

12.28.25

## Genesis

### Chapter 18 - God's Merciful Visitation

#### What's the Rush! (vs. 1-8)

**Genesis 18:1-8:** Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, and said, “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by. Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant.” And they said, “So do, as you have said.” So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes.” Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the

servant, and he hurried to prepare it. He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

A visit from God. What an amazing thought that is, to think that God would come by and just literally knock on your door, come by to see you. We know that as Scripture describes God that He is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. And we know that He is omnipresent, that is to say, where can you go from His presence? If you go to the highest of heavens, He's there; if you go to the deepest of Sheol, behold, He is there. There's no place that you can't go that He's not, because in Him is life. And as so aptly put in Acts 17, in Him we live and breathe and have our existence. So, the very existence of our nature is testimony that God is present with us. Nevertheless, do we see Him? Can we see Him? Does He appear to us, even beyond the metaphysical, in the sense of beyond the spiritual? Would

He come and visit? And in this passage, we see literally in the flesh, Abraham sees God. He appears to him in a human form. It's one of the greatest hopes as we look at John 1, and the word of God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory. Glories of the only begotten, full of grace and truth. God desires to be in our presence. We see here within this particular text, an individual, that is to say Abraham, that desired to be a friend of God. And so, God shows up as a friend.

I oftentimes think of that passage, if you look with me in Psalm 18, that talks about the way that God appears to different ones in different ways.

If you look in Psalm 18, it reads this way,

(Psalm 18:25) “With the kind You show Yourself kind;  
With the blameless You show Yourself blameless;

(Psalm 18:26) With the pure You show Yourself pure,  
And with the crooked You show Yourself astute.”

Hebrews 1 tells us that in the times of the Old Testament, God appeared and revealed Himself in many portions and in many ways, and in these last days, has revealed Himself

in His Son. Interesting text that begins to reveal that God was walking with Adam in the garden and walking with Enoch. And we have those interesting pictures of individuals having what we would deem as a personal relationship with God. What an amazing thought that is! And so, we see these snippets or pictures of Him showing up and revealing Himself in certain ways. Even with, you consider Moses, it tells us that He showed up in a flame in a bush. So, the bush was a burning bush, but He showed Himself in the flame. And I oftentimes thought about that. Why would He reveal Himself to Moses in a flame in a burning bush? Well, the burning bush that's described within the passage is a bush of thorns. And of course, the fire reveals the purity of God. That God would choose, as pure and as holy as He is, to abide with a people that would ultimately crucify Him and place on Him thorns, would be irritants to Him, that He would not consume them; it's certainly a marvelous picture of God's grace in the midst of the Law in which He will convey to Moses in that wonderful time. God appears in different ways. And with Abraham, it was in the sense of a friend. And so, He's coming by to see him.

The passage is talking to us not only in the sense of the wonderful appearance of God within the text but is revealing to us who God appears to and who He becomes real to and why He does. And it also demonstrates in a magnificent way, of course, we know that in Genesis 15, that it describes Abraham as one who would believe in God, who would trust in God by faith. And by faith, it was appointed unto him as righteousness because he believed God, because he trusted in God. So, we realize that this faith is that which draws God to you. You want to have a personal relationship with God, you want the appearance of God in your life, you want God to become your friend? You have to believe. You have to put your trust in Him. And so, the wonderful thing about the Old Testament is it takes these truths, and it puts them in pictures. And I'm much better at reading pictures than I am at a lot of words. A picture is worth a thousand words, isn't it? So, you look in the Old Testament, you go, "So, what does faith look like?" And Abraham is that picture of what faith looks like. Paul will emphasize in Romans 4 as you go on into the New Testament, that he actually becomes the father of faith in this respect.

