

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
[Adapted from Bethel Bible-
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DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 13

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Chapter 18-19

INTRODUCTION

There are valuable lessons to be learned in these two chapters. What God has promised, God will perform it. And that there is nothing too difficult for God to do. Another is that whatever God does, it is always righteous. How often has man misjudged the righteous Judge of all the earth. Do we not sometimes think that God is unfair? The study of these two chapters should help us to understand the character of the LORD our God and to keep trusting and obeying Him. The LORD manifests His faithfulness in keeping His promises, and His grace, mercy and justice in His judgement of the wicked deeds of man.

Outline

- I. The LORD Visited Abraham and Enjoyed a Fellowship Meal with His Family (18:1-8)
 - A. The LORD and two angels visited Abraham at Mamre (vv.1-5)
 - B. The three visitors enjoyed the hospitality and a meal prepared by Abraham and his household (vv.6-8)
- II. The LORD Reaffirmed the Fulfilment of His Promise of a Son to Abraham (18:9-15).
 - A. The LORD announced that the appointed time for Sarah to bear a son was imminent (vv.9-12)
 - B. The LORD rebuked Sarah for laughing but reiterated the certainty that Sarah shall have a son (13-15).
- III. The LORD's Justice and Judgement upon Sodom (18:16-33).
 - A. The LORD shared His intention to destroy Sodom with Abraham (vv.16-21).
 - B. Abraham interceded for the city of Sodom (vv.22-33).
- IV. The Angels Visited Lot and Repelled the Wickedness of the Sodomites (19:1-11).
 - A. The angels were entertained by Lot (vv.1-3).
 - B. The angels struck the Sodomites with blindness to prevent them from carrying out their wickedness (vv. 4-11).
- V. The Angels Saved Lot and His Family and Destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (19:12-29).
 - A. The angels saved Lot and his household (vv.12-22).
 - B. The LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (vv.23-29).
- VI. The Incestuous Acts of Lot's Daughters (19:30-38).
 - A. The reason for acts of Lot's daughters (vv.30-32).
 - B. The incestuous acts of Lot's daughters (vv.33-36).
 - C. The births of Moab and Ben-ammi, Lot's sons by his daughters (37-38).

The LORD God Visits Abraham

God visited Abraham in his dwelling tent in Mamre on a hot day. The LORD came to Abraham with two of His angels. They appeared as men. While their identity was hidden at first, nevertheless, Abraham addressed one of them as “my Lord” (Hebrew: *adonai*), a term which is used of God. But in the course of their conversation and meeting with Abraham and Lot, it becomes clear who they were. They were the LORD God Himself with two of His angels.¹ Such an appearance in human form by the LORD is theologically understood as *theophany*.

There are some interesting observations on this visit of Abraham by the LORD with the two angels. First, Abraham received the three guests without any hesitation. He extended his hospitality to his guests in no small measure. The bowing down to welcome his guests was an eastern custom as a gesture of honouring his distinguished guests. Abraham might have suspected that his guests were worthy of honourable treatment and addressed the apparent leader as “my lord.” It was only in the course of their conversation that the real identity of the LORD was revealed. The custom then was to wash the guests’ feet, which had been soiled by the dust of paths they trod, and to provide refreshments and food. This extension of Abraham’s gracious and kind hospitality to his guests is both commendable and instructive. In fact he had entertained the LORD unawares. The invitation to have a fellowship meal and waiting on them expresses an

intimate fellowship. This reminds us of the Lord Jesus Christ who invited His disciples to the Lord’s Supper in remembrance of His love and grace towards us by giving His life to us so that we might have life eternal! Fellowship or communal meals in the Christian community is one of the means of manifesting our love and joy of our oneness in Christ. Another striking feature is that the LORD and the two angels, although they came from heaven, could eat and enjoy a meal just like us! Did not our Lord Jesus Christ when He had the resurrected body also ate and fellowship with His disciples?²

However, the purpose of the LORD’s visit was to tell Abraham and Sarah that the time had come for the birth of Isaac. The guests knew the name of Sarah, for they asked Abraham, “Where is Sarah thy wife?” (18:9). Then the LORD said that the LORD’s time had come for Sarah to conceive and have a son (18:10). Sarah heard it and laughed within herself in disbelief. But the LORD, who can see the inner and hidden thoughts of man, rebuked Sarah for laughing in disbelief. The LORD remarked, “Is any thing too hard for the LORD?” and reiterated that the appointed time was near and she would conceive and give birth to a son. God reveals to His people that nothing is impossible with Him, but that all things are possible. If God has promised, God will perform. For our part, we need to be patient and wait for the LORD’S appointed time.

