



## Scriptures and Doctrine :: One of THOSE passages Genesis 18:21

### One of THOSE passages Genesis 18:21, on: 2012/7/13 19:43

So here's another one of those passages, that no matter how I read I can't really seem to get my mind around it.

In Genesis 18:20-21 we see the LORD speaking to Abraham saying,

"And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. "I will go d  
own now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know."

The thing that I can't seem to understand is this element of "not knowing" and "if".

We all know that God is all knowing, and there's nothing that escapes Him, astounds Him, or surprises Him.

We see that later the LORD promises to spare the city for the sake of ten righteous men. However the LORD still destro  
ys the city without investigating the whole city Himself, as He(They) are only ever in it company of Lot.

Now, I'm not saying that He somehow broke His promise to Abraham, because He knew, even without having to investig  
ate the whole city in person that there were not ten righteous. He knew when He was speaking to Abraham that there w  
ere not ten righteous. He knew before He went to Sodom that He would destroy it. He knew before the world began that  
He would destroy it.

So why did He phrase verse 21 the way that He did?

Is it a difficulty in translation that doesn't convey well in English?

Young's Literal Translation reads it as;

"I go down now, and see whether according to its cry which is coming unto Me they have done completely -- and if not --  
I know;"

Which could perhaps make a bit more sense.

As honestly, the only reason I see God going down there at all was to save Lot and possibly, (though I have no proof) pe  
rhaps somehow give them an opportunity to repent and become righteous?

I know that once this clicks it's going to reveal something incredible, but I just can't get my mind around it.

Thoughts?

### Re: One of THOSE passages Genesis 18:21 - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/7/13 20:17

Good one! Glad you brought this up as i have always wondered at it myself.

Could it be that it was basically a way of saying that He was giving them ONE LAST CHANCE? In other words, He (His  
angel(s)) would go down and if such and such happened (which of course He knew would) then that would bring the jud  
gment.

One thing i always try to remember is the whole host of Heaven watches how God deals with human beings, and there i  
s a cosmic court (and it's proceedings) that we are not privy to. The Accuser accuses both God and human beings nigh  
t and day. So it's possible that verse 21 could be understood in terms of that.

Re: , on: 2012/7/13 20:38

Quote:  
-----Could it be that it was basically a way of saying that He was giving them ONE LAST CHANCE? In other words, He (His angel(s)) would go down and if such and such happened (which of course He knew would) then that would bring the judgment.  
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That's what I'm wondering. If it's perhaps that somehow He was going to give them some opportunity to repent, so they couldn't say, "We didn't know," or "We had no chance," as we do see Lot pleading with the men not to do such a wicked thing. So I guess in one sense, as loose as it seems, they did have a chance to repent.

Yet they're intent on doing it anyway, up to the point that EVEN WHEN STRICKEN BLIND they're so bent on homosexual relations that they weary themselves trying to find the door to Lot's house. Now that's pretty scary IMO. And that's what the last day's are ultimately going to culminate to.

Re: - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/7/13 20:42

QUOTE: "Yet they're intent on doing it anyway, up to the point that EVEN WHEN STRICKEN BLIND they're so bent on homosexual relations that they weary themselves trying to find the door to Lot's house."==EVEREST

Yes, incredible. Almost too incredible to believe such wickedness. But if God holds cosmic court and the angels are the witnesses called to testify and/or be the jury so to speak, then it makes sense that it was the angels that were sent down to bear witness to what God already knew. The witnesses/angels then became the target of the Sodomites themselves! Shocking.

Re: , on: 2012/7/13 22:27

Everest, you know what I see in how He was speaking to Abraham - I see it as compassion for Abraham and speaking to him as we would our own child, if we had to break some REALLY bad news to them ... like finding out that someone or even their pet that they love will be dying soon and the child is asking is there any hope? --- etc.

GOD loved Abraham and Abraham asked GOD for mercy and GOD had to give it to him slowly - I believe.

He may be omniscient, but He's also extremely compassionate - as we see in the same Jesus Christ - yesterday, today and forever ...

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Same GOD!

Re: , on: 2012/7/14 0:19

@Jesus-is-God

So you would surmise that the way He stated it was more to lead the question from Abraham, so He could break it slowly to him?

That's pretty interesting as well. I hadn't thought of that possibility yet.

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2012/7/14 10:43**

And who knows? Perhaps the LORD Jesus still walks through this planet to see for Himself how things are going. After all, have we not heard of reports of people who have seen Him?

Just a thought...

**Re: , on: 2012/7/14 11:10**

Ah oh, don't let Zac hear you say that, GR. :)

I think folks can be given 'visions' of Him but they seldom see His Face and the Muslims and some others have dreamt about Him and were converted (wish the unsaved folks that I know would). But don't know if any have described His Face though, I don't think they could, but that's just my opinion. I wonder what Abraham and the others in the OT saw during these Christophanies or what John saw at Patmos.

Everest, I do believe that GOD foreknew what He and His angels was there for, besides to tell Abraham about Sarah conceiving, because of Gen 19:13 - For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD;  
and \*\*the LORD 'hath sent us' to destroy it.\*\*

I believe He was just being compassionate to Abraham because of Abraham's loving, concerned-for-others heart and needed to prove to Abraham that He is compassionate and yet "Just" in His decision, by allowing what happened at Lot's place when the angels got there. It proved to Lot as well that GOD was Just by the men's reaction to His angels. Neither could say that GOD was hasty and not compassion nor Just after all of that. GOD did extra special things to show this former pagan, Abraham 'what' He is like. Compassionate yet Just, based upon His Holiness in all that He does.

GOD always does Big Things for the "first of" any manifestations of Himself... like in the book of Acts with the 1st Church. Demonstrating "This is Who I Am and what My Nature is." - Love but Holy.

**Re: One of THOSE passages Genesis 18:21 - posted by learn (), on: 2012/7/14 16:14**

God is letting Abraham intercede on behalf of Lot. Pls look at Matthew Henry's commentary  
<http://bible.cc/genesis/18-20.htm>

post edited for brevity

**Genesis 18: 22-33 - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/14 19:12**

Ah!

But what a precious, sweet and holy prayer Abraham gives when conversing with God in Genesis 18: 22-33!!!

"Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27)

Classic!

"Oh, let not the Lord be angry if I speak..." (Gen. 18: 30)

Exquisite!

"Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord" (Gen. 18: 31)

Even Better!

"Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more." (Gen. 18: 32)

What a friend of God, indeed!

I hope that the Lord develops my spirit to pray as Abraham did!

Love-in-Christ

KP