

18 ¹The LORD appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot. ²Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and, bowing to the ground, ³he said, "My lords,^a if it please you, do not go on past your servant. ⁴Let a little water be brought; bathe your feet and recline under the tree. ⁵And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then go on—seeing that you have come your servant's way." They replied, "Do as you have said."

⁶Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quick, three seahs of choice flour! Knead and make cakes!" ⁷Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf, tender and choice, and gave it to a servant-boy, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸He took curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared and set these before them; and he waited on them under the tree as they ate.

⁹They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he replied, "There, in the tent." ¹⁰Then one said, "I will return to you next year,^b and your wife Sarah shall have a son!" Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind him. ¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years; Sarah had stopped having the periods of women. ¹²And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment—with my husband so old?" ¹³Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I in truth bear a child, old as I am?' ¹⁴Is anything too wondrous for the LORD? I will return to you at the same season next year, and Sarah shall have a son." ¹⁵Sarah lied, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was frightened. But He replied, "You did laugh."

¹⁶The men set out from there and looked down toward Sodom, Abraham walking with them to see them off. ¹⁷Now the LORD had said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸since Abraham is to become a great and populous nation and all the nations of the earth are to bless themselves by him? ¹⁹For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is just and right, in order that the LORD may bring about for Abraham what He has promised him." ²⁰Then the LORD said, "The outrage of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and their sin so grave! ²¹I will go down to see whether they have acted altogether according to the outcry that has reached Me; if not, I will take note."

²²The men went on from there to Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. ²³Abraham came forward and said, "Will You sweep away the innocent along with the guilty? ²⁴What if there should be fifty innocent within the city; will You then wipe out the place and not forgive it for the sake of the innocent fifty who are in it? ²⁵Far be it from You to do such a thing, to bring death upon the innocent as well as the guilty, so that innocent and guilty fare alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" ²⁶And the LORD answered, "If I find within the city of Sodom fifty innocent ones, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." ²⁷Abraham spoke up, saying, "Here I venture to speak to my Lord, I who am but dust and ashes: ²⁸What if the fifty innocent should lack five? Will You destroy the whole city for want of the five?" And He answered, "I will not destroy if I find forty-five there." ²⁹But he spoke to Him again, and said, "What if forty should be found there?" And He answered, "I will not do it, for the sake of the forty." ³⁰And he said, "Let not my Lord be angry if I go on: What if thirty should be found there?" And He answered, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." ³¹And he said, "I venture again to speak to my Lord: What if twenty should be found there?" And He answered, "I will not destroy, for the sake of the twenty." ³²And he said, "Let not my Lord be angry if I speak but this

^a Or "My Lord."

^b Cf. Gen. 17.21; 2 Kings 4.16–17.

last time: What if ten should be found there?” And He answered, “I will not destroy, for the sake of the ten.”

³³When the LORD had finished speaking to Abraham, He departed; and Abraham returned to his place.

19 ¹The two angels arrived in Sodom in the evening, as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom.

When Lot saw them, he rose to greet them and, bowing low with his face to the ground, ²he said, “Please, my lords, turn aside to your servant’s house to spend the night, and bathe your feet; then you may be on your way early.” But they said, “No, we will spend the night in the square.” ³But he urged them strongly, so they turned his way and entered his house. He prepared a feast for them and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

⁴They had not yet lain down, when the townspeople, the men of Sodom, young and old—all the people to the last man—gathered about the house. ⁵And they shouted to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may be intimate with them.” ⁶So Lot went out to them to the entrance, shut the door behind him, ⁷and said, “I beg you, my friends, do not commit such a wrong. ⁸Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you please; but do not do anything to these men, since they have come under the shelter of my roof.” ⁹But they said, “Stand back! The fellow,” they said, “came here as an alien, and already he acts the ruler! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.” And they pressed hard against the person of Lot, and moved forward to break the door. ¹⁰But the men stretched out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. ¹¹And the people who were at the entrance of the house, young and old, they struck with blinding light, so that they were helpless to find the entrance.

¹²Then the men said to Lot, “Whom else have you here? Sons-in-law, your sons and daughters, or anyone else that you have in the city—bring them out of the place. ¹³For we are about to destroy this place; because the outcry against them before the LORD has become so great that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.” ¹⁴So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, “Up, get out of this place, for the LORD is about to destroy the city.” But he seemed to his sons-in-law as one who jests.

