

Genesis Chapter 18 Commentary

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

We see here that God did something for Abraham that has been done to no other that we know of, What you ask? God revealed himself in the 3 persons of the Godhead by appearing as 3 men to Abraham. How do we know this is true? Verse 1 says that "**the Lord**", in singular form, appeared unto Abraham. Verse 2 says that Abraham saw "**three men**" and in verse 3 it says that he addressed the 3 men he ran to meet as "**My Lord**" in the singular form.

In other words; God made himself known to Abraham by revelation; and gave Abraham eyes to see and to recognize the Lord. If we see God it is by the same method of revelation.

Notice; the obeisance and hospitality displayed by Abraham. This is a lesson to us; when God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, reveals their presence to us, we should acknowledge their superiority, and welcome them with open hearts. We should be humbled and thankful that God has visited us with his presence.

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

Notice the effort that it took for Abraham to be hospitable to these three. Water was fetched and their feet were washed, he invited them to the shade of the tree, Sarah made cakes, a calf was dressed and prepared, and presented to them with butter and milk. Are we as willing as Abraham to make ready and receive guest as is displayed here? How often, do we do as is pointed out in New Testament scripture; **Heb 13:2 "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."** entertain, or not entertain, others. We should be mindful of that still small voice that alerts us when God's presence is near.

9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 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. 11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

Do you notice that there are three persons, yet notice; **"9 And they said unto him,"** (three persons) but in **"10 And he said,"** (one person). This demonstrates to us the unity and total agreement of the triune Godhead; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

God tells Abraham that his and Sarah's old and dead, to child bearing, bodies will be resurrected, to the state of child bearing. Sarah, who is eaves dropping, laughs within herself at this prospect. Notice; God hears it even though it is not aloud verbally. This reminds us; God knows all things as seen in: **Heb 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."** God does not need for us to speak aloud to know what is in our hearts, also seen in: **Mt 5:28 "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."** The very thought of sin is sin and is known to God.

Herein lies a true picture of the unbelief of mankind in his inherit nature. We would limit what God can do, by what we know and believe in nature. God is not confined by our unbelief. God is still able to do, and does, whatsoever He pleases; in spite of our feeble comprehension and expectation.

13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 14 Is anything 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. 15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

The fault of fallen human nature is exposed. When confronted with our sinful actions; it is our fallen nature which quickly denies; however, with the grace of God in our hearts; we willingly confess our faults.

16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. 17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

God confides in Abraham what he is fixing to do, which gives Abraham the opportunity to act as intercessor for his nephew Lot. It is also a defensive weapon for Abraham to put on, how? God is demonstrating to Abraham; these cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, are wicked places and I am going down to destroy them for their wickedness. Abraham should take note of this and build his life and the lives of his family upon the principle of living godly lives; lest they too incur the destructive judicial wrath of almighty God.

God reaffirms to Abraham his earlier promise of having many children; given earlier in Genesis 17. God tells him that **"all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him"** A reminder to us that even way back then in time; God purposed to save many people; in the number of which we are included today; as the saved by grace children of God.

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.

We see that God even told Abraham how to utilize this defensive armor he is giving him. Raise your children up in the nurture of God's word of truth. We have the same commandment in the New Testament in: ***Eph 6:4 "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."***

The true people of God, even today, are to do as stated here, "***do justice and judgment***" This is quite contrary to the teachings of the false church; who are teaching today that you are not to judge, you are to embrace everything and everyone, and take them in and love them, not admonishing them for any thing they do or say. As we see demonstrated in this chapter and following; God does not intend; that we should take in everything, and love everybody, who is not living the true life of a Christian.

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

Remember the scripture in ***Ge 4:10 "And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."*** which demonstrates that sin against God's people is heard by God? Here we see; God hears in heaven when people turn against him on earth. Their own words and works are a testimony against them; as we find in ***Re 20:12 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."***

This thought reminds us of a song the poet man wrote "Passing Away" #207-b in The Sacred Harp: 1 "And must I be to judgment brought and answer in that day, for every vain and idle thought and every word I say?" 2 "Yes every secret of my heart, Shall shortly be made known, And I receive my just desert, For all that I have done." 3 "How careful then, ought I to be, With what religious fear, Who such a strict account must give, For my behaviour here." Chorus: "We are passing away, We are passing away, We are passing away, To that great judgment day."

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

We see, from here to the end of the chapter, the act of intercession to God by Abraham; on behalf of Abraham's kinfolk. We know that Abraham's nephew, Lot, and his family are dwelling in Sodom and Abraham is asking God to save them.

This intercession is on behalf of those of Abraham's family, that he loves, who are dwelling there. This is a picture of Christ interceding on our behalf, as those of his family whom he loves, living in a world of sin and sorrow, where man in his lost nature is doing all things in defiance of God.

23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 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? 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? 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. 27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

We notice; Abraham's intercessory prayer, and pleading with God, is for the righteous; not for the wicked. Although it may not seem like it in appearance; Lot was a just man in the eyes of God, seen in scripture in: **2Pe 2:6-9; 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; 7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) 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:"** This is a demonstration of why God's people are to live lives separated from ungodliness.

May God help us all to be in prayer for one another in Christ Jesus, and to be an encouragement to one another in living the life of a Christian; as we see in: **Eph 5:15-21; 15 "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."**

Praise the Lord for salvation by grace! Praise the Lord for the one who wrought that salvation and eternal life for us, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord! Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!