

## GENESIS

### ABRAHAM'S HOSPITALITY

#### EXEGESIS VERSES 1 – 8:

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בְּאֵלֶיךָ מִמְרָא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב  
פֶּתַח־הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:1 Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, (וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בְּאֵלֶיךָ מִמְרָא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח־הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם) [waw consec. + v/Niphal/IPF/3ms: ra'ah; "and He appeared"; + prep. w/3ms suff: 'el; "to him"; + proper n: "Yahweh/Lord"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elon; "by the oaks of"; + proper n: "Mamre" ]

while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. (וַיֹּשֶׁבֶת אֱבְרָהָם בְּפֶתַח־הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם) [waw conj. + pro/3ms: hu'; "while he himself"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: yashab; "was sitting"; + n/com/m/s/constr: pethach; "at the door/opening of"; + d.a. \_ n/com/m/s/abs: 'ohel; "the tent"; + prep: kaph + n/com/m/s: cham {lit. be hot, warm}; "about the heat of"; + n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "the day" ]

וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים  
עָלָיו וַיִּרָץ וַיִּרְץ לִקְרַאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:2 And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; (וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו וַיִּרְץ וַיִּרְץ לִקְרַאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nasah; "and he lifted up"; + n/com/b/dual/constr. w/3ms suff: -ayin; "his eyes"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: ra'ah; "and looked"; + waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold!"; + adj/m/s/abs: shalosh; "three"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'ish; "men"; + v/Niphal/ptc/m/pl/abs: natsab; "standing"; + prep. w/3ms suff: -al; "opposite him" ]

and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, (וַיִּרְא וַיִּרְץ וַיִּרְץ לִקְרַאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: ra'ah; "when he saw"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: ruts; "then he ran"; + prep: lamed + v/qal/inf/constr. w/3mpl suff: qara'; "to greet them"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/constr: pethach + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ohel; "from the door of the tent"; + waw consec. + v/Hithpael/IPF/3ms: form of shachah; "and he himself bowed down"; + n/com/f/s/abs: 'erets; "to the earth" ]

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ  
אַל־נָא תַעֲבֹר מֵעַל עַבְדְּךָ:

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<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:3 and said, "My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. (וְאָמַר וְעָבַר עָלַי מִן עַבְדְּךָ אֵל עַיִן בְּחַן מִצָּא נָא אִם אֶדְנִי אָמַר וְ) עָבַדְךָ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: 'adonay; "Lord"; + part: 'im; "if"; + interj.part: na'; "now"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: matsa; "I have found"; + n/com/m/s/abs: chen; "favor/grace"; + prep: bet + n/com/b/dual/constr. w/2ms suff: -ayin; "in your eyes"; + adv. 'al; "not" + interj.part: na'; "I pray/please"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms w/jussive force; "let you pass by"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: -ebed; "your servant"])

וְיָקַח נָא מֵעֵט מַיִם וְרָחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁעֲנוּ  
תַּחַת הָעֵץ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:4

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:4 "Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; (וְעַיִן הִיא תַּחַת שְׁעֵן וְרַגְלֵי רַחֲצוּ וּמַיִם מֵעֵט נָא לְקַח) [v/qal/pass/IPF/3ms w/jussive force: laqach; "let it be brought"; + interj.part: na'; "please"; + adj/m/s/constr: me-ath; "a little"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "water"; + waw conj. + v/qal/Imp/m/pl: rachats; "and you all wash"; + n/com/f/dual/constr. w/2mpl suff: regel; "your feet"; + waw conj. + v/Niphal/Imp/m/pl: sha-an; {lit. to lean on}; "and you all be rested"; + prep: tachath; "under"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: -ets; "the trees"])

וְאֶקְחָה פֶת־לֶחֶם וְסַעְדֵּי לְבַבְכֶם אַחֲרַי תַּעֲבְרוּ  
כִּי־עַל־כֵּן עַבְרַתֶּם עַל־עַבְדֵיכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֵּן תַּעֲשֶׂה פֶאֶשֶׁר  
דְּבַרְתָּ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:5

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:5 and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; (וְאֶקְחָה פֶת־לֶחֶם וְסַעְדֵּי לְבַבְכֶם אַחֲרַי תַּעֲבְרוּ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/1cs: laqach; "and I will bring"; + n/com/f/s/constr: path; "a fragment/piece of"; + n/com/m/s/abs: lechem; "bread"; + waw consec. + v/qal/Imp/m/pl: sa-ad; "so you all can sustain/strengthen/refresh"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2mpl suff: leb; "your heart/yourselves"])

**after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant."** (כֵּן עַל כִּי עַבְרַתְּ אַחֲרַי) [adv: 'achar; "afterwards"; + v/qal/IPF/2mpl: -abar; "you all will pass through/go on"; + conj: kiy + prep: -al + adv: ken; "since upon thus"; + v/qal/PF/2mpl: -abar; "you all have passed by/visited"; + prep: -al + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2mpl suff: -ebed; "upon your servant"])

**And they said, "So do, as you have said."** (וְאָמַר כֵּן אֲשֶׁר כִּי עָשִׂיתָ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: 'amar; "and they said"; + adv: ken; "thus"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: -asah; "you will do"; + prep: kaph + rel.pro: 'asher; "just like which"; + v/Piel/PF/2ms: dabar; "you have spoken"])

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וַיְמַהֵר אַבְרָהָם הָאֵלֶּלָה אֶל-שָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר  
מַהֲרִי שְׁלֹשׁ סָאִים קִמַּח סֹלֶת לֹשֵׁי וְעָשִׂי עֲגוֹת:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, (וַיְמַהֵר אַבְרָהָם מַהֲרִי הָאֵלֶּלָה אֶל שָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: mahar; "and he hastened/hurried to"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ohel; "'the tent"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Sarah"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"])

"Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make bread cakes." (מַהֲרִי עֲנֵה עֲשֵׂה וּלֹשׁ סֹלֶת קִמַּח סָאֵה שְׁלֹשׁ [v/Piel/Imp/f/s: mahar; "Quickly without delay"; + adj/f/s/constr: shalosh; "three"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: se'ah; "measures of flour/grain"; + n/com/m/s/abs: qemach; "meal flour"; + n/com/f/s/abs: soleth; "fine flour"; + v/qal/Imp/f/s: lush; "knead it"; + waw conj. + v/qal/Imp/f/s: -asah; "and make"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: -unah; "disks of bread/bread cakes"])

וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח בֶּן-בְּקָר רֶדֶד  
וַיִּתֵּן אֶל-הַנְּעָר לְעִשׂוֹת אֹתוֹ:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:7 Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf, and gave it to the servant; (וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח בֶּן-בְּקָר רֶדֶד וַיִּתֵּן אֶל-הַנְּעָר [waw conj. + prep: 'el; "and to"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: baqar; "the herd"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: ruts; "he ran"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: laqach; "and he took"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben; "a son of"; + n/com/m/s/abs: baqar; "the herd" {hence: a calf}; + adj/m/s/abs: rake; "tender/soft"; + waw conj. + adj/m/s/abs: tob; "good/choice"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nathan; "and he gave it"; + prep: 'el + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar {lit. youth}; "to the servant"])

and he hurried to prepare it. (וַיְמַהֵר לְעִשׂוֹת אֹתוֹ [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: mahar; "and he hurried"; + prep: lamed + v/qal/inf/constr: -asah + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "to prepare it"])

וַיִּקַּח חֲמֵאָה וְחֵלֶב וּבֶן-בְּקָר אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּתֵּן  
לְפָנֵיהֶם וְהוּא-עֹמֵד עֲלֵיהֶם תַּחַת הָעֵץ וַיֹּאכְלוּ:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:8 And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; (וַיִּקַּח חֲמֵאָה וְחֵלֶב וּבֶן-בְּקָר אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּתֵּן לְפָנֵיהֶם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: laqach; "and he took"; + n/com/f/s/abs: cheme'ah;

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"curds"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: *chalab*; "milk/cheese"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: *ben* + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: *baqar*; "and the son of the herd/calf"; + rel.pro: 'asher + v/qal/PF/3ms: *-asah*; "which he had prepared"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: *nathan*; "and he gave/placed"; + prep: *lamed* + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3mpl suff: *paneh*; "before their faces/presence"])

**and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.** (עֵץ הַתְּחַת עַל עֵמֶד הוּא וְ 7  
 7 אִכְלוּ [waw consec. + pro/3ms: *hu'*; "and he himself"; + v/qal/Ptc/m/s/abs: *-amad*; "was standing"; + prep. w/3mpl: *-al*; "over them"; + prep: *tachath*; "under"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: *-ets*; "the tree"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: *'acal*; "as they ate"])

### ANALYSIS VERSES 1 – 8:

1. The narrative advances in time short of 3 months since Yahweh's appearance in chapter 17.
2. We deduce this based on the fact that Yahweh tells **Abraham** that Sarah will bear Isaac in one year's time per 17:21 and as of yet Isaac's conception has not occurred (18:10,14).
3. Again Yahweh appears to **Abraham** in theophany, this time "**by the taberinth/oaks of Mamre**".
4. It is in this location that **Abraham** built an altar commemorating Yahweh's unconditional promise of covenant after separating from Lot in 13:18.
5. It was here that **Abraham** was living when the fugitive came and told him of Lot's capture in 14:13.
6. Again we find Lot as a secondary actor that brings at least in part purpose for Yahweh's present visit further revealed in chapter 19.
7. This as it relates to the impending judgment regarding Sodom and Gomorrah (18:16-33).
8. However, first Yahweh will revisit the imminent birth of Isaac (18:9-15), this time for the benefit of Sarah.
9. It appears that **Mamre** is intended in part to remind the reader of God's promises of blessing in Covenant for those obedient to Him and judgment otherwise for those maladjusted to His will with emphasis on His grace in deliverance.
10. That **Mamre** is a parcel of land set apart in memoriam is further illustrated with its purchase by **Abraham** to be used as the burial place for the three patriarchs and their wives. Cf.Gen.23:17,19; 25:9; 35:27; 49:30; 50:13
11. The timing of Yahweh's appearance in vs.1 was summer and the time of day was mid-afternoon as per the phrase "**the heat of the day**/kaph cham yom".
12. **Abraham** was escaping the direct sun **sitting at the tent door** either taking a nap or in deep contemplation per the phrase in vs.2 "**and when he lifted up his eyes**/waw nasah –ayin".
13. Upon looking up, suddenly **three men** appeared **opposite him** out of nowhere.
14. The dramatic appearance is introduced with the interjectory particle "**Behold!**/hinneh".
15. Normally people would not have been moving about in this kind of heat.
16. He instantly identified them as supernatural in nature.
17. The nature of their sudden appearance and appearing as men made them out to be something more than what they seemed to be.
18. The language throughout these verses supports this assertion.

