

Genesis series 2022 #16 (10.16.22) #22083

Genesis 18

A Personal Visit

I. The Abraham narrative (him and his sons and grandsons) is the center of Genesis.

- A. His Seed will save the world. 12:1-3 (Gal.3)
- B. We are in the details of the larger story. Abe's faith is growing.

II. It has been a long journey for Abraham and Sarah...

- A. Abe and Sarah are 99 and 89 respectively.
- B. They have been in the land about 24-25 years
- C. The covenant with God has been ratified, but not fulfilled yet.
 - 1. 13 years ago, by God Himself. Gen. 15
 - 2. Recently by God and Abraham: Circumcision Gen. 17
- D. Gen 18-19 form one account of one 24 hour period in Abraham's life.
 - 1. Amazing detail for one small segment of time.
 - 2. Chapter 18 is God's personal visit to Abraham and Sarah.
 - 3. Chapter 19 is God's judgment poured out on unrepentant evil. Sobering.
 - a) Attempted homosexual rape, complete destruction, incest.
- E. *Just as Abraham learns about God's miraculous faithfulness, he learns about His decisive judgment ...*

III. The Lord visits Abraham personally. The Lord sets a date (finally). 18:1-15

- A. He shows up with two angels. 1-8
 - 1. Abraham realizes that this is a divine visitation. v. 3
 - 2. Uses singular "Lord" despite the fact that there are three "men" there.
 - 3. This is the Angel of YHWH. YHWH Himself. Preincarnate Christ?
- B. He blesses Sarah with a specific time! 9-15
 - 1. Emphasis is on Sarah here, not Abraham.
 - 2. She laughs. Can't believe she will have a child at her age.
 - a) News too good to be true?

IV. The Lord draws him into partnership. A covenant partnership. 18:16-33

- A. A covenant relationship that the Lord initiated. 18-19 (12:1-3)
 - 1. I have chosen him.
 - 2. I will bless the world through him.
 - 3. He will keep My way. (Different from the world) 19 (Eph.2:8-10)
 - a) Righteousness and justice.
 - b) Teaching his families the way of the Lord.
- B. Against the backdrop of judgment that the Lord will bring. 20-21. (ch.19)
 - 1. *Judgment is inevitable because evil is real.*
 - a) The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great
 - 2. Evil has a voice... Abel's blood (Gen.4:10)
- C. Resulting in intercession that the Lord wants to hear. 22-33
 - 1. The goodness and justice of God.
 - a) There is a distinction between the righteous and the wicked.
 - b) God will do what is right with all human souls in eternity.
 - c) *The larger question is, "are there any really righteous people?"*
 - 2. The power of Covenant Prayer. Jn.16:25-28
 - a) God ordains that we should be involved in "changing his mind" regarding the world around us.
 - b) This is a mystery, but it is a dynamic reality. Rom.8:26

V. Four Questions we might ask...

A. Why visit in Person? Luke 19:10

1. *Because the Lord himself is personally in charge of the judgment and salvation of the world.*
 - a) He is actively, personally, sovereignly moving history to judgment and resurrection. Eph.1:9-10

B. Why take so long with Isaac? 25 years with no explanation? Heb.11:1

1. *Because God's salvation of the world (and you) must be a miracle. Jn.3:16*
 - (1) The point of the passage is not simply that God does the impossible, but that it will take a miracle to save the world.
 - b) Humanity must come to an end of itself, trust God's promise and mercy.
2. *Because faith that is never stretched is merely self-confidence with a religious paint job.*
 - a) Jas.1:3. untested faith may not be real.

C. Why draw Abraham into the plan? Phil.2:12-13

1. *Because God must judge evil, but he is not in a rush.*
 - a) Ez.18:23. No delight in the death of the wicked, but that they should turn and live.
2. *Because God's work on earth includes his covenant people (seed of Abraham).*
 - a) Intercession is God's way of fulfilling his plan.
3. *It really matters what we pray for and how we live.*

D. Why trust the Seed of Abraham, Christ Jesus? Gal.3:26-29

1. Because God's justice and mercy can only be satisfied at the Cross.
2. The dilemma of God's mercy and God's judgment against sin is the driving force behind the entire biblical story arc. Because all have sinned and are falling short of God's glory (Rom.3:23).
3. Romans 3-4 is all about the gift of righteousness, God's righteousness given to us, declaring us righteous before we actually experience it.