

# Genesis: From Creation to New Creation

## Genesis 18:1-15

"Is This Too Hard for God?"– January 15, 2023



### **Introduction**

Genesis is a book about beginnings - new beginnings. It's a book about creation and new creation. In Genesis 12, God chose Abraham to be a great nation that would be a blessing to the world. Even before God makes this promise, we are told that Sarah is barren. ([Genesis 11:30](#)) God renewed His promise of offspring for Abraham in chapter 16. Abraham and Sarah continued to wait for an heir, but they became impatient. They took matters into their own hands. Abraham had a son with Sarah's handmaid, Hagar. They waited decades. Sarah watched other women have children. She wrestled with bitterness, shame, envy and cynicism.

We can all relate to what it feels like to wait on God. Will God come through? Where is God? Can God change things? Does God care? Have you asked any of these questions while waiting? Here in Genesis 18, we see the tenderness and power of God.

### **Sermon Outline**

1. God come to dinner. Vs. 1 - 8
2. God encourages Sarah. Vs. 9 - 15

### **Read & Discuss**

#### **1. Read vs. 1-8**

Three men came to visit Abraham unannounced. One of them was God (vs. 1). The others were angels. When does Abraham realize this? It seems that he realizes it right away. He quickly set things in motion to show them hospitality. Remember - he is 99 years old. Think of the meal that he had prepared. It was a feast. Abraham served them. Abraham's hospitality showed that he realized this was no normal guest. It is God.

Why did God come this way? It could be to contrast this chapter with the next. It contrasts people who trusted in God (chapter 18) to those in chapter 19 (in Sodom) who do not. They also came for fellowship. The meal conveys a trusted covenant relationship. What is the application for us today? Life gets so busy that we forget to enjoy a meal and the company of others. We should prioritize eating together as family, roommates, church family. Talk about your lives. Talk about what is going on in the world. Pray together. Laugh together. How often do you have a meal together as a family? With other church members? What do you need to change in your schedule to make this a priority?

What is the point of the meal? The covenant-keeping God came to Abraham. Abraham believed God about the promise of a son. He showed that belief with circumcision. Here, God used this meal to draw Sarah into belief.

#### **2. Read vs. 9-15**

One of the things that this text teaches is God's omniscience. God knows and sees everything all the time. God knew where Sarah was before He asked. The reason that He asked questions was not to gain information that He didn't have before. It was to engage the people that were there. He was tenderly and lovingly drawing Sarah out of her doubt and into a place of trusting God and believing the impossible.

Sarah didn't join them for the meal, but she was listening. God knew that. The promise in vs. 10 was for HER. He wanted her to hear and believe His promise. Moses adds an editorial comment in vs. 11. He says that Abraham and Sarah were old, and Sarah was post-menopausal. It would be impossible for her to have a child. So, when she heard this, she laughed.

The focal point of this passage is vs. 14. Is anything too hard for the Lord? NO! This is God who spoke creation into existence out of nothing. He sustains it with the power of His hand. He rules all things.

Sarah denied laughing because of fear and unbelief. It would be painful for her to confess laughing. God was being tender with her. We can see from [Hebrews 11:11](#) that Sarah believed. Eventually, she took her eyes off of herself and put them onto a faithful God.

Is it hard for you to comprehend that nothing is impossible for God? Are you tempted to laugh at His promises to you? What are you struggling with as you wait on God? While God is not a magician who will make your dreams come true, we shouldn't fall into the trap of not asking God for big things either.

Had Sarah closed her heart to God because she was tired of disappointment? She struggled to believe the big thing. Are you not asking God for the big thing because you are afraid of disappointment? Do you, like Sarah, ever laugh at God? What causes you to laugh like Sarah did?

For some, it is thinking that someone you love, who is not a Christian, will ever come to Christ. They seem so indifferent and far from God, so you've given up hope and you stop asking God to save that person. Have you experienced that? Do you open up your life, your home, your heart to those who need Christ? Do you pray for the people in your life believing that God can rescue them? Is anything too hard for the Lord?

Some laugh due to the fear of what could happen in the future. They consider the worst case scenario. If the worst thing you could think of happens, do you fear that God would let you down? For some, it is the fear of what has happened. Life feels hopeless. In moments like this, we, like Sarah, want to hide in our tent. We don't think we can survive more disappointment. Why should we take the risk and trust God again? How do you look at your situation or disappointment? Do you see it through the lens of how you can work it out, or do you look at it through the lens of who God is?

God is all powerful, and He is also good. In this text, Sarah was not looking for God. He came looking for her. Because of this truth, we can keep going. We have so much more reason today, under the new covenant, to trust and keep going. (Romans 8:31-32) Jesus took our place and died for us. God is for us. What do you hope for? Have you asked God? After you ask, stop and wait on God. We have to trust that His response is for our good - even if the answer is "not yet" or "no." Do not believe the devil's lies about God.

Sometimes, we wrestle with the doubts with what God has promised. Remember who you are in Christ. (Ephesians 1:7) Do you know and believe and rest in the fact that there is no condemnation because of Christ? (Romans 8:1) Do you believe that God loves you? (Zeph. 3:17) If God says, in His word, that it is true - it is! You have been set free. (Romans 6:7) Fight for holiness. (Romans 6:12)

Our sin problem has left us spiritually dead. The wages of our sin is death. (Romans 6:23) Left to ourselves, it is impossible. God did what we couldn't do. He sent Jesus to die for us so that we might be rescued from our sin. Jesus rose from the grave to offer us eternal life. In Revelation 3:20, Jesus is knocking. He is drawing you to Himself. Repent and trust. Nothing is too hard for God!

### **Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to repent?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to com. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

**Next week's sermon text:** we turn to 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 "The Ministry of Reconciliation"