



# DEEPER INTO RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE IN THE BIBLE

## PASSAGES

**Gen 18:1** And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day.

**Gen 18:14** Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, in the spring, and Sarah shall have a son."

**Gen 18:16** Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off. 17 The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18 since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? 19 "For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him." 20 And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. 21 I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know." 22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the LORD. 23 Abraham came near and said, "Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? 25 Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" 26 So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place on their account." 27 And Abraham replied, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am but dust and ashes. 28 "Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the whole city because of five?" And He said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there." 29 He spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose forty are found there?" And He said, "I will not do it on account of the forty." 30 Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak; suppose thirty are found there?" And He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." 31 And he said, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord; suppose twenty are found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it on account of the twenty." 32 Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once; suppose ten are found there?" And He said, "I will not

destroy it on account of the ten.” 33 As soon as He had finished speaking to Abraham the LORD departed, and Abraham returned to his place

**Gen 19:1-9** The two angels came to Sodom in the evening; and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and bowed himself with his face to the earth, and said, “My lords, turn aside, I pray you, to your servant’s house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise up early and go on your way.” They said, “No; we will spend the night in the street.” 3 But he urged them strongly; so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. 4 But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house and they called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them.” 6 Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, 7 and said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. Behold, I have two daughters who have not known man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.” But they said, “Stand back!” And they said, “This fellow came to sojourn, and he would play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.” Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and drew near to break the door.

**Gen 19:29** So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt.

## 1. PARALLELS BETWEEN GEN 18 & 19

- a. Hospitality valued
- b. Posterity valued
- c. Bartering
- d. Hiding
- e. Sarah/Mrs. Lot
- f. Abraham/Lot
- g. Dialogue
- h. God interceding in human history in unusual ways
- i. Abraham key figure in both
- j. Angels
- k. Theological words

## 2. CONNECTIONS IN GENESIS

- a. Gen 12 & 18
- b. Righteous
- c. Remember

## MESSAGE

### 1. WICKEDNESS (INJUSTICE/UNRIGHTEOUSNESS) MUST BE PUNISHED

**Gen. 19:5** “Bring them out to us, that we may know them.” (Judg 19:22-25)

Destruction compared to Sodom in Deut. 29:23; Isa. 13:19; Lam. 4:6; Amos 4:11; Zeph. 2:9; Matt 10:15

**Gen 13:13** Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.

**Isa 1:10** Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

**Isa 3:9** Their partiality witnesses against them; they proclaim their sin like Sodom, they do not hide it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil upon themselves.

**Jer 23:14** But in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies; they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns from his wickedness; all of them have become like Sodom to me, and its inhabitants like Gomorrah."

**Ezek 16:46-50** "Now your older sister is Samaria, who lives north of you with her daughters; and your younger sister, who lives south of you, is Sodom with her daughters. Yet you have not merely walked in their ways or done according to their abominations; but, as if that were too little, you acted more corruptly in all your conduct than they. As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "Sodom, your sister and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy. Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me. Therefore I removed them when I saw it.

**2 Pet 2:6** if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example to those who were to be ungodly

**Jude 7** just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise acted immorally and indulged in unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

## 2. THE POOR AND OPPRESSED KNOW GOD WILL DO JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS ON THEIR BEHALF.

## 3. DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT AND THE CHARACTER OF GOD

**Gen 6:5** The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his **heart** was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his **heart**.

**Gen 8:21** And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his **heart**, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's **heart** is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done.

**Gen 18:16-33**

**Hos 11:8** How can I give you up, O Ephraim! How can I hand you over, O Israel! How can I make you like Admah! How can I treat you like Zeboiim! My heart recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come to destroy.

## KEY QUESTIONS

### 1. 18:14: IS ANYTHING TOO HARD FOR GOD?

### 2. 18:23-25: WILL GOD ALLOW GOOD PEOPLE DIE WITH THE WICKED?

**1 Thess 4:17** then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord.

### 3. 18:26-33: WILL GOD SPARE WICKED PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THE GOOD PEOPLE?

**Isa 53:5** But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.

**Rom 3:21** But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

### 4. 19:1ff: WILL GOD SAVE ONE PERSON BECAUSE OF ANOTHER RIGHTEOUS PERSON?

**Rom 5:15** But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

**1 Cor 7:14** For the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy.

## DISCUSSION

1. Who is teaching who about Righteousness and justice?
2. Are God's plans for Sodom/Gomorrah just and righteous?
3. Does Abraham think the plan for Sodom/Gomorrah is just & right?
4. What is God teaching Abraham about righteousness and justice?
5. What is Abraham's goal in bargaining?
6. Does Abraham intend to hold God to a higher standard?
7. Does the bargaining assume God is reasonable?
8. What happens to the poor and oppressed in Sodom/Gomorrah?
9. Are the poor destroyed with the ones who treated them without justice & righteousness?