¹⁵As dawn broke, the angels urged Lot on, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two remaining daughters, lest you be swept away because of the iniquity of the city.” ¹⁶Still he delayed. So the men seized his hand, and the hands of his wife and his two daughters—in the LORD’s mercy on him—and brought him out and left him outside the city. ¹⁷When they had brought them outside, one said, “Flee for your life! Do not look behind you, nor stop anywhere in the Plain; flee to the hills, lest you be swept away.” ¹⁸But Lot said to them, “Oh no, my lord! ¹⁹You have been so gracious to your servant, and have already shown me so much kindness in order to save my life; but I cannot flee to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me and I die. ²⁰Look, that town there is near enough to flee to; it is such a little place! Let me flee there—it is such a little place—and let my life be saved.” ²¹He replied, “Very well, I will grant you this favor too, and I will not annihilate the town of which you have spoken. ²²Hurry, flee there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.” Hence the town came to be called Zoar.^a

²³As the sun rose upon the earth and Lot entered Zoar, ²⁴the LORD rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah sulfurous fire from the LORD out of heaven. ²⁵He annihilated those cities and the entire Plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities and the vegetation of the ground. ²⁶Lot’s^b wife looked back,^c and she thereupon turned into a pillar of salt.

^a Connected with mi@‘ar “a little place,” v. 20.

^b Lit. “His.”

^c Lit. “behind him.”

²⁷Next morning, Abraham hurried to the place where he had stood before the LORD, ²⁸and, looking down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and all the land of the Plain, he saw the smoke of the land rising like the smoke of a kiln.

²⁹Thus it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the Plain and annihilated the cities where Lot dwelt, God was mindful of Abraham and removed Lot from the midst of the upheaval.

³⁰Lot went up from Zoar and settled in the hill country with his two daughters, for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar; and he and his two daughters lived in a cave. ³¹And the older one said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to consort with us in the way of all the world. ³²Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him, that we may maintain life through our father." ³³That night they made their father drink wine, and the older one went in and lay with her father; he did not know when she lay down or when she rose. ³⁴The next day the older one said to the younger, "See, I lay with Father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go and lie with him, that we may maintain life through our father." ³⁵That night also they made their father drink wine, and the younger one went and lay with him; he did not know when she lay down or when she rose.

³⁶Thus the two daughters of Lot came to be with child by their father. ³⁷The older one bore a son and named him Moab;^d he is the father of the Moabites of today. ³⁸And the younger also bore a son, and she called him Ben-ammi;^e he is the father of the Ammonites of today.

20 ¹Abraham journeyed from there to the region of the Negeb and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While he was sojourning in Gerar, ²Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." So King Abimelech of Gerar had Sarah brought to him. ³But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, "You are to die because of the woman that you have taken, for she is a married woman." ⁴Now Abimelech had not approached her. He said, "O Lord, will You slay people even though innocent?" ⁵He himself said to me, 'She is my sister!' And she also said, 'He is my brother.' When I did this, my heart was blameless and my hands were clean." ⁶And God said to him in the dream, "I knew that you did this with a blameless heart, and so I kept you from sinning against Me. That was why I did not let you touch her. ⁷Therefore, restore the man's wife—since he is a prophet, he will intercede for you—to save your life. If you fail to restore her, know that you shall die, you and all that are yours."

⁸Early next morning, Abimelech called his servants and told them all that had happened; and the men were greatly frightened. ⁹Then Abimelech summoned Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? What wrong have I done that you should bring so great a guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done to me things that ought not to be done. ¹⁰What, then," Abimelech demanded of Abraham, "was your purpose in doing this thing?" ¹¹"I thought," said Abraham, "surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. ¹²And besides, she is in truth my sister, my father's daughter though not my mother's; and she became my wife. ¹³So when God made me wander from my father's house, I said to her, 'Let this be the kindness that you shall do me: whatever place we come to, say there of me: He is my brother.'"

¹⁴Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored his wife Sarah to him. ¹⁵And Abimelech said, "Here, my land is before you; settle wherever you please." ¹⁶And to Sarah he said, "I herewith give your brother a thousand pieces of silver; this will serve you as vindication^a before all who are with you, and you are cleared before everyone." ¹⁷Abraham then prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his slave girls, so that they bore children; ¹⁸for the LORD had closed fast every womb of the household of Abimelech because of Sarah, the wife of Abraham.

^d As though me-'ab "from (my) father."

^e As though "son of my (paternal) kindred."

^a Lit. "a covering of the eyes"; meaning of latter half of verse uncertain.

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¹The LORD took note of Sarah as He had promised, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had spoken. ²Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken. ³Abraham gave his newborn son, whom Sarah had borne him, the name of Isaac. ⁴And when his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded him. ⁵Now Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter; everyone who hears will laugh with^a me.” ⁷And she added,

“Who would have said to Abraham
That Sarah would suckle children!
Yet I have borne a son in his old age.”

