

WEDNESDAY

The Judge of All the Earth

[LESSON QUOTE] Just prior to the destruction of Sodom, there is a curious story that takes place on the plains of Mamre. God appears to Abraham, accompanied by two angels. When Abraham sees them, he invites the heavenly visitors to a meal, and it is at this point that God promises that Abraham and Sarah will have a son who would lead to the Messiah. Jesus, indeed, came from the line of Abraham (*compare with Gal. 3:16 to Abraham & his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ*). The story suddenly turns to the matter of the wicked cities of the plain.

- God’s third appearance to Abraham = 3 men came to visit
- One proves to be = Lord in temporary form of a man
- other two were of = **created order of beings** that we most commonly think of as angels /having assumed human form
- Following meal = men arose to head toward Sodom, hospitable Abraham walked along wi/ them to send them on their way

Genesis 18:17- 18 ¹⁷ And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

- Lord didn’t keep secrets from His friend Abraham

[LESSON QUOTE] God does not owe us an explanation, but He chooses not to veil His motives and plans from the human race. “Surely the Lord GOD does nothing,” the prophet Amos tells us, “unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets” (*Amos 3:7, NKJV*). Before God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah, He declares that the only right thing to do is inform Abraham of what is about to happen, about what he can soon expect to be witnessing. **UNQUOTE**

- Next --explains why He chose Abraham to be “father of us all”

Genesis 18:19 For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that [purpose statement] the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”

- Abraham faced many trials in his life
 - but consistently walked in loyalty to God’s will
- Abraham’s faith-filled / loving obedience ensured
 - Lord’s fulfillment of covenant promises to him
- God renewed covenant of RBF w/ Isaac (Abraham’s unique only-begotten covenant son) because = **Genesis 26:5** because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

Genesis 18:20-22 ²⁰the LORD said, “Because the outcry against Sodom / Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, ²¹I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”

²²Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD.

- Angels go to wicked city to call out those who will heed their warning = Reminds us of prophetic angels of Rev 14:6-12, Rev 18:1-4 calling God’s people out of Babylon
- Lord lingers w/Abraham = explains His reason for coming down to visit Sodom/Gomorah
- Before passing judgment of destruction = Lord wanted to personally investigate their sins

Genesis 18:23–24 ²³And Abraham came near and said, “Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?

- Aware of God’s love and righteousness, Abraham asks audacious question:

Genesis 18:25 Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

- Lord willingly subjects Himself to Abraham's questions

[LESSON QUOTE] Abraham is not only examining the case of Sodom, but he is also *examining the character of God*. Likewise, before the end comes, God opens the books of heaven (*Rev. 20:4, 11–15*) and allows us to investigate the evidence before He finally brings fire down on the earth. That is, we will have a thousand years to get a lot of questions answered that, for now, remain unanswered. **UNQUOTE**

- **Gen18:26-32** Lord agrees to spare all for sake of 50 righteous
- W/ compassion / intense humility
 - Abraham proceeds to negotiate w/Lord
 - finally requesting that He spare cities if just ten righteous people dwelt there
- Lord readily agreed to reserve His judgment for sake of just ten righteous ones
- But wicked Sodom/ Gomorrah were doomed, for ten were not found who walked w/God.
- Just before the Lord rained down fire and brimstone to wipe out their sin, the two angels in human form arranged for Lot and a few of his family members to escape (Genesis 19:15–17, 24).
- Early the next morning, Abraham looked toward the cities, only to see the smoke of a furnace (v. 28).

Before the Lord will bring down final judgment upon the lost, He gives us a thousand years to understand what will happen to whom and why. What does this tell us about His character and about how open He is to scrutiny by created beings—beings fully dependent upon Him for existence—and who have no inherent right to know these thing