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19. While they were some distance away, they were close enough to discern their faces.
20. Abraham's immediate actions upon seeing them indicates that he regarded them as paranormal.
21. That "**he ran...to meet them**/ruts lamed qara" is not something he would have done if the visitors were unrecognized.
22. His running reveals he was in good shape in spite of his age.
23. Then he prostrated himself bowing **himself to the earth**, an act generally reserved for a divine agent or others of importance (cp.17:3).
24. It appears that **Abraham** recognized the Divine Person of Yahweh among the trio.
25. Yahweh has in fact revealed Himself in Christophany twice before (cf.12:7; 17:1).
26. The bowing down in such manner is an act of worship (cf.24:26,28,52), would have been inappropriate if one of the 3 was not divine (cf.Rev.19:10; 22:8-9), and there is no censorship here.
27. Further, the **Lord** has appeared as a man before as the Angel of Yahweh in the presence of Hagar (cp.16:7ff).
28. Gen.19:1 reveals that the two other visitors with Yahweh were angels.
29. In vs.3, **Abraham** pleads for his would-be guests to **not pass him by**.
30. His reference to himself as their "**servant**/-ebed" reveals his humility further suggesting a lowly position before them.
31. The phrase "**if now I have found grace/favor**/'im na' matsa chen" clearly indicates a person in an inferior position (cf.Gen.6:8).
32. The singular address "**My Lord**/'adonay" instead of a plural "Sirs" further suggests recognition of the main visitor, Yahweh.
33. Abraham's overall greeting in vss.3-4 is quite long by biblical standards and very deferential (reverent/respectful).
34. In pressing them to stay **Abraham** addresses the leader whom he recognizes as Divine.
35. Following his solicitous welcome, he then offers them the usual treatment for weary travelers.
36. His priorities of hospitality are on the mark as in vs.4 he first offers them **a little water** to drink **and to wash** their **feet** followed with a comfortable and cool place to **rest** under the leafy canopy provided.
37. His offer in vs.5 of "**a morsel of bread**/path lechem" goes beyond the basics offered in vs.4, but not by much.
38. His offer of something like a pita roll is an extended invitation to test the waters if his guests might be amenable for his real intentions of providing a feast.
39. His approach in this fashion is in consideration of the visitors' immediate itinerary and allows them to accept or reject without any overt pressure or feeling of obligation (avoiding any form of coercing).
40. Further he avoids appearing overtly ostentatious considering the fact that he was well-to-do.
41. He is not motivated by approbation.
42. Understatement is characteristic of generous believers in Scripture.
43. Knowing that such as these 3 were divine and never hungry, thirsty or weary, he nevertheless treats them overtly according to their appearance as humans and as the following verses make clear according to their dignity.

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44. His final plea for them to stay awhile is seen in the words “**since you have visited your servant**/kiy –al ken –abar –al –ebed”.
45. As host, he is honored by their presence and asks them to accept his hospitality.
46. His invitation is accepted in terms that might offend some people.
47. “**So do as you have said**/ken –asah kaph ‘asher dabar” is akin to the concept of “let your ‘yes’ be yes and your “no” no.
48. The seeming bluntness was not rude, but simple acknowledgment that Abraham’s desire to apply hospitality is totally up to him.
49. There was no call to ingratiate (grovel) themselves as the weight of honor lies upon their host.
50. So as host **Abraham** is honored by their presence and asks them to accept his hospitality.
51. Upon their acceptance, **Abraham** shift gears and springs into action.
52. Despite the midday **heat**, he hurries to **Sarah**, tells her to hurry, runs to the lad, who in turn hurries (vss.6-7).
53. It is Sarah’s submissive response to Abraham’s authority that is recorded in 1Pet.3:6 that sets her forth as example to wives seeking spiritual greatness as Sarah’s daughters...*see Doctrine of Sarah’s Daughters*.
54. The introduction to **Sarah** contextually sets the stage as the primary person of interest in the immediate setting (cf.vss.9ff).
55. Her obedience to **Abraham** reflected her +V and she is personally targeted to hear the good news of bearing their son.
56. It is clear that the trio of visitors had this intention in mind for their visit.
57. In spite of her momentary STA lapse (vss.12-15), Yahweh did not withhold the blessing of doctrine.
58. It is this increment of doctrine repeated for her benefit in the current situation that will advance and strengthen her faith.
59. The “**piece of bread**” turns into a feast.
60. Abraham’s commands to **Sarah** are snapped out with 3 imperatives, “**Quickly**/mahar”, “**knead**/lush” and “**make**/-asah”.
61. The different ingredients of “**grain**/se’ah”, “**meal flour**/qemach” and “**fine flour**/soleth” suggests the best recipe in Sarah’s arsenal for making “**disks of bread**/-unah”.
62. If “**three measures**/shalosh” is about 6 quarts (1 ½ gals.), this would make a great quantity of **bread**, while to kill a fatted **calf** for just 3 visitors shows royal generosity when a lamb or goat would have been more than adequate (Cf.2Sam.12:4 cp.Luk.15:27-30).
63. Obviously this would take a while to cook and the pita hors d’oeuvres would tide them over.
64. With the energetic preparations over, the meal is served.
65. The zeal to apply for all concerned is not to be overlooked.
66. As customary in the Middle East, “**yogart/curds**/cheme’ah (modern *leben*)” and “**cheese/milk**/chalab” is served with the main course.
67. **Abraham** the good host waits discreetly in the background allowing his guests to enjoy the lavish banquet (vs.8b).

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### THE 2<sup>ND</sup> BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

#### EXEGESIS VERSES 9 – 15:

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אַיֵּה שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְּאֵהָלִי: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:9

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:9 Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" (וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אַיֵּה שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: 'amar + prep. w/3ms suff: 'el; "and they said to him"; + interr. part: 'ayeh; "Where?"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2ms suff: 'ishshah; "your wife"])

And he said, "Behold, in the tent." (וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְּאֵהָלִי [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + interj.part: hinneh + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ohel; "and he said, 'Behold, in the tent'"])

וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיִּיהָ וְהָיִיתִי בְּךָ לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וְשָׂרָה שָׂמְעַת פֶּתַח הָאֵהָלִי וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:10

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:10 (REVISED) And he said, "I will surely return to you at the time of life; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיִּיהָ וְהָיִיתִי בְּךָ לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וְשָׂרָה שָׂמְעַת פֶּתַח הָאֵהָלִי וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and He said"; + v/qal/inf: shub + v/qal/IPF/1cs: shub; "returning I will return"; + prep. w/2ms suff: 'el; "to you"; + prep: kaph + d.a. + n/com/b/s/constr: -eth; "at the time of"; + adj/f/s/abs: chay; "life"])

and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיִּיהָ וְהָיִיתִי בְּךָ לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ [waw conj. + interrj.part: hinneh + n/com/m/s/abs: ben + prep: lamed + proper n: sarah; "and behold, a son for Sarah"])

And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. (וְשָׂרָה שָׂמְעַת פֶּתַח הָאֵהָלִי וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו [waw conj. + proper n: "and Sarah"; + v/qal/Ptc/f/s/abs: shama-; "was listening"; + n/com/m/s/constr: pethach; "at the door/entry of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ohel; "the tent"; + waw conj. + pro/3ms: hu'; "and it was"; + adv. w/3ms suff: 'acherey; "behind him"])

וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זְקֵנִים בָּאִים בְּיָמֵם חָדְלָה לְהַיִּיתָ לְשָׂרָה אֶרֶחַ כְּנָשִׁים: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:11

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. (וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זְקֵנִים בָּאִים בְּיָמֵם חָדְלָה לְהַיִּיתָ לְשָׂרָה אֶרֶחַ כְּנָשִׁים [waw conj. + proper n: "and Abraham and Sarah"; + v/qal/Ptc/f/s/abs: zekenim; "were old"; + v/qal/Ptc/f/s/abs: sarah; "was past childbearing"; + waw conj. + pro/3ms: hu'; "and it was"; + adv. w/3ms suff: 'acherey; "behind him"])

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כַּ וְהָיוּ אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ [waw conj. + proper n: "and Abraham"; + waw conj. + proper n: "and Sarah"; + adj/m/pl/abs: zaqen; "were old"; + v/qal/Ptc/m/pl/abs: bo'; {lit. going} "advancing"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: yom; "in the days/age"; + v/qal/PF/3ms; chadal; "having ceased/stopped"; + v/qal/inf/constr: hayah; "becoming"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "for Sarah"; + n/com/b/s/abs: 'orach; "the way/path"; + prep: kaph + d.a. + n/com/f/pl/abs: 'ishshah; "as of the women" ])

וַתִּצְחַק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר אַחֲרַי בְּלֹתִי  
הֲיִתְהַלְכִי עִדְנָה וְאֵדְנִי זָקֵן:

WTT Genesis 18:12

NAS Genesis 18:12 **And Sarah laughed to herself, saying,** ל קָרַב בַּ שָׂרָה צִחֻק (ו) אַמַּר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: tsachaq; "and she laughed"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs suff: qereb: {lit. midst, inner part} "to herself"; + prep: lamed + v/qal/inf: 'amar"; "saying" ])

"After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" (בְּלֹתִי אַחֲרַי) זָקֵן אֲדֹנָי וְעִדְנָה לִּי הִיא [adv: 'achery; "after"; + v/qal/inf/constr. w/1cs suff: balah {lit. worn out, become old} "past my bearing age"; + v/qal/PF/3fs; "hayah; "it has become"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "for me"; + n/com/f/s/abs: -edenah; "pleasure"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'adon; "also my lord"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: zaken; "has become old" ])

