

Israel's Patriarch

A Study in Genesis 12-24

By the Oaks of Mamre
Genesis 18:1-15
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The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD?" - **Genesis 18:13**

I. THREE VISITORS

- Three men "appear" before Abraham. Contextually, it appears that one is the LORD, the other two are angels (Gen. 18:1; Ex. 23:20-21; Judges 6:1-27).
- Three men are present, but Abraham seems to be focused only on one. The use of the plural and singular in these verses is unique — and somewhat confusing (Gen. 18:1-15).
- Abraham demonstrates customary (yet a bit over-the-top) Middle Eastern hospitality to the strangers. It contrasts with the next major narrative, the angels' welcome in Sodom (Gen. 19:1-11).

II. A PURPOSE FOR THE VISIT

- The visitors reveal a purpose of their visit with a question: "Where is Sarah your wife?" (Gen. 18:9).
- Now "the LORD" speaks and confirms again his promise that a child will be born to Sarah in about a year's time (Gen. 18:10).
- This story is paralleled in Isaiah 7:10-17, Luke 1:8-13, and Luke 1:26-38.
- Like her husband, Sarah is a bit incredulous at this birth announcement (Gen. 18:11-12).
- God's rhetorical question in verse 13 is answered definitively with another question in verse 14: "Is anything too hard for the LORD?"
- Sarah's fear leads her to an attempted lie. God was not buying it (Gen. 18:15).

MAIN POINT: God is sovereign in his plans and decisions, and he does the work to bring them to pass. He knows all things and he cannot be deceived.

KNOW: There is nothing we can do to thwart the plan of God. He always accomplishes his will, and he is ever faithful to those upon whom he has set his pleasure and love.

DO: Get on board with God. It is good to be on his side.

Suggested Reading:

**The God Who Hears* by W. Bingham Hunter (Available in the LifePoint Library)

**Waiting on God* by Andrew Murray (LifePoint Library #248.32 MUR)

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read Genesis 18:1-15

1. Why do you think Abraham is so eager to host these strangers?
2. What do you think of these three men? Who are they?
3. Why does God keep repeating to Abraham that Sarah will have a son?
4. Why does Sarah laugh? Put yourself in her shoes (or Abraham's). Would this try your faith?
5. Is God angry with Sarah? Is this a rebuke?
6. Is anything too hard for the Lord? If not, why do bad things happen?
7. Is there at least one takeaway for you from this passage?