

A Daily Devotional Study Guide

# The Book of Genesis

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth - Genesis 1:1

**WEEK 5**

## ***“Better to Wait”***

**Study:** Genesis 16:1-6

**Reading:** Psalm 27:1-14

**Memory:** Matthew 5:43

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

Both Sarai and Abram wanted a child very badly, but since they tried for many years, it seemed impossible that this would happen. They knew that God had promised a child to Abram through his seed so Sarai thought she would help God keep His promise by offering her personal servant to Abram. It appears that Hagar was not just some servant pulled out of the crowd, but was a servant that would be right at the side of Sarai, constantly helping her with her needs. Most likely, Sarai had become very good friends with Hagar, and, in her mind, Hagar was the best option for Abram to have a child. Though this was Sarai's decision, she doesn't deserve all of the blame since it appears she was acting out of love for her husband. It should also be noted that this would have been common custom in those days which would have made it much easier for Sarai to make this choice. We are told that they had been in Canaan for 10 years at this point which would have made Abram 85 years old and Sarai would have been 75 years old. It must be remembered that aging was a little different in those days. Abram chose to listen to Sarai and made Hagar his wife. This was probably some type of arrangement where she was a secondary wife. Shortly after this, Hagar became pregnant, which was the original intent of their marriage. The plan of Sarai had seemed good, but the outcome was not what she expected. After Sarai found out that Hagar was with child, she began to despise Hagar. Perhaps there was some type of hope in the heart of Sarai that Hagar would not become pregnant and therefore the problem would be Abram rather than her. Whatever had gone through her mind before was now completely overcome with hatred towards her servant (vs 1-4).

The type of bitterness that Sarai developed towards Hagar is often the same reaction that many people still have today when they choose to do what is wrong in order to get a desired result. The bitter person could have been completely behind the actions that caused the bitterness, yet that bitterness blinds them from humbling themselves and admitting their mistake. Sarai justified her anger by stating that Hagar now looked at her with contempt since Hagar was able to get pregnant and she wasn't. From

the context of this passage, it does not appear that Hagar acted as Sarai stated, but an angry, bitter person often creates situations in his or her mind. Sarai was also blaming Abram for his action, even to the point where it appears she wanted Abram to face judgment from God if he didn't turn Hagar away. Abram and Sarai were both caught up in the mess they made and Abram tried to pass the blame back to Sarai by giving her the responsibility of doing whatever she wanted with Hagar. He told Sarai that Hagar was her servant and she had control over her servant. Sarai then began to do all she could to make the life of Hagar a miserable one (vs 5-6).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

The few short verses today are packed with revelation about human nature and the results of sin. The first and huge mistake was not trusting in God to do what He said He would do. They tried to take matters into their own hands and help God with what God was doing, but the problem was that they used their human reasoning to try to accomplish God's plan. This is something that is so easy to do for all believers. When you follow God, there are some times you have to wait for Him to fulfill His Word, but waiting is hard. When you choose to take matters into your own hands, you will often mess things up. When you choose to act out of your faulty human excuses, the situation will end up in a way that will be much harder on you than if you had waited for God. Yes, waiting is tough, but the difficulty of waiting is nothing compared to the difficulties that will occur when you choose to step out on your own.

Another lesson to learn is from the response of Sarai and Abram to this whole situation. Instead of humbling themselves and admitting their faults, it seems that they blamed each other for this terrible choice, which created a deeper bitterness and anger. When you step out of God's will, you need to recognize the error of your way, repent and take the blame for what happened. When you humble yourself after sinning, though it is very hard to do, things will always go better for you and the recovery time is much quicker. Yet, if you allow your pride to rule, you will continue to make things worse.

God has great plans for you and desires great peace and love to abound in your relationships, yet the only way to be filled with the fullness of God is when you live in obedience to Him.

Why do you think we are reminded that Sarai was Abram's wife in verse 1?

Who was Hagar (vs 1)?

What did Sarai think God had done (vs 2)?

What was Sarai's plan (vs 2)?

Why do you think that Sarai chose this route?

What did Abram do (vs 2)?

Why do you think Abram chose to listen to his wife?

What would you put more blame on, Sarai or Abram? Explain your answer.

How long had they been waiting for a child after God gave them the promise of a child (vs 3)?

What did Sarai do (vs 3)?

