

The LORD Appears to Abraham and Sarah

Gn 18¹ Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. ² So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, ³ and said, “My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. ⁴ Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵ And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant.” They said, “Do as you have said.” ⁶ So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, “Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes.” ⁷ And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. ⁸ So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate. ⁹ Then they said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” So he said, “Here, in the tent.” ¹⁰ And He said, “I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son.” (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) ¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. ¹² Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, “After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” ¹³ And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?’ ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.” ¹⁵ But Sarah denied it, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. And He said, “No, but you did laugh!”

► Our text opens with God telling us a _____ that Abraham & Sarah will only figure out slowly.

► Hospitality was a _____ in the ancient near East, and that included strangers (2).

Heb 13¹ “Let brotherly love continue. ² Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.”

► One of the visitors is _____ to the others, for Abraham addresses them all through the one (3-4).

► Abraham’s words convey that it will be a blessing to Abraham if the strangers let him _____ them (3-5).

► Abraham minimizes the hospitality he has in mind, then sets a lavish _____ before them (4-8).

► The leader begins to reveal the purpose of the visit when he asks about _____ (9).

► The leader reveals himself to be the _____, and though he is speaking to Abraham, he is really speaking to _____ (9-10).

► When God made this same promise to Abraham in ch 17, he responded similarly to _____ in ch 18.

Gn 17¹⁵ “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.” ¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” ¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!” ¹⁹ Then God said: “No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac [“Laughter”]; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.

► God shepherded Abraham’s faith, and he does the same thing with _____ (12-15).

Cf. Lk 1¹³ But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. . . .” ¹⁸ And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

► God's shepherding was _____.

Hb 11¹¹ By faith Sarah herself also received strength [power] to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

► **Takeaways**

► 1) Everything God does is both cosmic & individual, for the redemption of the world & your personal _____.

Rm 8¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ... ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ... ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

► 2) God deals with each of us, not as we should be, but as we _____.

Gn 18¹⁹ I have known him [Abraham]

Hb 4¹³ There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Ps 19¹² Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults.

► 3) Perseverance is necessary to every _____ of a child of God.

Jm 1² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience [perseverance]. ⁴ But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Rm 5² [We] rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Hb 12¹ [L]et us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

► 4) God's training is _____.

Hb 12¹¹ Now no chastening [paideia – training] seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

► 5) We must _____ to one another.

Col 3¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Eph 5¹⁸ [B]e filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