

The background of the slide is a dark night sky filled with numerous small stars. Several prominent stars have bright blue and white starburst effects. At the bottom of the image, there is a dark silhouette of a forest or a line of trees.

We Are  
Abraham's  
Seed

The Family *of* Promise

# **We are Abraham's Seed**

**A Study on the life of Abraham in relation to the current day  
Christian**

Class 6 Justice and Righteousness

Genesis 18-19

**Allen Thomas 2026**

# Where We Have Been

- Gen 1-11 is the prologue to the rest of Scripture
  - The promise of a seed
  - The result of rebellions
  - God's mishpat (justice) and His tzedakah (righteousness) are working together
- Abram is called to be a blessing
  - Called to leave land, kin, home
  - God will give him nationhood, blessing, a great name
  - Yet we see failure in Egypt
- Abram retraces his steps to the beginning
  - He and Lot separate
  - The promise is restated
  - Power through conquest is refused and we encounter Melchizedek
- God's promise clarified for the heir
  - Trust (Faith) counted as tzedakah
  - Covenant cutting ceremony
  - Prophecy of exile and return
- The couple renamed and the Heir identified
  - Ishmael is born through natural means
  - New names given to signify new roles
  - The heir will come through Sara
  - A covenant sign of circumcision is given

# Where we are going

- Hospitality is shown
- Why Abraham is chosen
- Justice & Intercession
- Sodom's Outcry
- Lot's Rescue

# What to look for

- Where is **justice** demanded and verified? (Mishpat)
- Who is **protected or rescued**—and who is not? (Tzedakah)
- Where do we see **love not abandoned**—hospitality and covenant mercy? (Chesed)
- What is **anti-shalom** here, and what preserves **shalom**? (Shalom)

# Listen for the Echoes

- Abraham is on a hill with trees and has a conversation with God
- Lot looks to the east and thinks he sees Eden
- Lot is in a city to the east where there is an outcry
- God goes to investigate
- Fire is rained down

# Parsha Vayera - And he appeared

<sup>18:1</sup> **And YHWH was seen by him** by the oaks of Mamre

As he was sitting at the entrance to his tent  
At the heat of the day.

<sup>2</sup> **He lifted up his eyes and saw:**

Here, three men standing over against him.  
When he saw them, **he ran** to meet them from the  
Entrance to his tent and bowed to the earth

<sup>3</sup> And said:

My lord,  
Pray if I have found favor in your eyes,  
Pray do not pass by your servant!

<sup>4</sup> pray let a little water be fetched  
Then wash your feet and recline under the tree

<sup>5</sup> let me fetch you a morsel of bread,  
That you may refresh yourselves,  
Then afterward you may pass on –

For you have after all,

Passed your servant's way!

They said:

Do as you have spoken.

# Extravagant Hospitality

<sup>6</sup> Avraham **hurried** to the tent to Sara and said:

**Hurry!**

Three measures of choice flour!

Knead it, make bread loaves!

<sup>7</sup> Avraham ran to the oxen,

He fetched a young ox, tender and fine

And gave it to a serving lad

That he might **hurry** to prepare it;

<sup>8</sup> then he fetched **curds and milk and the young ox**

That he had made ready

And placed it before them.

Now **he stood** over against them under the tree  
and they ate.

# The Promise is Set

<sup>9</sup> They said to him

Where is Sara your wife?

He said

There in the tent.

Now he said:

<sup>10</sup> I will return, yes, return to you at this very season,

And Sara your wife will have a son!

Now Sara was listening at the tent flap,

Which was behind him.

<sup>11</sup> (And Avraham and Sara were old,  
Advanced in days,  
Sara no longer had her woman's flow).

<sup>12</sup> Sara laughed within herself saying:

After I have become shriveled,

Is there to be pleasure for me?

And my lord is old!

<sup>13</sup> But when YHWH said to Avraham:

Now why does Sara laugh and say:

Shall I really give birth, now that I am old?

<sup>14</sup> Is anything beyond YHWH?