What was the result of this choice (vs 4)?

How did Sarai respond when Hagar became pregnant (vs 4)?

What was Sarai's attitude about this (vs 5)?

Why do you think she blamed Abram?

What did Sarai think Hagar was doing (vs 5)?

What did Sarai tell Abram to do about Hagar (vs 6)?

How did Sarai respond (vs 6)?

How did this choice become a major problem (vs 6)?

# “The God Who Sees”

**Study:** Genesis 16:7-16

**Reading:** Isaiah 6:1-13

**Memory:** Matthew 5:43

I have a friend who had known about Jesus from early on in life, but chose to live his own way. He lived in his flesh for many years, but soon found that his way only brought difficulty and heartache. He finally reached the point where he was unsure if God cared or even if God would accept him because of all that he had done. One night, he picked up his Bible and randomly opened it to the passage that you read today. It was this passage that helped him realize that God saw him and cared for him in his sinful state.

Today, we are going to see how God cares about each one of us and constantly knows and understands what we are going through. We will see that we can trust God and obey Him because He is there for us even if He is sending us into a difficult situation.

## What Does the Bible Say?

Hagar could not take the abuse given out by Sarai and fled from the house of Abram south towards Egypt. She was by a spring when an angel of the Lord appeared to her and asked her where she came from and where she was going. The angel knew her name and knew she was a servant of Sarai. He also knew why she was there, but was asking her as a starting point for the conversation they were about to have. She responded to his question by telling him that she was running away from Sarai. We are not told if she explained why or if there was more to this conversation, but we are told that the angel said that she should go back to Sarai and submit to her. This must have been very hard for Hagar to hear because of the abuse she had been suffering. God knew what Hagar was going through and He wanted her to know that He would bless her offspring in a great way and that they would be numerous. The angel then told her that she would have a son and would call him Ishmael. The name Ishmael meant “God hears.” That was an encouragement to Hagar because she could know and understand that God could hear her in her affliction. At the same time, the angel told Hagar that her son would be like a wild donkey and would

be constantly fighting against others which would lead to constant struggles. This is an interesting prophecy that is still being fulfilled today through many of the arabic descendants of Ishmael (vs 7-12).

The well where Hagar had this experience was given the name Beer-lahai-roi which meant that God was living and that God saw the condition of Hagar. This was not only meant to say that God saw Hagar, but it was a reference to the character of God which reveals that God sees and knows all the affairs of men. Hagar did as the angel had commanded and traveled back to the house of Abram where she gave birth to Ishmael when Abram was 86 years old (vs 13-16).

## How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize that God always sees and always knows what you are going through? Hagar had traveled south, which would have led her to barren lands out of the sight of many people, but she was never out of the sight of God. Not only did God know where she was, but the angel also revealed that God knew what she was going through. What a great reminder to you today. No matter what situation you are in. No matter how far you have strayed from God or how difficult the situation is that you are facing, you can rest assured that God sees what is going on. You can trust God and look to God because He is the God who sees you. This also gives the idea that you can submit to Him and His plan, even if it doesn't seem to be the easiest path for you. God was sending Hagar back to a very difficult situation, yet at the same time, He was declaring that He would be there to help her through this time of trial.

## Suggestions for Prayer

- \* *Thank God because He always sees you.*
- \* *Ask God to help you trust in His plan.*
- \* *Praise God because He has no limits.*

## Thought for the day

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Where did the angel find Hagar (vs 7)?

Where was she on her way to (vs 7)?

\*\*\**Shur was south of what would become Israel and it appears that Hagar was headed towards Egypt where she was from.*

What did the angel know about Hagar (vs 8)?

What did the angel ask her (vs 8)?

Why do you think he asked her this?

What was Hagar's explanation (vs 8)?

What did the angel tell Hagar to do (vs 9)?

Why would this have been hard for Hagar?

What declaration did the angel make (vs 10)?

Why do you think God chose to make this promise to Hagar?

What did the angel tell Hagar to name her son (vs 11)?

Why would he be called this?

What can you observe from the fact that the angel knew Hagar's child would be a boy (vs 11)?

What would Ishmael be like (vs 12)

How is this prophecy still coming true today?

What did Hagar call the name of the spring (vs 13-14)? Why?

What important lesson can you learn from this name?

How did everything play out (vs 15-16)?

