

Discussion October 10 and 11:

1. Read Genesis 19.12-29 and Genesis 20.

Re-read our definition for Grace:

Grace can be seen as God's movement towards the sinner-saint; action that manifests as unmerited kindness towards the sinner-saint.

(*Remember* Kindness plays out more specifically than favor; kindness is specific blessings pertaining to the individual and the specific season they're in.)

Keeping this definition in mind, are you seeing any instances of Grace that you hadn't seen before?

2. Write Genesis 19.15 here:

What is Lot's response in Genesis 19.16?

What do the angels do in the same verse? Why?

Write Jude 23 here:

3. What is Lot commanded in Genesis 19.17?

How does Lot respond in Genesis 19.18?

What does Lot ask in Genesis 19.20?

What is the answer to this request in 19.21?

Why do you think Lot's request was obliged?

4. Write Genesis 18.25 here:

Write Genesis 19.21-23 here:

When did the Lord destroy Sodom? Why did He wait until this moment to destroy Sodom?

5. Write Genesis 20.2 here:

Is this true?

Even though this is a half-truth, what is Abraham's heart in saying this?

Has Abraham (Abram) done this before? When?

Are there any sins you struggle with continually repeating? If you do, incorporate Jeremiah 3.22 into your prayer time this week:

“Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness.” “Behold, we come to you, for you are the LORD our God.”

6. In Genesis 20.3-6, who keeps Abimelech from doing wrong?

Why do you think God keeps Abimelech from doing wrong to Abraham and Sarah?

7. In Genesis 20.14-16 how does Abimelech repay Abraham and Sarah?

In Genesis 20.17-18 how does Abraham repay Abimelech?

If you're being honest, how easy is it for you to show Grace to others? Is there someone in your life that you need to be more Gracious towards?

8. Incorporate Psalm 119.132 into your prayer time this week:

Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is your way with those who love your name.

October 10 and 11, 2023: God's Grace to Lot and Abraham & Abimelech

I. Recap of Events:

A. Abram and Sarai have been called out of a godless people to bring about God's chosen people and the Messiah (Genesis 11.29-12.7).

B. Abram disobeys in a variety of ways:

-Settled in Haran (rather than promptly going to Canaan, the land that God would show Abram), Genesis 11.31

-Brings his nephew Lot with him, even though the command was "*Go from...your kindred,*" Genesis 12.1

-Abram relocates he and Sarai to Egypt, even though they weren't commanded to go there; once in Egypt, Abram convinces Sarai to lie and say she is his sister, Genesis 12.10-20

-Abram conceives Ishmael with Sarai's servant Hagar, Genesis 16.1-4

C. The Lord repeatedly draws near to Abraham to remind him that it is His will and pleasure for Abrahams' life to experience blessings, land, and offspring:

-Acts 7.2-4

-Genesis 12.1-3

-Genesis 13.14-17

-Genesis 15.1, 5, 7, 9, 13-21

-Genesis 17.1-16, 19-21

-Genesis 18.9-15

II. Review of Lot:

A. Came along with his uncle:

Genesis 11.27-31:

27 Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. **28** Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans. **29** And Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. **30** Now Sarai was barren; she had no child. **31** Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went

forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there.

B. Separates from his uncle:

Genesis 13.5-11:

5 And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, 6 so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, 7 and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land. 8 Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) 11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other.

C. Lot is abducted as part of looted people and possessions during the War of the Nine Kings:

Genesis 14.11-12:

11 So the enemy took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. 12 They also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who was dwelling in Sodom, and his possessions, and went their way.

D. Abram hears of Lot's abduction and gathers 318 of his associates to rescue him:

Genesis 14.16:

Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people.

E. Lot was righteous:

2 Peter 2.7:

And if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked...

III. Events of Genesis 19.1-11:

A. The 2 visitors (angels) that joined the preincarnate Christ depart for Sodom and meet Lot at the city gate, Genesis 19.1.

B. Lot shows hospitality to the 2 angelic visitors (compare to the hospitality that Abraham shows in Genesis 18.2-8), Genesis 19.2-3.

C. The men of the city form a mob and demand that Lot surrender his 2 visitors; Lot defends his visitors but instead offers his daughters, Genesis 19.4-8.

D. The 2 angels strike the mob blind, Genesis 19.11.

19.12 *Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city, bring them out of the place. 13 For we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against its people has become great before the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it.” 14 So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, “Up! Get out of this place, for the Lord is about to destroy the city.” But he seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting.*

i. Lot is the only one who is righteous and the angelic visitors are thoroughly aware of this. Their inquiries about “Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone [else] in the city” are born purely out of God’s grace to Lot. That any of these people would be saved from destruction along with Lot is purely a kindness that God is extending to Lot.

ii. Lot takes seriously the warning of the angels but his sons-in-law will not; they will remain in Sodom and will perish with the rest of the wicked.