**At that set time I will return to you**

**When time revives,**

**And Sara will have a son**

<sup>15</sup> Sara pretended saying:

No I did not laugh

**For she was afraid**

But he said:

No indeed you laughed.

# Why is Abraham Chosen

<sup>16</sup> the men arose from there and looked down upon the face of Sodom,  
And Avraham went with them to escort them.

<sup>17</sup> Now YHWH had said to himself:

**Shall I conceal from Avraham what I am about to do?**

<sup>18</sup> for Avraham is to become, yes **become a great nation**

And mighty in number,

**And all the nations of earth will find blessing through him.**

<sup>19</sup> Indeed, I have known him,

**In order that he may command his children**

**And his household after him:**

**They shall guard (*samar*) the path of YHWH,**

**by doing *tzedakah* (righteousness) and *mishpat* (justice),**

**so that** YHWH may bring upon Avraham what he spoke

Concerning him. (So YHWH can bring about the promise)

# The Path of YHWH

18:17 Now YHWH had said to himself:

Shall I conceal from Avraham what I am about to do?

<sup>18</sup> for Avraham is to become, yes become a great nation

And mighty in number,

And all the nations of earth will find blessing through him.

<sup>19</sup> Indeed, I have embraced him,

In order that he may charge his sons

And his household after him:

**They shall guard (keep) the path of YHWH,**

To do *tzedakah* (righteousness) and *mishpat* (justice),

In order that YHWH may bring upon Avraham what he spoke

Concerning him.

# More Reflections on the Path

3:24 He drove the human out  
And caused to dwell, eastward of the garden of Eden,  
The winged-sphinxes and the flashing, ever-turning  
sword  
To **guard (samar) the path** to the tree of life.

Ps 25:4 Show me your ways, Lord,  
**teach me your paths.**

Jn 14:6 Jesus replied, “I am **the path**, and the truth, and the life.  
No one comes to the Father except through me.

5 times in Acts early believers were identified as members of **The Way** (Path)

# The Restoration of the Nations

<sup>18</sup> for Avraham is to become, yes become a great nation

And mighty in number,

**And all the nations of earth will find blessing through him.**

Abraham is God's response to Babel.

- The nations are healed as they encounter a people living in covenant identity—
- shaped by chesed, mishpat, and tzedakah.
- The nations aren't absorbed into Abraham; they are invited to blessings through a promise-formed way of life.

Where Abraham's way is practiced:

- the vulnerable are protected
- power is restrained
- life flourishes

Where it is rejected:

- Sodom-like destruction follows

# The Restored Path to YHWH

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant **to eat of the tree of life** which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev 22:1 Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb<sup>2</sup> through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, **the tree of life** with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and **the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**

# To Do...

Babel is humans grasping unity/power on their own terms. Abraham is a new kind of community where:

- **mishpat** restrains power and protects the vulnerable,
- **tzedakah** restores dignity and puts things right.

So Abraham is God's plan to grow a people whose social order pushes back against the violence/pride Genesis has been tracing.

Lev 19:18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but **you shall love your neighbor as yourself**; I am the Lord.

So what is Abraham to do with this new charge he has been given...  
how will he exercise it in real life?

# The Outcry of Sodom

<sup>20</sup> So YHWH said:

The **outcry** (**ze'aqah**) in Sodom and Amora – how great it is!  
And their sin – how exceedingly heavily it weighs!

<sup>21</sup> **So let me go down and see:**

If they have done according to **its cry** that has come to me  
Destruction!

And if not

**I wish to know.**

<sup>22</sup> The men turned from there and went toward Sodom,  
While YHWH was still standing before Avraham.

**ze'aqah** — a cry for help

- the cry of the oppressed
- victims of injustice
- those without power appealing for intervention

# God invites Participation

<sup>23</sup> Avraham stepped forward and said:

**Will you really wipe out the righteous (*tzaddiq*) along with the wicked (*rasha*)?**

<sup>24</sup> perhaps there are **fifty righteous** within the city,

Will you really wipe it away?

Will you not bear with the place because of

The fifty righteous that are in its midst?