## ***“Establishing A Covenant”***

**Study:** Genesis 17:1-14

**Reading:** Deuteronomy 30:1-9, Luke 1:67-75

**Memory:** Matthew 5:43

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

One thing to take note of as you study the Bible is the time frame in which things happen. We left off in chapter 16 with Abram being 86 years old and the next verse in chapter 17 tells us he is now 99 years old. It is very easy to forget that many of the Bible characters lived common, ordinary, every day lives. We are just told about the big events that happened in their lives and their big events were often years apart. This is something to remember when you go through time periods where your Christian walk is slow and mundane. There will be stages in your life and times in your life where there is great excitement, but those are often few and far between. Much of the Christian life is just living a faithful walk before God.

When God came to Abram at the age of 99, He encouraged Abram to continue to walk in His ways and to walk in a way that was blameless. God was not saying that Abram had to be perfect. No man can be perfect, but when we walk with God and we sin, we should humble ourselves and repent of that sin. We also establish safeguards and make every effort not to fall back into that sin. God told Abram that if he kept his part of the covenant that he would be greatly blessed and his seed after him would be abundant (vs 1-2).

In response to the presence of God, Abram fell on his face in a sign of humility and respect. We are not told what the presence of God looked like to Abram, but he responded in a way that many others in the Bible responded when approached by the presence of God. As a sign of the covenant that God was making with Abram, He was going to change Abram's name to Abraham. The name Abram meant “exalted father” and the name Abraham meant “father of many nations.” The seed of Abraham would continue forever and great kings would be crowned from his lineage. He would give the children of Abraham the land of Canaan to be a possession which they will have for all eternity. They were to be God's chosen people where He would call them His children and they would call

Him their God (vs 3-8).

To help set Abraham and His children apart, and as a symbol of the covenant that God was establishing with Abraham, Abraham and his descendants were to be circumcised. Circumcision was an act where the foreskin of the male's penis would be cut. For those born into the family of Abraham, this was to be done when the boy was eight days old. Those not born into the line of Abraham, but who were a part of the household of Abraham or his descendants, were to be circumcised also in order to be a part of Abraham's family. Those who chose not to be circumcised were to be cut off from the family (vs 9-14).

It is very interesting that God chose circumcision as a sign to differentiate the Israelites (Jews) from the rest of the world. Circumcision was not visible to others because it was undercover in a private place, but it was also done on an area of a man that he would see multiple times each day. I believe God used this to be a reminder to Abraham and his seed of who they were and how they were to be separate from the world. Living a life different than the pagans involved both their private and public life. If they chose to follow God's plan for separation and uniqueness from the world around them, God would bless them in a mighty way.

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Is it your desire to be faithfully blameless before God? One of the great lessons from Abraham that you can learn is one of faithfulness. Abraham faithfully served God, believed in God and followed God. Did he make mistakes? Yes, we have read about these mistakes, but at the same time He did not give up on God and continued to follow Him even at times where it seemed that God was not going to keep His word. We are not told specifically that Abraham repented and asked forgiveness for his sin with Hagar, but it seems to be implied. You can see from the instruction of God to Abraham that God desired Abraham to continue to trust and walk in faithfulness to Him. If Abraham chose to do this, he would be blessed in a great way. Though the covenant made with Abraham does not directly extend to you, it is a general biblical concept that when you walk in faithfulness to God, God will bless you abundantly (Galatians 3:7-9). In Abraham's day, that blessing was land and wealth, though it also did go much deeper than that. The blessings you are promised today is abundant life from the inside and a fullness in life that those who follow the world can not have or understand.

How old was Abram when God appeared to him again (vs 1)?

How many years had passed since Ishmael was born (see 16:16)?

What did God declare about Himself (vs 1)? Why do you think He declared this?

What did God instruct Abram to do (vs 2)?

What did God covenant with Abram to do (vs 2)?

How did Abram respond to the Lord's appearance (vs 3)?

What did God tell Abram he would become (vs 4)?

What did God change the name of Abram to (vs 5)?

Why do you think God changed his name?

What did God say would come from Abraham's seed (vs 6)?

What covenant did God make (vs 7)?

What was God going to give to Abraham's descendants (vs 8)? How long was this their land to have?

What requirement did God give to Abraham (vs 9-10)?

Why do you think this was given as a sign (vs 11)?

Who was required to be circumcised (vs 12-13)?

