

THE LORD APPEARS TO ABRAHAM

In the midst of great wickedness God brought his people into a relationship with himself.



THE STORY: GENESIS 18:1-8

MONDAY

God initiated contact with Abraham again.

God initiated contact with Abraham again. “And the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre.” With these opening words of chapter 18 we see that, once again, God is the one who took the initiative to reveal himself to his people. God’s initiative in visiting with Abraham is all of grace. If God did not reveal himself to Abraham or to us, neither we nor Abraham would know him.

As we continue reading the passage, we learn that Abraham was going about his life after encountering God the first time. He trusted the promise of God but in his old age there was nothing Abraham could do to bring about the fulfillment of God’s promise of a son through Sarah. Already, Abraham had taken his wife’s maidservant to produce a son and God responded by saying that Ishmael was not the one to fulfill the promise.

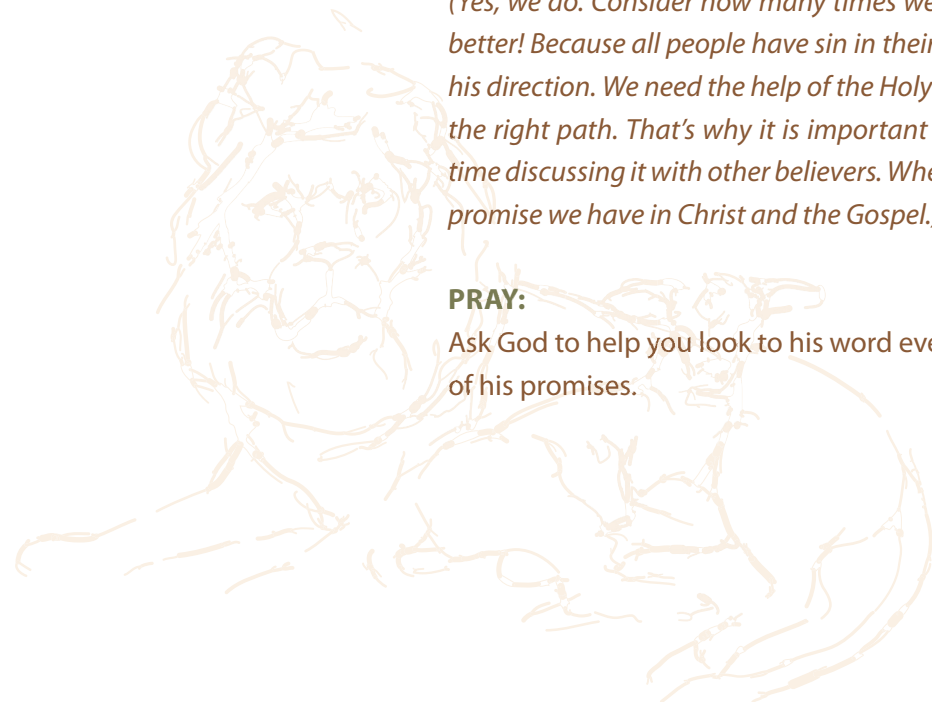
TALK ABOUT IT:

Why did God keep coming to Abraham? *(We don’t know the “why’s” behind what God does but we can learn from what he does. Clearly, God cared for Abraham. This care is shown as God visited with Abraham, spoke with him, and reminded him of the promise God had made.)*

Do we need to hear God’s Word again and again for us to stay on track in our lives? *(Yes, we do. Consider how many times we have each disobeyed even though we knew better! Because all people have sin in their hearts, all people tend to drift from God and his direction. We need the help of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and others to stay on the right path. That’s why it is important for us to read the Bible every day and spend time discussing it with other believers. When we do that, the Holy Spirit reminds us of the promise we have in Christ and the Gospel.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help you look to his word every day so that you will always be reminded of his promises.





God reaffirmed his covenant and promise to Abraham.