God’s Justice and Judgement

After the meal and having announced to Abraham and Sarah of

¹ To interpret this appearance of three as the Trinity, the three Persons of the Godhead, is reading beyond the text.

² KJV Luke 24:42 And they gave him (Christ) a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. 43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

the time of Isaac's birth, the guests proceeded in the direction of Sodom. The LORD shared with Abraham His intention of destroying Sodom and Gomorrah, as a friend would share with his friend. The LORD wanted to be sure that the wickedness of Sodom was as reported to Him. This seems strange because the LORD who is God knows everything. Why this statement? It is obvious that it was intended to show us that the LORD'S judgement and justice is always righteous. Hence, Abraham's question, "Will thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" is not questioning the judgement and justice of God. Instead, Abraham could only ask God that question because he knew that God who is the Judge of all the earth always judges righteously.

In his intercession for Sodom, Abraham first asked if there were 50 righteous men, would the LORD destroy the city. The LORD agreed that if there were 50 righteous men, He would not destroy Sodom. Abraham continued interceding and for the next two times he reduced the number of righteous men by five, and when God said that He would spare Sodom, then Abraham began reducing the number by ten for the next two times until he reached the number ten when he stopped. No reason was given. The question of whether God is morally fair or not fair is never brought up. Abraham appealed to the mercy of God in his intercession for the Sodomites. And this sets the model for other intercessions.³

³ Hamilton, p.25. The author quotes the following intercession prayers for examples: Samuel (1Samuel 7:5-9; 12:19-25), Elijah (1 King 17:17-23), Elisha (2 Kings 4:33; 6:15-20), Job (Job 42:7-9), Amos (Amos 7:1-6, and Moses (Exodus 32:11-13, 31-34; 33:12-15; m34:9; Numbers 12:11-13; 14:13-19; Deuteronomy 9:16-29).

This Abraham's intercessory prayer teaches us to be frank and open with God for He knows our inner thoughts and feelings. We cannot hide anything from Him. For this truth we must praise and thank the LORD, for many times when we are falsely misunderstood and accused, the LORD knows the truth. So Abraham confidently and boldly asked God to be merciful which is based on his knowledge of God's character and integrity. God cannot deny Himself. The truth we learn here about God is that God is willing to spare even the wicked for the sake of the righteous.

God Delivers Lot and His Family

Two angels, apparently the ones who came with the LORD, were now sent by the LORD to the city of Sodom. Lot "sat in the gate of Sodom." Earlier Lot had pitched his tent *near* Sodom (13:12). Later it was reported that he *was living* in Sodom (14:12). And now he *sat* in the gate of Sodom, meaning that he had attained some prominence in Sodom, for only important officials of the city were allowed to sit in the gate, where they engaged in the affairs of the city. Lot had left his fundamental background and assimilated with the Sodomites. His ways reminded us of what the Psalmist describes in Psalm 1. First he walked in the counsel of the ungodly, then he stood in the way of sinners, and finally he sat in the seat of the mockers!

However, when Lot saw the two angels he invited them to stay in his house. But immediately as the two angels stepped into Lot's house, the male Sodomites demanded that Lot released the two angels, that *they may know them* (an expression meaning to engage in sexual intimacy). Lot resisted their demands and instead was willing to

go to the extent of offering his two daughters! While Lot may be commendable for his efforts to protect his guests, yet his willingness to give his daughters to the men to do whatever seemed good to them is a perverted gesture which is unacceptable. Lot was completely helpless in the situation (19:8-9).