Why do you think God required the servants to be circumcised?

What were Abraham and his descendants supposed to do with those who failed to be circumcised (vs 14)?

Why do you think God presented this as such a serious commitment?

# ***“Hard to Believe”***

**Study:** Genesis 17:15-27

**Reading:** Hebrews 11:1-22

**Memory:** Matthew 5:43

**H**ave you ever looked back at something and realized that the situation was much less complex than it seemed when you were in the middle of it? When you look at a situation you are in and can not see how it is going to work out, it is very hard to believe that there could be any type of solution. Yet, when you look back after having seen God work, many times you will find that you made something much more complicated than it needed to be. It is very easy to forget that God has the ability to make things easy.

Today, we are going to see how Abraham had a hard time believing God because what God was declaring seemed impossible.

## **What Does the Bible Say?**

God not only changed the name of Abram to Abraham, but He also changed Sarai's name to Sarah. The name Sarah meant “my princess” which indicated that she would be the ancestress of a great nation. God declared that she would be blessed and that she would have a son from the seed of Abraham that would allow them to become the founders of a great nation. The words sounded great to Abraham, but he somewhat chuckled to himself about this, wondering how a child would be born to Sarah who was ninety years old. Though the aging process in those days was different, it was impossible at the age of 90 for Sarah to bear a child. The age wasn't the only contributing factor to this unbelief. They had tried to have a child unsuccessfully for well over 25 years. Abraham responded to God by saying that it must be Ishmael who would be the one who would carry on his name. God disagreed with Abraham and declared that Sarah would bear a son and that they should call his name Isaac. The name Isaac is an interesting one because it meant “he laughs.” God knew the thoughts of Abraham, but insisted that he would have a child and that his child from Sarah would be the one who God would keep His everlasting covenant through (vs 15-19).

Ishmael would also be blessed because He was a descendant of

Abraham. He was going to be fruitful and multiply and would be the leader of a nation. He would have twelve sons and the seed of Ishmael would grow abundantly, but he was not to be the one that God would use. God had a plan to have Isaac become the one who would carry out the covenant that God had made with Abraham. God even told him that the time had now come and that within the year, Sarah would become pregnant and have a child (vs 20-21).

In an act of faith and obedience, Abraham took Ishmael and all the other males in his household and had them circumcised. Abraham himself, though he was 99 year old, was also circumcised. It is very interesting to note that Abraham did not wait to carry out God's command, but obeyed immediately (vs 22-27).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Do you believe that God can do the impossible? Have you ever said that it would be easier to believe if God appeared to you directly? Though you may think that would be the case, God appeared to Abraham and he laughed to himself about what God said. He loved God and trusted God, but since having a child was humanly impossible, he didn't believe. He kept trying to use the method -- the human method -- that made the most sense to him to help carry out God's plans. Yet, God did not want to use human methods because He wanted to do the impossible. Though the Bible talks about wisdom many times in our earthly dealings, we are also told to have faith when it comes to obeying God. Though Abraham may have doubted, He did not let his doubt interfere with his obedience and he obeyed God immediately. This obedience was not a small thing either. Having to circumcise babies is one thing, but circumcising adults is something completely different. Yet, Abraham chose to trust God and to obey, believing that God would do as He said.

## **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for giving you the faith to believe.*
- \* *Ask God to help you trust Him when you can't see how He will work things out.*

## **Thought for the day**

What did God change Sarai's name to (vs 15)?

Why do you think He changed her name?

What did God say He would do for Sarah (vs 16)?

What would come from the womb of Sarah (vs 16)?

Why did Abraham laugh to himself (vs 17)?

What does this reveal about human nature? (Keep in mind that Abraham was considered a man of great faith.)

What did Abraham try to convince God of in verse 18?

Why do you think he said this?

Why is it hard to believe God when circumstances seem impossible?

What did God confirm to Abraham (vs 19)?

What did God say He would do for Ishmael (vs 20)?

What did God emphasize about Isaac (vs 21)?

What did Abraham do (vs 23)?

What can you learn about the faithfulness and obedience of Abraham from this?

What does verse 24 declare?

How complete was the obedience of Abraham to what God had commanded (vs 25-27)?

Why is complete obedience to God and His instructions important?

What lessons can you learn from today's reading?

