

SESSION 8

GOD RESCUED LOT. GOD SAVED ABRAHAM'S SON, ISAAC

God's story also tells us about Lot, Abraham's nephew. Lot and his family had gone to live on good land with a lot of grass beside the Jordan River. This land was near a city called Sodom. Lot and his family had moved into the city of Sodom. There was another city near Sodom called Gomorrah.



GENESIS 18:20,21

²⁰ So the Lord told Abraham, "I have heard a great outcry from Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sin is so flagrant. ²¹ I am going down to see if their actions are as wicked as I have heard. If not, I want to know."

The people in Sodom and Gomorrah had become very evil in the way that they lived. They had turned against God and did not listen to him. They did not want to be close to God or have any relationship with him. God said that their sin was *flagrant*. That means that they did not care about their sin against God. God decided that the things they were doing were so bad that they could not be allowed to keep doing them. When people don't listen to God, it is very bad for them. God wants people to listen to him because that is the best thing for them. Because the people in Sodom and Gomorrah had decided not to listen to him, and because the way that they lived was so bad, he decided to destroy them.

Abraham talked to God about his plan to destroy the cities.



GENESIS 18:23-26

²³ Abraham approached him and said, "Will you sweep away both the righteous and the wicked? ²⁴ Suppose you find fifty righteous people living there in the city—will you still sweep it away and not spare it for their sakes? ²⁵ Surely you

HIS STORY: THE RESCUE

wouldn't do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, you would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn't do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?"

²⁶ And the Lord replied, "If I find fifty righteous people in Sodom, I will spare the entire city for their sake."

Abraham asked God not to destroy the city of Sodom if there were even 50 people living there who still listened to God. But Abraham knew that there may not have been 50 people in Sodom who listened to God, so then he asked God not to destroy Sodom if there were 45 people there who listened to God. Then Abraham kept asking God not to destroy Sodom if there were even 40, or 30, or 20 people in the city who listened to God.



GENESIS 18:32,33

³² Finally, Abraham said, "Lord, please don't be angry with me if I speak one more time. Suppose only ten are found there?"

And the Lord replied, "Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten."

³³ When the Lord had finished his conversation with Abraham, he went on his way, and Abraham returned to his tent.

The Lord said he would not destroy Sodom if there were only ten people there who listened to him. God sent two of his angel servants to Sodom to see if there were even ten people there who listened to him. These angels took the form of young men.



GENESIS 19:1-9

¹ That evening the two angels came to the entrance of the city of Sodom. Lot was sitting there, and when he saw them, he stood up to meet them. Then he welcomed them and bowed with his face to the ground. ² "My lords," he said, "come to my home to wash your feet, and be my guests for the night. You may then get up early in the morning and be on your way again."

"Oh no," they replied. "We'll just spend the night out here in the city square."

³ But Lot insisted, so at last they went home with him. Lot prepared a feast for them, complete with fresh bread made without yeast, and they ate. ⁴ But before they retired for the night, all the men of Sodom, young and old, came from all over the city and surrounded the house. ⁵ They shouted to Lot, "Where are the men who came to spend the night with you? Bring them out to us so we can have sex with them!"

⁶ So Lot stepped outside to talk to them, shutting the door behind him. ⁷ "Please, my brothers," he begged, "don't do such a wicked thing. ⁸ Look, I have two virgin daughters. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do with them as you wish. But please, leave these men alone, for they are my guests and are under my protection."

⁹ "Stand back!" they shouted. "This fellow came to town as an outsider, and now he's acting like our judge! We'll treat you far worse than those other men!" And they lunged toward Lot to break down the door.

SESSION 8 : GOD RESCUED LOT. GOD SAVED ABRAHAM'S SON, ISAAC

Lot did not know that these two young men were angels of God. But he did not want them to stay out in the city. He knew that the men of Sodom would want to have sex with them. So Lot asked them to stay at his home. That night, men from all over Sodom came to Lot's house. They wanted Lot to send out the two men. Lot went outside and told them he could send out his two virgin⁷¹ daughters instead. But the men of Sodom only wanted the two young men to come out. These men from Sodom had stopped listening to God. The way that they lived showed that they did not care about God.