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָהָם לְמָה זֶה צִחֻקָּהּ  
שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הֲאֵפֶּה אֲמַנָּם אֵלַי וְאֵנִי זָקֵנָתִי:

WTT Genesis 18:13

NAS Genesis 18:13 **And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?'"** צִחֻק זֶה לְמָה אֲבָרָהֶם אֵל יְהוָה אָמַר (ו) שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הֲאֵפֶּה אֲמַנָּם אֵלַי וְאֵנִי זָקֵנָתִי [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + proper n: yahweh + prep: 'el + proper n: aberaham; "and He said, the Lord, to Abraham"; + interr.part: lammah; "Why?/For what reason?"; + adj/m/s: zeh; "as such/did"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: tsachaq; "she laughed"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + prep: lamed w. v/qal/inf/constr: 'amar"; "saying"; + interr.part: ha + conj: 'aph {emphatic} "really?/indeed?"; + part: 'umenam; "truly"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs: yalad; "I will bear"; + pro/1cs: 'aniy; "I, myself"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: zaken; "having become old" ])

וַיִּפְלֵא מִיְהוָה דְּבַר לְמוֹעֵד אֲשׁוּב אֵלַיךָ  
כַּעֲת חַיָּה וְלִשְׂרָה בֵּן:

WTT Genesis 18:14

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<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:14 "Is anything too difficult for the LORD? (דָּבָר יְהוָה מִן פֶּלֶא הֲ) [interr.part: ha + v/Niphal/IPF/3ms: phala' {lit. wonderful/marvelous}; "Will it be too marvelous?/is it too difficult?"; + prep: min + proper n: "for the Lord"; + n/com/m/s/abs: dabar; "a matter/anything"])

**(REVISED) At the appointed time I will return to you, at the time of life,** (לְ מוֹעֵד הֲ לִ) מוֹעֵד הֲ לִ [prep: lamed + part: ha + n/com/m/s/abs: mo-ed; "at the appointed place"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs: shub; "I will return"; + prep. w/2ms suff: 'el; "to you" + prep: kaph + da. + n/com/b/s/constr: -eth; "at the time of"; + adj/f/s/abs: chay; "life"])

**and Sarah shall have a son.** (וְ בִן שָׂרָה לִ) [waw conj. + prep: lamed + proper n: sarah + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "and for Sarah a son"])

וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא כִי צָחַקְתִּי כִּי יִרְאֶה וַתִּכְחַשׁ שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר לֹא צָחַקְתִּי כִּי יִרְאֶה  
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא כִי צָחַקְתִּי

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:15 Sarah denied it however, saying, "I did not laugh"; (לְ שָׂרָה כַחֵשׁ וְ) לְ שָׂרָה כַחֵשׁ וְ [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3fs: kachash {lit. found to be a liar}; "and she utterly denied"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + prep: lamed w. v/qal/inf/constr: 'amar"; "saying"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/PF/1cs: tsachaq; "I did not laugh"])

**for she was afraid.** (כִּי יָרָא) [conj: kiy; "because"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: yara'; "she was afraid/she feared"])

**And He said, "No, but you did laugh."** (וְ אָמַר לֹא אָמַר וְ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and He said"; + neg.part: lo' + conj: kiy + v/qal/PF/2fs: tsachaq; "No, for you did laugh"])

### ANALYSIS VERSES 9 – 15:

1. Concluding the meal, the divine visitors engage in conversation.
2. During their course of conversation they ask **Abraham**, "Where is Sarah your wife?"
3. The plural of the verb in the phrase "they said to him/'amar 'el" looks to the point of conversation when all 3 visitors determined to get down to business concerning the visit.
4. Obviously, only one spoke the actual question that being Yahweh (cp.vs.10a singular of "and He said").
5. A primary purpose of the visit now becomes plain.
6. The person of interest is **Sarah** and the Lords second announcement concerning the birth of Isaac.
7. The focus is that the promise is now meant to be made directly to **Sarah**.
8. The question of her location is rhetorical and designed to get her attention (cp.Gen.4:9, "Where is Able your brother?").

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9. **Abraham** replies directly, “**Behold, in the tent**/hinneh ha ‘ohel”.
10. The interjectory particle “**Behold**” was more for Sarah’s benefit rather than informing the divine as to her location as they obviously already knew.
11. The question and Abraham’s exclamatory response (elevated in sound) was to ensure they had her undivided attention as one of interest to them.
12. Yahweh then speaks, “**Returning, I will return to you at the time of life; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son**”.
13. The NAS translation “**at this time next year**” is incorrect and very misleading (both vss.10 and 14).
14. There are no Hebrew words for “**next/after**”/acher” or “**year**/shanah” as otherwise correctly translated in 17:21.
15. The literal Hebrew of the phrase is “**at/according to (kaph) the time of (-eth) life (chay)**”.
16. The double use of the verb *shub* (**returning** [Qal infinitive] **I will return** [Qal imperfect]) extends beyond the definite (NAS - **surely return**) to include a two-fold **return**.
17. The matter of fact is that this is the last visible visitation by Yahweh in Christophany during Abraham’s life as recorded in Genesis.
18. The closest future manifestation by Yahweh in Christophany (manifestation of the pre-incarnate Christ) is in Gen.22:11ff where as the “*Angel of Yahweh*” audibly he stops **Abraham** from sacrificing Isaac; yet He doesn’t literally “**return**” but speaks “*from heaven*” (cf.Gen.22:11,15).
19. Further, there is no evidence that Yahweh was present at the birth of Isaac whereas our verse connects the “**return**” in connection with **Sarah** having a son.
20. Key to interpretation is the second mention by Yahweh returning in vs.14 in response to Sarah’s disbelief in vs.13.
21. In vs.14, *shub* is used only once as a future literally “**at the appointed place**/lamed ha mo-ed” that is then “**at the time of life** (same construct as vs.10: *kaph ha –eth chay*)”.
22. The noun “**appointed place (mo-ed)**” can mean “*season*” as it relates to **time** (cf.1:14; 17:21)” but its Hebrew root means “a meeting” designated for a specific **time** (e.g., observing the feast of unleavened bread, Exo.13:10; 23:15 cp. “*the tent of meeting* (Tabernacle)/‘ohel mo-ed”, Exo.27:21; 28:43; 29:4; etc.).
23. So vs.14 is stating that Yahweh’s **return** is to be timed with a specific meeting related to **the time of life**.
24. Further, Yahweh’s “**return**” is to be understood in terms of divine intervention (cp.Psa.80:14; Zec.1:3) in a two-fold way rather than a visible manifestation.
25. That is His appearing will be on behalf of both **Abraham and Sarah** to reverse their conditions of sexual death enabling **Sarah** to conceive.
26. The first two uses of “**return**” in vs.10 emphasize both parties; the singular use in vs.14 emphasizes the act of sexual procreation.
27. The following proclamation by Yahweh, “**and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son**” in vs.10 looks to the result of the miracle (“**Behold!**”) and its subdued rendition in vs.14 “**and Sarah shall have a son**” looks to the natural result of having sexual intercourse.
28. So Yahweh’s **return** and **Sarah** having their child are two separate but related conditions with the first being in a matter of days and the latter following nine months later.
29. The promised visit or **return** would be silent and invisible but real.

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30. Very little time separated Yahweh's appearance to **Abraham** in Gen.17 and the visit in this chapter, as we have already concluded, was less than 3 months.
31. The question of the divine visitors as to Sarah's whereabouts and Abraham's pointed response surely grabbed Sarah's attention as we are informed, "**And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him (Abraham)**".
32. It appears that **Sarah** had maintained close proximity to all concerned in the event of further need for her help.
33. She was that faithful help mate ready to serve in order to fulfill her role as a **wife**.
34. The author then reminds us that "**Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing**."
35. We know that she was pushing 90 from the previous visit in 17:17.
36. At age 66 she was still very attractive (Gen.12:11), a point assumed in Gen.20 as well!
37. In the context of Genesis, 90 is no great age.
38. Yet, the reproductive cycles of humanity were still more in line with our present age.
39. The phrase "**advanced in age/zaqen bo**" does not refer to what we commonly think; it refers exclusively to their both being sexually dead.
40. It is the final phrase "**Sarah was past childbearing** (lit.: "*in the days having ceased to become for Sarah the way/manner of women*"/bet ha yom chadal hayah lamed Sarah 'orach kaph ha 'ishshah") that extends our verse beyond redundant to the information in 17:17.
41. **Sarah** was not only barren her entire married life, but she had now also passed menopause.
42. This in addition to the fact that her husband was now **also** too **old** to have kids.
43. For **Sarah** to hear that she will be conceiving in the near future goes beyond human reason and for that we might tend to excuse her silent laughter that follows in vs.12.
44. Whereas Abraham's laughter in 17:17 was simply mirthful contemplation of the reality, Sarah's like response carries with it blatant disbelief.
45. Contrasts between the laugh incidents of the two are:
  - A. Abraham's laughter was overtly noticeable (not trying to hide anything); Sarah's was completely restrained within.
  - B. **Abraham** looks to the promise as to its future reality (100 years old and 90 years old); **Sarah** views the promise as being too late, "**After I have become old...my lord being old also?**"
  - C. Sarah's incident follows with her lying under fear and a rebuke by Yahweh; Abraham's follows with consideration by Yahweh to an honest request.
46. The "**pleasure/-edenah**" that Sarah now speaks of is of course sexual intercourse no longer a part of or possible in their relationship since **Abraham** was impotent.
47. She further views herself as "**worn out**" the literal meaning of the first reference to becoming "**old/balah**" (in contrast to "*zaken*" translated **old** otherwise in vss.11,12,13).
48. Her skepticism becomes more apparent as her thoughts revolve around the idea "as if I haven't tried" otherwise.
49. Her cynicism translates to hopelessness as her doubts are based on a lifetime of denial.
50. In spite of her reaction, the reader is not to overlook her address of **Abraham** as "**my lord/'adon**".
51. According to 1Pet.3:6 this demonstrated her mature acclimation to Abraham's authority and that even when she was not in fellowship.

