

Genesis Chapter 18 – Workbook Questions

“...I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” (18:10)

1. How would you describe Abraham’s actions in this opening section? Does it differ from earlier chapters as well as the end of this chapter, and if so, how?
2. How can you take this expression of hospitality and translate it into a spiritual lesson? What are the details the story provides of how Abraham directs his household to provide that are a guidepost in our own ‘hospitality’ to divine messages?
3. What is your indication in 18:9 that these are not just ‘regular’ visitors? Note how the text goes in and out between divine beings and men. What are your clues for this shift?
4. What is your reasoning for the theological dialogue between God and Abraham regarding saving a number of innocents (vs. 23 to the end)? How is it quite distinct from the narrative we have seen so far?

Bonus: Read the article at this link for further reflection on the justice of God: “The Theodicy after Auschwitz and the Reality of God” by Stephen Gottschalk.

<https://johnsonfund.org/stephen-gottschalk-theodicy-after-auschwitz-and-the-reality-of-god/>

Genesis Chapter 19 – Workbook Questions

“...The outcry against its people has become great before the Lord,
and the Lord has sent us to destroy it.” (19:13)

1. The chapter focuses on Lot and his story ends here. What are the qualities you see Lot express throughout, both positive and negative?
2. How do you define *hospitality* in light of Chapters 18 and 19? What is its spiritual root and deeper meaning? How do you define *xenophobia*? What is the relationship between these two terms?
3. How do you explain this story theologically?
4. Is there any good that came out of the daughters' decisions to have an incestuous affair with their father? If so, what is it?
5. What do you learn from this story that you can apply to your life today?

Genesis Chapter 20 – Workbook Questions

“You are about to die because of the woman whom you have taken;
for she is a married woman.” (20:5)

1. Comparing chapters 12 and 20, why is the ‘matriarch endangerment’ story so important to the overall message of Genesis?
2. What is the role of prayer in this chapter (see Gen.20:7 & 17)? Why is Abraham praying for Abimelech when Abraham caused the problem in the first place?
3. What are you learning about the shift that occurs in Abraham from his initial distrust and fear of those unlike himself, to where the story ends? What is a takeaway for *your* life from his experience?
4. How would you describe Abimelech’s actions and character in the last section of the story? Why?
5. Is there a time in your life when your initial assumptions about others turned out to need course correction?