

OT-OV

Lesson 49

1. Last week I finished The Doctrine of Ishmael and when time expired we were in the process of developing several principles found in Genesis chapter eighteen.
2. I want to review some of that learned and then pick up with new material on page three.
3. There is no record in the Scripture or elsewhere of animosity developing between Ishmael and Isaac as adults. For example both sons tended to the burial of Abraham in the cave of Machpelah. Gen 25:9.
4. The Scripture provides first indication of animosity in about 1400 B.C. when certain descendants living east of the Jordan are forced to accept Israel's return from Egypt. This occurred some 25 generations from Ishmael himself.
5. The next evidence of animosity recorded in Scripture (though problematic) occurs during the period of the judges in c. 1150 B.C.
6. Ishmael has received a bad rap from many of us for three reasons:
 - 6.1 Ishmael is said to be a "wild ass of a man" even though the statement is a compliment rather than a put down. The epithet "a wild ass of a man" ascribed to Ishmael in Gen 16:12 is not to be considered an opprobrium but one of praise.
 - 6.1.1 The wild Onager (a wild ass found in the desert of the middle east) was the choicest animal on the Assyrian king's hunting list and a delicacy on the menus at royal banquets. Perhaps in Gen 16:12 it depicts the Bedouin freedom of the Ishmaelites in the southern wilderness.
 - 6.1.2 The latter part of verse 12 does, however, indicate his hand will be against every man—ergo he will be a warrior type who will settle in the desert lands of what we today call the Middle East.

Gen 16:12 And he will be a wild man (Onager); his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.
 - 6.2 Mohammed, a possibly distant descendent of Ishmael, founded in c. 630 the Muslim religion which is definitely antagonistic toward all Jews and Christians;
 - 6.3 and finally the New Testament analogy found in Gal 4:21-5:1 is often erroneously interpreted as teaching Ishmael as a perverse individual and an a thorn in the side of Israel.

6.3.1 In Gal 4:21-5:1 Paul interprets the narratives of Ishmael and Isaac allegorically. Remember Ishmael represents the law and Isaac represents grace.

Gal 4:21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the Mosaic Law, did you learn nothing from the law?

Gal 4:22 For it is written, Abraham had two sons, the one by a slave, the other by his right woman.

Gal 4:23 Ishmael was the son of Hagar a slave, Ishmael was born after the flesh; but Isaac was a product of the freewoman, Sarah, the product of a divine promise.

Gal 4:24 The events are an allegory: for the account teaches of two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which brings bondage, Hagar and her child are analogous with the law and bondage.

Gal 4:25 Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds today to the present city of Jerusalem, Jerusalem at the time of Paul's writing was in slavery to the law and legalism.

Gal 4:26 But the Jerusalem which is from above is free, and she is our mother.

Gal 4:27 For it is written by Isaiah: "Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains; because the children of the barren woman now surpass the children of the slave."

Gal 4:28 Isn't it clear that you, like Isaac, are children of the promise.

Gal 4:29 In the days of Hagar and Sarah, Ishmael, who was born in the ordinary way, persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit and it is the same today.

Gal 4:30 But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son."

Gal 4:31 Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman. We are children of the promise as was Isaac.

Gal 5:1 Christ has set us free to live a free life. So stand firm and do not let anyone put the harness of the slavery of the law upon you.

6.3.2 In the above verses Paul uses Ishmael to teach Judaeo Christian legalists who were clinging to the ordinances of the Mosaic law that the law must pass away (as Ishmael was sent away).

6.3.3 As Ishmael was a problem to the child of promise so also in the case of those legalists who came from James and John, they were a like problem. Legalism and grace cannot coexist.

7. Now let's return to our study of chapter eighteen.

Gen 18:1 The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day.

1. For every crisis there is a fresh supply of doctrine to meet the emergency; God is best seen during times of trauma; the exigencies of life demand God's renewal.

1.1 No matter what Abraham's progress, there was still more to know and so it is with us and thus it will be forever in time.

1.2 Abraham and Lot are finally ready for severe adversity pressure for in chapter nineteen we will see Lot brought to the edge of doom, his family lost, his wife judged and himself stripped bare of his possessions.

1.3 Before Abraham is ready to see the destruction and ruin in his nephew's life, he will again receive a promise of a son from both his and Sarah's loins.

1.4 Abraham will receive three heavenly messengers who will renew the promise of Isaac. Lot will receive two heavenly messengers who will warn him of an impending disaster in his life.

1.5 Both Abraham and Lot are believers but Abraham represents a mature believer and Lot an immature believer.

Rom 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

2Pe 2:7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

1.6 The lives of Abraham and Lot were contrasting, so also is the way God responded to each man.

1.7 Abraham was a pilgrim and a stranger. He never bought any land until he purchased a cave in which he would bury Sarah.

