

(Genesis) Genesis 18:22-23

by J. Vernon McGee

Abraham's intercession for Sodom illustrates the importance of Christian fellowship with God and the condition for God's mercy.

Duration: 6:15

Scripture: Genesis 18:23-28, Genesis 18:32, Genesis 19:22, Genesis 19:24-25, Genesis 19:29-30

Topics: "Genesis"

Description

In this sermon, Abraham is having a conversation with God about the destruction of the city of Sodom. Abraham starts by asking if God would spare the city if there were fifty righteous people in it. He continues to negotiate with God, asking if He would spare the city for the sake of forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, and finally, ten righteous people. Abraham's main concern is that the righteous should not be punished along with the wicked. Through this conversation, Abraham demonstrates his faith in God's righteousness and justice. The sermon emphasizes that God always does what is right and that our understanding may be limited, but we can trust in His judgment.

Transcript

Now, will you notice what happened? The men turned their faces from fence and went towards Sodom, but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. Abraham is now waiting before the Lord. And Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Now what was the first thing that entered his mind? The first thing that entered his mind, of course, was life.

He'd rescued him once, now he's in danger down there. And he's wondering, I think he'd wondered about Lot and his relationship to God many times. But he at least believes he's a saved man, and he's asking God, what about the righteous? And after all, Abraham, I think, would have told you that there were many people, he thought, in the city of Sodom that were saved.

And he couldn't understand God wanting to destroy, or that he would destroy the righteous with the wicked. What a picture we have here. He says, Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city.

Wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? Now Abraham begins with fifty. He says to the Lord, Lord, suppose there are fifty righteous down there in Sodom. Would you destroy the city if there were fifty righteous? And you know that it's quite interesting.

Will you notice this? He keeps on. That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be as the wicked? That be far from thee. Listen to him.

Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? May I say that's still a question that many people ask. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? And there's an answer to it. The rest of the Bible testifies to the fact that the judge of all the earth always does right.

Now whatever God does is right. And if you don't think he's right, the trouble is not with God, the trouble is with you and your thinking. You're thinking wrong.

You don't have all the facts. You do not know all of the details. If you did, you'd know that the judge of all the earth does right.

We are wrong, he's right. And the Lord said, if I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham thought that over.

And Abraham answered and said, Behold, now I've taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes. Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous. In other words, he says, if there are forty-five there, would you destroy the city for forty-five? And God told him, if I find there forty and five, I'll not destroy it.

And this makes the man a little bit bold. And he said unto him again, he says, suppose there are forty. And the very interesting thing is, God says, I won't destroy it for forty.

And Abraham keeps on bringing him down. He says, how about thirty? And God says, well, if there are thirty there, I still won't do it. And he says, suppose that there are twenty there, I'll not destroy it.

And, well, Abraham's overwhelmed now, and he takes another plunge. He says, suppose there are ten there, would you destroy it if there are ten? God says, if there are ten righteous in the city, I won't destroy it. And we're told at this point, and the Lord went his way as soon as he had left communion with Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

Now the question arises, why didn't he come on down below ten? I'll tell you why. At this point, he's afraid Lot is lost. And this disturbs him a great deal, so he's not going to come down any farther.

But he could have come down, friends, to one. He could have said, Lord, if there's one in that city that's righteous, would you destroy the city? And you know what God would have said? If there's one that's righteous in that city, I'm going to get him out of that city, because I wouldn't destroy it if there's one righteous there. And you tell me, you say, how do you know that's the way it would have been? Because that's the way it worked out.

There was one righteous man there. Abraham didn't believe it, but God knew him. That was Lot.

And God said, get out of the city. And God says, I can't destroy it until you are out. Did you know the tribulation, the great tribulation period can't come as long as the church is in the world? Just can't come, friends, because Christ bore our judgment.

And the great tribulation is part of the judgment that is coming. And that's the reason that the church can't go. This is a picture of it.

This is a glorious picture, if you please. And believe me, as we're going to see, Sodom and Gomorrah are a picture of the world. And what a picture.

And what a condition the world's in today, very much like Sodom and Gomorrah. And that does not mean, friends, the Lord's going to come tomorrow because I don't know and no one else knows, but He could come tomorrow. And this certainly would be in keeping with the condition and the carrying out of the picture that is here.

Now, that is blessed fellowship with God. It's a picture of blessed Christian fellowship here with God. Now the picture changes.

We live up yonder at Hebron on the plains of Mamre, where Abraham dwelt. And now we go down to the city of Sodom, where Lot dwells.

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