

GENESIS 18

YHWH appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the **door (Heb, pethach) of his tent** in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the **tent door** to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, "My lord, if, **please**, I find favor in your eyes, **please** do not pass by your servant. **Please take** a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And **take, please**, a little bread, that you may refresh your hearts, and after that you may pass on--since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." And Abraham hastened into the tent to **Sarah**, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." Abraham ran to the herd, and **took** a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he **took** curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and gave it to their faces; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

They said to him, "Where is your wife **Sarah**?" And he said, "Behold, in the tent." Then one said, "I will return yes return to you in due season, and your wife **Sarah** shall have a son." And **Sarah** was listening at the **tent door** behind him. Now Abraham and **Sarah** were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with **Sarah** after the manner of women. So **Sarah laughed** in her womb, saying, "After I have grown worn, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure [Heb, *`ednah*, related to *`eden*]?" YHWH said to Abraham, "Why did **Sarah laugh**, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too wonderful for YHWH? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and **Sarah** shall have a son." But **Sarah** denied, saying, "**I did not laugh**"; for she was afraid. He said, "Oh **yes, you did laugh**."

Then the men set out from there, and they looked on the face of Sodom; and Abraham went with them to set them on their way. YHWH said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall become yes become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of YHWH by doing **justice** and fairness; so that YHWH may bring about for Abraham what he has promised him." Then YHWH said, "How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! I must **please** go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know." So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham stood in the face of YHWH.

Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the **just** with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty **just** within the **city**; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty **just** who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the **just** with the wicked, so that the **just** fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is **just**?" And YHWH said, "If I find at Sodom fifty **just** in the **city**, I will forgive the whole place **for their sake**." Abraham answered, Behold, **please**, let me take it upon myself to speak to YHWH, I

who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty **just** are lacking? Will you **de-destroy** the whole **city** for lack of five?" And he said, "I will not **destroy** it if I find forty-five there." Again he spoke to him, "Suppose forty are found there." He answered, "**For the sake of** forty I will not do it." Then he said, "Oh **please** do not let YHWH be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there." He answered, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there." He said, "Behold **please**, let me take it upon myself to speak to YHWH. Suppose twenty are found there." He answered, "**For the sake of** twenty I will not **destroy** it." Then he said, "Oh do not let YHWH be angry if I speak **just** once more. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "**For the sake of** ten I will not **de-destroy** it." And YHWH went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

GENESIS 19

The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and bowed down with his face to the ground. He said, "**Please**, my lords, **please** turn aside to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you can rise early and go on your way." They said, "No; we will spend the night in the square." 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.

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, so that we may know them." Lot went out of **the doorway and the door** to the men, shut **the door** after him, and said, "I beg you, **please**, my brothers, do not, **please**, act so wickedly. Behold, **please**, I have two daughters who have not known a man; **please**, let me **bring them out** to you, and do to them what is good in your eyes; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof." But they replied, "Stand back!" And they said, "This fellow came here as an alien, and he would judge yes judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near **the door** to break it down. But the men inside reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut **the door**. And they struck with blindness the men who were at **the door** of the house, both small and great, so that they were unable to find **the door**. Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the **city**--**bring them out** of the place. For we are about to **destroy** this place, because the outcry against its people has become great before YHWH, and YHWH has sent us to **destroy** it." So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to **take** his daughters, "Up, **bring them out** of this place; for YHWH is about to **destroy** the **city**." But in his sons'-in-law eyes, he seemed to be jesting.

When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Get up, **take** your woman and your two daughters who are here, or else you will be consumed in the

punishment of the **city**." But he lingered; so the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, YHWH being merciful to him, and **they brought him out** and left him outside the **city**. When **they had brought them outside**, they said, "**Flee** for your life; do not look back or stop anywhere in the **Plain**; **flee** to the hills, or else you will be consumed." And Lot said to them, "Oh, no, **please**, my lords; behold, **please**, your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life; but I cannot **flee** to the hills, for fear the disaster will overtake me and I die. Behold, **please**, that **city** is near enough to **flee** to, and it is a little one. **Please** let me escape there--is it not a little one?--and my life will be saved!" He said to him, "Behold, I have lifted up your face, and will not overthrow the **city** of which you have spoken. Hurry, **flee** there, for I can do nothing until you arrive there." Therefore the **city** was called Zoar. The sun **had been brought out** on the earth when Lot came to Zoar. Then YHWH rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from YHWH out of heaven; and he overthrew those **cities**, and all the **Plain**, and all the inhabitants of the **cities**, and what grew on the ground. But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before YHWH; and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the **Plain** and saw the smoke of the land going up like the smoke of a furnace. So it was that, when God **destroyed** the **cities** of the **Plain**, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the **cities** in which Lot had settled.

Now Lot went up out of Zoar and settled in the hills with his two daughters, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; so he lived in a cave with his two daughters. And the **firstborn** said to the **younger**, "Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the world. Come, let us make our father **drink wine**, and **we will lie with** him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father." So they made their father **drink wine** that night; and the **firstborn** went in, and **lay with** her father; he did not know when she lay down or when she rose. On the next day, the **firstborn** said to the **younger**, "Look, **I lay** last night with my father; let us make him **drink wine** tonight also; then you go in and **lie with** him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father." So they made their father **drink wine** that night also; and the **younger** rose, and **lay with** him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she rose. Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. The **firstborn** bore a son, and named him Moab; he is the ancestor of the Moabites to this day. The **younger** also bore a son and named him Ben-ammi; he is the ancestor of the Ammonites to this day.