

Day 17 - TUESDAY: November 8th

Genesis 18

Genesis 18:1-33 NKJV

Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said." So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes." And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate. Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent." And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will

return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!" Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know." Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?" So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it." And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?" So He said, "I will not do it for

the sake of forty." Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty." Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten." So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

Daily Deep Dive:

We will start with a couple sections from the UCG Reading Program today:

“While Abraham sat in the shade of his tent, he saw three men approaching. Subsequent events show them to be the preincarnate Christ and two angels. It was the custom in those days that one had an obligation to treat well any visitor who happened upon one’s camp. Indeed, this custom prevails to this day among the nomadic Bedouin of the Middle East and was much in evidence in the early decades of the 20th century. To neglect to welcome and provide for a visitor was esteemed a great insult and a mark of a man of worthless character. So when Abraham, a 99-year old man, saw the men, “he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground” (verse 2).

In the opinion of one source: “The writer of Hebrews used this account to encourage hospitality to strangers, ‘for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels’ (Hebrew 13:2). Abraham’s words *My Lord* suggest that he suspected the identity of the visitors, but perhaps

he was not sure until later of the full significance of the event” (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on Genesis 18:2–3).

In fulfilling his social duty, though he may have been going above and beyond if he recognized his guests, it is, in any case, interesting to note what Abraham said as compared to what he actually provided. He said: “Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will bring [you] a morsel of bread” (verses 4–5). But notice what Abraham actually told Sarah to prepare: not just a little water and a morsel of bread but three measures of fine meal kneaded into dough and baked into cakes, a dressed young calf, butter and milk. That was a very sizable quantity of food—indeed, a veritable feast! From this the rabbis derive a simple lesson: promise little but deliver much.” [END]

Verse 14 – Another great line of the Bible and one we must remember often: “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” The answer is obviously “no”, but we often put limits on what God can do in our mind, even if it’s unintentionally.

Verse 20 – This verse states “their sin is very grave.” What was Sodom and Gomorrah’s sin? There were many. Before we focus on some of their sexual sins, notice what Ezekiel records in Ezekiel 16:49–50: “Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw *fit*.”

God lists pride, having too much time on their hands and in their abundance, not helping those who were in need. He continues that they were haughty (slightly different from pride) and they committed abominations.

I think we would all be wise to think through this list and examine where pride, haughtiness, idleness and where we have the capacity to help others more than we take.

Jewish historian Josephus records this about Sodom (Antiquities Jews, Book 1, Chapter 11):

“ABOUT this time the Sodomites grew proud, on account of their riches and great wealth; they became unjust towards men, and impious towards God, insomuch that they did not call to mind the advantages they received from him: they hated strangers, and abused themselves with Sodomitical practices. God was therefore much displeased at them, and determined to punish them for their pride, and to overthrow their city, and to lay waste their country, until there should neither plant nor fruit grow out of it” [END]

In the book of Luke it compares the events of the last days of Sodom to how it will be right before the return of Jesus Christ.

Luk 17:28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;

Luk 17:29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all.

Luk 17:30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

We should not delay in making any of the necessary changes in our lives because we might be tempted to think we have plenty of time still before the return of Jesus Christ.

What about Sodom and Gomorrah's sexual sins:

I will paste in a section from the "Book of Jasher". Disclaimer: This book is not a part of Biblical cannon and parts of the book contradict some facts of the Bible. However, it does seem to contain some accurate traditions that were passed down over time and I believe in this particular case to bring to light some information about Sodom and Gomorrah.

Book of Jasher:

11 In those days all the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of the whole five cities, were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord and they provoked the Lord with their abominations, ...and their wickedness and crimes were in those days great before the Lord

12 And they had in their land a very extensive valley, about half a day's walk, and in it there were fountains of water and a great deal of herbage surrounding the water.

13 And all the people of Sodom and Gomorrah went there four times in the year [Sun worship – summer & winter solstice, and the spring and autumn equinox], with their women and children and all belonging to them, and they rejoiced there with timbrels and dances.

14 And in the time of rejoicing they would all rise and lay hold of their neighbor's women, and some, the virgin daughters of their neighbors, and they enjoyed them, and each man saw his woman and daughter in the hands of his neighbor and did not say a word. " [END]

Due to all these sins, God chose to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.

This chapter ends with Abraham interceding for Sodom in verses 22 to 33. Here's what the UCG reading program says about these verses:

“The account of Abraham reasoning with God over the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah reveals much about both God and Abraham. As mentioned before, the phrase "come down" often indicates the serious nature of a personal intervention by God, usually in judgment. That God Himself would leave heaven and personally come to make an inspection shows His diligence in administering justice, as well as His close involvement with the affairs of man. And the fact that He was ready to repeal the sentence if He found only 10 righteous inhabitants shows His great mercy. Furthermore, that God would reveal His intentions to Abraham demonstrates that God desires interaction with His people. God is interested in our opinions and He is willing to reason with us. We too can talk to God in prayer. Jesus said, "Ask, and it will be given to you" (Matthew 7:7). God hears and answers our prayers. He even changes His plans at times in response to our prayers. Interestingly, God disclosing His business to Abraham, who will later be called a prophet (Genesis 20:7), brings to mind Amos 3:7, which states, "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servant the prophets." We also see reflected in the account something of the nature and character of Abraham—that he could be bold toward God, generous to his guests and merciful toward even the sinful inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah.” [END]