# The Judge of All the Earth does RIGHT!

**Genesis 18:16-33**
**7/19/98**

Introduction:

**** In all of God's Dealings with Man, He is righteous!***

3 Demonstrations of God's Righteousness in Genesis 18:

## I. God is RIGHT in <u>REVEALING HIMSELF</u> to those who walk uprightly (v.18-19)

## II. God is RIGHT in <u>POSSESSING ALL THE FACTS</u> before He sends judgment on the wicked (v.20-21)

## III. God is RIGHT in <u>NOT DESTROYING THE RIGHTEOUS</u> along with the wicked (when He sends supernatural judgment) (v.22-33)

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Introduction:

Deuteronomy 32:4 - He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

"Righteousness" (or Justice) = a legal term that describes a conformity to a standard.

Righteousness is an extension of holiness, and actually describes holiness in action.
Often called "transitive holiness."

God's treatment of His creatures conforms perfectly to the holiness (purity) of His nature.

God's righteousness (justice) is an extended expression of His holiness.

**v. 16**
Having eaten a mid-afternoon fellowship meal and having announced that Abraham and Sarah would have a son, the LORD and the two angels (who took on the appearance of men) depart toward Sodom, with hospitable Abraham escorting them part of the way.

It is on this occasion that we find a passage which expresses the righteous character of God.

**** In all of God's Dealings with Man, He is righteous!***

3 Demonstrations of God's Righteousness in Genesis 18:

# I. God is RIGHT in REVEALING HIMSELF to those who walk uprightly (v.18-19)

God could trust Abraham with special revelation because Abraham was trustworthy. Abraham's influential and righteous character qualified him for a close communion with God.

**v. 19**
**"Command his children" =** discipline/training
(He would teach his household the right way of living)

**"After him" =** example
(He would model a righteous life)

**"They shall keep the way" =** Obedience
(He would require obedience to God's ways)

**"He will command his children" –**

The Lord had confidence that Abraham would guide his family in the ways of God.

One way to see how righteous a man is, is to see how he directs his family. Abraham (in contrast to Priest Eli in the time of young Samuel) would discipline his children, require obedience from them; he no doubt would teach them God's Word (as revealed to him) and set the right example.

Although Abraham lived in a pagan society, he, like Joshua, would say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

The Lord knew that He could entrust to Abraham revelation about His righteousness because Abraham would pass it on to his descendents.

"Abraham knew more about Sodom's future than the citizens themselves, including Lot. It is the separated believer who shares God's secrets" (Wiersbe, p. 78).

Today, only God's people know in much detail what God has in store for the future. The rest of the world is in darkness.

If a person is not obeying what he already has been entrusted with, God will not give him any more. (SEE: Matt. 25:14-30 *v. 29; *Luke 8:15-21)
*Matthew 25:29 For unto every one that hath (been faithful with what he has been given) shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not (been faithful) shall be taken away even that which he hath.*
*Luke 8:18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.*

"No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Ps. 84:11).

## II. God is RIGHT in <u>POSSESSING ALL THE FACTS</u> before He sends judgment on the wicked (v.20-21)

**v. 20**

Just as Abel's blood cried out as it were from the ground for vengeance, so Sodom's sin cried out for judgment.

Besides the external manifestation of homosexuality (which God calls an abomination), what was the underlying sin of the people of Sodom?

Ezek. 16:49-50 – "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good. "

The sin of Sodom:

1. Arrogance
2. Had plenty of <u>goods</u> (materialism)
3. Had plenty of <u>time</u> (lazy idleness)
4. Inconsideration of the helpless (self-centered)

**v. 21**

**"I will go down now, and see" –** The omniscient God certainly knew the condition of Sodom and Gomorrah; however, He uses anthropomorphic language to inform Abraham of His intentions.

Note: In Gen. 11:1-9, the Lord also went down to see the city of Babel before He sent judgment there and confused their languages.

The Lord knew exactly what was going on in Sodom, but would go out of His way to <u>prove</u> that He had all the facts before He would judge. For man's benefit, He uses terms to indicate that He will not judge unless all of the evidence is clear. For vindication purposes, the Lord will uphold the evidence, pointing to Sodom's guilt.

The point is that the Lord's judgment is based on full and accurate information.

Because God is a righteous judge, He does not ever pronounce a verdict without having concrete evidence of guilt.

Note: Vindicating His right to judge is the purpose for the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

## III. God is RIGHT in <u>NOT DESTROYING THE RIGHTEOUS</u> along with the wicked (when He sends supernatural judgment) (v.22-33)

**v. 22**
**"The men turned" -** Actually, only those two angels would visibly enter Sodom (cp. 19:1), and the Lord Jesus would send the judgment from Heaven (19:24).

Just as God sent two angels to go inspect the condition of the people of Sodom before He sent judgment, so He wills end "two witnesses" before He pours out His wrath in the future (Rev. 11).

**"Abraham stood yet before the Lord" –** he stood before Jesus Christ, since no mortal man has ever seen God the Father (Jn. 1:18).

**v. 25**
For God to treat the righteous as the wicked would <u>not</u> be just.

It is <u>righteous people</u> that <u>preserve</u> a <u>society</u>. ("Righteousness exalteth a nation")

**v. 26**
**"If <u>I</u> find" –** It's not how man defines righteousness, but how God see it that matters.

**v. 27**
**"Lord" =** *Adonai* – Abraham recognizes that he is standing before the Master and Ruler of the universe and recognizes his own unworthiness to even ask Him such questions.