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52. What set **Sarah** apart from the typical female mentality today is her ongoing gentle and quiet spirit in submission to her right man in spite of some STA leakage otherwise.
53. Her constant attitude in orientation to the authority God placed in her life served as a staple of application in maintaining her spiritual advance and ultimately victory over her STA.
54. She examples +V that in spite of incidental sin maintains doctrine in priority of application, here in orientation to the doctrine of authority as positive right-man/right-woman.
55. When Yahweh speaks to **Abraham** in vs.13 He is really speaking for Sarah's benefit.
56. If **Sarah** is astonished at the promise of a child, the **Lord** professes astonishment that she did not take Him at His word, "**Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?'**"
57. The phraseology of the Hebrew expresses divine surprise (accommodation) introduced with the interrogative particle "**Why?/lammah**".
58. What is most significant here is that Yahweh knows **Sarah** had **laughed** and what she thought even though she was still inside the **tent** and not face to face.
59. This proves who He is and is the basis for the next remark in vs.14, "**Is anything too difficult for the Lord?**"
60. The question is rhetorical and demands the answer no.
61. This episode illustrates divine omniscience and omnipotence.
62. "**Too difficult/phala**" is used elsewhere of lawsuits **too difficult** for lower judges to handle (Deu.17:8), of the impossibility of Amnon marrying Tamar (2Sam.13:2) and the unimaginable peace of Jerusalem (Zec.8:6).
63. Jer.32:17,27 offer the closest parallels to our verse where divine omnipotence is affirmed.
64. The 2<sup>nd</sup> affirmation of Yahweh's visit "**at the appointed place**" now takes on further meaning; this in response to Sarah's thoughts of "ever again having sexual **pleasure...?**"
65. She will, and will produce the promised heir as a result.
66. Yahweh's response is enough for **Sarah** to thoroughly recognize that she wasn't in the presence of just any man and her disbelief immediately converts to a lie as a cover up as she gets under fear (vs.15).
67. Yahweh's rebuke wasn't reading her any "riot act", but simply reconfirms what she is now comprehending and again illustrates His omniscience, "**No, but you did laugh**".
68. Principle: God continually provides evidence of His word in rebuke to unbelief and falsehood.
69. God doesn't rebuke her fear, only her spoken lie.
70. Her laughing was not the sin; her cynical disbelief to the doctrine and then trying to lie to God is what brought rebuke.
71. These two things are always sin.
72. The omission to addressing her fear leaves in the balance whether **Sarah** will overcome sin fear and restore a righteous fear in faith with the truth.
73. Per Heb.11:11 we know righteous fear won.
74. *Review the Doctrine of Hospitality.*
75. *Review the Doctrine of Sarah's Daughters.*

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### THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH

#### VSS.16- CHPTR 19:29

#### SCENE ONE: ABRAHAM IS UNAWARE

#### EXEGESIS VERSE 16:

וַיִּקְמוּ מִשָּׁם הַאֲנָשִׁים וַיִּשְׁקֹפוּ עַל־פְּנֵי סֹדֶם  
וַאֲבָרָהֶם הֵלֵךְ עִמָּם לְשַׁלְּחָם: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:16

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:16 **Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom;** (7

*סֹדֶם פָּנָה עַל שִׁקְףָּ וְ אִישׁ הָ שָׁם מִן קוּם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: qum; "and they stood up/arose"; + prep: min + adv: sham; "from there"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: ish; "the men"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: shaqaph; "and caused to look down/overlooked"; + prep: -al + n/com/b/pl/constr: paneh; "upon the face of"; + proper n: "Sodom"])*

**and Abraham was walking with them to send them off.** (וְ שַׁלַּח ל עִם הֵלֵךְ אֲבָרָהֶם וּ)  
*[waw conj. + proper n: "and Abraham"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: halak; "was walking"; + prep. w/3mpl: -im; "with them"; + prep: lamed w. v/Piel/inf/constr. w/3mpl suff: shalach; "to send them off"])*

#### ANALYSIS VERSE 16:

1. **Abraham** and Sarah have just received confirmation to the impending birth of a son in their old age.
2. Verse 16 forward to the end of chapter 19 the narrative transitions into the story of the destruction of **Sodom** and Gomorrah.
3. This reveals a second reason for the divine visitors presence i.e., to exact judgment.
4. Only Lot, his wife and two daughters are spared the impending judgment, though his wife ultimately experiences judgment as a result of her own doing (19:26).
5. Indeed, the oaks of Mamre (vs.1) is a historical reminder of God's blessings, judgments and deliverances afforded the early patriarchs and mankind in general.
6. Whether irony is intended or not, these 3 things (blessing, judgment and deliverance) summarize the basic tenets of God's plan as it plays out in human history.
7. The story of these cities destruction is arranged around 11 scenes (vs.16; vss.17-21; vss.22-33; 19:1-3; vss.4-11; vss.12-13; vs.14; vss.15-16; vss.17-22; vss.23-26; vss.27-29).
8. The central scene is found at 19:12-13 (scene 6) where the angelic announcement of the destruction is presented.
9. The 1<sup>st</sup> 5 scenes lay the foundation for judgment; the final 5 records the deliverance and execution of judgment.

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10. The 1<sup>st</sup> scene (vs.16), like the last scene (19:27-28) sees **Abraham** after leaving his encampment and “looking **down upon the face of Sodom**/shaqaph –al paneh sodom” from the hills of Hebron over the Dead Sea plane.
11. However, it is “**the men...that looked down toward Sodom**” that gives the readers the first inkling that there is divine interest in the area.
12. After the meal and discussion of Sarah’s impending pregnancy, **Abraham** accompanies the 3 men on their way to **Sodom** as a parting act of respect having no idea of the issues at stake.
13. His continued presence with them is not stimulated by anything other than a continued desire for their fellowship for as long as possible.
14. His zeal for the truth and real fellowship, along with being the part of a good host, is his sole motivation.
15. A characteristic of a zealous and first-rate believer is that he places himself in the best doctrinal company and tends to be where he needs to be, to be on the cutting edge of what God is up to.

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### SCENE 2: DIVINE CONSIDERATION AND REASONING

#### EXEGESIS VERSES 17 – 21:

וַיְהוָה אָמַר הַמְכַסֶּה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:17

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:17 **And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, (וַיְהוָה אָמַר הַמְכַסֶּה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה [waw conj. + proper n: yahweh + v/qal/PF/3ms: 'amar; "and He said, Yahweh"; interr.part: ha + v/Piel/ptc/m/s/abs: kasah {lit. to cover, conceal, hide}; "Shall completely/utterly hide"; + pro/1cs: 'aniy; "I Myself"; + prep: min + proper n: "from Abraham"; + rel.pro: 'asher + pro/1cs: 'aniy + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: -asah; "that which I Myself am doing"])**

וְאַבְרָהָם הָיוּ יְהוָה לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְעַצוֹם וְנִבְרָכוֹ בּוֹ כָּל גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:18

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:18 **since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, (וְאַבְרָהָם הָיוּ יְהוָה לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְעַצוֹם וְנִבְרָכוֹ בּוֹ כָּל גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ [waw conj. + proper n: "since Abraham"; + v/qal/inf/abs: hayah + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "becoming he will become {surely become}"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: goiy; "as a nation"; + adj/m/s/abs: gadol; "great" + waw conj. + adj/m/s/abs: -atsum; "and mighty"])**

**and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? (וְנִבְרָכוֹ בּוֹ כָּל גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ [waw consec. + v/Niphal/PF/3com/pl: barak; "and they will be blessed"; + prep. w/3ms suff: bet; "in him"; + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/pl/constr: goiy + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: 'erets; "all of the nations of the earth"])**

כִּי יָדַעְתִּיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצְוֶה אֶת־בְּנָיו וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְשָׁמְרוּ דְרָךְ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט לְמַעַן הִבִּיא יְהוָה עַל־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר עִלָּיו: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:19

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:19 **"For I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him (כִּי יָדַעְתִּיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצְוֶה אֶת־בְּנָיו וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְשָׁמְרוּ דְרָךְ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט לְמַעַן הִבִּיא יְהוָה עַל־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר עִלָּיו [conj: kiy; "because/for"; + v/qal/PF/1cs w/3ms suff: yada-; "I have known/chosen him"; + prep: lema-an; "in order that"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: tsawa; "he may command/charge"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "his sons/children"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: bayith; "and his household"; + adv. w/3fs suff: 'acherey; "after him" {fem. suff. = soul/nephesh?}]**

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**to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice;** (יְהוָה דִּרְךְךָ שָׁמַר ו) לְ עֲשֵׂה צְדָקָה וּ מִשְׁפָּט [waw consec. + v/qal/PF/3cpl: shamar; "so they will keep/guard/observe" + n/com/b/s/constr: derek; "the way of"; + proper n: "Yahweh"; prep: lamed w/v/qal/inf/constr: -asah; "to do"; + n/com/f/s/abs: tsedaqah; "righteousness"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: mishpath; "and justice"])

**in order that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."** (עַל דְּבַר אֲשֶׁר אֵת אַבְרָהָם עַל יְהוָה בּוֹא לְמַעַן) [prep: lema-an; "in order that"; + v/Hiphil/inf/constr: bo'; "causing to bring"; + proper n: "Yahweh"; + prep: -al + proper n: "upon Abraham"; + sign of d.o. + rel.pro: 'asher; "that which"; + v/Piel/PF/3ms: dabar; "had utterly He spoke"; + prep. w/3ms suff: -al; "about him"])

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה זַעֲקַת סְדֹם וְעֹמֶרָה כִּי־רַבָּה  
וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי כְבֹדָה מְאֹד:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:20 **And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave.** (כִּי עֹמֶרָה ו סְדֹם זַעֲקָה יְהוָה אָמַר ו) כִּי חַטָּאת ו רַבָּב מְאֹד [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + proper n: yahweh; "and He said, the Lord"; + n/com/f/s/constr: ze-aqah {root has nuance of outrage/shouting complaint; BDB 277a}; "the outcry of"; + proper n: "Sodom"; + waw conj. + proper n: "and Gomorrah"; + conj: kiy; "indeed/certainly"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: rabab; "it {outcry} is great"; + waw conj. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: chatta'th; "their sin"; + conj: kiy; "certainly"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: kabad {lit. be heavy}; "is severe/grave"; + adv. me'od; "exceedingly"])

