Genesis 18-20 NRSVUE

Yahweh (J), **Elohist (E)**, Priestly (P), **Editor/Redactor** **(R),** *Other*

**18**The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. **2**He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them and bowed down to the ground. **3**He said, “My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. **4**Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. **5**Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” **6**And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” **7**Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. **8**Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

**9**They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” **10**Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. **11**Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. **12**So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I be fruitful?” **13**The Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ **14**Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” **15**But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

**16**Then the men set out from there, and they looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to set them on their way. **17**The Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, **18**seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? **19**No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.” **20**Then the Lord said, “How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! **21**I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me, and if not, I will know.”

**22**So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the Lord. **23**Then Abraham came near and said, “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? **24**Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? **25**Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” **26**And the Lord said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake.” **27**Abraham answered, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to my lord, I who am but dust and ashes. **28**Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?” And he said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.” **29**Again he spoke to him, “Suppose forty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of forty I will not do it.” **30**Then he said, “Oh, do not let my lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” He answered, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” **31**He said, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to my lord. Suppose twenty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.” **32**Then he said, “Oh, do not let my lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.” **33**And the Lord went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

**19**The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. **2**He said, “Please, my lords, turn aside to your servant’s house and spend the night and wash your feet; then you can rise early and go on your way.” They said, “No; we will spend the night in the square.” **3**But he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house, and he made them a feast and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. **4**But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house, **5**and they called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, so that we may know them.” **6**Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, **7**and said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. **8**Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.” **9**But they replied, “Stand back!” And they said, “This fellow came here as an alien, and he would play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.” Then they pressed hard against the man Lot and came near the door to break it down. **10**But the men inside reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them and shut the door. **11**And they struck with blindness the men who were at the door of the house, both small and great, so that they were unable to find the door.

**12**Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city—bring them out of the place. **13**For we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against its people has become great before the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it.” **14**So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, “Up, get out of this place, for the Lord is about to destroy the city.” But he seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting.

**15**When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Get up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or else you will be consumed in the punishment of the city.” **16**But he lingered, so the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and left him outside the city. **17**When they had brought them outside, they said, “Flee for your life; do not look back or stop anywhere in the plain; flee to the hills, or else you will be consumed.” **18**And Lot said to them, “Oh, no, my lords; **19**your servant has found favor with you, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life, but I cannot flee to the hills, for fear the disaster will overtake me and I die. **20**Look, that city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved!” **21**He said to him, “Very well, I grant you this favor too and will not overthrow the city of which you have spoken. **22**Hurry, escape there, for I can do nothing until you arrive there.” Therefore the city was called Zoar. **23**The sun had risen on the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

**24**Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven, **25**and he overthrew those cities and all the plain and all the inhabitants of the cities and what grew on the ground. **26**But Lot’s wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

**27**Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord, **28**and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the plain and saw the smoke of the land going up like the smoke of a furnace.

**29**So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had settled.

**30**Now Lot went up out of Zoar and settled in the hills with his two daughters, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar, so he lived in a cave with his two daughters. **31**And the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the world. **32**Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father.” **33**So they made their father drink wine that night, and the firstborn went in and lay with her father; he did not know when she lay down or when she rose. **34**On the next day, the firstborn said to the younger, “Look, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father.” **35**So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger rose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she rose. **36**Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. **37**The firstborn bore a son and named him Moab; he is the ancestor of the Moabites to this day. **38**The younger also bore a son and named him Ben-ammi; he is the ancestor of the Ammonites to this day.

**20 From there Abraham journeyed toward the region of the Negeb** **and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While residing in Gerar as an alien, 2Abraham said of his wife Sarah, “She is my sister.” And King Abimelech of Gerar sent and took Sarah. 3But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “You are about to die because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a married woman.” 4Now Abimelech had not approached her, so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent people? 5Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ I did this in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands.” 6Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart; furthermore, it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her. 7Now then, return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you, and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all that are yours.”**

**8So Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told them all these things, and the men were very much afraid. 9Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you, that you have brought such great guilt on me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that ought not to be done.” 10And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What were you thinking, that you did this thing?” 11Abraham said, “I did it because I thought, Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. 12Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. 13And when God caused me to wander from my father’s house, I said to her, ‘This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, He is my brother.’ ” 14Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham and restored his wife Sarah to him. 15Abimelech said, “My land is before you; settle where it pleases you.” 16To Sarah he said, “Look, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; it is your exoneration before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated.” 17Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. 18For the Lord had closed fast all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife.**