<sup>25</sup> Heaven forbid for you to do a thing like this,

To deal death to the righteous along with the guilty,

Heaven forbid for you!

The judge of all the earth

**Will he not do what is *mishpat* (just)?**

<sup>26</sup> YHWH said:

If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city,

I will bear with the whole place for their sake.

<sup>27</sup> Avraham spoke up and said:

Now pray, I have ventured to speak to my Lord,

And I am but dust and ashes:

<sup>28</sup> perhaps of the fifty righteous, five will be lacking

**Will you bring ruin upon the whole city because of the five?**

He said:

I will not bring ruin if I find there forty-five.

<sup>32</sup> But he said:

Pray let my Lord not be upset that I speak further just this one time

Perhaps there will be found there only ten!

He said:

**I will not bring ruin , for the sake of the ten.**

<sup>33</sup> YHWH went,

As soon as he had finished speaking to Avraham

And Avraham returned to his place.

# The Tension between Mishpat and Tzedakah

- Abraham begins by appealing to **mishpat**: justice must not destroy the righteous with the wicked.
- When he moves from fifty to forty-five, he introduces **tzedakah**—a willingness to act generously beyond strict legal thresholds.
- **Mishpat alone** would destroy the city at forty-nine. ( Cold justice)
- **Tzedakah alone** would preserve it even at one. (Ignores the victims)
- Abraham stops at ten because below that threshold there is no longer a basis for **shalom**—righteousness cannot restrain violence, and mercy alone would abandon the victims.
- The story shows that mishpat and tzedakah must be held together and restrain one another if shalom is to exist.
- Judgment becomes necessary not as punishment, but as removal of anti-shalom forces

# To do Mishpat and Tzedakah

This is what an ordered society requires. Abraham's descendants will become kings, and kings must rule with the **tension** of mishpat and tzedakah. That is why Abraham is invited into the discussion—not to change God's mind, but to learn how justice works, so future generations will know how to rule.

1 Kings 10:9 (Queen of Sheba speaking to Solomon) Blessed be YHWH your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore He made you **king, to do *mishpat* and *tzedakah***

- Mishpat without tzedakah = cold legality
- Tzedakah without mishpat = enabling harm
- God forms/educates Abraham to hold both so shalom can return

# Lot's Hospitality

<sup>19:1</sup> The two messengers came to Sodom at sunset,

**As Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom.**

When Lot saw them, he arose to meet them and bowed low,

Bow to the ground.

<sup>2</sup> and said:

Now, pray, my lords,

Pray turn aside to your servant's house,

Spend the night, wash your feet;

Starting early you may go on your way.

They said:

No,

Rather we will spend the night in the square.

<sup>3</sup> But he pressed them exceedingly hard,

So they turned in to him and came into his house.

He made them **a meal with drink and baked flat-cakes**

And they ate.

# So what was really wrong in Sodom?

- <sup>4</sup> They had not yet lain down,  
When the men of the city,  
The men of Sodom,  
Encircled the house,  
From young lad to old man,  
All the people from the outskirts.
- <sup>5</sup> They called out to Lot and said to him:  
Where are the men who came to you tonight?  
Bring them out to us, we want to know them!
- <sup>6</sup> Lot went out to them,  
To the entrance ,  
Shutting the door behind him
- <sup>7</sup>and said:  
Pray, brothers, do not be so wicked!
- <sup>8</sup> Now pray, I have two daughters who have never known a man,  
Pray let me bring them out to you,  
And you may deal with them  
However seems good in your eyes;  
Only to these men do nothing,  
For they have, after all,  
Come under the shadow of my roof-beam!

# The Outcry

18:20 So YHWH said:

**The outcry** in Sedom and Amora – **how great it is!**  
And their sin – how exceedingly heavily it weighs!

21 So let me go down and see:

If they have done according **to its cry** that has come  
to me  
(complete) Destruction!

19:12 The men said to Lot:

Whom else have you here  
A son in law, sons, daughters?  
Bring anyone whom you have in the city out of the place!  
13 for we are about to overturn this place,  
**For how great is their outcry** before YHWH!  
And YHWH has sent us to overturn it.