19.15 *As morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city.” 16 But he lingered. So the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. 17 And as they brought them out, one said, “Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away.” 18 And Lot said to them, “Oh, no, my lords. 19 Behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life. But I cannot escape to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me and I die. 20 Behold, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved!” 21 He said to him, “Behold, I grant you this favor also, that I will not overthrow the city of which you have spoken. 22 Escape there quickly, for I can do nothing till you arrive there.” Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. 23 The sun had risen on the earth when Lot came to Zoar.*

i. Lot lingers and without God's Gracious intervention via the angels, Lot, because he was slow to leave Sodom, might have perished with the rest of the wicked.

We are saved by Grace and none of us are any better than Lot. By His Grace, God took each one of us by the hand and saved us because of no merit of our own.

ii. Lot is delivered to safety and given specific instructions:

Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away.

iii. Lot argues with these instructions...he thinks his choice is better than what God sovereignly ordains for him. And God will Graciously grant him his request because the Lord is eager to lavish Grace on all of his saints. So, Zoar is spared for the sake of Lot.

19.24 *Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven. 25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.*

i. The Lord showed abounding Grace to the peoples of this area in hopes that they would turn to Him.

Genesis 13.10:

And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

This same people group had also been blessed when Abraham and 318 of his associates delivered them from the 4 Mesopotamian overlords. What a testament to Abraham's Living God.

God lavished unmerited favor on this people group...yet they rejected it.

ii. First they rejected God's Grace. Then they stayed in their sin, they settled comfortably in it, and they continued in it with no regard for the Living God.

God eagerly lavishes Grace on all people but the choice remains with us if we willingly accept it or not.

19.26 *But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord. 28 And he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the valley, and he looked and, behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace. 29 So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had lived.*

i. Grace is lavished on Lot as he is removed from the destruction and relocated to a place of, essentially, his own choosing; simultaneously we're seeing judgment poured out on his wife.

ii. There's something deeper going on with Lot's wife; even our Savior references it:

Luke 17.32:

Remember Lot's wife.

This is born from a deep care and concern and regard for Sodom, and all the pleasures she once found there. She was grieving Sodom's destruction and the life she was leaving behind, rather than looking ahead to the Grace that's being offered to her.

20.1 *From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar. 2 And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.*

i. Some possible reasons for Abraham's move:

-Abraham might be feeling unsettled and ill at ease after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

-Abraham has reached his limit with Lot (upon hearing about the incestuous relations with his daughters, Genesis 19.30-38).

ii. Abraham commits the same sin he committed when we first meet him: He meets a national leader and says his wife is his sister.

Sarah is his sister but his heart in this matter is through and through to deceive.

20.3 *But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife.” 4 Now Abimelech had not approached her. So he said, “Lord, will you kill an innocent people? 5 Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this.” 6 Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her. 7 Now then, return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, so that he will pray for you, and you shall live. But if you do not return her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours.”*

i. Abraham has a real fear that Sarah will be taken into harems and that fear is realized on both occasions—first in Egypt and again here.

ii. Abimelech takes her into his harem and the Lord appears to him and says, *“Behold, you are a dead man...”*

iii. Abimelech proclaims his innocence in the matter and the Lord affirms that it was only by His Gracious intervention that no sin occurred.

Sarah's womb is open so she and Abraham can bring about the promised offspring. The Lord would not allow Abimelech anywhere near Sarah when she was so close to conceiving with Abraham. Lineage would come to be unspeakably important to the Jews—and they would have a difficult enough time accepting Jesus without the idea that Abimelech dallied with Sarah when her womb was at last open.

iv. Abraham's sin instigated this entire issue, so his recompense would be prayer.

20.8 *So Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told them all these things. And the men were very much afraid. 9 Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things that ought not to be done.” 10 And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What did you see, that you did this thing?” 11 Abraham said, “I did it because I thought, ‘There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’ 12 Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. 13 And when God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, ‘This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, “He is my brother.”’”*

i. Abimelech asks honest questions and conducts himself Graciously.

ii. Abraham's response is uncharitable and a poor reflection on the Living God that he serves.

Abraham claimed that he conducted himself this way because he assumed the fear of the Lord was not in this land but the real problem was that Abraham didn't fear the Lord.

20.14 *Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male servants and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and returned Sarah his wife to him. 15 And Abimelech said, "Behold, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you." 16 To Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. It is a sign of your innocence in the eyes of all who are with you, and before everyone you are vindicated." 17 Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. 18 For the LORD had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.*

i. Abimelech richly blesses Abraham and returns Sarah, and so we see just how unfounded Abraham's fears were.

Abraham should have been wholly concerned with His relationship with the Lord and concerned with developing his trust in the Lord, instead of assessing Abimelech's fear of God.

ii. Abraham prays for Abimelech; there is practicality in this—to heal the wombs that were closed on account of Sarah's entrance into the harem.