

Genesis: Beginning “Good” with God
New Pilgrim Baptist Church Bible Study
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Lesson: The Promise of Isaac and the Judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (18:1-19:38)

These two chapters address God’s promise and judgment, to multiply life and to remove it from the world. The deadness of Abraham and Sarah became life available for all the nations through their proper alignment with God. Sodom and Gomorrah, lush and flourishing, teeming with people, became a heap of rubble because of their rebellion against God and his ways. A great city became nothing and a barren couple became nations.

Biblical Takeaways (Gen 18:1-19:38)

1. *Is there anything too hard for the Lord? (18:1-16)*

- a. In vv. 1-2, God appeared to Abraham as a “man,” which is quite common in the Bible. God will often come or send angels looking like a man. The fact that three men appeared helps us understand the later revelation of the Trinity.
- b. Abraham worshipped and prepared them a meal so that they may feel welcomed. This action starkly contrasts Abraham from the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- c. God promised Abraham and Sarah they would have Isaac soon. But Sarah laughed at the prospect. Abraham laughed and now Sarah laughed, too. God’s response to Abraham asks, “is there a wonder too much for the Lord?” The expected answer is, no. Of course, not. God is able to show his strength in any situation, as he will do through Abraham and Sarah. We must believe God is able to manifest his power in any situation.

2. *Abraham’s plea for mercy (18:17-33)*

God spoke within himself and thought it made no sense for him not to share with Abraham his intentions to judge Sodom. When God shared with Abraham what he was going to do, Abraham pleaded with God that he would have mercy if, ultimately, there were 10 righteous people in the city. Sadly, God could not even find that many in this large, bustling city.

3. *The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (19:1-38)*

- a. In vv. 1-11, the angels venture to Sodom and retrieve Lot and his family. When the angels arrive, Lot presses them to receive his hospitality. Hospitality was a high moral value in the ancient world. But the men of Sodom were so filled with pride and lust they did not want to welcome the angels but wanted to sexually assault them. One sin always brings others. The problem was not just inhospitality or violent homosexuality or desire to sleep with angels. One sin always gathers others. The fact that they refused Lot’s daughters (a sad act of desperation on his part) showed how much God despised the kinds of behaviors they displayed. Later in Scripture, homosexuality will be codified as anti-God in that is anti-creation and anti-flourishing, it only yields in pride and self-indulgence (Ezek 16:49-50; Jude 1:7).
- b. In vv. 12-29, God enabled Lot and his family to escape the oncoming destruction. In v. 17, he warned not to look back, but in v. 26 Lot’s wife did and she became a pillar of salt. God completely destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, they became an example in Scripture of what God does to prideful and rebellious people. There appears to be archeological evidence of the utter destruction this place suffered.
- c. After this, Lot’s daughters got him drunk, slept with him, and birthed children by him. These were the ancestors of the people of Moab and Ammon, sinful people in Scripture.