18:20 And the Lord said to the ministering  
angels, **The cry** of Sedom and Amorah,  
[because they **oppress the poor**, and decree  
that whosoever giveth a morsel to the needy  
shall be **burned with fire**], is therefore great,  
and their guilt exceedingly weighty.  
(Targum Psuedo-Jonathan)

# The Cry of the Oppressed

Outcry” (tse‘aqah) is the **cry of victims**—the sound of injustice and oppression rising to God when **mishpat has collapsed**. In Genesis 18 it signals that Sodom’s sin is not abstract “badness,” or sexual orientation but concrete harm - oppression and violence - that demands investigation and decisive action.

# Prophets View

Ez 16:49 Behold, this was the guilt of your sister **Sodom**: she and her daughters had **arrogance (pride)**, **plenty of food, and carefree ease**, **but she did not help the poor and needy**.<sup>50</sup> So they were **haughty** and committed abominations before Me.

Is 1:10 Hear the word of the Lord,

**You rulers of Sodom; [leaders in Jerusalem]**

Listen to the instruction of our God,

**You people of Gomorrah! [people of Judah/Jerusalem]**

<sup>11</sup>“What are your many sacrifices to Me?” Says the Lord.

“I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fattened cattle;

...

I will not be listening. Your hands are covered with blood.

<sup>16</sup> “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean;

Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight.

**Stop doing evil (*ra*),**

<sup>17</sup> **Learn to do good (*tov*);**

**Seek justice (*mishpat*),**

**Rebuke the oppressor (*Hamas*),**

**Obtain justice for the orphan,**

**Plead for the widow’s case ( *care fore the vulnerable*).**

# Contrast of the Triangle

Is 5:7 The vineyard of the Lord Almighty

is the nation of Israel,  
and the people of Judah

are the vines he delighted in.

And he looked for *mishpat (justice)*, but saw *mispach (bloodshed)*;  
for **tzedakah (righteousness)**, but heard **tse'aqah (cries of distress)**.

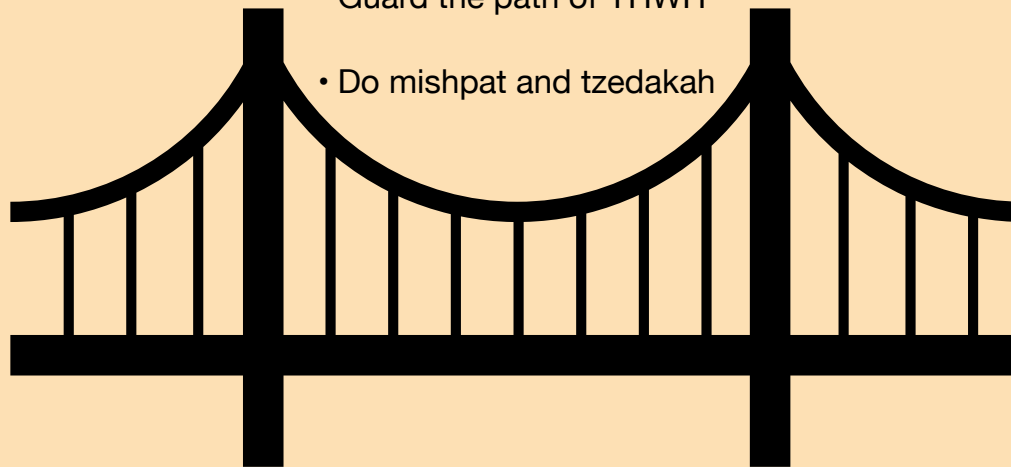
# Echoes of the Melody

- **Cain - Violence that generates outcry**
  - Abels blood cries out from the ground
  - The outcry of the city has gone up
- **Flood corruption/violence-remnant-mishpat**
  - Spiritual being/human boundary crossing
  - Violence, sin was grave
  - God saw, goes down to see
  - One family saved
  - Rain down
  - Devastation, waters covered, smoke like a furnace
  - God remembers
  - Post event drunkenness in enclosed dwelling
  - Illicit sexual action within the family
  - Listing of nations - Gen 10, Moab/Ammon
- **Babel - humanity united against Shalom**
  - God goes down to see