But the two angels rescued Lot. Then they smote the Sodomites with blindness, *both small and great*. What is most sad is to know the depths of moral depravity into which the people of Sodom, including in the children, had fallen. We also learn that angels possess supernatural power to smite the men who invaded Lot's house with blindness. The iniquities of the Sodomites were full. In the eyes of the LORD they deserved to be destroyed. The angels then warned Lot that the LORD had sent them to destroy the city. Lot was told by the angels to tell his family and get out of the city before it was destroyed. Lot believed and obeyed. But observe that his sons-in-law thought that Lot was joking and so did not believe him. But the time was imminent and the angels hurried Lot to take his wife and two daughters, but they lingered! So the angels took them by force and drove them out of the city. And the most wonderful piece of revelation in the passage is *the LORD being merciful unto him* (19:16). After they were compelled out of the house, they had to run for their own lives to safety. They were told to run to the mountains for refuge, but Lot pleaded that they ran to a nearby town Zoar, which the angels allowed. They were told not to look back. When the LORD poured brimstone and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, the twin cities, Lot's wife

looked back and she was turned to a pillar of salt.

God destroyed the twin cities and all the wicked people, but the LORD saved Lot because God remembered Abraham's intercession (19:29). God judges and punishes the wicked but delivers and saves the righteous. The justice and judgement of God never fails. This destruction of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah could be related to the end-time judgement of the world, when the LORD will send His angels to gather the wheat and burn the tares (Matthew 13:30):

Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

If there is one lesson we can learn from the deliverance of Lot, it is that we should intercede fervently for the salvation of our loved ones and relatives, and may the LORD be merciful to us and to them by saving them from the fires of hell!

Lot and His Daughters

Lot did not live long in Zoar. He left the city and fled to the mountains where he lived in a cave with his two daughters. He feared to live in Zoar. Lot was wiser. Zoar was one of the cities in the plains and could also be under the LORD'S judgement. At least Lot learned. This is a lesson for many of us, but how procrastinating and even stubborn are we. What Lot's daughters did with their father was a reflection of what they had learned in Sodom. They took advantage of the weakness of their father and committed sexual incest. The two sons born to

each to them, Moab and Ammon, had descendants who became neighbours of Abraham's descendants. But the Moabites and the Ammonites lived totally different ways of life from their Abrahamic relatives. The Moabites indulged in idolatries and orgies, and worshipped a fertility god (Numbers 25). The Ammonites became a cruel and wicked group of people. Both of these tribes refused Israel safe passage through their land to enter into the Promised Land and did not treat them kindly. The LORD commanded Israel that they should have nothing to do with the Moabites and the Ammonites (Deuteronomy 23:3-4):

An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever: 4 Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.

The lesson from Genesis 19:30-38 is that those who flirt with sin are going on a downhill path, like Jonah who deliberately disobeyed God and took an opposite direction. James describes it most succinctly and to the point (James 1:13-15):

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it

bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Another lesson we learn is that children do suffer from the sins of their fathers. Lots' daughters might not have known the alternative righteous life with God. They lived in and were brought up in Sodom. All because of the sin of their father Lot. Lot knew the right path of life with God, but he rather chose to live near, and later in Sodom, and took his daughters with him, He made a wrong choice. His daughters followed him, and were exposed to the way of life of the Sodomites. It is therefore sad. This strikes a serious and sobering note to those who are Christian parents. How do we conduct ourselves in the world, having grown up and are taught the ways of God but have preferred the ways of the world instead of the ways of God? Pray that we may not fall into the same sin as Lot. END.

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**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

Daily Readings

**MONDAY: Genesis 18:1-15;
Hebrews 11:6; 11-16; 13:1-2.**

**TUESDAY: Genesis 18:16-32;
1Peter 1:14-21.**

**WEDNESDAY: Genesis 19:1-11;
2Peter 2:6-9;**

**THURSDAY: Genesis 19:12-28;
Luke 17:28-30;**

**FRIDAY: Genesis 19:29-38;
Leviticus 18:1-29.**

Discussion Questions

1. How does Abraham treat his guests, and in what ways can his example have a positive and negative response?

2. Why does Sarah react as she does to the LORD'S renewed promise of a son?

3. In what way is the LORD'S response to Sarah's laughter both a rebuke and an encouragement?

4. Why does the LORD decide to tell Abraham about His decision to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah?

5. What attitudes towards God, people, and self does Abraham show in 18:23-33?

6. What effects does life in Sodom seem to have had on the members of Lot's family?

7. What does Lot do or experience in each of the following passages? What does it show about his faith and character?

13:12-13

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14:11-12,16

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19:1-2

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19:8

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19:15-16

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19:18-20

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19:30

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19:33, 35

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8. What can we learn from the results of Lot's choices?

9. What can we learn from the results of Lot's choices?

10. What is the most beneficial thing, which you have learned from this study?
