



Genesis 18:16-19:38: A Righteous Remnant

God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him. Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day.

– 2 Peter 2:6-8 NLT

- **When we last left Abram**

- He had a new name
- He had a new “sign” of the covenant
- He had a confirmed delivery date

*“I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at **this time next year.**” – Genesis 17:21 ESV*

- God left Abraham to his business

That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him. – Genesis 17:26-27 ESV

- Then God departed

*When he had finished talking with him, God **went up** from Abraham. – Genesis 17:22 ESV*

'ālâ (aw•law) – to go up, ascend, depart

*So Abram **went up** ('ālâ) from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb. – Genesis 13:1 ESV*

- **When we last left Lot**

***Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley** to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. – Genesis 13:11 ESV*

*So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and **Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the Lord.** – Genesis 13:12-13 ESV*

- Lot has migrated from the fields to the city
- He has made a conscious decision to urbanize

- **Abraham encounters three strangers** – Genesis 18:1-21

- It appears to a nobleman with two servants
 - He addresses the one as “Lord”
ādôn – master, prince (superior status)
 - He has no clue as to their identity
 - But he extends them gracious hospitality
 - He provides water to wash their feet
 - He has Sarah prepare bread
 - He sacrifices a calf
 - He serves them curds and milk
 - Why is any of this pertinent to the story?

*“I am God Almighty; **walk before me, and be blameless**, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.” – Genesis 17:1-2 ESV*

- He is modeling a life of **wholeness** and **holiness**
- The search for Sarah
They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” – Genesis 18:9 ESV
 - They don’t ask him **how** she is (barren)
 - They ask **where** she is (in the tent)
 - Was Abraham embarrassed by her condition?
 - He had not invited her to meet their guests
 - But they had a message for **her**

The LORD said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.” – Genesis 18:10 ESV

- In the original Hebrew, it reads: *...and he said, I will...*
- But who is this?

***The Lord** said to Abraham... – vs 13*

***Yehōvâ** – Jehovah – “the existing one” – yhwh*

- Sarah was listening
 - What does she hear?

“I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.” – Genesis 18:10 ESV

- How does she respond?
“Sarah laughed to herself.” – Genesis 18:12 ESV
 - She responds with **disbelief** and **derision**
 - But she was in “good” company

Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” – Genesis 17:17 ESV

- **Is anything too difficult for God?**

- Moses confirms the seriousness of their problem

Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. – Genesis 18:11 ESV

- Sarah is right – this is **impossible** (or is it?)

*The Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ **Is anything too hard for the Lord?**” – Genesis 18:13-14 ESV*

- Can a barren womb thwart the Creator-God?
- Can old age prove too much for the Eternal One?
- Can a lack of faith derail the plans of Almighty God?

*“Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! **Nothing is too hard for you.**” – Jeremiah 32:17 ESV*

- **The righteous versus the wicked** – Genesis 18:22-32

- A stark contrast is now established
 - The final destination of the angels is revealed: Sodom
 - They are headed to “sin city”

*Then the Lord said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and **their sin is very grave**, I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know.” – Genesis 18:20
ESV*

- The keeper of the way
*“I have chosen him, 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 to Abraham what he has promised him.” – Genesis 18:19 ESV*

- What is “the way”?
*“I am God Almighty; **walk before me, and be blameless...**” – Genesis 17:17 ESV*

“Live your whole life as if I am watching.”

Abraham (the nation)

- Chosen by God
- Keepers of the Lord’s way
- Doers of righteousness
- Heirs of the promise

Sodom (the nations)

- Created by God
- Keepers of their own way
- Doers of wickedness
- Heirs of judgment

doers (‘āśâ) – to do, produce, to bring about

*“...to keep the way of the Lord by **doing** (‘āśâ) righteousness and justice...” – vs 19*

*“I will go down to see whether they [Sodom] have **done** (‘āśâ) altogether according to the outcry that has come to me.” – vs 21*

- Abraham to the rescue again
 - He knows Lot is living in Sodom
 - And he knows the city’s reputation
 - So he begs God to do the just and right thing

*Surely you wouldn’t do such a thing, destroying **the righteous** along with **the wicked**. – Genesis 18:25 ESV*