# The Contrast of Chapters

## The connecting bridge

- Guard the path of YHWH
- Do mishpat and tzedakah



## Mamre (Gen 18)

- strangers welcomed
- food multiplied
- bodies protected
- conversation invited
- justice deliberated

## Sodom (Gen 19)

- strangers threatened
- bodies exploited
- outcry goes up
- violence normalized
- no justice possible

This is what covenant faithfulness looks like — and this is what its absence produces.

# God's Patience

<sup>15</sup> now when dawn came up,  
The messengers **pushed Lot on** saying  
Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here,  
Lest you be swept away in the iniquity of the city!

<sup>16</sup> **when he lingered,**  
The men **seized his hand,**  
**His wife's hand,**  
And **the hand of his two daughters**  
Because YHWH dealt gently with him  
And bringing him out  
They left him outside the city.

<sup>17</sup> It was when they had brought him outside,  
That one of them said  
Escape for your life  
Do not gaze behind you  
Do not stand still anywhere in the plain  
**To the hill country escape**  
Lest you be swept away!

<sup>18</sup> Lot said to them:

No, pray, lord!

<sup>19</sup> Now pray, your servant has found in your eyes,  
You have shown **chesed** (great faithfulness) in how you have dealt with me  
Keeping me alive  
But I, I am not able to escape to the hill country,  
Lest the wickedness cling to me  
And I die!

**Now pray, that town is near enough to flee to**  
And it is so tiny;  
Pray let me escape there  
Is it not tiny?  
And stay alive!

<sup>21</sup> he said to him:

Here then,  
I lift up your face in the matter as well,  
By not overturning this town of which you speak.

<sup>22</sup> Make haste, escape there,  
For I am not able to do anything until you come there.  
(therefore the name of the town was called Tzo'ar (Tiny))

<sup>23</sup> now the sun was going out over the earth as Lot came to Tzo'ar.

# Moab and Ammon

<sup>29</sup> Thus it was,

When God brought ruin on the cities of the plain,

**That God kept Avraham in mind and sent out Lot**

From the overturning,

When he overturned the cities where Lot had settled.

<sup>30</sup> Lot went up from Tzo'ar and settled in the hill country

His two daughters with him,

For he was afraid to settle in Tzo'ar.

So he settled in a cave,

He and his two daughters.

<sup>31</sup> the first born said to the younger:

Our father is old

And there is no man in the land to come not us

As befits the way of all the earth!

<sup>32</sup> Come let us have our father drink wine and lie with him

So that we may keep seed alive by our father.

<sup>36</sup> and Lot's two daughters became pregnant by their father.

<sup>37</sup> The firstborn bore a son and called his name Mo'av (by Father),

He is the tribal father of the **Mo'av** today.

<sup>38</sup> The younger also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi (son of my kinspeople)

He is the tribal father of the children of **Ammon** of today.

Ruth, the great-grandmother of David is a Moabite, a stunning picture of God's chesed

# What we can do this week

- Practice Abraham-like hospitality: make room for one person this week who feels unseen (chesed). (Elder vision cards)
- Listen for the “outcry”: pay attention to where someone is being harmed or overlooked, and let that shape your response (mishpat).
- Repair one small breach: restore dignity with a direct apology, a fair action, or a quiet act of provision (tzedakah).
- Hold mishpat and tzedakah together especially when it’s messy: pursue what’s right without becoming cold, and pursue mercy without enabling harm.

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## **We Are Abraham's Seed**

### **Class 6 - Justice and Righteousness (Genesis 18-19)**

#### **Where we are in the story**

Genesis 18-19 grows directly out of the covenant story we have been tracing. Abraham has been called, tested, assured, renamed, and given the covenant sign. Now Genesis shows what covenant life is for: a household that guards the way of YHWH by doing mishpat and tzedakah.

