

Lesson 3: Mercy

Today's Bible Story

The Lord came to Abraham and led him out to where they could look down from the hills and see the wicked city of Sodom in the valley below. God was planning to destroy that city because of its sin.

God thought: *I should tell Abraham what I am about to do, since I have chosen him to teach his family to obey me forever and to do what is right and fair.*

So he said, "Abraham, I have heard that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah are doing all kinds of evil things. Now I am going down to see for myself if those people really are that bad. If they aren't, I would like to know."

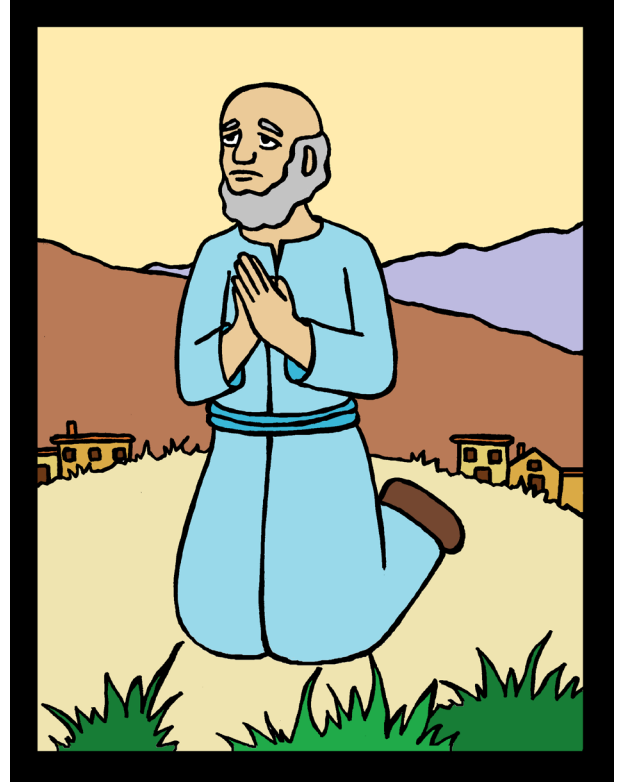
Abraham asked, "Lord, when you destroy the evil people in Sodom, are you also going to destroy the people who are good? Let's say that there are 50 good people in the city. You surely wouldn't let them be killed when you destroy the evil ones. You are the judge of all the earth, and you do what is right." God promised him, "If I find 50 good people in Sodom, I will spare the city."

But Abraham kept on asking. "Lord," he said, "please forgive me, Lord, for daring to speak to you like this. But suppose that five were missing. Would you destroy the city if there are only 45 good people in Sodom?"

And God replied, "If I find 45 good people, I won't destroy the city."

Abraham continued to ask: "But what about 40? ... What about 30? ... What about 20?" And each time God answered again, "I will spare them."

Finally, Abraham asked, "What if there are only 10 good people?" God said: "Even if there are only 10 good people in Sodom, I promise I won't destroy the city." Abraham believed God would be true to his word. He went back home to wait and see what would happen.



From Genesis 18:17-33

Bible Rhyme

Sodom's people were very bad.
Their sin and evil made God sad.
Since they never would obey,
God planned to wipe them all away.
God told Abraham his plan,
since he was a righteous man.
But Abraham — he had his doubts
about how this would all play out.
"Lord, when you destroy the evil,
will you punish *all* the people?"
God said, "No, I vow to spare
any good folk I find there."

"I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people ... that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

(1 Timothy 2:1-4)



This Bible verse encourages:

Prayers = asking God for what we need

Supplications = pleading to God for help

Intercessions = praying on behalf of others

Thanksgivings = giving credit to God for good

Abraham did all of these things in our lesson for today. He prayed to God, pleading to God on behalf of the people of the city and trusting that God would do what was right.

Think of people you know: friends, family, cousins, teachers, classmates, neighbors – even enemies.

What are some things about which you might pray for God's help for them?

- a) Friends: _____
- b) Family: _____
- c) Cousins: _____
- d) Teachers: _____
- e) Classmates: _____
- f) Neighbors: _____
- g) Enemies: _____

