

Genesis

Chapter 18:9-21

Last week we ended on verse 11 but to continue this week we have to start back a few verses.

✠ **Gen 18:9-15** ⁹ *Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent."* ¹⁰ *And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)* ¹¹ *Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.* ¹² *Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"* ¹³ *And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?'"* ¹⁴ *"Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."* ¹⁵ *But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"*

The Lord was telling Abraham that in a year from now He would return to Abraham and Sarah and they would have a child. And Sarah was listening inside the tent. The original Hebrew word for *listening*, or *heard* as it says in the KJV is: **Sama'** which can also be used of "eavesdropping, or intentionally listening in on a conversation;

So Sarah was eavesdropping in on Abraham's conversation with the Lord. After all, if three men just appeared at your house and they were talking to someone other than you, about you, wouldn't you want to hear also?

Before you say yes, what does the bible say about eavesdropping?

✠ **2 Thess 3:11** (NLT) *Yet we hear that some of you are living idle lives, refusing to work and wasting time meddling in other people's business.*

✠ **1 Tim 5:13** (NLT) *Besides, they are likely to become lazy and spend their time gossiping from house to house, getting into other people's business and saying things they shouldn't.*

✠ **1 Peter 4:15** (NLT) *If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people's affairs.*

And just because we see that Sarah (a woman) was doing it doesn't mean that we as men cannot be guilty of the same thing. Think of it this way, If you have enough time to listen to gossip, or to eavesdrop into someone else's conversation. Then you have time to walk away and pray for them.

Once again, we see that Abraham was 99 and Sarah was 89 and verse 11 calls them old, well advanced in years. In fact they were so old that Sarah couldn't have children.

I also notice it says that Sarah couldn't have children, but not Abraham. Just an interesting thought.

So Sarah got caught eavesdropping.

👉 *12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" 13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?'"*

The word laugh here can also mean to mock. The pleasure spoken of here doesn't refer to intimacy, but rather the pleasure of having a child. We know this by reading the verse in the context of what it's talking about, and that's Abraham and Sarah having a child.

Sarah got caught, and what is her response?

👉 *15 But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"*

A lie being spoken to cover her facing the Lord with what she did. But then we all do this. We try to lie to the Lord thinking He won't catch us, but in reality what we are doing is adding to our sins by lying about them. God isn't in heaven waiting for you to mess up so He can pound you. No, God is with you even now, waiting for you to run to Him, seeking His love and forgiveness.

Now you may think I just skipped over a very important verse, but I didn't. Let's look at it again.

👉 *14 "Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."*

The word "hard" here is:

Hebrew word: pala' paw-law'

Part of Speech: verb

- wonders
- marvelous
- wonderful
- hard
- wondrous
- wondrously
- marvelously
- performing

Notice it's a verb, which is an action word. What is too hard, or marvelous, or wonderful that the Lord can't do in your life? You may be thinking, "But Steve, you just don't

understand. I've prayed and prayed. I've fasted, given up things, worked hard in the church, gave as much as I could to the church, and still God hasn't helped me."

What do you need to see or use to help your faith to grow?

✠ **Matt 9:20-22** *And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well." But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "**Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.**" And the woman was made well from that hour.*

This woman didn't place her faith on a piece of clothing, but it was the action of coming to the Lord and just touching a piece of His clothing and she knew that "THE LORD" would heal her, not the hem of His garment.

✠ **James 2:20** *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

By her works (touching the hem of Jesus' garment), her faith was strengthened. So I ask you again, what do you need to have your faith increased? God knows just what you need and when you need it.

✠ **Gen 18:16-19** ¹⁶ *Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. ¹⁷ And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸ "since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ "For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."*

I have to wonder if Abraham was wondering why the Lord was going towards Sodom. Abraham knew it was a wicked and unholy place and I don't think he would ignore the fact that the Lord was going there. And the Lord knew this, so He asked Himself if He should let Abraham know what was going on. And why, well verse 18 & 19 tells us why.

✠ *"since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."*

The key is in verse 19

✠ **Gen 18:19 (NLT)** *I have singled him out so that he will direct his sons and their families to keep the way of the LORD and do what is right and just. Then I will do for him all that I have promised."*

What better way to teach someone than to show them the consequences of their ways. And that is what the Lord was doing. After all Abraham was to teach his family the ways of God, and along with that the consequences of not obeying Him.

Jesus has done the same with us, showing us the consequences of rejecting Him.

✠ **Mark 9:43-48** ⁴³ *"If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched--* ⁴⁴ *"where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'* ⁴⁵ *"And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched -* ⁴⁶ *"where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'* ⁴⁷ *"And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—* ⁴⁸ *where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'*

Jesus was quoting from:

✠ **Isaiah 66:24** *"And they shall go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."*

Fire and brimstone preachers, we say that is old school or old style of preaching. Today we try and sugar coat the gospel, not really warning people about the consequences of their denying the Lord. We are afraid people will reject us and wont listen or that they may make fun of us. But you also have to remember that to tell of fire and brimstone, you don't have to yell as we are used to hearing this type of preaching. People are not deaf, and even if their ears are closed to the truth, all the yelling in the world won't help at all.

So why was it so important for Abraham to know these things? Look at the end of verse 19 *to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.*

God had chosen a righteous man, which was Abraham. But Abraham was not righteous by his works, but rather by his faith in God.

✠ **Romans 4:1-3** *What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

† **Gal 3:5-9** *Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?-- just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

And next week we will see that Abraham will ask God an important question to be sure he is serving a just and righteous God.

✠ **Gen 18:20-21** ²⁰ *And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, ²¹ "I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."*

We looked at this type of saying before with the tower of Babel, where God said I will go down and see what they are doing. Once again, God is not ignorant and it's not like He doesn't know what is going on. I believe that the Lord was giving them a final chance to repent by sending His messengers there, which were the two angels. I say this because as we get into chapter 19 the first thing we read is.

† **Gen 19:1** *Now 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 he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.*

We will look at this next more week.

But the Lord has done the same thing for us today, and not for just a couple of cities, but for the whole world. God has heard the cry of those who truly love Him and want to serve Him. He has also heard the cry of wickedness coming from the earth. But because He is loving, patient, and has compassion towards the people, He has sent another messenger, and not just an angel, but rather His only Son, Jesus Christ. Even now the Holy Spirit testified of Jesus Christ, proclaiming the word of God to the world.

Stephen tells of this in the book of acts, and because he did, he was stoned to death.

† **Acts 7:51-53** (NLT) *"You stubborn people! You are heathen at heart and deaf to the truth. Must you forever resist the Holy Spirit? But your ancestors did, and so do you! Name one prophet your ancestors didn't persecute! They even killed the ones who predicted the coming of the Righteous One--the Messiah whom you betrayed and murdered. You deliberately disobeyed God's law, though you received it from the hands of angels."*

So what is stopping you from telling others about Jesus.

Is it fear?

- † **Prov 29:25** *The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.*
- † **Matt 10:28** *And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

What about rejection?

- † **1 Sam 8:7** *And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them."*

What about excuses from others?

- † **John 15:22** *If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.*

Maybe you think you don't know enough about the bible?

- † **Matt 10:19-20** *But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.*

Do you fear losing your job?

- † **Matt 6:31-34** *Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

I've said it before and I will say it again, an excuse is the same way as saying no, and if you are coming up with excuses, then you're saying to God, "No, I won't tell others about your Son Jesus."

Jesus says, *But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.* **Matt 10:33**