

Character Study: Abraham

Part 6 – Questioning God

Genesis 17-20

What's happening?

- When Abraham was 99 years old, God emphasized the covenant promises with him by changing his name from Abram to Abraham (as we have been referring to him), which means “Father of a multitude.” Here, Sarai’s name was also changed, to Sarah, meaning “princess.” Circumcision was also started as a sign of the covenant. (17:1-15)
- God promised Abraham that he would soon have a son with Sarah. This son, to be named Isaac, was the son by which the covenant would be carried out. Abraham initially laughed at the idea that he (being 100 years old) or Sarah (being 90 years old) could have a child. Sarah, hearing the news, laughed as well. (17:16-18:15)
- After speaking to Abraham, the Lord, along with two angels, went toward Sodom and Gomorrah to destroy them because of their great wickedness. Abraham pleaded for the Lord to spare the cities if at least ten righteous people could be found there. The Lord agreed. (18:16-33)
- Arriving in Sodom, the two angels stayed in Lot’s home. The men of the city desired to take them in order to know them carnally, which only confirmed their utter wickedness. Lot and his family escaped the town, and then the Lord rained down fire and brimstone which destroyed both cities. Lot’s wife ignored a warning not to look back as they left, and she was instantly turned into a pillar of salt. (19:1-29)

What's God doing?

- > After Sarah laughed at the idea of her bearing a child in her old age, God asked, “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” God was showing that He can be trusted even with doing the seemingly impossible.
- > God showed compassion by listening to Abraham’s plea and sparing Lot. But He also showed there is a limit at times to what He will tolerate.

What's to learn?

→ God is all powerful, yet sometimes we question what He can do. God hates sin, yet sometimes we do not want to separate ourselves from it. How well does your life align with a correct understanding of who God is? Living to honor God begins with truly knowing the God you are seeking to honor!