#### **Where we are going today**

- Genesis 18 - Abraham's hospitality at Mamre: *chesed* made visible in action.
- Genesis 18 - God's disclosure and Abraham's intercession: learning the path of YHWH.
- Genesis 19 - Sodom's outcry and Lot's rescue: what anti-shalom looks like when mishpat collapses.
- A contrast between Mamre and Sodom: covenant faithfulness versus a society that can no longer sustain dignity, justice, or life.

#### **Genesis 18 - Hospitality at Mamre**

Abraham's welcome of the visitors is not minimal courtesy. It is extravagant *chesed*. He offers a 'morsel' and then prepares a feast. In doing so, he treats strangers as bearers of dignity and creates a space of safety, welcome, and honor.

*"Expect a morsel and be surprised at the feast."*

This is tzedakah as action, not merely status: doing what is fitting for covenant partners living among others.

#### **Genesis 18:19 - Guarding the way of YHWH**

Genesis 18:19 gives one of the clearest vocation statements in Abraham's story: Abraham is chosen so that he will command his household after him to keep the way of YHWH by doing tzedakah and mishpat. The promise is not only about receiving blessing; it is about embodying a way of life that restrains power, protects the vulnerable, and restores right relationship.

- The command is covenantal, not merely ethnic.
- The seed inherits vocation, not just blessing.
- Faith is meant to be lived, taught, and embodied.
- Mishpat and tzedakah define what covenant life looks like in public.

#### **The path of YHWH**

Genesis presents Abraham's calling as a restored path forward after Eden and Babel. God forms a people whose social life pushes back against violence, pride, and predation. The nations are meant to encounter blessing through a community shaped by *chesed*, mishpat, and tzedakah.

#### **The outcry of Sodom**

The outcry in Genesis 18 is the cry of the oppressed - victims of injustice appealing for intervention. God does not judge blindly. He 'goes down to see,' modeling mishpat that

investigates before acting. Justice here is not arbitrary force from above; it is careful, truthful, and accountable.

### **Abraham's intercession - mishpat and tzedakah held together**

Abraham's plea for Sodom is not a search for a handful of morally flawless people. He is asking whether enough rightly aligned people remain - people whose lives still sustain justice and right relationship in the city. The issue is communal moral coherence, not individual perfection.

- Mishpat insists the righteous must not be swept away with the wicked.
- Tzedakah introduces generous restraint beyond strict legal calculation.
- Shalom requires both protection of victims and the possibility of restoration.
- Judgment becomes necessary when anti-shalom has so overwhelmed a place that justice and rightness can no longer operate there.

### **Genesis 19 - What is wrong in Sodom?**

Genesis 19 presents Sodom as an anti-shalom society: violent, inhospitable, predatory, and unsafe for the vulnerable. The sexual violence in the story is a symptom of that collapse, not a narrow definition of the city's sin. The prophets later interpret Sodom in the same direction - pride, neglect of the poor, bloodshed, oppression, and systemic injustice.

### **Mamre and Sodom in contrast**

- Mamre: strangers welcomed, food multiplied, bodies protected, conversation invited, justice deliberated.
- Sodom: strangers threatened, bodies exploited, outcry rises, violence normalized, no justice possible.

### **For our own walk**

- Practice Abraham-like hospitality: make room for one person this week who feels unseen.
- Listen for the outcry: notice where someone is being harmed or overlooked and let that shape your response.
- Hold mishpat and tzedakah together when it gets messy: pursue what is right without becoming cold, and pursue mercy without enabling harm.
- Repair one small breach: restore dignity through a fair action, a direct apology, or a quiet act of provision.

### **Key Takeaway**

Genesis 18-19 shows that Abraham's calling was never only to receive promises, but to guard the way of YHWH through chesed, mishpat, and tzedakah. Mamre shows what covenant faithfulness looks like; Sodom shows what happens when a society abandons justice, dignity, and protection of the vulnerable. If we are Abraham's seed, then this path is part of our vocation too.