

# Intercession

## GENESIS 18–19

### **FIRST DAY:** Introduction

More often than not, we are unaware of the jeopardy, danger, and troubles that threaten to disrupt our lives. Thank God that Jesus, knowing all things, intercedes for us before the throne of God (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:25). Even as Jesus intercedes on our behalf, we are to pray and intercede for others that they might be saved from wrath and become recipients of God's promises.

Through Abraham's example we see the work of intercession. Abraham welcomed the Lord into his home. He fellowshiped with the Lord and received His promises. God then revealed His plan to Abraham concerning the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Immediately, Abraham recognized the jeopardy of his nephew Lot and began to call upon God's character to spare the righteous. Abraham's prayer availed! In Genesis 19 we see the results of Abraham's intercession for the unwilling participant—Lot. Even though Lot was hesitant to acknowledge his jeopardy and to cooperate with the angels, he was delivered because of Abraham's prayers.

We have the same power, through prayer, to intercede even for the uncooperative and defiled. As we welcome God into our lives, fellowship with Him, and embrace His promises, we receive revelation concerning the jeopardy of the world. Our response is to pray, calling on God's righteous character and grace to save and deliver. God hears and works through our prayers in divine ways to bring salvation even to the hesitant and uncooperative. This is why *men always ought to pray and not lose heart* (Luke 18:1).

*Ask God to reveal to you the powerful effect you have through prayer.*



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In the text of Genesis 18:3, the Hebrew word for *Lord* is *Adonay*—a word reserved for God. *Adonay* is the emphatic term for *Lord*. We don't know whether Abraham knew his visitors' identity at the outset, but by the story's end, Abraham certainly knew he had been talking with God.<sup>17</sup>  
—NLT Study Bible

## SECOND DAY: Read Genesis 18:1–15

1. God *appeared* to Abraham soon after He established His covenant with him. Read about this encounter in Genesis 18:1–8 and cite Abraham's:

a. Haste

b. Hospitality

(1) Link Abraham's actions with Hebrews 13:2. What do you see?

2. As they ate, the men asked Abraham where Sarah was, and he told them she was *in the tent* (Genesis 18:9). What promise did the Lord make concerning her? Genesis 18:10a

3. According to Genesis 18:10b, *Sarah was listening in the tent door*. From Genesis 18:12, remark on her reaction to this proclamation.

a. Use Genesis 18:11 to explain why she reacted this way.

4. The Lord heard Sarah *laugh*, yet He reiterated His promise concerning her (Genesis 18:13–14). From Genesis 18:14a, fill in the blanks with His penetrating rhetorical question:

*Is \_\_\_\_\_ too \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_?*

- a. Connect this with the following Scriptures, noting what most ministers to you:

(1) Job 42:2

(2) Jeremiah 32:17

(3) Luke 1:37

(4) Ephesians 3:20

- (a) Share an area of your life in which you need to consider this truth.

5. Sarah *denied* laughing, even though God affirmed that she did (Genesis 18:15). In spite of Sarah's apparent unbelief, what did God say about her in Hebrews 11:11?
  - a. Why do you think God reaffirmed His promise within earshot of Sarah?

(1) How does this minister to you?

**THIRD DAY:** Read Genesis 18:16–33

1. After their meal, the men headed toward Sodom and Abraham went *to send them on their way*. Then the Lord spoke of His plans, indicating that He would not *hide from Abraham* what He was doing (Genesis 18:16–17). Link this with Amos 3:7 and share your thoughts.
2. From Genesis 18:18–19, note and comment on what the Lord said concerning:
  - a. His plans for Abraham (verse 18)
  - b. His purpose for Abraham (verse 19)

- (1) In the Hebrew, when God said He had *known* Abraham, it meant that He cared for and chose him. Link this with Jesus' words in John 10:14. How does this encourage you?
  
3. God then declared His intentions concerning Sodom and Gomorrah. From Genesis 18:20–21, describe the *outcry* that came to God's attention and His response.
  - a. Use the following verses to ascertain why an *outcry* arose *against Sodom and Gomorrah*:
    - (1) Isaiah 3:9
  
    - (2) Jeremiah 23:14
  
    - (3) Ezekiel 16:49–50
  
4. When *the men* left for Sodom, *Abraham still stood before the LORD* to intercede on its behalf (Genesis 18:22). Use your own words to record the three questions he asked God:
  - a. Genesis 18:23



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

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There are three important principles observed from this dialogue:

1. God is not hasty to bring judgment on any city or person.
2. Even a tiny minority may have a remarkable influence for good.
3. Abraham's prayer was persistent yet extremely reverent.

b. Genesis 18:24

c. Genesis 18:25

(1) Abraham was not questioning God's justice, but pleading with Him based on what he knew of His character. From Abraham's dialogue with God, what do you recognize about God's character? See also Ezekiel 33:11.

5. Abraham began to intercede to the Lord on behalf of the *righteous* in Sodom. Use Genesis 18:24–33 to briefly comment on the progression of his intercession.