God made men and women to be together so that they could have children. Remember that God made Eve for Adam to be his helper and companion. God wanted Adam and Eve to take care of the earth and to have children. He wanted them to be together and help one another, and take care of their children. This was how God intended people to live with one another. He wanted a man to have a wife so that they could help each other and so that they could have children. The men from Sodom did not care about the way that God wanted things to be. They did not think about what God wanted. They only thought about what they wanted.



GENESIS 19:10,11

¹⁰ But the two angels reached out, pulled Lot into the house, and bolted the door.

¹¹ Then they blinded all the men, young and old, who were at the door of the house, so they gave up trying to get inside.

The angels blinded the eyes of the men of Sodom so that they would go away.



GENESIS 19:12-25

¹² Meanwhile, the angels questioned Lot. "Do you have any other relatives here in the city?" they asked. "Get them out of this place—your sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone else. ¹³ For we are about to destroy this city completely. The outcry against this place is so great it has reached the Lord, and he has sent us to destroy it."

¹⁴ So Lot rushed out to tell his daughters' fiancés, "Quick, get out of the city! The Lord is about to destroy it." But the young men thought he was only joking.

¹⁵ At dawn the next morning the angels became insistent. "Hurry," they said to Lot. "Take your wife and your two daughters who are here. Get out right now, or you will be swept away in the destruction of the city!"

¹⁶ When Lot still hesitated, the angels seized his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters and rushed them to safety outside the city, for the Lord was merciful. ¹⁷ When they were safely out of the city, one of the angels ordered, "Run for your lives! And don't look back or stop anywhere in the valley! Escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away!"

¹⁸ "Oh no, my lord!" Lot begged. ¹⁹ "You have been so gracious to me and saved my life, and you have shown such great kindness. But I cannot go to the mountains. Disaster would catch up to me there, and I would soon die. ²⁰ See,

71. **virgin** - someone who has never had sex

HIS STORY: THE RESCUE

there is a small village nearby. Please let me go there instead; don't you see how small it is? Then my life will be saved."

²¹ "All right," the angel said, "I will grant your request. I will not destroy the little village. ²² But hurry! Escape to it, for I can do nothing until you arrive there." (This explains why that village was known as Zoar, which means "little place.")

²³ Lot reached the village just as the sun was rising over the horizon. ²⁴ Then the Lord rained down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah.

²⁵ He utterly destroyed them, along with the other cities and villages of the plain, wiping out all the people and every bit of vegetation.

God decided to rescue Lot so the angels helped Lot and his family to get out of the city. Then fire and burning sulfur⁷² came raining down. The cities and all the people and all the trees and growing things were destroyed.

After this time, God's story tells us that Abraham and Sarah had a son. Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 years old when their son was born.



GENESIS 21:1-5

¹ The Lord kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what he had promised. ² She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God had said it would. ³ And Abraham named their son Isaac. ⁴ Eight days after Isaac was born, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. ⁵ Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born.

God's story tells us that God did what he said he would do. He gave Abraham and Sarah a son at the time he said he would. God always does what he says he will do. Abraham and Sarah's son was named Isaac.

God's story tells us about something that happened a bit later, once Isaac had grown up and become a young man.



GENESIS 22:1,2

¹ Some time later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called.

"Yes," he replied. "Here I am."

² "Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you."

It says that God *tested*⁷³ *Abraham's faith*. That means that God wanted to see what Abraham would do. One day, God told Abraham to go with Isaac to a mountain that God would show him. God said that Abraham should kill Isaac there. He said that Abraham should then burn Isaac's body as an offering.

72. **sulfur** - a yellow powder found in rocks and in dirt. It can burn.

73. **tested** - tried it to see if it was real or not

SESSION 8 : GOD RESCUED LOT. GOD SAVED ABRAHAM'S SON, ISAAC

Abraham had known the Lord for many years. He had listened to God. He knew that the things that God said were true. Abraham knew that God always does what he says he will do. God had said that one day the whole land of Canaan would belong to Abraham's descendants. These descendants would start with Abraham and Sarah's son, Isaac. God had said that through Abraham, all the families of the earth would be blessed.