So, as we come to this, we're not only looking at this wonderful event at which God appears to Abraham, but we're looking at why He appeared to Abraham and what qualities actually brought Him to Abraham. The Scripture tells us in Hebrews 11, without faith, it's impossible to please God. You must first believe that He is and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him. Faith is really the issue here. Do you trust God? Are you putting your trust in God? Do you believe Him? This is the whole issue. That's why we call it our faith, because it's about that very thing that brings a relationship with God.

So, as we come to this, this great passage starts off with,

(Genesis 18:1) "Now the LORD appeared to him..."

I mean, that in and of itself is the magnificence of the text. Verse 1 is actually a summary verse, because then it goes into the details. And of course, Abraham does not know that this is the LORD, *Yahweh*, that this is the creator of the universe that's visiting him. He knows that it is an important figure, but he doesn't know who it is. And really, throughout the passage, as you go through, he's still calling him "*'ādōn*," which is a thing of respect,

where we get the word “*Adonai*,” and he'll use the word “Lord,” which would be “lord,” in the sense of one that was visiting him and he wants to show respect to. But you never see him within the text actually call Him “LORD” throughout the passage. So, the reason why and what we're seeing is that he's showing a sense of hospitality to somebody that he doesn't know who it is. But there is a sense in his life that maybe God is visiting him. Now, let me preface all this by stating this, that up to this point, Abraham has been promised that he would have a son. It has not yet happened. So, we're still in the realm of faith and trust in God. And since the time that God gave a promise in Genesis 12 that He was going to make of him a great nation, and of course, He begins to explain what this means. Abraham goes, “Well, sure, You're probably thinking of the people that are working with me, that through them this is going to happen.” He goes, “No, it's going to be you.” And He keeps telling him, and He keeps building even closer, “Not only through you,” and He tells him, “but now through your wife.” And that was the last thing that we saw within the passage. Well, it still hasn't happened. So, we're like at 25 years later, and the

promise has been there, but it still hasn't happened. Now, the thought is, if, in fact, God holds back on a promise in time, and we perceive, obviously, I think there was a time in Abraham's life as well as Sarah's, that they perceived Him being a little late. And so, they went the whole Hagar route. But in that process, there comes a time where you're going to have to decide, are you going to trust Him or not? And what's going to happen if you don't see it? So, we're at the point now where Abraham is now 25 years later, and my natural thought would be, "Okay, so his faith is actually waning." And as you read Romans 4, it says, no, his faith grew stronger. So, we're going to look in this passage, once again, and see what faith looks like, because if in fact faith draws the presence of God, to me, I want to walk by faith, and I want to know what that faith looks like.

So, as we come to this passage, it starts off, (Genesis 18:1) "Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre..."

And of course, once again, He's actually going to be eating under the tree.

If you look at the end of verse 8,

(Genesis 18:8) “He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them...”

Where were they eating? Where did they meet? Under the tree, right? Under the tree. Which it was not an unusual thing that God would meet at a place under the tree. He did it with Adam. Of course, obviously, He's showing with His friend, and He meets us under the tree at the cross. So, God desires to have a relationship with us under the tree.

The passage goes on,

(Genesis 18:1) “... while he was sitting at the tent door...”

Which really shows a sense of expectancy on the part of Abraham, which, once again, as we begin the passage, what I hope to reveal is, there are fundamental characteristics of faith. And one of the fundamental characteristics of faith really is that you're ever vigilant about God's working in your life. You're expecting something. Now, once again, it's been 25 years. Why

would you be expecting something if after 25 years you hadn't really received what you thought you were going to receive? Why would you expect something now? And God says, "That's faith." And you grow stronger as time goes on, and you still don't have it, because that displays true faith. The longer you can go without it coming to pass reveals the strength of your faith. The passage really shows this sense of expectation at the door. Once again, verse 1 really sets the stage.

Verse 2 then opens up,

(Genesis 18:2) "When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him..."

Now, I want you to underline the words "opposite him" because that is a very small word in the Hebrew. It's actually a preposition which makes reference to somebody standing upon or around or above or something to that point. The reason why it's mentioned in this setting is because it describes a contact.