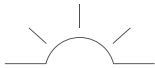
a. What most stands out to you from Abraham's interaction with the Lord?

b. Pastor David Guzik says, *This is the kind of heart God wanted to draw out of Abraham—a heart that cared so much for people made in the image of God that he worked hard to intercede on behalf of a city that deserved judgment.*<sup>18</sup> How does this deepen your understanding of intercession and its purpose?

- c. What lesson do you receive concerning:
- (1) Intercession (See also James 5:16)
  
  - (2) God's character (See also 2 Peter 3:9)
6. James 2:23b says Abraham *was called the friend of God*. How do you see this evidenced in your study today?
- a. Link this with John 15:15. Why are you blessed to be called a *friend of God*?

**FOURTH DAY:** Read Genesis 19:1–14

1. Recall from Genesis 13:12 that Lot was *living as far as Sodom*, then living *in Sodom* (Genesis 14:12), and finally *sitting in the gate* (Genesis 19:1) where the *two angels* found him. This indicates that Lot had become a prominent political figure and judge in Sodom. What do you find interesting about this digression? See Psalm 1:1.
  
2. From Genesis 19:1b–3, summarize and remark on Lot's interaction with the *angels*.



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Jesus is the One who elevated and honored women. Through Christianity, women have been able to rise and take their proper place, not as subservient or in any way subservient to men, but rather on an equal basis with men. But you won't find that in any culture outside of where the Christian gospel has gone.<sup>19</sup>*  
—Pastor Chuck Smith

3. *Before they lay down* for the night, a disturbing incident occurred. Use Genesis 19:4–11 to note and comment on:
  - a. The demands of the men of Sodom (verses 4–5, 9)

(1) Notice that these men accused Lot of *acting as a judge* over them. What does this convey about Lot's interaction with them? See also 2 Peter 2:7–8.

- b. The response of Lot (verses 6–8)

(1) What does this response indicate about Lot's perspective?

- c. The actions of the angels (verses 10–11)

4. From Genesis 19:12–13 cite the warning and instruction of the angels.



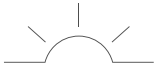
- a. After hearing this, Lot warned his *sons-in-law* of the impending judgment. Use Genesis 19:14 to remark on their response.

(1) What does this response reveal about Lot's witness among his family?

5. Lot was a man who had allowed himself to be greatly influenced by his culture. How does your study today caution you concerning the effects of a compromised life?

**FIFTH DAY:** Read Genesis 19:15–38

1. In spite of Lot's pleas, his *sons-in-law* disregarded his warning of impending judgment. *When the morning dawned*, it was time for Lot to flee from Sodom. From Genesis 19:15–22, summarize Lot's deliverance, highlighting the following:
  - a. The urgency of the *angels* (verses 15–17, 22)
  - b. Lot's hesitation (verse 16)
  - c. Lot's bargaining (verses 18–21)




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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**


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*The first time God rescued Lot, he was a prisoner of war (Genesis 14:12, 16), and he went right back to Sodom. That painful experience should have warned him that he was out of the will of God .... Now God had to take Lot by the hand and forcibly drag him out of Sodom.*<sup>20</sup>  
 —Pastor Warren Wiersbe

- (1) In what way was God *merciful* to Lot?
2. When *the sun had risen*, Lot finally entered the city of Zoar, which means *small* or *insignificant* (Genesis 19:23). What happened as soon as Lot was safe? Genesis 19:24–25
    - a. Pastor Chuck said of Lot's wife (Genesis 19:26), *The phrase "looked back" can be translated "turned back." Lot's wife actually began to turn back toward Sodom and in turning back towards Sodom, she was caught in the great conflagration and the bubbling, boiling, spewing salts covered her.*<sup>21</sup> Link this with Luke 17:32–33 and share your thoughts.
  
  3. *Early in the morning*, Abraham went and *looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah* (Genesis 19:27–28a). From Genesis 19:28b describe what he saw.
    - a. According to Genesis 19:29, why was Lot *sent out* by God?

- (1) What does this reveal to you about intercession?
4. Even as Lot was being delivered from Sodom, he was negotiating with the angels about his next destination. After he left Zoar he went to an isolated place of his own choosing and *dwelt in the mountains* with his two daughters (Genesis 19:30). Use Genesis 19:31–38 to briefly summarize the grievous events that took place because of Lot's choices.
- a. The Moabites and Ammonites became enemies of Abraham's descendants in later generations. How does this underscore the far-reaching effects of Lot's compromise?
5. Pastor J. Vernon McGee says, *There is many a man today who may be a saved man, but due to his lifestyle or where he lives, he loses his family, his influence, and his testimony.*<sup>22</sup> Connect this with 1 Corinthians 3:15 and record your summation of Lot's life.
6. How is Lot's life a cautionary warning to you?

**SIXTH DAY: Review**

1. From your study this week, share something that spoke to you concerning:
  - a. God's promises
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Intercession
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. Compromise
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - d. Judgment
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - e. Mercy
  
2. What insights did you receive in Genesis 18 and 19 about Our Great Creator?