



An Adventure of Faith: Walking With Abraham

1. We're into our 8th week of our study on: **An Adventure of Faith: Walking with Abraham**
 -]
 - we're trying to keep the focus of our study not so much on Abraham, but the GOD of Abraham
 - we're learning a lot from Abraham's life, but we're learning more about God and seeing His hand at work through the life of Abraham
2. Last week: *Genesis 17: Sometimes We Just Don't Get It OR How Many Times Does God Have to Tell You?*
 - Two major points about God and the implications to our lives:
 - I. Our Gracious God Provides What We Need to Know When We Need To Know It**
 - II. Our Gracious God expects Immediate Obedience**
3. Next week we'll study *Genesis 20: Your Life Impacts Others* - Abraham made decisions that affected the king. He lied again and said Sarah was his sister and the king suffered
4. Today our study is from **Genesis 18-19: Don't Underestimate the Power of God - the Promise of Isaac and the Destruction of Sodom**
5. We're studying these two chapters together because they are strongly '*connected*' and are parallel to each other
 - **Both contain promises of God's ability to**
 - 1) Create life**
 - 2) Bring judgment.**
6. God's promises in these two areas are both met with human responses of *laughter*.
 - ✓ Sarah laughs when she finds out that she and 'the old man' Abraham are going to have a baby!
 - > Sarah responds to God's promise of a child from her own body with a *laugh*.
 - Note: This is the 1st time Sarah has heard that the promised 'seed' will be from her – and at her age (humanly speaking, we can understand her response – because we have all the facts!
 - but this is why your THEOLOGY has to drive your response to the unexpected!
 - in this case, Sarah's theology was WEAK – much like ours! – so she laughed
 - Q: *What did that communicate about her faith and/or her view of God? DOUBT!*
 - Faith = believing that God knows something we don't know and He can do something that we can't do!**
 - ✓ Lot's son in laws laugh at him when he warns them about the coming destruction

> Lot's son in laws mockingly laughs at the angels who are declaring judgment. Their laugh results in destruction.

- These two elements, *chaos* [CONFUSION – in this case, judgment] & *cosmos* [ORDER] as we have seen before in Genesis 1, and many other places in Scripture, are abilities that are constantly doubted by man

- I think, in part, because if we acknowledge them, then that puts God in higher position, so we must submit to Him, which means our lives will need to change . . . and we don't like CHANGE – and we don't like being WRONG or TOLD what to do!

Point: * **Believing in the LORD's abilities in these areas form the fear of the LORD – thus the beginning of wisdom.**

❖ **Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.**

- let's begin reading the text: 18:1-19:38!! – I've divided up the reading of these two chapters [see divisions after the teaching notes] – I'll take 19:30-38

I. The Grace of God to Abraham & Sarah – 18:1-15

A. Continued communication – 18:1

“the LORD appeared to . . . “ – just like He did in 12:7 and 17:1

- while we'd expect some remarkable revelation at this point, the text proceeds to point out the hospitality of Abraham to these 3 'ordinary men' (from Abraham's perspective)

- this is yet another demonstration of God's grace to communicate with those He loves

- Abraham is getting ready to take a nap – God interrupts his plans and does something special, again!

B. Personal representation – 18:2-8

- it's not until after the meal that these '*men*' (actually angels sent from the LORD) reveal their real identity

- these are obviously (looking back on the text) messengers sent from God, angels sent by Him to communicate His plan – there are a couple of lesson here:

* **God uses people in our lives to accomplish His will!**

- think about the various 'messengers' God has sent to you to try to help you understand His plan for your life

Illustrations or Examples??

* **As these men (angels) represented God, we are sent by God to carry His message!**

❖ **2 Corinthians 5:20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.**

C. Promised seed – 18:9-12

- once again, God communicates His promise – this time it's more specific: Sarah's name is given as the birth mother!

1. Reality of the situation: barren/old – advanced in age – v. 9-11

- but even though this is the reality of the situation – it was from a *human* perspective, not God's perspective!