And the contact that's being described, if you look at the passage, "he lifted up his eyes," so now we're actually talking visually at this juncture.

“When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold...”

So, at that particular juncture, his eyes had met with something, and now, there's kind of a “behold,” demonstrative within the text, a surprise that when he sees this individual, there's some sort of contact made. That's what the passage is emphasizing. “Behold, men were standing,” now here's the word, “upon him”. Now, because he uses this word in the way that it's used, it's actually describing not only a sense of perhaps their eyes are meeting with each other, but he has perceived something by virtue of what he's seen.

There's an interesting text in Kings. It talks about a wealthy woman, a prominent woman, that Elisha kept passing by her house. And she turns to her husband, and she said to her husband, “I perceive this is a man of God. We need to invite him in.” That's an interesting phrase, isn't it? “I perceive this as a man of God.” How would you perceive this? How would you know this? And there seems to be this revelatory moment in which he doesn't know who it is, but he perceives that God has so ordained this visit. And so, it's drawn his attention.

There's a passage in Psalm, if you look with me, in Psalm 56, where this word is used. And hopefully they will explain it even better than the way I have up to this point.

Psalm 56, if you look there with me, verse 12, the psalmist cries out,

(Psalm 56:12) “Your vows are binding upon me, O God; I will render thank offerings to You.”

Now, the phrase, “Your vows are binding upon me,” the “binding upon” is the same word, “‘al” as used in the text, where it came opposite him, or we would probably describe it as came upon him or standing in front of him. But the point is that it's describing a pressure. It's describing a sense that something is pushing to an obligation. So, the way that it reads is, “Your vows are binding upon me.” That is to say, there's a sense of duty and obligation. Have you ever met somebody and your eyes met and you weren't even intended to look at them, but somehow the eyes met and you go, “I've got to help that person. I don't even know why.” But a sense of obligation came upon you. That's what the text is really describing. It's using those kind of words to describe that

he doesn't know why, but he feels drawn and he feels a sense of obligation. And as we go on within the passage, he acts upon this obligation and this duty quite quickly.

So, if you go back to Chapter 18 of Genesis, in verse 2, (Genesis 18:2) “When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them...”

That in and of itself is a miracle. He's 99 years old. And I'm getting up there, but I'm not running. But he's running at 99. That's an amazing thing.

“... he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth,

(Genesis 18:3) and said, “My Lord...”

Once again, you notice that it is not all capital letters.

If you go back to verse 1, you see,

(Genesis 18:1) “Now the LORD...”

But now, he uses the word “*'ādōn*,” where we get the word “Adonai,” and simply means “Master,” which is a declaration of respect.

(Genesis 18:3) “and said, “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by.”

This is in what is called the “jussive” in the Hebrew, which means that he's speaking to him and he's addressing, expressing a particular concern, but it's not for that individual, it was for himself. So, to describe what he just said was this, “I'm not worried about you passing by for yourself, I'm worried about you passing by for me. I don't want you to pass me by.” So, it's an interesting, once again, construct that he begins to reveal, because he knows that there's something in these individuals that are here that God has sent, and he knows that there's a blessing here involved. He hasn't figured it out, but he knows that that's true.

I think of it in John 1, where some of the disciples, a couple of the disciples of John the Baptist are following him, and of course, they're looking for the Christ, they're looking for the Messiah. And John ultimately says, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” And they run to Him. Now, what's interesting about the passage is, the way it reads is, “and Jesus was

walking." So, they had to catch up to Him. Was He intending to just walk on by?

There's actually a passage in Mark 6 in which Jesus had gone up to pray, the disciples are in the boat, and they're going against the wind, obviously, within the passage and feeling extremely frustrated over that. And Jesus begins walking on the water. And in Mark 6, it actually says He was intending to pass by them. It's an interesting phrase, isn't it? Whether or not Jesus was intending to pass by them, they were walking by, they stopped, they stared at each other, Abraham wasn't going to let any time go by; he was going to catch them. And he runs out after them. It reminds me that we have opportunities. We have windows.