God reaffirmed his covenant and promise to Abraham. God is mindful of the frailty of man and is aware of the effects of sin upon us. How quickly we can begin to doubt! In this passage, God affirmed his promise to Abraham because he knew that doubts had already begun to find a foothold. God need not have appeared to remind Abraham of the promise but in his mercy he chose to. Doubts were revealed when Sarah laughed in response to the promise of a son because she was old and advanced in years beyond childbearing. Though the Lord questioned Sarah, he did not rebuke her unbelief. He knew that the child of promise she was to bear represented the future line of Israel and the Savior. Abraham's faith in the promise of God, the future redeemer, had been counted to him as righteousness and, similarly, Sarah need not be judged. For even as she doubted, her sin was covered by the life of Christ to come and his atoning sacrifice.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What did Sarah do when she was confronted by the Lord about her laughing? (Sarah lied.)

Why didn't God rebuke Sarah? (The Bible tells us that God is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love and that he does not treat us as our sins deserve (Psalm 103:8-10).)

PRAY:

Thank God for His patience with us as sinners and for sending His son Jesus to die for us.



Where is Jesus?

God appeared to Abraham, demonstrating that he is a God who desires to dwell with mankind. This means that God desires to dwell with us, too. Jesus came to earth to die so that all men might have fellowship with God. God, through his Spirit, can dwell in each of our hearts.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How did God demonstrate his grace through his visit with Abraham and through Jesus? (*Abraham didn't deserve to be shown favor by God and neither do we. God simply showered his love upon Abraham and through Jesus he showers his love upon us as well.*)

PRAY:

Thank God that through the Gospel, we can each have fellowship with God. Ask that God would help us to enjoy fellowship with him our whole lives through.



THE STORY: GENESIS 18:16-33

THURSDAY

God heard Abraham's prayers to spare the righteous of Sodom.

God heard Abraham's prayers to spare the righteous of Sodom. God's plan of salvation is not universal, covering all of mankind. Though God had chosen Abraham out from among sinful man, God had not chosen Sodom. In this most amazing exchange we see how our prayers interact with God's purpose and plan. In the passage, we see how God announced his plan to judge the wickedness of Sodom. Abraham appealed to God on behalf of any righteous people in Sodom: first fifty, then forty-five, then thirty, then twenty, and finally ten. Truly, God would not destroy even one that he had chosen but, in fact, there was not one righteous person found inside the city. In this exchange between Abraham and God, we catch a glimpse of how God hears our prayers and responds to them. In the end, God's angel rescued Lot who was just outside the city by dragging him by the hand against his objections. God will save those whom he has chosen.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What do we learn about God from Abraham's appeals? (*God was willing to listen to Abraham's requests and did not tire of Abraham coming to him again and again.*)

What do we do that is like Abraham's appeals? (*Abraham was offering prayers to God. Our prayers are really no different. We ask God to hear our appeals and answer us by his grace.*)

PRAY:

Fresh with faith that God listens to our prayers, have each family member pray to God. Listen to their prayers and later, where appropriate, bring your encouragements or adjustments.



On the road to Emmaus.

The writer of Hebrews (Hebrews 2:6-9) quotes Psalm 8:6-8 and attributes the description to Jesus. Specifically, we read in Hebrews 2:9 “but we see Jesus.”

TALK ABOUT IT:

After reading Hebrews 2:6-9, how would you say this passage relates to Jesus? (*This passage talks about the Son of God's humility in giving up his glory to become a man.*)

Knowing that Psalm 8:5 refers to Jesus, how might Philippians 2:6-11 fit into this description of Christ? (*The passage in Philippians not only talks about the humility of the Son of God but also the subsequent exaltation of Christ to which Psalm 8:5 also refers.*)

PRAY:

Thank God for the amazing prophetic words he gave to Israel but don't forget that many in Israel didn't recognize Jesus as the Messiah. Pray that God would help you to recognize him.