1.8 He looked for a heavenly city whose builder and maker is God. (Heb 11:8-10).

Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

Heb 11:9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

Heb 11:10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

1.9 The more Abraham knew God, the less he was interested in the world and its things. Little by little, he separated himself from the world and unto God Abram was in the world but not of the world.

1.10 Without a doubt, the people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah thought of Abraham as an eccentric who looked down upon city comforts and was content to dwell in a tent.

1.11 The worldly Christian can never see spiritual things visible to the eye of the mature believer; so don't expect their approval.

1.11.1 There is a subtle but interesting contrast between Gen 18:1 where Abraham is content to sit in front of his tent versus Lot who is seen sitting at the gate of Sodom.

Gen 19:1 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

1.12 In an ancient city, the gate was the place of honor. The industrious woman in the last chapter of Proverbs had a husband who was known in the gates, where he sat among the elders of the land. (Pro 31:23)

Pro 31:23 Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.

1.13 Lot had first pitched his tent toward Sodom (Gen 13:12), moved into the city (Gen 14:12), and then became a leader in the city.

Gen 13:12 Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom.

1.13.1 Perhaps Lot thought he could reform Sodom or perhaps he believed neither he nor his family would be adversely effected by the big city life.

1.14 Christians who live in the world have never yet succeeded in reforming that world though many have desperately tried.

1.15 It is not God's purpose to cleanse or improve the devil's world but to judge it, and to call a few Abrahams to a place where they witness against that world.

Gen 18:2 Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.

1. Vs 2: Three men; two angels (Gen 19:1)

1.1 To Abraham, this appearance was "God in three persons, the Trinity." In one sentence the men said something and then Jehovah spoke. At times it says, "they said" and then "he said," and then "the Lord said."

Gen 19:1 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.

1.2 To Abraham was being fulfilled the promise, "If a man loves me, he will keep my word and we will come to him and make our home with him" (Joh 14:23).

Joh 14:23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

1.3 They came in a manner and form that Abraham could comprehend, and they lodged and ate with him in fellowship.

1.4 Lot received the heavenly messengers but only two. There has been much supposition as to why only two as over against the three who visited Abraham. Barnhouse has conjectured:

"Lot did not know the power of the Holy Spirit. He knew God in creation and the Lord in redemption, but the Spirit is not known to the worldly Christian."

1.5 In Gen 18:2 we see Abraham ran to meet the Divine Entourage; Lot however only rose up to meet His divine delegation. (Gen 19:1)

1.6 The difference between the believer who walks by faith and the one who is walking in the world is evident by the manner in which each receives the Lord. Abraham, separated from the world, he had no other Master but the Lord.

1.7 There was nothing to occupy Abraham's attention, and when the Lord appeared, He ran to meet Him. The Holy Spirit upon Abraham drew him immediately to the Lord.

1.8 Lot was preoccupied with worldly things. He rose up to welcome the Lord, but there was no instinctive quickening of his senses to be ready for the Lord and to welcome Him gladly.

1.9 The carnal Christian must overcome the inertia of the world. This can only be done by being sensitive and honest with God the Holy Spirit.

1.10 Naming the sin that God the Holy Spirit shows you, the honesty aspect comes from not rationalizing, but calling sin what it is. Be specific.

Gen 18:3 He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by.

Gen 18:4 Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree.

Gen 18:5 Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way-- now that you have come to your servant." "Very well," they answered, "do as you say."

1. Abraham immediately accepted his visitors. He offered hospitality and the three Theophanies entered.

2. When God knocks and we positively respond, He comes to fellowship with us. It is however up to us to make Him feel at home in our hearts. The alternative results in discipline from the Lord.

Rev 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Rev 3:22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

3. Abraham is eager to welcome and feed his guests. They are provided the safety of his home.

Gen 18:6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three seahs of fine flour and knead it and bake some bread."

Gen 18:7 Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it.

Gen 18:8 He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.

1. Abram was God's man in God's place and so all went well with the quietness and smoothness of the Lord's ways. There was little safety in the big city where evil prevailed.

Gen 19:1 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

Gen 19:2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

Gen 19:3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

Gen 19:4 But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

Gen 19:5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

2. Lot's communion was disturbed and distracted. He was where he should not have been and the things of the world were bound to interfere.

2.1 Lot and his family were about to receive discipline from the Lord; Abram on the other hand was about to receive a reiteration of their special blessing for time--Isaac.

2.2 Even the intercessory prayers of Abram could not help Lot; things had gone far too long.

Gen 18:32 And he said Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

Gen 18:33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

1Jo 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Heb 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

3. As a carnal Christian Lot could have no fellowship with his Divine guests. He was no better than the natural man because He chose to live carnally being both in and of the world.

End Lesson