- Huge Point: *Are you seeing things only through your eyes (cursed by sin, etc.) or are you going to view your situation through God's eyes?*

Input: What is the difference between these two perspectives when it comes to trials:

Trials: Human Eyes	Trials: God's Eyes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporal • Doubt • Negative • Hurt/Pain • Just get by • Mean/unkind • Other examples: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eternal • Faith • Positive • Good/Helpful • Growing/changing • Grace/Mercy • Other examples:

2. Response: Revealing their view of God – v. 12

- this passages reminds me of Solomon's words:

❖ **Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is . . .**

- Abraham and Sarah unknowingly confirm (by *laughing*) the truth of the message from the representatives of God;

> Sarah's denial of laughing, "*I did not laugh*," is a form of her son's name (*Isaac* = to laugh)

- but as God frequently does, our lack of faith or mocking responses to His truth/message does not keep Him from revealing Himself to us and showing grace in spite of our sin!

D. Awesome nature of Yahweh– 18:13-15

- this in one of the key passages in the life of Abraham –and it should be in our life – this passage reveals

1. Yahweh's power in the midst of our weakness– 18:13-14a

- what is the answer to the question: *Is there anything too hard for me?*

> we should have studied this question in our series: *Questions God Asked That Deserve an Answer*

Input: When you think about _____ , it answers the question about God's power!

[creation, flood, Exodus, Jericho, the Cross, the empty tomb, miracles Jesus performed]

2. Yahweh's promise in the midst of our doubt– 18:14b

- this is a promise repeated from v. 10 'your wife will have a son' –and if there is any doubt, "Sarah will have a son" – can't get much clearer than that!

- yet, look at the promises God has made to us and yet we still doubt:

Input: What are some of the promises we tend to ignore, neglect, or have doubt?

❖ 2 Cor. 12:9 *My grace is sufficient for you*

- ❖ 1 Cor. 10:13 *God is faithful; He will not allow you to be tempted beyond . . .*
- ❖ Phi; 4:13 *But my God shall provide all your needs . . .*
- ❖ Joshua 1:9 *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.*

3. Yahweh's truth in the midst of our fear– 18:15

- she was afraid – we see the issue of fear showing up AGAIN (Gen. 3 – *I was afraid*)
- this is the wrong kind of fear – this is not the fear of God, but just like Adam's response to God when he sinned
- it's interesting how the issue of FEAR (wrong kind) and faith cannot go together
 - > *fear* leads us away from God (i.e. to go hide in the bushes) where *faith* leads us to run toward God – He is our shelter, strength, refuge in time of trouble

Transition: 18:16 – would be a more logical chapter division (which are NOT inspired, but mostly helpful – but in this case, could be different)

- God, because He is holy, also manifests RIGHTEOUSNESS and JUSTICE – mentioned in v. 19

❖ **Psalm 7:11 God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day.**

Q: *What is He angry about?* – the ingratitude of the sinner, the pride and self-righteousness of the Pharisee, the willful choice to reject Him as Creator and Lord of All

II. The Wrath of God Toward Sodom and Gomorrah

- the tone of the passage changes here – and God communicates again!

A. God clearly communicated His plan – 18:16-22

- Nobody can accuse God of NOT communicating!

Input: Other examples of God practicing full-disclosure (telling what He is going to do):

- √ Gen. 2:17 – don't eat of the tree . . . surely die
- √ Gen. 6:1-5 – Flood – warnings for 120 years as Noah built the ark
- √ Exodus 5:1-3 – Egypt – 10 plagues – let My people go!
- √ Joshua 6 – the walls of Jericho will come tumbling down
- √ Isaiah 9:6 – for unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given . . .
- √ John 2:19-20 – Death and resurrection communicated
- √ John 14:3 – 2nd coming (I will come again and receive you . . .)

B. Abraham's prayer for MERCY

Mercy – God withholding what we do DESERVE

Grace –God giving us what we DON'T deserve

- 6 times the Lord grants Abraham's plea for mercy, the intimacy of Abraham with God is disclosed.
- Here, in the manner of a true prophet, he intercedes for the people of Sodom:
- Other examples of people praying for others:

⇒ Moses (Exod 32), Samuel, and Jeremiah, made intercession for Israel,

* Abraham here prays for the Canaanites.

- But this great prayer does not simply show the intimacy of Abraham with God; it also reflects on the promise that *"in him all the nations will find blessing"*

> but you might say, "Mark, Sodom was DESTROYED – how is that a blessing?"