God kept his word and gave Abraham and Sarah a son. God did what he said he would do and their son Isaac was born. Abraham and Sarah had taken care of Isaac. They had watched him grow up. They knew that God said he was going to have many descendants and that many nations would come from this one boy. God said he would do that, so Abraham knew God would do it.

But now God had asked Abraham to build a platform of stones on a mountain. God asked Abraham to kill Isaac there. Abraham would have to cut Isaac's throat until his blood ran out. And then he would have to burn Isaac's body. God asked Abraham to kill Isaac as an offering.

Abraham would have done this many times with lambs. He would have killed them as an offering⁷⁴ to God. But this time God was asking him to offer his son. This was the boy that God had given him when he was old. This was the one that God said would be the start of a long line of people. Through him, all the families of the earth would be blessed. How would all of those things happen if Isaac were dead?



GENESIS 22:3-8

³ The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. ⁴ On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ "Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the servants. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back."

⁶ So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, ⁷ Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?"

⁸ "God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together.

Abraham listened to God and did what he said. He got everything ready and went to the mountain that God showed him. He took firewood and fire so that the offering could be burned. He went with two servants and with his son, Isaac. They walked for three days until they could see the mountain.

74. offering - a gift that is given to God

HIS STORY: THE RESCUE

Then Abraham and Isaac left the servants and the donkey. Abraham and Isaac went on alone to the mountain. Isaac carried the firewood on his shoulders.

As they climbed up the mountain, Isaac asked his father, “*where is the sheep for the burnt offering?*” Isaac had seen lambs being killed for offerings many times before. So he wanted to know why they didn’t have a lamb with them this time. Abraham told him, “*God will provide⁷⁵ a sheep for the burnt offering, my son.*” Abraham knew that God was the only one who could save his son.



GENESIS 22:9-11

⁹ When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. ¹¹ At that moment the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Yes,” Abraham replied. “Here I am!”

Abraham tied Isaac up and laid him on the firewood on top of the pile of stones. Then, he picked up the knife to kill his son. God saw that Abraham was going to obey him. Abraham was going to do what God had told him to do. Before he could kill Isaac, an angel of God called out to Abraham.



GENESIS 22:12,13

¹² “Don’t lay a hand on the boy!” the angel said. “Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son.”

¹³ Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son.

The angel of God called out to Abraham and told him to stop. He said that Abraham should not hurt Isaac in any way. God saw that Abraham had wanted to obey him, and was even willing to kill his own son. Abraham had showed that he loved and trusted⁷⁶ God and that he would do what God said.

But an offering still had to be made. The only way to come to God is with death. So God provided a sheep for the burnt offering, just like Abraham said he would. A ram⁷⁷ was caught in the bushes nearby. So Abraham killed the ram in Isaac’s place. God had saved Isaac from death. God allowed a sheep to die so that Isaac would not have to die. God was the only one who could save Isaac from death.



GENESIS 22:14-18

¹⁴ Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means “the Lord will provide”). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.”

75. **provide** - to give something

76. **trusted** - he believed what God said was true and that God would always do the best thing

77. **ram** - a male sheep

SESSION 8 : GOD RESCUED LOT. GOD SAVED ABRAHAM'S SON, ISAAC

¹⁵ Then the angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven. ¹⁶ “This is what the Lord says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that ¹⁷ I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. ¹⁸ And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”

Abraham listened to God and knew that what God said was true. He had faith in God. He knew that God had a plan for his family. Isaac was Abraham and Sarah’s eldest son, so Abraham knew that Isaac had to live. God said that through Abraham’s family all the families of the earth would be blessed. A nation would start with Isaac and through his family all the nations of the earth would be blessed. The man that God said would come and defeat Satan would be a member of Isaac’s family. God had made a promise that this man would come. God said in the garden that this man would defeat Satan. Then he said to Abraham that this man would come through his family. He would come through the family of Abraham and Isaac.

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1. Why did God decide to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah?
2. Why did God tell Abraham to kill Isaac?
3. What were all the things that God said would happen through Abraham’s family?
4. What is the only way that people can come to God?
5. How did Abraham show that he had faith in God?
6. What did it mean when God said to Abraham: “through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed”?



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