

### **Abraham Prays for Sodom**

**Genesis 18:20** And the Lord said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, :21 I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”

**Genesis 18:22** Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the Lord.

**Genesis 18:23** And Abraham came near and said, “Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 1

The intercession for the two wicked cities began with a question that portrayed Abraham’s acute awareness of God’s mercy toward the righteous and the distinction He made between the good and the bad.<sup>1</sup>

**Genesis 18:24** Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?  
:25 Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” 1

Abraham’s clear understanding of God’s character being able only to do what is good and totally above reproach was affirmed with this rhetorical question.<sup>1</sup>

**Genesis 18:26** So the Lord said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.”

**Genesis 18:27** Then Abraham answered and said, “Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: 1

Abraham’s negotiation, far from being crassly or selfishly manipulative, humbly and compassionately expressed his concern for people (cf. 13:8, 9) and particularly interceded for the place where his nephew Lot and his family lived. Neither did he intend to anger the Lord by his repeated requests (vv. 28, 30, 32).<sup>1</sup>

**Genesis 18:28** Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?” So He said, “If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it.”

**Genesis 18:29** And he spoke to Him yet again and said, “Suppose there should be forty found there?” So He said, “I will not do it for the sake of forty.”

**Genesis 18:30** Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?” So He said, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”

**Genesis 18:31** And he said, “Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?” So He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty.” :32 Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.” 1

That the number of righteous people necessary to forestall judgment had been reduced from 50 to 10 may have reflected Abraham’s awareness both of the intense wickedness of the cities as well as Lot’s ineffective witness there. Abraham probably had the whole of Lot’s family in mind.<sup>1</sup>

**Genesis 18:33** So the Lord went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

### **Sodom’s Depravity**

**Genesis 19:1** Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. 1