- Moses insists that Sodom has been given every chance to repent and save itself – that's GRACE and MERCY

> but God is HOLY and that demands eventual justice (someday, an eternal damnation!)

Note: Back in chap. 14 Abraham had rescued the king of Sodom from the eastern kings and restored all his property and people only to be treated with surly ingratitude. Yet Abraham still prays for them and is assured that if there are just ten righteous persons in Sodom, the whole city will be spared:

* **God's mercy on the few will outweigh his anger with the many (cf. Exodus 34).**

But as the story makes clear, there were not even ten righteous in Sodom.

C. Things to remember:

1. God in wrath remembers mercy

❖ **Habakkuk 3:2 O LORD, I have heard your speech *and* was afraid; O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make *it* known; In wrath remember mercy.**

2. This is not the ONLY place God dealt with homosexual sin!

> He dealt with at the Cross (Calvary), where the wrath of God was satisfied by the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world

Note: Luke 10:8-12 – context of discipleship/truth – Sodom is compared w/rejecting truth

❖ **Luke 10:8 Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. 9 "And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' 12 But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.**

D. Specific targets: two cities, but individual responsibility!

1. – 19:1-3 – summarize – very similar to Gen. 18 (first part) and what Abraham did to his guests

2. – 19:4-11

- the cultural responsibility of hosting a guest and protecting them was very HIGH

- vs. offering his virgin daughters to these sex crazy men –that's how perverted they were in their thinking

Note: Lot's wrong view of sex leads to his daughters' view @ v. 30-39

3. – 19:12-22 (summarize)

- Even Lot is shown 'compassion' and given a chance to do the right thing

4. – 19:23-26 – God’s wrath poured out on . . .
- a. the rebellious people
 - b. a rebellious person – v. 26 [Choices have consequences]

5. – 19:27-28 – **God keeps His promises!**

cf. 18:17 – this was the plan of God – carried out!

a. God doesn’t quit!

- > Abraham has cause to have FAITH in Yahweh to do what He said He would
- note the patience of God –

b. God remembers Abraham – a God that doesn’t forget!

III. The Consequences of God [*Law of the Harvest*] – 19:30-38

- remember what Lot tried to do in 19:4-11 – that communicated a message to his daughters (an ungodly view of sex)

A. The idolatry of Lot’s daughters – nothing wrong with wanting children, but consider these two questions when determining if something is an idol:

1) *How do you respond when you don’t get it?*

2) *Are you willing to sin in order to get it?*

***Idol* = anything you make more important than pleasing God!**

B. The weakness of Lot’s leadership – got drunk, no self-control

- note: This goes back to chp. 13 when Lot chose to go this direction!

c.f. Galatians 6:7-8 – law of harvest

C. The results of their sin: CHAOS – Moabites & Ammonites!

- two of the most wicked nations that constantly sought conflict with Israel (the seed of Abraham!)

Conclusion:

* **Choices have consequences!**

* **Don’t Underestimate the God’s Power**

Genesis 18:1 Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, 3 and said, "My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. 4 "Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; 5 and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant." And they said, "So do, as you have said." 6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead *it* and make bread cakes." 7 Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave *it* to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. 8 He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed *it* before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

9 Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "There, in the tent." 10 He said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. 11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. 12 Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" 13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear *a child*, when I am so old?' 14 "Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son." 15 Sarah denied *it* however, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh."

16 Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off. 17 The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18 since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? 19 "For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him." 20 And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. 21 "I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know." 22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the LORD.

23 Abraham came near and said, "Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 "Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed sweep *it* away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? 25 "Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" 26 So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place on their account." 27 And Abraham replied, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am *but* dust and ashes. 28 "Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the whole city because of five?" And He said, "I will not destroy *it* if I find forty-five there." 29 He spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose forty are found there?" And He said, "I will not do *it* on account of the forty." 30 Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak; suppose thirty are found there?" And He said, "I will not do *it* if I find thirty there." 31 And he said, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord; suppose twenty are found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy *it* on account of the twenty." 32 Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once; suppose ten are found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy *it* on account of the ten." 33 As soon as He had finished speaking to Abraham the LORD departed, and Abraham returned to his place.