⁸The child grew up and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

⁹Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing. ¹⁰She said to Abraham, “Cast out that slave-woman and her son, for the son of that slave shall not share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.” ¹¹The matter distressed Abraham greatly, for it concerned a son of his. ¹²But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed over the boy or your slave; whatever Sarah tells you, do as she says, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be continued^b for you. ¹³As for the son of the slave-woman, I will make a nation of him, too, for he is your seed.”

¹⁴Early next morning Abraham took some bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar. He placed them over her shoulder, together with the child, and sent her away. And she wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. ¹⁵When the water was gone from the skin, she left the child under one of the bushes, ¹⁶and went and sat down at a distance, a bowshot away; for she thought, “Let me not look on as the child dies.” And sitting thus afar, she burst into tears.

¹⁷God heard the cry of the boy, and an angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heeded the cry of the boy where he is. ¹⁸Come, lift up the boy and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him.” ¹⁹Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water, and let the boy drink. ²⁰God was with the boy and he grew up; he dwelt in the wilderness and became a bowman. ²¹He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

²²At that time Abimelech and Phicol, chief of his troops, said to Abraham, “God is with you in everything that you do. ²³Therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my kith and kin, but will deal with me and with the land in which you have sojourned as loyally as I have dealt with you.” ²⁴And Abraham said, “I swear it.”

²⁵Then Abraham reproached Abimelech for the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized. ²⁶But Abimelech said, “I do not know who did this; you did not tell me, nor have I heard of it until today.” ²⁷Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a pact. ²⁸Abraham then set seven ewes of the flock by themselves, ²⁹and Abimelech said to Abraham, “What mean these seven ewes which you have set apart?” ³⁰He replied, “You are to accept these seven ewes from me as proof that I dug this well.” ³¹Hence that place was called Beer-sheba,^c for there the two of them swore an oath. ³²When they had concluded the pact at Beer-sheba, Abimelech and Phicol, chief of his troops, departed and returned to the land of the Philistines. ³³[Abraham] planted a tamarisk at Beer-sheba, and invoked there the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God. ³⁴And Abraham resided in the land of the Philistines a long time.

^a Lit. “for.”

^b Lit. “called.”

^c I.e., “well of seven” or “well of oath.”

22 ¹Some time afterward, God put Abraham to the test. He said to him, “Abraham,” and he answered, “Here I am.” ²And He said, “Take your son, your favored one, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the heights that I will point out to you.” ³So early next morning, Abraham saddled his ass and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He split the wood for the burnt offering, and he set out for the place of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place from afar. ⁵Then Abraham said to his servants, “You stay here with the ass. The boy and I will go up there; we will worship and we will return to you.”

⁶Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on his son Isaac. He himself took the firestone^a and the knife; and the two walked off together. ⁷Then Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” And he answered, “Yes, my son.” And he said, “Here are the firestone and the wood; but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?” ⁸And Abraham said, “God will see to the sheep for His burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them walked on together.

⁹They arrived at the place of which God had told him. Abraham built an altar there; he laid out the wood; he bound his son Isaac; he laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰And Abraham picked up the knife to slay his son. ¹¹Then an angel of the LORD called to him from heaven: “Abraham! Abraham!” And he answered, “Here I am.” ¹²And he said, “Do not raise your hand against the boy, or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your favored one, from Me.” ¹³When Abraham looked up, his eye fell upon a^b ram, caught in the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son. ¹⁴And Abraham named that site Adonai-yireh,^c whence the present saying, “On the mount of the LORD there is vision.”^d

¹⁵The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, ¹⁶and said, “By Myself I swear, the LORD declares: Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your favored one, ¹⁷I will bestow My blessing upon you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands on the seashore; and your descendants shall seize the gates of their foes. ¹⁸All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, because you have obeyed My command.” ¹⁹Abraham then returned to his servants, and they departed together for Beer-sheba; and Abraham stayed in Beer-sheba.

²⁰Some time later, Abraham was told, “Milcah too has borne children to your brother Nahor: ²¹Uz the first-born, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram; ²²and Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel”—²³Bethuel being the father of Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham’s brother. ²⁴And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore children: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

^a Lit. “fire.”

^b Reading ’eh%ad with many Heb. mss. and ancient versions; text ’ah%ar “after.”

^c I.e., “the Lord will see”; cf. v. 8.

^d Heb. Behar Adonai yera’eh.