



Nothing is Too Hard for God

(Genesis 18:1-15)

I. A **Heavenly** Encounter (18:1-2)

- “The Lord appeared” is from the perspective of the narrator. Abraham doesn’t know this yet.
- “behold, three men” is actually God Himself (probably the Pre-incarnate Christ) along with two angels (who will go to Sodom to warn Lot about the coming destruction).
- Abraham is called “**God’s friend**” in three places: 2 Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah 41:8, and James 2:23.

POINT: God wants to have a relationship with us as well. See 1 Kings 8:27, Isa. 57:15, Psalm 146:9, and Luke 24:30. If we are not close to the Lord, it’s not because of His reluctance.

POINT: Fellowship is dependent on obedience. Because of the Cross, Jesus stands ready to be the friend of any person (Rev. 3:20), but His friends obey Him (John 15:14).

II. A **Hospitable** Expression (18:3-8)

- “hurried” “quickly” “ran” (v.6-7) all speak to the flurry of hospitable activity that Abraham exhibited with total strangers.
- “His commands to Sarah are snapped out in four clauses: one, ‘three seahs of fine flour,’ lacks a verb, and there is only a single ‘and’ linking the clauses. The chiasmus between vv 5 and 6 suggests Abraham hurrying to the tent and running to the cattle almost simultaneously.”¹

POINT: When we serve others, we serve God. See Hebrews 13:2 and Matthew 25:40.

¹ Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, vol. 2, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1994), 46–47.

III. A Humbling Exchange (18:9-15)

- God knows Sarah's private thoughts, though her face was hidden (she's in the tent) and her laugh is silent - she "laughed within herself" (v.12).
- "A normal biological conception was humanly ruled out due to Sarah's post-menopausal age. The passage captures the impossibility of her pregnancy by three successive descriptions: the couple is 'old'; 'advanced in years,' lit., 'coming with days'; and she is 'past the age of childbearing,' lit., 'as the way of women had ceased for Sarah'.²
- Hebrews 11:11 says, "By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised."
- E. W. Wilcox once said, "Laugh and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone." God laughs with Abraham and Sarah as He names the boy "Isaac" (lit. "laughter"). Genesis 21:6 says, "And Sarah said, 'God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me'."

POINT: God's power is only limited by His will and by His character.

"Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (v. 14). "This question does not belong in the same category as "Can God build a stone so big that He cannot move it?" because so often that kind of question is not altogether serious. ... God cannot make a two-sided triangle or a square circle. **God's power is clearly limited by His will and by His character. He cannot lie and He cannot be unfaithful to His promises. But He is powerful enough to do all that He wills to do and adequate enough to accomplish all that He intends to accomplish.**"³

POINT: Refuse to question God's ability to accomplish His promises.

Donald Grey Barnhouse reminds us that "God made water flow from a rock in the wilderness, yet the people doubted that He could furnish bread. Although He rained manna from heaven, they questioned whether He could furnish flesh. Even Moses counted the soldiers and told God that there were not enough animals in the flocks and herds to feed them and asked, sarcastically, if all the fish of the sea would be secured for them (Numbers 11:22). God replied, 'Is Jehovah's arm waxed short?' To Jeremiah, God said, 'Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for me?' (Jeremiah 32:27)."⁴

You may think that you have sinned so grievously that God can't forgive you. **Jesus Christ can forgive any sin and anyone can be saved.** Isaiah 1:18 says, "'Come now, and let us reason together,' Says the Lord, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool'."

Adrian Rogers once said, "There is no promise too hard for God to fulfill, no prayer too hard for God to answer, no problem too big for God to solve and no person too hard for God to save!"⁵

² K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, vol. 1B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 218.

³ D. Stuart Briscoe and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Genesis*, vol. 1, *The Preacher's Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1987), 156.

⁴ As quoted in James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 607.

⁵ Adrian Rogers, "Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?" (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Gen. 18:13–14.