

# Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 18: January 17-24

## Genesis 18

In Genesis chapter 18, the LORD again appears to Abraham. This time He appears with two angels but all three of them are manifested as men who sit down and eat a meal with Abraham. In this visit, the LORD again reminds Abraham of His covenant promises but this time He makes sure that Sarah knows about her involvement in the plan. This is a powerful faith-building chapter where we hear God asking us, “Is anything too hard for the LORD?”

### Read Genesis 18:1-15

1. What time of the day did God appear to Abraham in verse 1?
2. What did Abraham do in verse 2 when he saw the three visitors?
3. What did Abraham offer to do for the three visitors? (18:3-5)
4. What did Abraham tell Sarah to do in verse 6?

Even though it is the hottest time of the day when most people are resting in the shade, 99-year-old Abraham is treating this opportunity to show hospitality as a matter of great urgency. Paul Kissling notes,

Once again we see Abraham rushing. He hurries and he asks Sarah to hurry. Just as at the Passover, there is no time to wait for the bread to rise. It must be made quickly. The imagined audience, Israel recently freed from Egypt, would undoubtedly recall the "hurry" that is a part of the original Passover. The unleavened bread which was produced in such circumstances had an ongoing symbolic value for the community. At any moment the Lord might reveal himself and call upon us to act. We must therefore be ever ready to respond.<sup>1</sup>

5. What kind of food did Abraham and his servant prepare for the visitors to eat? (18:7-8)

6. What did the visitors ask Abraham in verse 9?
7. What did the LORD say to Abraham in verse 10?

The author of Hebrews is probably referring to this event when he tells us to “show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Heb. 13:2). Sarah and the servants did not know that they were serving angels. At first, Abraham may not have been fully aware of his visitor’s identity. However, when the LORD asked about Sarah (using her new name) and then repeated the specific promise from 17:21, Abraham knew that these were no ordinary men.

8. Why did Sarah laugh when she heard the prediction that she would give birth to a son? (18:11-12)
9. What did the LORD ask Abraham in verse 13?
10. What did the LORD ask Abraham in verse 14?

John Walton wisely observes,

The rhetorical question of 8:14 does not present us with a promise to claim but an attribute to embrace, a faith to aspire to, and a hope to sustain us. When we face difficult circumstances, we cannot claim this verse as confidence that God will change our circumstances. He is capable of changing any circumstances, but perhaps the hard thing that he will do is to help us to accept our circumstances and grow through them.<sup>2</sup>

11. What did God say to Sarah after she said that she didn’t laugh? (18:15)

### Read Genesis 18:16-33

12. Where were the visitors looking as they began to leave in verse 16?
13. What did the LORD ask the two angels in verse 17?
14. What promises did the LORD repeat in verse 18?

<sup>1</sup> Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 136.

<sup>2</sup> John H. Walton, *The NIV Application Commentary Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2001), 470-471.

15. What did the LORD want Abraham to do in verse 19?

Kissling explains how verse 19 is only fulfilled in Jesus. He writes,

The Hebrew text reads, "For I knew him" rather than "have chosen." The verb used (יָדָע, *yāda'*) sometimes has the connotation of personal, intimate knowledge. The Lord's knowledge of Abraham and his coming to know the Lord in response had a purpose. Abraham would "charge" his sons and his house coming after him. The result of Abraham's charge would be that his descendants would keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice... The descendants of Abraham have not consistently practiced righteousness and justice. It will take a new work of God among the descendants of Abraham in order for them to fulfill their obligations and see the blessing of God flow through them to all the nations of the world. A Christian reader, of course, knows that only one truly faithful descendant of Abraham ever arose, Jesus the Messiah. Only he truly kept the way of the Lord by doing what was right and just.<sup>3</sup>

16. What did God say about Sodom and Gomorrah in verse 20?

17. What did God tell Abraham that He was going to do in verse 21?

18. Where did the two angels go in verse 22?

19. What question did Abraham ask the LORD in verse 23?

20. In the last part of this chapter, Abraham argues on behalf of the most wicked cities in the Bible. He believes that it is better for wicked people go unpunished than for righteous people to suffer with them. At the end of his appeal, in verse 32, how many righteous people did Abraham suppose that there might be in Sodom?

21. What does it mean for us to serve the LORD with eagerness?

22. What does it look like for us to give the LORD our best?

23. What difficult problem do you need to give to the LORD?

## Sermon Notes 1/17/21

### **"Is anything too hard for the LORD?" How should we respond to Genesis chapter 18?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ one another with eagerness.  
Genesis 18:4-5  
Hebrews 13:1-2  
1 Peter 4:7-10
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord our best.  
Genesis 18:6-7  
Colossians 3:23-24  
Romans 12:1
3. \_\_\_\_\_ in God's power and plan.  
Genesis 18:14  
Jeremiah 32:17  
2 Peter 1:3-4



“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.”—Hebrews 13:2

<sup>3</sup> Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2*, 142.