You think of passages like Galatians 6. It says, "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially those who are of the faith." It's telling us that we have opportunities throughout the day to do something. We ought to be vigilant and think in terms of that. If, in fact, God has brought somebody in our life, it's actually an opportunity that God has afforded us, which

sometimes, I have to admit, I think of it just as a bother. But Colossians talks in terms of making the most of your opportunities.

There is an interesting passage in Scripture that begins to talk about the obligation that God's people have. And if you look with me in Deuteronomy 10, you'll see this. And I can't help but feel that in some respects, these laws come out of the relationship that God has with Abraham. If you'll look throughout the Old Testament, you'll see the beginnings of the laws that come to fruition in Exodus and Deuteronomy and Leviticus that really come out of just plain friendship. But because man has to be told what to do because he's so immature, it has to get very detailed. It's like a parent saying, "Be nice to your brother and sister." And the kid goes, "So, does that mean I have to share?" "Yes, you have to share." "Does that mean that I have to open the door for them?" "Yes, that means that." So, you have to go through all the various laws because they can't perceive that they actually have to be nice to somebody.

But if you look with me in Deuteronomy 10:12, the declaration of God's greatness is revealed.

(Deuteronomy 10:12) "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,"

Well, that's pretty much a summary, isn't it? I think that covers it.

Deu 10:13) "and to keep the LORD'S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?

(Deuteronomy 10:14) Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it.

(Deuteronomy 10:15) Yet on your fathers did the LORD set His affection to love them..."

Surprise! I mean, God could do anything and He owns everything. Why would He set His affection on a bunch of wanderers, a bunch of nobodies, basically?

“Yet on your fathers did the LORD set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day.”

Now, what he's going to say at this juncture is, because God has graced you with His presence, you have an obligation. You know those moments where you catch eyes, somebody's put somebody in your path, and you just feel that? God says, “You have an obligation.” What's the obligation?

Well, if you look with me in verse 16,

(Deuteronomy 10:16) “So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.”

In other words, “Don't be inflexible with what I tell you to do.”

(Deuteronomy 10:17) “For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality...”

“Oh, well, God loved me, He's graced me, He's given me all this stuff, so I must be really something special.” He

goes, “No. I'm just gracious and chose you. But I chose you for a reason.”

Now, keep following me on this.

(Deuteronomy 10:18) “He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing.”

(Deuteronomy 10:19) “So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.”

It's an interesting passage because He displays His greatness, and He goes, “I can do anything I want to. I chose you. But you know why I chose you? Because you were down and out, and you know what it feels like to be down and out. You were a wanderer, you were a stranger in a land like Abraham was. I called him a Hebrew, a stranger. So, I've called you for that purpose, that you might minister to people because everybody at some time in their life feels like a stranger.” They feel on the out, they feel like an outcast in some time. And I would say that's when your eyes begin to contact. So, what He's actually doing is setting the stage and really coming off of what relationship is all about and the calling. Remember,

the fundamental calling of Abraham was in Genesis 12, "I'm going to bless you and I'm going to make you a blessing to all nations." That means to everybody.

He doesn't know who this is, in Genesis 18, that has come to visit him. He knows this, that they've made eye contact and he has a sense of obligation or duty to do something. Now, if you go back to Genesis 18, what's interesting about this is that he's clearly ever vigilant, sitting at his tent door, looking for those opportunities. Up to this point, not receiving what God had promised, Nevertheless, this has not in any way thwarted his vigilance in looking for the blessings of God. But he is coming with this kind of expectation. Of course, that's what God gives us. That's what faith is. Faith is a confident expectation that God is bringing things into our life. And it's not just happenstance, not just accidents, but they're appointments that God has placed in our life. Do you believe that? I believe that God has made appointments in our life. Do I always walk by that? No. I don't always walk by that. But I can tell you, God is placing doors. He has called us. God Almighty, who orchestrates the