וַיֵּרָא נְאֻם אֲרָרְהָנָא וְאֵרְאָה הַפְּצַעְקָתָהּ הַבָּאָה אֵלַי  
עֲשֵׂנוּ כְלָה וְאִם־לֹא אֲדַע:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:21 **"I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me;** (עֲשֵׂה אֵל בּוֹא הַ צַּעֲקָה כִּי רָאָה ו נָא יִרְדֶּה) כְּלָה [v/qal/IPF/1cs: yarad {cohortative; shows intent}; "I will go down/descend"; + interj.part: na'; "now"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/1cs: ra'ah {cohortative}; "and I will have seen"; + d.a. + prep: kaph {emphasis quantitative}; "that accordingly/in like of"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3fs suff: tse-aqah; "their outcry" {fem. suff. looks to their souls}; + d.a. + v/qal/PF/3fs: bo'; "that came" + prep. w/1cs suff: 'el; "to Me"; + v/qal/PF/3cpl: -asah; "is as they have done"; + prep: kalah; "entirely/completely"])

**and if not, I will know."** (ו יִדַע לֹא אִם ו) [waw conj. + conj: 'im + neg: lo'; "and if not"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs {cohortative}; yada-; "I will know"])

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### ANALYSIS VERSES 17 – 21:

1. Abraham's ardent desire for fellowship with Yahweh and his angelic guests finds further benefit.
2. That as it pertains to **Abraham** gaining further doctrinal insight (vss.17-21) and freedom to respond with doctrine himself (vss.22-33).
3. Scenes two and three illustrate the common ground for true fellowship i.e., doctrinal rapport between parties.
4. The scenario in general views **Abraham** escorting his guests down the road as a final act of hospitality (vs.16) and Yahweh informing him of His plan to judge **Sodom and Gomorrah** (vss.20-21).
5. Vss.23ff make clear that **Abraham** came to understand that judgment was in view.
6. It is how Yahweh approaches the subject in vss.17-19 that is of most interest and designed to build suspense.
7. The details expose doctrinal insight into the Person of Yahweh/God and his interaction with men, +V and -V alike.
8. Some interpreters regard vss.17-19 as a soliloquy whereas Yahweh is speaking to Himself and/or using mental telepathy with the angelic companions.
9. While it is clear He is not addressing **Abraham** directly, He could be conferring with the two angels aloud in such manner as **Abraham** indirectly stills hear the conversation.
10. Yahweh is not snubbing or circumventing **Abraham**, but rather tactically seeks to draw him into conversation.
11. The approach subtly without pressure provides an open door for **Abraham** to respond as he will with the doctrine articulated in vss.23ff.
12. Neither view (soliloquy or overtly audible) damages the doctrinal purpose of Yahweh's approach to **Abraham** in vss.17-19.
13. First it is designed to demonstrate that God is a personality (not some nonentity or disengaged intelligence) that considers on a very personal level the events of human history individually and otherwise and uses reason to exact his actions in all things.
14. It is language that gives insight as to the mechanics of God's omniscience as it relates to contemplation (scrutiny/examination/anticipation), consideration (deliberation/consequence) and reasoning (willful and rational determination) in decision making.
15. Second, Yahweh's approach illustrates the fact that God does not hide from +V doctrine essential to understanding his plan in human history. Cf.Amo.3:7
16. He makes privy to +V insight into the workings of human history as it is destined to be fulfilled in the POG otherwise not comprehended by the cosmos. Cp.Mat.13:10-13
17. This so the believer may represent himself as an example to others in conduct and witness of the Word/word.
18. It is this principle that Yahweh's conversational style frames as **Abraham** is to be the example to follow in terms of the Abrahamic covenant to ensure maximum blessing.
19. Yahweh's question in vs.17, "**Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do...?**" is rhetorical expecting a negative answer.
20. The question is not to solicit information but for effect...to peak Abraham's attention (+V).
21. It teaches that God contemplates matters of life in anticipation of events.
22. Its practical application is designed to unveil +V when provided opportunity to hear God's revealed will in truth i.e., it solicits one's undivided attention.

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23. It is a question of interest (is he interested or not?).
24. Contextually the truth includes a prophetic ingredient per the phrase “**what I am about to do**”/asher ‘aniy –asah”.
25. The fact is, prophecy is not limited to just certain historical events (as here), but is inclusive of all doctrine that declares what God will or will not do as it pertains to His plan.
26. The entire Word of God is prophetic in essence. Cp.2Pet.1:20,21
27. The phrase “**shall I hide from Abraham**/ha kasha ‘aniy min Aberaham” further contemplates the extent of doctrine that God dispenses to +V.
28. The Piel form of the verb “**hide**” (kasha) means to completely conceal or cover and was used as to the flood waters covering the entire planet (Gen.7:19-20).
29. The verb illustrates that God is not obligated to tell +V every minute detail of His prophetic plan, but that essential to orientation in fulfillment of His plan.
30. The fact is throughout history more and more of God’s plan is unveiled in revelation. Eph.3:8-9; 1Pet.1:10-12
31. Vs.18 then adds to contemplation God’s consideration (examines consequence/deliberating the situation at hand), “**since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed**”.
32. The Hebrew “*waw/ since*” is copulative to the initial question of “hiding” with the idea of “*in light of*” or “*considering that*”.
33. So contemplation and consideration go hand in hand with respect to omniscience.
34. The basis for consideration is the Abrahamic Covenant and Abraham’s role in its representation.
35. The reference to the Covenant in our verse addresses the first and last features of the Covenant first revealed in Gen.12:2,3: “*And I will make you a great nation*”... “*And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed*”.
36. Yahweh now revises the original citation to include **Abraham** becoming a “**mighty nation**”/atsum goiy” and transcends familial blessing to “**nations**/goiy” or “national” blessing.
37. By stating the first and last provisions of the original list, the **Lord** summarizes the covenant.
38. The revisions in our verse then extend the Covenant in terms of power (**mighty** in addition to numbers {**great**/gadol}), and places its effect on a national level.
39. It depicts the Covenant in a most comprehensive and corporate fashion.
40. The singular use of “**nation**” refers to Israel and the plural use to all other **nations**.
41. So the question is in light of Abraham’s part in the POG as it impacts national Israel and gentile **nations**.
42. It is the **Lord** that elevates Israel’s status from simply “**great**” to “**mighty**”. Cp.Mic.4:7
43. So Yahweh is the agency making the future reality possible.
44. As to Abraham’s active role towards Israel, the phrase “**will surely become**” is literally the Hebrew “*becoming he will become*” (Qal infinitive + Qal imperfect of *hayah*).
45. The two-fold emphasis looks to Abraham’s present faith in God’s deliverance as to the promised heir (vss.9-15 cp.15:2-6) and the future results of the Hebrew race that in turn produces Messiah making the **nation** truly **great and mighty and** foundation for blessing of **all nations**.
46. In principle, **Abraham** first operates on faith that only becomes reality after his death which emulates positional truth. Cf.Joh.3:15-16; 3:36; etc.

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47. The phrase “**in him**/bet” highlights positional truth illustrated in Abraham and carries with it further consequences with respect to the remaining **nations** also being **blessed** through the coming Messiah. Cf. Jer.4:2
48. So **Abraham** first and foremost is representative of positional truth making his person a platform for witness of his Covenant relationship with God:
  - A. He is a believer destined for greatness revealed in Israel through the Person of Jesus Christ.
  - B. He sets the standard as such for blessing of **all nations**.
49. So God first considers this fact in contemplation as to why He will reveal His plan of judgment for Sodom to **Abraham** i.e., he is first and foremost a believer.
50. While positional truth is a platform for why God would choose to reveal His prophetic will to **Abraham**, it is in context only a preliminary consideration, not the direct cause.
51. Implicit then is apart from the preliminary consideration, the end result would be starkly different i.e., as a non-believer the question would expect a “yes” answer.
52. The primary cause for revelation is seen in vs.19 in the beginning phrase literally in the Hebrew, “**Because I have known him**/kiy yada-“.
53. The NAS “**chosen**” can be misleading as contextually it infers His omniscience as causative.
54. The cause otherwise illustrates the why of God’s reasoning or willful/Sovereign determination to reveal the truth.
55. The phrase first and foremost teaches that omniscience reads our tape. Psa.44:21; Jer.1:5
56. The verb *yada-* extends beyond accumulation of information having the added nuance of discernment, insight and understanding (cf. Gen.3:5,7,22; 8:11; et al).
57. The knowledge Yahweh possesses is then stated having two purposes:
  - A. **In order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice.**
  - B. **In order that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.**
58. The primary cause of reasoning as to why God reveals the truth is because of Abraham’s Ph<sub>2</sub> +V “**he may command**” providing witness to others and enjoying all the Covenant blessings promised by God.
59. God’s omniscience has purpose and here it is to discern Abraham’s soul/volition as positive to Ph<sub>2</sub> doctrine foreseeing that Abraham would utilize the doctrine for all intents and purposes.
60. It’s important to understand that omniscience is not causative; it only allows God to accurately know volition **in order that He may** reveal His purposed will to +V so they can fulfill His plan and He **may bring upon** them blessing. *See doctrine of Election and Calling.*
61. God does not conceal BD from those He sees as Ph<sub>2</sub> +V.
62. Just as for **Abraham**, God’s revelation is in order to instruct others in **the way of the Lord** so that all the promises of God may be enjoyed.
63. The phrase ending vs.19, “**what He has spoken about him**/’asher dabar –al” refers in the immediate context to all the promises of the Covenant.
64. For these to be realized it meant that **Abraham** had to implement the teaching for application of doctrine to his offspring with instructions for same to be handed down to his descendants.
65. It’s interesting to note that Yahweh speaks of Himself in vs.19 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person.
66. The grammatical distance appeals to the idea of future anticipation characterizing omniscience (God perfectly anticipates).