## ***“Is Anything too Hard for God”***

**Study:** Genesis 18:1-15

**Reading:** Matthew 19:23-29, I Samuel 14:1-15

**Memory:** Matthew 5:43

I am sure that when I told people that I was considering becoming a pastor they must have snickered a little bit. After all, I would have been telling them this when I was a somewhat rebellious teenager who didn't display much of a heart and desire for God. It might have seemed impossible at the time for most people to envision me as a pastor, but God has a way of making the impossible possible. I am thankful that God was up for the challenge.

Today, we are going to see how Sarah laughed at the declaration that she was going to have a child. You can't fully blame her, but this laugh helps us see and understand just how great of a miracle the birth of Isaac was.

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

We are not told what time of day God appeared to Abraham in chapter 17, but when God appeared to Him again in chapter 18, it was in the middle of the day. During the middle of the day, people would often take a break, protecting themselves from the heat of the sun. This is where we find Abraham as he sees three men coming towards him. We are told that he ran to meet them and bowed down to the ground when he greeted them. He asked them to come into his tent so he could give them food and water. Though we can't say for sure, it appears that Abraham knew that there was something different about these three men. There would have been many people who traveled through the area where Abraham was living and most likely one would not think that he treated every traveler this way. The haste in which Abraham went to Sarah and asked for cakes appears to indicate that Abraham knew that these were special guests. Once the meal was all prepared, he fed the men and waited to hear what they had to say. Most likely he had some idea that they had a message from God (vs 1-8).

Up to this point, Sarah had not shown herself to the men and they asked where she was. Abraham responded by saying she was still in the tent, which was probably customary for times when men came to visit.



Verse ten reveals that these were not ordinary men because it states that “the Lord said” when referring to one of the men who was doing the speaking. We see at times in the Old Testament that God appeared to men in the form of a man. Many theologians believe that this was a form of Christ that appeared to Abraham. Some call this a “theophany.” We are not given any details so we can only assume and follow what Scripture says. Regardless of the specifics, the important part was the message that was delivered. God stated that about that time next year, Sarah would have a son. Sarah must have been very curious about what the visitors had to say so she was listening while sitting in the tent. When Sarah heard this, she laughed to herself because physically this was impossible. Though she laughed to herself, the Lord knew the response of Sarah and asked Abraham why she laughed. This is not necessarily a condemning statement, but was given to help emphasize that God knew this was physically impossible. God then asked a rhetorical question stating, “is anything too hard for God?” Sarah still did not believe the message that was given and she even denied that she laughed because she was afraid of what these men might think (vs 9-15).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Do you believe that God is a God of the impossible? When God promises something, He will keep His promises, even if it seems that the situation may be impossible. It is natural for you to think in the human realm because, of course, you are human. As a human, you have limitations and these limitations can often cause you to put limits on God. Sarah didn’t believe God, but God reminded her that He was greater than their physical limitations. Sarah didn’t want to admit that she was doubting, but she was. Doubting is human, but you are given a choice to trust in God and let Him fulfill His Word. It is encouraging to note that doubt did not keep God from fulfilling His Word. This doesn’t mean that it is okay to continually doubt God, but this should be an encouragement for you to trust in God and to ask God to give you the faith you need to trust Him.

## **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for wanting to do the impossible for you.*
- \* *Ask God to help you trust Him through difficult situations.*
- \* *Praise God because He has no limits.*

Where was Abraham (vs 1)? Why?

What did Abraham see (vs 2)?

What did Abraham say to these men (vs 3)?

How do you think Abraham knew that there was something different about these travelers?

How did Abraham treat these men (vs 4-5)?

What did Abraham choose to do to welcome these men (vs 6-8)?

What did they ask (vs 9)?

What declaration did the Lord make (vs 10)?

What was Sarah doing (vs 10)?

What does verse 11 make clear?

How did Sarah respond after hearing the words of God (vs 12)?

Why do you think Sarah responded this way?

What did the Lord ask Abraham (vs 13)?

What question did the Lord ask (vs 14)? What point was He making?

What promise did the Lord make (vs 14)?

What did Sarah deny (vs 15)?

Why do you think she denied this?

What did God state (vs 15)? Why do you think He emphasized that He knew she laughed?

What lessons can you learn from this passage?