universe, is also orchestrating that which is around our life. So, you can see the sense of expectation, and there's a tendency in the midst of time that we grow weary. In Galatians, Paul will write, "Do not grow weary in well-doing. In due season, you shall reap if you don't grow weary." But there is a tendency to grow weary. And Hebrews will say in Hebrews 10, you have need of endurance. So, you know, we do get a little bit tired. But what's wonderful about this passage is, once again, we see the attributes of faith. And the attributes of faith is he's ever ready, he's ever expectant, and he's literally jumping in there to serve.

Now, I want you to see something within the passage. We already made mention of in verse 2 that he ran from the tent door. Do you see that? But watch how many times that kind of thing is mentioned.

If you drop on down to verse 6,

(Genesis 18:6) "So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes."

(Genesis 18:7) Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it.”

What's the rush? Scripture is telling us it's that energy that God is looking for, and that really is a quality of faith. When God tells us to do something, we should run to do it. Not just walk, not skip, but run. Because God is calling upon us to bless us in some great way, and we believe that. We believe that God is using us, God is blessing us, and so we hurry, we run within the passage. So, you not only have a sense of vigilance and expectation, but you have a sense of great energy within the passage in which you can see him. And bowing himself down to the ground, a great sense of humility.

And he states that humility within the passage, not only there in the sense of him bowing himself, really making himself a servant, but he says,

“... “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by.”

His greatest concern is that he will be passed by.

(Genesis 18:4) “Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.”

“Let me help you relax.” Man, I just wish I was so excited about serving people that way. I mean, washing feet, what's so glorious about that? Jesus explains it to the disciples. He says, “Look, if I'm your LORD, I'm washing your feet, what do you think I want you to do?” So many times, He calls His disciples together and He says, “Let me tell you what you're really supposed to do.” Of course, you have the multitudes gathering around and of course the disciples go, “Send them home.” He goes, “No, you feed them.” And we know that Christ could have just popped fish and bread in front of them, but He said, “No, you break them apart, have them sit in groups and I want you to feed them” because He was teaching them to serve. And He was teaching them to serve quickly. Don't withhold good, Proverbs will say.

I want you to look at Mark. If you've ever read the Gospel of Mark; Mark emphasizes this whole thing of “do it fast.” Of course, Mark, to me, in many respects, actually is a

fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, in which God declares in Isaiah 42, actually the first of the chapter, (Isaiah 42:1) “Behold, My Servant...”

And He begins to describe the Christ that would come to be a servant.

Of course, Mark really displays Him as a servant as you go into the Gospel of Mark. And you see Mark setting the stage with John the Baptist in which John comes on the scene, and he goes, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

And he uses this interesting word if you look in Mark 1:3, “THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.’””

“Make ready” is basically an oriental term in which they would send someone before the kings, “Come to prepare the way,” to make sure that the road was not rough so that when they were coming and everything was straight and it wasn't convoluted because the king is coming. And you want everything to be perfect. And so, you want everything to be pleasant, unconvoluted, clean, right for

the king to come. So, he's fundamentally saying, "You want to be ready. You want to get everything ready. Provisions, preparations need to be made. And then make His paths straight." But the whole feel of the text is, "You need to do this quickly, because He's coming."

Now, if you drop on down, then Mark will continue with this by using this word in verse 12,

(Mark 1:12) "Immediately..."

See that? Immediately, the Spirit came.

(Mark 1:18) "Immediately they left their nets and followed Him."

(Mark 1:20) "Immediately He called them..."

(Mark 1:21) "... and immediately on the Sabbath..."

And all the way through,

(Mark 1:28) "Immediately the news about Him spread..."

(Mark 1:29) "And immediately after..."

And even when He does healing, it's in the King James in verse 31, immediately there was a miracle that happened, and when He healed the leper in verse 42, it's immediate.

