

## **Genesis 18: God Came to Visit**

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Can you imagine what it would be like meeting God as a Man? This is what happened in Genesis 18, when God showed up on Abraham's doorstep. We are told that God was there to see firsthand the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah. But He was also there to see Abraham with some special news.

One of the important lessons here is the hospitality of Abraham. We see how he became obsessed with the care of his guests. We are told in Hebrews 13:2 that this is an example for us to consider, a lesson for us in caring for others. In that visit God made a promise: a son in a season. We know that Sarah laughed at this (as had Abraham Genesis 17).

But the big idea was over the mediation of Abraham for Sodom & Gomorrah. They had a reputation of evil works; there was no denying that. Abraham's mediation had only one : God will be fair to righteous. Mediation is an important idea in the Bible. It is described in Job 9:32-35 with the word "Umpire", which means "not equal". A Mediator speaks between two parties of unequal standing. We are told that in the New Testament Jesus is our mediator (Hebrews 9:15), which is his covenant work as a High Priest.

There is also an important idea in the nature of preservation. When Jesus was speaking in the sermon on the mount, He told the listeners that they were (or could be) the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13-16). This meant that we are a preservative to those around us. If there had been 10 righteous people in Sodom, it might have been spared.

Finally, notice how Abraham negotiated with God. In a sense, prayer is a negotiation through our mediator Jesus Christ. Abraham was not the only man to have such a conversation; Moses negotiated with God in Exodus 32:9-14, and Hezekiah petitioned God to change His mind in 2 Kings 20:1-5. Consider that this is how we negotiate with God:

1. Petition in a covenant relationship  
John 16:23
2. Be honest in supplication  
Psalm 51:17
3. Consider the will of God  
Matthew 6:10
4. Be prepared to fulfill your vows  
Psalm 76:11