What a privilege we creatures of dust have to commune with *Adonai*!

**v. 30**
**"Oh, let not the Lord be angry" –** Abraham gets more apologetic as he goes; he feels embarrassed to keep making a more stringent request than he made before.

**v. 32**
Why does Abraham keep whittling down the numbers? Abraham, knowing that his nephew Lot and his family were living in Sodom intercedes on their behalf (though not by name).

"Never underestimate the importance of even a small number of believers As few as ten people would have saved a whole city from destruction" (Wiersbe, p. 79).

No doubt the Lord would have destroyed NYC long ago, if it were not for a small remnant of His people who are left in this city.

An important principle is taught here:

> The presence of the righteous benefits the wicked.

EX:
--Potiphar was blessed by Joseph's presence.

--The carnal church attendee finds blessing in the presence of the believers (I Cor. 5)

--The unsaved spouse is sanctified by the presence of a believer (I Cor. 7:14)

"Not appointed unto wrath" –

**1Th 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ**

"Appointed" = to place into; or destine

God has our flight pre=arranged; our departure is booked; our tickets have been purchased in advance!

And our flight leaves right on time! (before God's wrath is poured out)

> I Thess. 1:10 - *And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

Our deliverance from God's wrath is so sure, God puts its fulfillment in the past tense.

Salvation from sin is only by our Lord Jesus Christ, and salvation (deliverance) from the wrath of God is only by our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is in no other (Acts 4:12)!

> Note: Just as God delivered Noah and Lot on the same day He poured oust His judgment and wrath on the earth, so it will be at Christ's coming
>
> Luke 17:26-30 - 26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and

brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

The Day of the Lord's Wrath begins at the Rapture (I Thes. 4 & 5).

*God always delivers His people before He pours out His vindictive judgment.

Conclusion:

**--Because God is righteous,**
**He must punish sin.**

HIS JUDGMENT

1) Present Judgment - "sowing and reaping" (Gal. 6:7)

The consistent, unalterable, law of "sowing and reaping" shows that no one can do good or bad without being rewarded accordingly for what is done. No one gets away with sin (not even the greatest of the Bible's Heroes - David; Moses)

If you want to reap a good harvest in your future, begin planting new seed today!

2) Future Judgment (see: **Romans 2**)

Because He is righteous, His judgment will be:

a) Righteous (cp. Acts 17:31; v. 2)

Many to deceive themselves into thinking that they are "OK" but at the judgement, the real truth (according to God's standards) will be known.

b) Inescapable (v. 3)

The believer can praise God that the judgement for his sin has been paid for at Calvary. However, our sin will prevent us from doing good works that will earn eternal reward. We will be examined on judgement day for the quality of our works.

c) Deserved (v. 4, 5)

God will not pay back anyone anything that has not been earned. The judgement received will be deserved.

d) Universal (v. 6)

e) According to works (v. 7-10)

For the believer (I Cor.3; II Cor.5) - Our good works will determine the degree of rewards to be enjoyed for eternity.

For the unbeliever (Rev. 20:11-f) - Their evil works will determine the degree of suffering to be endured for eternity.

f) Severe (v. 8-9)

The judgement will be no joking matter!
(cp. Heb. 10:30,31 - "the Lord shall judge His people...It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God")

g) Impartial (v. 11)

Today, If people have enough money, prestige, popularity, influence etc. they might be let off the hook and shown preferential treatment for wrong doing -- God, however, will show no such partiality.

h) Fair (v. 12)

1) God's judgment for believers will be just (II Tim. 4:8; I Cor. 3:13-15; II Cor. 5:10)
2) God's judgment for unbelievers will be just (Rev. 11:18; Rev. 20:11-15)
3) God's judgment in the Tribulation will be just (Rev. 15:1-4)
4) God's judgment in the Millennium will be just (Jer. 23:5-6)

**--Because God is righteous,**
**He must save by grace.**

HIS GRACIOUS OFFER OF ETERNAL LIFE (Gal. 2:16-17; 3:11, 24)

See: Job 15:14-16

God could not be righteous and offer us eternal life any other way than by grace. Why? Because none of us could do enough to earn Heaven. None of us could undo our sin.

In light of the fact that "there is not a just man upon earth..." (Ecc.7:20),
Job asked: "How should a man be just with God?" (Job 9:2, 25:4)
The Answer: Is. 53:11 - "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant (Jesus Christ) justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

Note what God says about those who try to establish their own righteousness (Rom. 10:3)

For us to offer God our righteousness to gain His Heaven & all that comes "in Christ" is like someone offering a car dealer $5.00 for a new Rolls Royce. Actually it is more like offering "filthy rags" (Is. 64:6)

Because of Christ, God's righteousness is balanced with His mercy, grace, and peace (Ps. 112:4; 116:5; cp. Jer. 9:24).

Ps. 85:10 - "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

GOD'S SACRIFICE OF HIS SON demonstrates His Righteousness (Rom. 3:25-26; II Cor. 5:21)

Christ's death shows that God is "neither indifferent to sin nor regards it lightly" (Vines, p. 298).

SEE Rom. 8:3 - God "condemned sin in the flesh" of His Son.

## "The Just [died] for the unjust" (I Pet. 3:18).