Genesis 19:1 Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw *them*, he rose to meet them and bowed down *with his* face to the ground. 2 And he said, "Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." They said however, "No, but we shall spend the night in the square." 3 Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

4 Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; 5 and they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them." 6 But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, 7 and said, "Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly. 8 "Now behold, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof." 9 But they said, "Stand aside." Furthermore, they said, "This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them." So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door. 10 But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. 11 They struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied *themselves trying* to find the doorway.

12 Then the *two* men said to Lot, "Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring *them* out of the place; 13 for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it." 14 Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, "Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city." But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting. 15 When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city." 16 But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD *was* upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city. 17 When they had brought them outside, one said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away." 18 But Lot said to them, "Oh no, my lords! 19 "Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, for the disaster will overtake me and I will die; 20 now behold, this town is near *enough* to flee to, and it is small. Please, let me escape there (is it not small?) that my life may be saved." 21 He said to him, "Behold, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken. 22 "Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the name of the town was called Zoar.

23 The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar. 24 Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, 25 and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 But his wife, from behind him, looked *back*, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 Now Abraham arose early in the morning *and went* to the place where he had stood before the LORD; 28 and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace. 29 Thus it came about, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.

.....

30 Lot went up from Zoar, and stayed in the mountains, and his two daughters with him; for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; and he stayed in a cave, he and his two daughters. 31 Then the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of the earth. 32 "Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him that we may preserve our family through our father." 33 So they made their father drink wine that night, and the firstborn went in and lay with her father; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. 34 On the following day, the firstborn said to the younger, "Behold, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father." 35 So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. 36 Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 The firstborn bore a son, and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 As for the younger, she also bore a son, and called his name Ben-ammi; he is the father of the sons of Ammon to this day.

Study Notes: An Adventure of Faith: Walking With Abraham
Don't Underestimate Gods Power – Genesis 18 & 19

Introduction:

Next Week: *Genesis 20: Your Life Impacts Others*

Genesis 18 & 19 – Both contain promises of God’s ability to

- 1) Create life
- 2) Bring judgment.

Faith = believing that God knows something we don’t know and He can do something that we can’t do!

* Believing in the LORD’s abilities in these areas form the _____ of the LORD – thus the beginning of _____.

I. The Grace of God to Abraham & Sarah – 18:1-15

A. Continued _____ – 18:1

B. _____ – 18:2-8

- * God uses _____ in our lives to accomplish His will!
- * As these men (angels) represented God, we are sent by God to carry His message!

C. Promised _____ – 18:9-12

1. Reality of the situation: barren/old – advanced in age – v. 9-11

Input: What is the difference between these two perspectives when it comes to trials?

Trials: Human Eyes	Trials: God’s Eyes

2. Response: Revealing their view of God – v. 12

D. Awesome _____ of Yahweh– 18:13-15

1. Yahweh’s _____ in the midst of our _____ – 18:13-14a

Input: When you think about _____ (events), it answers the question about God's power!

2. Yahweh's _____ in the midst of our _____ – 18:14b

Input: What are some of the promises we tend to ignore, neglect, or have doubt?

3. Yahweh's _____ in the midst of our _____ – 18:15

II. The Wrath of God Toward Sodom and Gomorrah

A. God clearly _____ His plan – 18:16-22

Input: Other examples of God practicing full-disclosure (telling what He is going to do):

B. Abraham's prayer for _____

⇒ Mercy – God _____ what we do DESERVE

⇒ Grace – God giving us what we _____ deserve

* *God's mercy on the few will outweigh His anger with the many* (cf. Exodus 34).

C. Things to remember:

1. God in wrath remembers _____

2. This is not the _____ place God dealt with homosexual sin!

D. Specific targets: two cities, but _____ !

* God keeps His promises!

a. God doesn't quit!

b. God remembers Abraham – a God that doesn't forget!

III. The Consequences of God [*Law of the Harvest*] – 19:30-38

A. The _____ of Lot's daughters

1) *How do you respond when you don't get it?*

2) *Are you willing to sin in order to get it?*

Idol = anything you make more important than pleasing God!

B. The weakness of Lot's _____ – got drunk, no self-control

c.f. Galatians 6:7-8

C. The results of their sin: _____ – Moabites & Ammonites!

Conclusion:

* Choices have consequences!

* Don't _____ the God's _____

