.

knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth; after the fine flour was made dough and kneaded, it was made into round cakes, and these were put upon an hearth made hot, and then covered with hot embers, by which means they were soon baked and fit to eat; this was done "upon hot stones" (n); and a traveller (o) into those parts some years ago reports, that, passing through the deserts of Arabia, when they chose to eat new bread, instead of, or for want of biscuits, they made a paste of flour and water, and wrought it into broad cakes about the thickness of a finger, and put them in a hot place on the ground, heated on purpose by fire, and covered them with ashes and coals, and turned them several times until they were enough, and that these cakes were savoury and good to eat: some of the Arabians, he says: have in their tents stones or copper plates, made on purpose to bake them, and gives (p) an instance of a woman they met with in a country lying between Mesopotamia and Media, making such cakes for them in the same manner.

Abraham showed wisdom in recognizing God and addresses him as "My Lord" . "Lord" is here the Hebrew "Adonai" and always means the Lord God. (The vowel points are different when it is lord, referring to a man.) The Massoretic Hebrew text and other texts clearly show it was God. However, some modern interpreters emend it to read "my lord," because of their unbelief. These include the American Standard Version, NASV, The Living Bible, Revised Standard Version, and Amplified version of the bible. We need to stick to the King James Version which most closely gives us the original in the English language. God promised that his word would endure forever, and in our times, the KJV has been the true bible that you can rely on.

Isa 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Psa 119:89 LAMED. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Psa 119:90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

Notice that "Lord" in verse 1 is spelled with capital letters which indicates that the Hebrew word is "Jehovah."

Keith Brooks once said: "The way to know the divine purpose about the world is not to be mixed up with its schemes and speculations, but walking in communion with Christ."

Abraham pleads for the Lord to remain. How important it is to recognize and treasure the presence of the Lord. Hospitality is extended and offered to all three. When we have the opportunity to do good for others, even if strangers, we should be quick to do it.

Heb 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

Heb 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Remember that the Holy Spirit is our Holy Guest. He not only visits us, but takes abode inside the soul of every believer. The food was prepared for the visitors which was typical hospitality for those days. In verse 8, the Lord consents to eat with Abraham. This is without precedent in the Old Testament.

Rev 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Rev 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Rev 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

III. The Lord Repeats His Promise Of A Son

Gen 18:9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

Gen 18:10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

Gen 18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased

to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

Gen 18:12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

Gen 18:13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

Gen 18:14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

Gen 18:15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

The promise to Abraham is again repeated. As I mentioned last week, when God makes a promise, you can absolutely count on it. The reason we know that is because God can not lie.

Heb 6:16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

Heb 6:17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

Heb 6:18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Heb 6:19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

Heb 6:20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Although nothing is impossible with God, Sarah laughed in unbelief. She knew she was old and Abraham was old, and from the sheer physical side of things, this was not going to happen. She was past the age of child bearing. "Waxed old" literally means worn out. But when God says a thing will come to pass, be sure that it will. Every promise God ever made in the bible has come to pass except for the few that are still pending. But if God said it, they too will come to pass at the appointed time. Isaac was to be born at a set time, and it was not yet the time. Verse 14 asks a question: "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?"

***Psa 115:1** Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.*

Psa 115:2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?

Psa 115:3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

Isa 43:13 Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

Mat 19:26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible;

but with God all things are possible.

When caught in her doubts, Sarah shows fearful denial. in verse 15.

Matthew Henry made these comments about Sarah in his commentary.

The promise is then renewed and ratified, that she should have a son (Gen 18:10): “*I will certainly return unto thee, and visit thee next time with the performance, as now I do with the promise.*” God will return to those that bid him welcome, that entertain his visits: “*I will return thy kindness, Sarah thy wife shall have a son;*” it is repeated again, Gen 18:14. Thus the promises of the Messiah were often repeated in the Old Testament, for the strengthening of the faith of God's people. We are slow of heart to believe, and therefore have need of line upon line to the same purport. This is that word of promise which the apostle quotes (Rom 9:9) as that by the virtue of which Isaac was born. Note, 1. The same blessings which others have from common providence believers have from the promise, which makes them very sweet and very sure. 2. The spiritual seed of Abraham owe their life, and joy, and hope, and all, to the promise. They are born by the word of God, 1Pe 1:23.