# “Holy, Just, Loving, Gracious”

**Study:** Genesis 18:16-33

**Reading:** Isaiah 6:1-7, Psalm 145:1-9

**Memory:** Matthew 5:43

When my children were growing up, I often found myself parenting them based on how I felt at the time. It was easy to be a parent who was harsh and unloving if I was in a bad or rushed mood. It was much easier to be a parent of love and mercy if I was relaxed and in a playful mood. I tried hard to be a consistent parent because I knew my children would be far better off if I displayed a consistent and balanced approach to parenting, but that balance was not always easy.

Today, we are going to see how God is a Father that has perfect balance. He is a God who has multiple attributes, but those attributes all work together for our good. He is a God of great mercy, but He is also a God of great judgement. By only focusing on the mercy of God, or only focusing on the judgment of God, we miss out on His complete character.

## What Does the Bible Say?

After the three men had finished their meal with Abraham, they set out toward the direction of Sodom. Abraham traveled with them for a short distance as they were heading out. While they were talking on the way, the Lord asked the others who were with Him if He should hide his future plans from Abraham. As mentioned yesterday, one of the three men was God appearing in a human form. After He asked the question, He continued to state that Abraham would become a great nation and that He wanted the seed of Abraham to live in righteousness and holiness. God wanted Abraham to see and know the blessings He would have for obedience compared to the destruction that would come as a result of sin (vs 16-19).

God proceeded to tell Abraham that there was a great outcry against the sins that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were committing. We are not told if there was a group of righteous people crying out against the sins of the region or if the sin was so great that there was an outcry in heaven because of the evil in the land. God said that He and the others were traveling down to Sodom to see if the reports that He had heard about the region were true. We know that God knows all things, and He knew

the great sin of the region. Why He was physically traveling there is unclear. Perhaps this was an attempt to reveal great grace and give the people of Sodom a chance to have their city spared (vs 20-21).

The two men that were with the Lord traveled on to Sodom while the Lord stayed and talked with Abraham. Abraham asked if God would destroy Sodom even if there were righteous men living in the land. He then asked God if God would spare the city if there were 50 righteous people in the city. Abraham appealed to the grace of God, stating that God's love for the righteous would keep Him from destroying the city. God agreed to the request of Abraham and told him He would spare the city if 50 righteous people were found in the city. Abraham then asked if God would spare the city if only forty-five righteous people were found. God agreed to spare the city for forty-five godly individuals. Abraham continued to negotiate down to forty, then thirty, then twenty and finally appealed to God to spare the city if there were ten righteous men. God declared He would not destroy it if there were ten godly men. We are not told what else was said, but are told that God left Abraham and they went their separate ways (vs 22-33).

## How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you see the holiness of God working together with the love of God? Do you realize that the grace of God is constantly working in accord with the judgement of God? As you think of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the emphasis is often on holiness and judgment, but the passage that we read today emphasizes love, mercy and grace. God was willing to spare the city if there were only ten righteous people in the region. He was also willing to spare the city if the men who went to visit the city personally were treated with respect and honor. If they found the city in better than reported condition, He would forgo destruction. Depending on your personality, it is easy to view God as a God of holiness and judgment or to view Him as a God of love and mercy. He is all of these, and a proper, balanced view of God will help you live a proper and balanced Christian life.

## Thought for the day

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Where did the men set out from (vs 16)?

Where were they headed to (vs 16)?

What did God say to this companions (vs 17)?

What did God declare about Abraham (vs 18)?

What had God chosen Abraham to do (vs 19)?

What did God say He had heard about Sodom and Gomorrah (vs 20)?

Why did the Lord say He was physically going to travel to Sodom and Gomorrah (vs 21)?

What does this reveal about God?

What did Abraham do as the men traveled toward Sodom (vs 22)?

*\*\*\*It appears that perhaps Abraham pulled the Lord aside, hoping to make a private deal with Him.*

What did Abraham ask the Lord (vs 23)?

What scenario did Abraham bring up to the Lord (vs 24)?

What did Abraham think that God would not do (vs 25)?

What did the Lord declare (vs 26)?

How did Abraham display humility when making the next request (vs 27)?

What did Abraham do in verses 28-32?

Why do you think Abraham did this?

What did the Lord say it would take to spare the cities (vs 32)?

What does this reveal about the character of God?

*Matthew 5:25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. 26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny. 27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. 31 “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. 33 “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ 34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil. 38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42 Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you. 43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’*