- Let the bargaining begin
 - Abraham tries to negotiate with God
 - God agrees to spare the righteous
 - The question is, **how many** will that be?
- **The right man in the wrong place** – Genesis 19:1-22
 - Like Abraham, Lot shows these men hospitality
 - He fears for their safety
 - He takes responsibility for their well-being
 - He did what is **righteous** and **just**

*God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people. But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom **because he was a righteous man** who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him. Yes, **Lot was a righteous man** who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day. – 2 Peter 2:6-8 NLT*

- God rescued Lot

- Lot had **compromised** his convictions
 - He had sacrificed **integrity** for **comfort**
 - **Righteous** Lot was surrounded by **wickedness**
 - He had become **ineffectual** and **vulnerable**
 - He was not **wholly** holy
 - How many righteous did God find in Sodom?

...the angels seized his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters and rushed them to safety outside the city, for the Lord was merciful. – Genesis 19:16 ESV

- Lot, his wife, and his two daughters
- But only Lot proves to be truly righteous
- His wife looks back (longingly) and dies (Genesis 19:26)

- **A dim light in a dark place – Genesis 19:30-38**

How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? – 2 Corinthians 6:14 NLT

...be blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine as lights in the world... – Philippians 2:15 BSB

- Another “bright” idea and another dark outcome

“The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.” – Robert Burns, “To a Mouse”

- The family tree of a bad idea
 - Abram gave Lot his choice of land
 - Lot chose the fertile Jordan Valley
 - But he settled near Sodom
 - Then he took up residence in Sodom
 - He made himself at home in Sodom
 - He exposed his family to the temptations of Sodom
 - He lost his wife to the allure of Sodom
 - He became a pawn in his daughters’ godless plan
 - The Ammonites and Moabites end up cursed
 - They become the perpetual enemies of Israel

No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the Lord. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the Lord forever...You shall not seek their peace or their prosperity all your days forever. – Deuteronomy 23:3, 6 ESV

- **Discussion questions**

How does this story illustrate the idea that our choices have consequences? Consider the chain of influence started by Abram's decision to give Lot his choice of the land.

Look at 2 Peter 2:6-8. How does Peter's description of Lot as a righteous man change the way you read this story?

Share a time in your life when you considered something to be "too hard for God." What causes us to think that way?



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FALL SERIES 2022 – WEEK 9 HOMEWORK

WEEK 9: Genesis 20:1-21:34 – God is With You

The main focus of this lesson will be the birth of Isaac. After years of waiting, Sarah and Abraham are given the son for whom they have long waited. But surrounding this story of the divine promise fulfilled, we will see the doubt and faithlessness of Sarah and Abraham on full display. The birth of Isaac is sandwiched between two stories involving Abimelech, the king of Gerar. In the first instance, Abraham reveals that he still has doubts about God's providence and power to protect him. So, he stoops to using his old tricks once again. Yet the emphasis of this section of Genesis is on the sovereignty of God. He is all-powerful and fully capable of taking care of those whom He has chosen and who bear His name.

- As you read through this week's passage, consider what lessons you can learn from the timing of the events. What does chapter 20 reveal about Abraham? And what does chapter 21 reveal about Jehovah?
- Read pages 241-259 of Ken's Devotional™ on Genesis.
- As you read Genesis 20:1-18, compare it to the story in Genesis 12:10-20. What similarities and differences do you find?

How does the account in chapter 20 indicate that Abraham hasn't changed much over the years?

What does verse 13 reveal about Abraham's outlook on God's initial calling and his plans for handling these kinds of situations?

What is significant about God's punishment on the house of Abimelech (verse 18)?

- Read chapter 21:1-7. It seems odd that God had Moses dedicate just seven verses to such a critical event in Abraham's life. What significance do you find in this?

What jumps out at you when you read Sarah's reaction to the good news?

- Verses 8-10 indicate that Sarah's joy was interrupted. What happened?

What does this reveal about Sarah's attitude toward Hagar and her son, Ishmael?

How does God console Abraham in verses 12-13?

Look at verses 14-21. How does God intercede for Hagar and her son?

What does this reveal about the goodness and graciousness of God?

- Read Genesis 21:22-33. Abraham is living on land belonging to Abimelech. What is significant about Abimelech's statement to Abraham in verse 22?

Why would Abimelech be eager to sign a treaty with Abraham (look back at 20:1-7)?

Why do you think Moses included this story? Think about his original audience.