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67. For **Abraham**, “**his children and his household after him**/ben waw bayith ‘acherey” meant the immediate and future Hebrew **nation**.
68. The feminine suffix of the adverb “**after her** (literal)” implies the like souls of others that too would be positive to doctrine (Hebrew *nephesh/soul* is feminine).
69. It is via the chain of +V that brings about maximum insight into the POG and blessing for **all nations** and mankind.
70. The charge is a Ph<sub>2</sub> “**command/tsawa**” to observe BD in application of “**righteousness and justice**”.
71. So the reasoning for revealing the truth having a platform of saving faith is based on Ph<sub>2</sub> +V i.e., a willingness of the believer to implement BD as their **way** of life.
72. A premier example of insight as to what Israel (and by application **all nations**) should avoid so not to violate the charge of doctrine is now going to be revealed to **Abraham** i.e., the **sin of Sodom and Gomorrah**.
73. That God is preparing to destroy them for their vice is something that **Abraham** and descendants might need to know as it determines future blessing or not.
74. The immediate example is only one among others as to determining the destiny of **nations**, but one that carries a lot of weight of evoking judgment from God.
75. In fact, the penalty is of such that it called for the eradication of complete societies (**nations**).
76. First, to avoid national (and personal) discipline, pursuit of **righteousness and justice** is key.
77. These are two of God’s attributes.
78. God’s **justice** is the execution of His **righteousness**.
79. Doing “**righteousness and justice**/tsedaqah waw mishepath” is characteristic of those that are imitators of God. Cp.Eph.5:1
80. The believer that does **righteousness** is one that applies Bible doctrine under the FHS.
81. These are the only works that are acceptable to God in action with honor.
82. Works otherwise are only human good, energy of the flesh, a realm of evil.
83. **Justice** is the rendering of what is due or proper in the sphere of the judicial expression of **righteousness**.
84. Only executed in **righteousness** can one assure true **justice**.
85. Knowledge of BD is the basis for becoming a just person. Pro.1:3; 2:6-11
86. Only +V diligently pursuing BD will result in an understanding of **justice**. Pro.28:5
87. Lack of **justice** renders a **nation** unstable. Pro.29:4
88. While keeping “**the way of the Lord**/derek Yahweh” involves the whole realm of doctrinal application, as noted some sins of national reversionism carry stricter and harsher penalties.
89. This is now the issue contextually with the related warning to avoid the reversionism of **Sodom and Gomorrah**.
90. Apart from **Abraham** enforcing BD in his own home and its perpetuation via generational pursuits following, the extent of Abrahamic blessing would historically fall short.
91. In other words, if this particular vice of national reversionism is left unchecked, potential national blessing for Israel or any other **nation** would be replaced with judgment.
92. It gives impetus as to why **nations** should use the Mosaic Law (legal code) as civil law. Cf.1Tim.1:8
93. After giving reason for revealing His purpose to **Abraham**, Yahweh then elaborates on the situation at **Sodom and Gomorrah** in vss.20-21.
94. The noun “**outcry/ze-aqah**” is in the emphatic position and so is a focus of the verse.

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95. The **outcry** was not the complaint of others, but that of the citizens of these cities themselves.
96. The noun is a play on words (*za-aph*; *BDB 277a*) having the root meaning of outrage or complaint leading to violence and implies hostility towards God that is calling for judgment.
97. Their violent mentality towards the divine will be exemplified in 19:4-11.
98. Its present form primarily reflects distress (cf. Neh.9:9; Pro.21:13; etc.) which is what they will experience when faced with the wrath of +J.
99. So in essence they are begging God to dump the pain and suffering of His judgment upon them.
100. No one could presently hear the **outcry** except Yahweh and even the citizens were deaf to the reality of their actions.
101. That the “**outcry**” was a result of negative volition is again seen in the use of a singular feminine suffix here with the noun (*her outcry*) indicting the corporate souls (*nepshesh* – feminine) of the cities in vs.21 (2<sup>nd</sup> time this construct is used in this way in these verses cf. vs.19).
102. Their sinful vice shouted out to Him for judgment. Cp. Gen.4:10
103. It is language of accommodation illustrating the fact that God’s **righteousness** (+R) had been violated to the point that His **justice** (+J) was about to be enforced.
104. Principle: God allows those operating under his permissive will to reach saturation for evil; then his overruling will executes perfect +J upon them; extremely important to understand on a national level in the course of human history.
105. The singular “**sin**/chatta’th” in view covers the totality of their activities dominated by homosexuality. Cp. Gen.19:5; Jud.7
106. This particular sexual vice is considered “**exceedingly grave**/kabad me’od” by God.
107. It is a vice that should not be tolerated by societies and the Mosaic Law calls for capital punishment of these types and other flagrant sexual reversionists, both homosexual and heterosexual. Lev.18:22-30; 20:10-16
108. The abnormal perversion of **Sodom and Gomorrah** was well known at the time. Cp. Gen.13:13
109. The language of Yahweh, “**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**” again is language of accommodation (anthropopathic w/morphous visualization).
110. It graphically illustrates that God does not execute His judgments apart from having all the facts and determining that the **sin** has overstepped the boundaries of grace under His permissive will.
111. In these verses we see God’s directive will (vss.18-19), permissive will (vss.20-21) and the intention of exercising overruling will.
112. The negative phrase “**and if not**” (vs.21b) accommodates volition and points to the **sin** as a matter of choice.
113. It further implies that **if** repentance would come about, God would call off the impending judgment (e.g., Nineveh in the book of Jonah).
114. It reflects a singular act of contemplation and consideration before judgment.
115. In either case, God “**will know**” and make the perfect decision.
116. In summary, these verses teach and illustrate many principles of Bible doctrine:
  - A. They illustrate the mechanics in function of God’s omniscience:
    - 1) It is contemplative in anticipation of human history. Vs.17

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- 2) It is deliberating weighing the facts. Vs.18
  - 3) It is rational foresight having purpose whether towards +V (**Abraham**) or -V (**Sodom and Gomorrah...and if not I will know**). Vs.19,21
  - 4) The purpose is not causative, but accommodating to volition.
- B. They teach that God does not hide the truth of His doings in human history from Ph<sub>2</sub> +V. Vss.20-21
  - C. On the other hand, His judgments are concealed to -V. Vs.20
  - D. The reason and purpose for revealing the truth is for +V to witness the faith in application and experience maximum blessing. Vs.19
  - E. The principle is true on both a personal and national level. Vs.18
  - F. Thus, they illustrate that God is in control of all of human history individually and corporately.
  - G. They reveal that the Abrahamic Covenant was imparted based on the platform of Ph<sub>1</sub> saving faith (positional truth). Vs.18b
  - H. They reveal that the future of national blessing rests on the same platform.
  - I. They further reveal that maximum blessing is realized based on Ph<sub>2</sub> experiential faith in application. Vs.19
  - J. This is only possible through the intake of BD.
  - K. Ph<sub>2</sub> faith on the other hand is necessary to unveil the truth beyond the SAJG.
  - L. They illustrate God's directive (vs.19), permissive (vss.20-21) and overruling wills (chapter 19 confirms).
  - M. They in turn reveal His Sovereign will in terms of blessing (**Abraham**) vs. judgment (**Sodom and Gomorrah**).
  - N. They illustrate other attributes of God along with omniscience, such as **righteousness, justice** (vs.19a,b) and omnipotence (19c).
  - O. They reveal a premier example of executing perfect **justice** based on **righteousness** nationally.
  - P. This in turn illustrates what happens to **nations** that do not enforce rational laws of reason (recorded in the Mosaic Law) otherwise ignoring a saturation of gross moral perversions within society.
117. *Review Doctrine of Divine Essence/Attributes*

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### SCENE 3: ABRAHAM'S INTERVENTION

#### EXEGESIS VERSES 22 – 33:

וַיִּפְּנוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּלְכוּ סָדֹמָה וְאַבְרָהָם עֹדְנוֹ  
עֹמֵד לְפָנָי יְהוָה: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:22

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:22 **Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom,** ( *וַיִּפְּנוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּלְכוּ סָדֹמָה* [*waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: phanah; "and they turned"; + prep: min + adv: sham; "from there"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'ish; "the men"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: halak; "and they walked/went"; + proper n: "Sodom"]*) **while Abraham was still standing before the LORD.** ( *וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְרָהָם עֹד יְהוָה* [*waw conj. + proper n: "and Abraham"; + adv. w/3ms suff: -od; "he still"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: -amad; "was standing"; + prep: lamed + n/com/b/pl/constr: phaneh; "in the presence of"; + proper n: "Yahweh/the Lord"]*)

וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֵפֶה תְּסַפֶּה צְדִיק עִם־רָשָׁע: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:23

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:23 **And Abraham came near and said,** ( *וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר* [*waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nagash; "and he drew near/approached"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and said"]*) **"Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?** ( *הֲאֵפֶה תְּסַפֶּה צְדִיק עִם־רָשָׁע* [*interr. part: ha + part: 'aph; "indeed?"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: saphah; "will you sweep away/consume together"; + adj/m/s/abs: tsadiyq; "the righteous"; + prep: -im; "with"; + adj/m/s/abs: rasha- "the wicked"]*)

וְאִם־יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר הַזֹּאת  
תְּסַפֶּה וְלֹא־תִשָּׂא לְמַקּוֹם לְמַעַן חַמְשִׁים הַצְּדִיקִים אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבָּהּ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:24

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:24 **"Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city;** ( *וְאִם־יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר הַזֹּאת* [*adv: 'ulay; "perhaps/suppose"; + adv: resh; "there exists"; + adj/b/pl/abs: chamishshiyim; "fifty"; + adj/m/pl/abs: tsadiyq; "righteous"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: tawek; "in the middle of/within"; + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: -iy; "the city"]*) **will You indeed sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it?** ( *אֲשֶׁר צְדִיק הֵיאָה חֲמִשִּׁים לְמַעַן מְקוֹם הֵיאָה לְאִם־יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבָּהּ* [*interr. part: ha + part: 'aph; "indeed?"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms; saphah; "will you sweep*

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away"; + waw conj. + neg.part; lo' + v/qal/IPF/2ms: nasa'; "and not lift up {spare}"; + prep: lamed + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: maqom; "for the place"; + prep: lema-an; "on behalf of"; + adj/b/pl/abs: chamishshiyim; "the fifty"; + d.a. + adj/m/pl/abs: tsadiyq; "the righteous ones"; + rel.pro: 'asher + prep: bet; "which are in"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs suff: qereb; "its midst"])