Sarah thinks this too good news to be true, and therefore cannot as yet find in her heart to believe it: *Sarah laughed within herself, Gen 18:12*. It was not a pleasing laughter of faith, like Abraham's (Gen 17:17), but it was a laughter of doubting and mistrust. Note, The same thing may be done from very different principles, of which God only, who knows the heart, can judge. The great objection which Sarah could not get over was her age: “*I am waxed old, and past childbearing in the course of nature, especially having been hitherto barren, and (which magnifies the difficulty) my lord is old also.*”

IV. The Lord Vexed with Sodom

Gen 18:16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

Gen 18:17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

God gives a revelation to Abraham. The men arose and looked towards Sodom. God declares many wonderful things to his children, and here God shows His secrets to his servant Abraham.

God honors those that by faith are His servants.

Rev 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Rev 1:2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

God is faithful to those who obey His voice and seek His face.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

He honors those who fear Him.

Psa 25:14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Gen 18:18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

Gen 18:19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

God repeats that there is going to be a great future for Abraham and his descendants. God knew Abraham trusted him, and he would raise up his household to follow the ways of the Lord. Through the family of Abraham, all of the earth has truly been blessed.

The father in the family was to be the teacher.

Deu 6:1 Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:

Deu 6:2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

Deu 6:3 *Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.*

Deu 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

Deu 6:5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Deu 6:6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

Deu 6:7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Eph 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

And after they were taught, the children are commanded to follow.

Eph 6:1 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.*

Pro 22:6 *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Gen 18:20 *And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;*

Gen 18:21 *I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.*

Gen 18:22 *And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.*

God reveals His plans to Abraham. The two angels depart, but Abraham waits before the Lord.

V. Abraham's Intercession For Sodom

Gen 18:23 *And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?*

Gen 18:24 *Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?*

Gen 18:25 *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

Abraham poses a significant question. "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

Exo 11:7 *But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.*

Abraham shows his love for his kin as well as God honoring them also. This question about whether there be a few righteous or not is relevant now, in view of the imminent coming of Christ. When Christ returns, will he find faith still here on earth? The answer is yes, there will always be a true church and some faithful to the very end.

In verse 25, Abraham poses a second significant question. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Absolutely He will. Sodom could not hide behind this question because they were wicked and very sinful. Lot was different and like us, he was under the blood. He was saved, but living there in the sin filled city vexed his soul every day.

2Pe 2:4 *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;*

2Pe 2:5 *And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher*

of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;
2Pe 2:6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;
2Pe 2:7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:
2Pe 2:8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)
2Pe 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Gen 18:26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.
Gen 18:27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:
Gen 18:28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.
Gen 18:29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.
Gen 18:30 And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.
Gen 18:31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.
Gen 18:32 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.
Gen 18:33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

The presence of the righteous in a community does hold back Divine judgment. The fact that judgment has not fallen on America already is probably due to the Christians that still stand on the truth and trust God. Many missionaries are sent out of churches in America, and God honors those that do His bidding according to the Word of God. Does verse 32 reveal Abraham's low estimate of Lot's spiritual power? Are we soul-winners? Do we try and reach the lost during the week. If Lot was trying, there were not many that turned to the Lord during this time. God's gracious long-suffering is shown in verses 26 - 32 "I will spare," he promises and says "I will not destroy" if just a few righteous are present in the city. Today, look how God is long-suffering in sparing our wicked world. Not only that, but He is long-suffering in dealing with His children. If we got what we deserved, we'd all go to Hell. Thank God for his faithfulness to us and for the fact that Christ went and paid our sin debt on Calvary.

Another good quote from Keith Brooks says: "The closer the believer walks with God, the more he will know of God's mind about everything. The secrets of the Lord are with those who fear Him."

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How many men appeared to Abraham as he sat in his tent door in Mamre?

3 men (one was the Lord)

2. What does Mamre mean?

fatness

3. Who were these three men that appeared to Abraham?

Two were Angels, one was the Lord.

4. What does it indicate when "Lord" is spelled in capitals?

It refers to "Jehovah" the great and almighty God.

5. How did Sarah display her unbelief?

She laughed when the Lord said she and Abraham would have a child at their advanced age.

6. How did Abraham intercede for Sodom?

He asked God to spare the city if just a few righteous lived there.

7. Who was Abraham's kinsman who lived in Sodom?

Lot

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.