וַיִּשָׁעַר אֱלֹהִים לְדַבֵּר הַזֶּה לְהַמִּית צְדִיקִים  
עִם־רָשָׁע וְהָיָה כְּצְדִיק כְּרָשָׁע חָלְלָה לְךָ הַשֹּׁפֵט כָּל־הָאָרֶץ לֹא  
יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:25 "Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, (רָשָׁע עִם צְדִיק מוֹת ל זֶה הֵ דָבָר הַ כֵּ עֲשֵׂה מִן ל חָלִיל) [interj.part: haliyl; "far be it!"; + prep. w/2ms suff: lamed; "for You"; + prep: min + v/qal/inf: -asah; "from doing"; + prep: kaph; "like/according to"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: dabar; "a thing"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "such as"; + prep: lamed + v/Hiphil/inf: muth; "to kill/put to death" + adj/m/s/abs: tsadiyq; "the righteous"; + prep: -im + adj/m/s/abs: rasha-; "with the wicked"])

**so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike.** (וְרָשָׁע הַ כֵּ צְדִיק הַ כֵּ הִיָּה ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "so it will come to pass"; + prep: kaph + d.a. + adj/m/s/abs: tsadiyq; "according to the righteous"; + prep: kaph + d.a. + adj/m/s/abs: rasha-; "like the wicked"])

**Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?** (שֹׁפֵט הַ ל חָלִיל) [interj.part: haliyl; "far be it!"; + prep. w/2fs suff: lamed; "for You {emphasis God's will}; + interr.part: ha + v/qal/ptc/m/s/constr: shamath; "the Judge of?"; + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + d.a. + n/c/f/s/abs: 'erets; "all of the earth"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/IPF/3ms: -asah; "will He not do/deal"; + n/com/m/s/abs: mishpath; "justly"])

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אִם־אֶמְצָא בְּסֹדֹם חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים  
בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר וְנִשְׂאֵתִי לְכָל־הַמָּקוֹם בְּעָבוּרָם:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:26 So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, (וְאִם אֶמְצָא בְּסֹדֹם חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר הִיָּה אִם יְהוָה אָמַר) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + proper n: yahweh; "and He said, the Lord"; + part: 'im; "if"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs: matsa'; "I will find"; + prep: bet + proper n: "in Sodom"; + adj/b/pl/abs: chamishshiyim; "fifty"; + adj/m/pl/abs: tsadiyq; "righteous"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: tawek; "in the middle of/within"; + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: -iy; "the city"])

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**then I will spare the whole place on their account."** (וַעֲבוֹר בְּמִקְוֵם הָאֵל כָּל לְנֶשְׂאָו) [waw consec. + v/qal/PF/1cs: nasa'; "then I will lift up/spare"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: maqom; "for all of the place"; + prep: bet + prep. w/3mpl suff: -abur; "on their account" ])

וַיַּעַן אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא הוֹאֲלֵתִי לְדַבֵּר  
אֶל־אֲדֹנָי וְאֲנֹכִי עֶפֶר וְאַפָּר:

WTT Genesis 18:27

**NAS Genesis 18:27 And Abraham answered and said, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am but dust and ashes."** (וַיַּעַן אַבְרָהָם עֵנָה וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה נָא הוֹאֲלֵתִי לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדֹנָי וְאֲנֹכִי עֶפֶר וְאַפָּר) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: -anah; "and he answered/responded"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and said"; + inter.part: hinneh + inter.part: na'; "Now behold!"; + v/Hiphil/PF/1cs: ya'al {show willingness/to make a volitional decision to commence a given activity}; "I have ventured"; + prep: lamed + v/Piel/inf/constr: dabar; "to speak"; + prep: 'el + proper n: 'adonay; "to the Lord"; + waw conj. + pro: 'anikiy; "although I myself"; + n/com/m/s/abs: -aphar; "dust"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'epher; "and ashes" ])

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְחַסְרוּן חַמִּישִׁים הַצְּדִיקִים חַמִּשָּׁה הַתְּשׁוּבִית  
בְּחַמִּשָּׁה אֶת־כָּל־הָעִיר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶשְׁחִית אִם־אֶמְצָא שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים  
וַחַמִּשָּׁה:

WTT Genesis 18:28

**NAS Genesis 18:28 "Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the whole city because of five?"** (וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְחַסְרוּן חַמִּישִׁים הַצְּדִיקִים חַמִּשָּׁה הַתְּשׁוּבִית בְּחַמִּשָּׁה אֶת־כָּל־הָעִיר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶשְׁחִית אִם־אֶמְצָא שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים וַחַמִּשָּׁה) [prep: 'ulay; "suppose"; + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: chasar; {to have need/be lacking}; "they will lack"; + adj/b/pl/abs: chamishshiyim; "the fifty"; + d.a. + adj/m/pl/abs: tsadiyq; "righteous"; + adj/m/s/abs: chamishshah; "five"; + interr.part: ha + v/Hiphil/IPF/2ms: shachath; "will You destroy"; + prep: bet + d.a. + adj/m/s/abs: chamishshah; "by means of the five"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: -iy; "the whole city" ])

**And He said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there."** (וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְחַסְרוּן חַמִּישִׁים הַצְּדִיקִים חַמִּשָּׁה אִם־אֶמְצָא שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים וַחַמִּשָּׁה) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and He said"; + neg.part: lo' + v/Hiphil/IPF/1cs: shachath; "I will not destroy"; + conj: 'im + v/qal/IPF/1cs: matsa' + adv: sham; "If I find there"; + adj/b/pl/abs: 'arebba-iyim; "forty"; + waw conj. + adj/m/s/abs: chamishshah; "and five" ])

וַיֹּסֵף עוֹד לְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם

WTT Genesis 18:29

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אַרְבָּעִים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂה בְּעִבּוֹר הָאַרְבָּעִים:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:29 And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose forty are found there?" (וְאֵל דָּבַר לַ עוֹד יִסַּף ו) אַרְבָּעִים שָׁם מִצָּא אוֹלֵי אָמַר וּ [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: yasaph; "and He did again"; + adv: -od; "repeat"; + prep: lamed + v/Piel/inf/constr: dabar; "to speak"; + prep. w/3ms suff: 'el; "to Him"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and said"; + adv: 'ulay; "suppose"; + v/Niphal/IPF/3mpl: matsa; "they will be found"; + adv: sham; "there"; + adj/b/pl/abs: 'arebba-iyim; "forty"])

וְהָ עִבּוֹר בַּ עֲשֵׂה לֹא אָמַר ו) אַרְבָּעִים [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and He said"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/IPF/1cs: -asah; "I will not do"; + prep: bet + prep: -abur: "on account of"; + d.a. + adj/b/pl/abs: 'arebba-iyim; "the forty"])

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־נָא יְחַר לִאֲדָנִי וְאֶדְבָּרָה אוֹלֵי <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:30  
יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם שְׁלֹשִׁים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂה אִם־אִמְצָא שָׁם שְׁלֹשִׁים:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:30 Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak; suppose thirty are found there?" (וְאֵל דָּבַר וְאֲדָנִי לַ חֲרָה נָא אֵל אָמַר ו) שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁם מִצָּא [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + adv: 'al "not" + interr.part: na'; "I pray/please"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms {jussive}: charah; {lit. burn}; "let be angry"; + prep: lamed + proper n: 'adonay; "for/Oh Lord"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/1cs: dabar; "and I will speak"; + adv: 'ulay; "suppose"; + v/Niphal/IPF/3mpl: matsha'; "they will be found"; + adv: sham; "there"; + adj/b/pl/abs: sheloshiym; "thirty"])

וְשָׁם מִצָּא אִם עֲשֵׂה לֹא אָמַר ו) שְׁלֹשִׁים [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + neg: lo' + v/qal/IPF/1cs: -asah + conj: 'im + v/qal/IPF/1cs: matsa' + adv: sham + adj/b/pl/abs: sheloshiym; "and He said, 'I will not do it if I will find there thirty"])

וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא הוֹאֲלֹתִי לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדָנִי אוֹלֵי <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 18:31  
יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם עֶשְׂרִים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶשְׁחִית בְּעִבּוֹר הָעֶשְׂרִים:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 18:31 And he said, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord; suppose twenty are found there?" (וְאֵל דָּבַר לַ יֵּאֵל נָא הִנֵּה אָמַר ו) עֶשְׂרִים שָׁם מִצָּא [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and He said"; + interr.part: hinneh + interr.part: na'; "behold, now!"; + v/Hiphil/PF/1cs: ya'al {lit.be determined/make a volitional decision}; "I have venture"; + prep: lamed + v/Piel/inf/constr: dabar; "to speak"; + prep: 'el +



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### ANALYSIS VERSES 22 – 33:

1. Vs.22 to the end of the chapter constitutes the 3<sup>rd</sup> scene.
2. After Yahweh reveals His intentions of judgment against **Sodom** and Gomorrah to **Abraham** (vss.20-21), the two accompanying angels **turned away from there and went toward Sodom**.
3. It is in **Sodom** that Abraham's nephew Lot resides (cf.19:1ff).
4. Yahweh never goes there in this anthropocentric (as a human) form.
5. As God He did not need to enter the place to do what He was going to do and suggests it's evil as too foul a place for His presence.
6. While Yahweh did not explicitly state that the cities would be destroyed, it is apparent that **Abraham** understood His intent in doing so.
7. That Yahweh stated an intended action of what He Himself was "*about to do* (emphatic: 'aniy –asah/I Myself am doing )" in vs.17, **Abraham** was able to put 2 and 2 together.
8. The evil of the region was well known (cp.13:13); this coupled with the doctrine of Abraham's Covenant role with Israel and all nations as to blessing in the realms of righteous and justice (vss.18-19), he GAP'd the action as judgment versus blessing.
9. While Lot was obviously on Abraham's mind in the situation, his mention is noticeably omitted in Abraham's discourse with Yahweh.
10. In part his mention was not necessary as the lesson on God's omniscience (vss.18-19) made clear that Yahweh already knows these things.
11. Otherwise, Lot's omission in name strongly suggests that Abraham's intentions in conversing with Yahweh was not merely on behalf of Lot but had deeper intentions.
12. That is to establish a measure of grace that might be expected in history upon nations (societies) potentially facing such catastrophic consequences of judgment as with **Sodom**.
13. Obviously this would have impact on believers such as Lot residing in nations (cf.Rev.18:4).
14. This standard of measure in grace vs. judgment allows for Yahweh's previous words to **Abraham** to now have doctrinal force in the present discourse.
15. The crux of the conversation centers on a complete demise of a society by the hand of God while silently recognizing Lot's involvement in the present context.
16. The sense of corporate (national) emphasis is weaved throughout our verses with references to contrasting "**the righteous with the wicked**" (3x, vss.23,25,28, and implied vss.29,30,31,32), viewing "**the city**" as a "**whole place or whole city**" (vss.24,26,28) and "**all the earth**" (vs.25).
17. **Abraham** has just been given an important lesson on the importance of being positive and acquiring doctrine in relationship to national blessing vs. judgment.
18. This was framed in a manner of discourse designed to peak interest drawing him into conversation and testing his frame of reference doctrinally (a 3<sup>rd</sup> party observer drawn into conversation by default).
19. **Abraham** GAP'd the intent of the conversation and now responds evidencing the doctrine in his soul while showing his continued desire to learn even more in the process.
20. His questions reflect both the doctrine that he knows stated with confidence and the doctrine he desires to GAP otherwise; the less certain as to God's will, the more diffident/reserve he becomes.
21. **Abraham** shows he possesses the qualities of Ph<sub>2</sub> +V validating God's choice to appoint him as the recipient of the Abrahamic Covenant being an effective witness to others.

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22. He is a continuous seeker of truth adamant/confident in what he knows showing restraint otherwise.
23. With the two angels on their way, the context picks up with **Abraham** mulling over all that had just been said as he **was still standing before the Lord** (vs.22b).
24. Having GAP'd the doctrine with its intent, and collecting his thoughts, he approaches Yahweh to engage in conversation **“and he came near and said...”**
25. There is a pattern in the discourse between **Abraham** and Yahweh.
26. **Abraham** puts in a six-fold plea for the **city**, each time accepted by the **Lord**.
27. Each time he essentially asks, **“Suppose there are x righteous/’ulay x tsadiyq”**; every time God accedes to his supposition.
28. **Abraham** starts confidently in vss.23-25 and ends with a final and hesitant **“Oh may the Lord not be angry”** (vs.32).
29. On the other hand, every instance Yahweh accepts his possibility, the tone of acceptance progressively becomes cooler.
30. He begins with the positive words, **“If I find...I will spare/’im matsa...nasa”**.
31. He ends with the more ominous **“I will not destroy it on account of...lo’ shachath bet – abur...”**
32. The number of the **righteous** are presented in decreasing increments of 5's and 10's, beginning with **“fifty”**, dropping 5 two times to **“forty –five”** and **“forty”** and ending with series of 10's, **“thirty, twenty and ten”**.
33. Ironically it should not go unnoticed that in Biblical numerology 5 = grace and 10 = the perfect Law, which parallels the parameters of the discourse: Grace unto judgment.
34. **Abraham** begins by establishing his doctrinal foundation of argument, **“Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?”**
35. The question is the first of 3 rhetorical questions (vs.23a,24b,25c) in the lists of questions and expects a no answer (mimics Yahweh's approach in question vs.17).
36. The rhetorical nature of these questions reveals Abraham's confidence at its upmost.
37. All following unrhetorical questions then suggest a progressive lack of assuredness revealing his desire to continue further discernment.
38. That the 1<sup>st</sup> two questions are rhetorical (vss.23,24) is seen in Abraham's resolute statement of vs.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?”** (3<sup>rd</sup> rhetorical expecting a “yes” answer).
39. So the doctrinal foundation appeals to God's fairness in execution of His justice (wrath) while disregarding like consequences upon those aligned with His righteousness otherwise.
40. In other words, which is weightier in God determining to implement a judgment of wrath upon societies: The presence of evil or God's plan of grace for the **righteous** in spite of evil?
41. The doctrine of the blatantly obvious is that God spares mankind throughout history on behalf of the **righteous** (vs.26b, **“then I will spare the whole place on their account** (prep: -*abur* used 4x” cp.vs29b, **“on account of the forty”**, etc. vss31b,32b.).
42. The **“righteous”** and **“wicked/rasha-“** distinguish between two opposite categories of humanity.
43. Many interpret that these two terms relate solely to behavior.
44. First and foremost is that they are related to saving faith – those that are justified by faith (like Lot) and those that whatever their behavior are still outside the POG.

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45. All men are born enemies of God due to spiritual death brought on by the mere possession of an STA.
46. The **righteous** at its most basic level are those that possess imputed +R (cf.15:6; Rom.4:5).
47. The **wicked** are those that are spiritual criminals living their lives in the prison of spiritual death.
48. We are to understand the rhetorical questions, “**Would you indeed seep away believers with unbelievers?**”
49. The presupposition of the OT is that “*the Lord loves the righteous...but the way of the wicked He brings to ruin*” (Psa.146:8,9).
50. As vs.25 indicates, to **slay** believers with unbelievers in the act of judgment would be a grave oversight.
51. In vs.24, **Abraham** reframes the doctrinal premise adding a supposition to the expected no answer, “**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?**”
52. In the 1<sup>st</sup> two questions of rhetorical significance **Abraham** views God’s action of wrath as a communal effect using the Hebrew verb translated “**sweep/saphah**” that indicates the process of heaping things together in removal.
53. In reality it looks to God putting to death the entire population as noted by the verb “**slay/muth**” in vs.25a.
54. The significance of the numbers used of the **righteous** is to also be viewed as a community of believers more so than simply believers independently.
55. Each supposition looks to a viable community of believers (a unit) as we might recognize in a local church today.
56. These assemblies would be prevalent and as 50 suggests in the first supposition, sizeable enough that they would be recognized by the community at large (in the historical context).
57. The final phrase in vs.24 “**who are in it**” asher bet qereb (**in its midst**) implies these may find themselves in such a **wicked** society through no fault of their own.
58. This illustrates the reality that believers predominantly are a minority of mankind surrounded by a mass of unbelievers throughout history. Cf.Mat.22:14
59. The clause in vs.25, “**so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike**” looks to the shortening of the lives of believers along with **the wicked** wiping everyone out together.
60. It would in part preclude the POG for believers to finish their course based on the unrighteousness of others.
61. Further, it would project a God as without mercy even for His own and in action proclaim a condemnation of believers at the same level as unbelievers.
62. In principle, it would destroy the potential witness of believers otherwise demonstrated by God in their deliverance from the realm of evil. Cf.Pro.11:21 cp.Gal.1:4
63. It is these doctrinal concepts that give **Abraham** his assertive confidence...”**Far be it from you/haliyl lamed**” stated twice in vs.25.
64. Yahweh accepts Abraham’s reasoning in vs.26.
65. The future phrase, “**If I will find**” im matsa’ is anthropopathic relating to God’s omniscience having a perfect read on the presence of believers under the supposed condition.
66. The key word from Yahweh is “**spare/nasa**” that means to “bear” or “carry” (cf.Gen.4:13) indicating God’s willingness to show grace upon all.
67. It highlights blessing by association in grace.

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68. That God's grace would be applied to a significant community of believers for these reasons, the question remaining is, "How small of community will grace supersede judgment?"
69. From this point forward, **Abraham** seeks further clarity and discernment as to the extent grace will reign.
70. Even though Yahweh confirms Abraham's doctrinal premise in agreement, **Abraham** does not give into arrogance, but shows true humility.
71. This in vs.27, "**I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am but dust and ashes**".
72. The clause itself encapsulates Abraham's perception of grace....he was not worthy.
73. It is a statement recognizing his limitations as human compared to Divine and yet the Divine is willing to have rapport with him.
74. The phrase "**dust and ashes**"/-aphar waw 'epher" is a subtle reminder that God is dealing with a human race that has "weakness of the flesh" (STA dominated). Cp.Mat.26:41
75. Abraham's acknowledgment in humility becomes a springboard to then explore the extent of grace that might be expected.
76. In vs.28, **Abraham** uses the term "**destroy**/shachath" that recognizes the judgment due the corruption in view, a key term in the Flood story (cp.Gen.6:11,12 cf.vss.13&17).
77. It subtly harks back to God's deliverance of believers at that time in history (only 8 out of the entire world population).
78. Yahweh again responds OK with the same language acknowledging Abraham's intents of further questioning i.e., asking in humbleness (vs.28b).
79. The next drop of 5 **righteous** in vs.29 pushes the boundaries of grace further.
80. In vs.30, **Abraham** checks himself to make sure He is not overstepping any boundaries of grace himself, "**Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak**".
81. Truly James is right in Jam.1:5, "*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him*".
82. In vs.31, again Abraham's +V is highlighted with the Hiphil verb "**I have ventured**/ya'al (same as vs.27) meaning a willful determination characterizing his +V.
83. The verb presumes the doctrine of grace underwriting his very conversation with Yahweh.
84. By the time **Abraham** gets down to a size of 10 in vs.32, he recognizes that there is a limit to grace. Cf.Heb.9:27
85. To ask further would be tantamount to snubbing God's overruling will.
86. As it will be, there was not even the smallest community of believers to be found in **Sodom** or Gomorrah with only Lot and his immediate family an island to themselves.
87. That God still spares Lot and family illustrates He will make provision for deliverance of believers in the event of national judgment.
88. By addressing the doctrine of grace and judgment in such fashion **Abraham** is petitioning on Lot's behalf (cf.vs.29).
89. After the doctrinal Q & A, Yahweh left and **Abraham returned to his place**.
90. Because of Abraham's +V as a seeker of truth, we now have insight as to the extent of grace God provides the world on behalf of believers and in spite of gross evil of the unbelieving.
91. Yet as the story unfolds, it remains as a stark warning to the world that God's patience in grace is not immeasurable and beyond a point will meet His overruling will in judgment.