So, all the way through, what he's saying within the passages is that there needs to be an immediate response because God was immediate in serving you. What does immediate reveal? Well, immediate, really, and to be energetic is not about expediency. And I want to emphasize that. It's not you just kind of getting something over. But it's you really demonstrating a love and affection that would not hold back, or that would not be slow to do something. The faster you react is showing just how interested you are in ministering and serving. So, what you have is this sense of desire that begins to be expressed.

So, as you go back to Genesis 18, not only is there this kind of servitude that is being realized, and I would say that when you serve, there not only needs to be a sense of energy, but a sense of excellence about it. Let me just explain what excellence looks like. It looks excellent in the way that you serve, that is to say, you're going to give your best. And it looks excellent in the service itself. Malachi talks about this when it talks about when you come before God, you want to give your best before God;

you don't want to withhold things. I mean, would you do that to a governor? Would you withhold things? You would pull out everything the best. And what we're seeing within the passage is that sense of excellence. And 1 Peter would talk about excellent behavior, that you're going to be excellent in your behavior. So, there's an excellence in the behavior and a humility of spirit, and as he goes on to say, "Let me bring you a piece of bread."

Look at verse 5. I like the way that it's phrased here, (Genesis 18:5) "and I will bring a piece of bread..."

I think the King James translated it "morsel". It actually is a small piece of bread. The point is, he's not exaggerating what he's going to be doing. You know how some people would go, "Oh, I've set you a big spread. And wow, how wonderful I am in doing this." Now, he goes, "Let me just feed you just a little bit. Just a little bit." Well, what, of course, he's really doing within the passage is minimizing his role in this. But is he just going to give him a little bit?

Well, the passage reads this way,

“And I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on...”

“I'm not going to withhold you anymore. But please give me this opportunity to serve you.”

“... since you have visited your servant.” And they said, “So do, as you have said.”

(Genesis 18:6) So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour...”

Now, the word that's used within the text, “*s<sup>a</sup>'â*,” for “measures” within the passage, is actually three, 7 quarts of grain. So, I hope those guys are hungry. I think they're getting ready to pack them a lunch, is what I think they're going to do. They're not only going to have something to eat, but they're going to pack them a lunch. “So, I'm going to bring a piece of bread, a little morsel,” so he turns to his wife. Let me say this gentleman to you, and just have your wives plug her ears just a moment. If you're going to be demanding, be demanding about serving. You know, there have been times in our house that I go, “Hon, we've got to do this.” And it's to serve. But that's what God has

called us to do. So, if you're going to be vocal about anything, not about yourself, not about sitting down and getting something for yourself, but "Go quickly, Sarah. Get this done. God has called these men here. They're here for a reason. I don't know why. I don't know what's going on."

(Genesis 18:6) "So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes.""

Abraham's not just sitting around doing nothing. So, here again, gentlemen, just because you asked your wife to do something, doesn't mean you sit down and do nothing. He's actually doing the hard part if you look at the passage.

(Genesis 18:7) "Abraham also ran..."

Once again, he's running. I can't believe it.

"Abraham also ran to the herd, and took..."

I don't know if he chased down the calf. I don't know. Did he lasso it? I don't know, jumped on it?

“Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it.”

I mean, we've got a huge meal coming here.

And not only that,

(Genesis 18:8) “He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them...”

And I can just see him, there he is, standing, watching them eat, “Is it okay? Do you like it? Do you like it?”

Because the passage says,

“... and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.”

Could you imagine God in the flesh eating in front of him?

I oftentimes think of the passage, we recently were in the Gospel of Luke and still are, and as Jesus would talk to His disciples, He said, “I want you to go to different people's houses. Whoever opens the door and lets you in, stay there.” Luke 10 will go on to say, “Stay there, eat whatever they put before you, and remain there and minister to that house, because that house has invited

you in." It's a very interesting passage. What we're seeing is fundamentally Hebrews 13.

Turn to Hebrews 13 and a couple of passages that I just want to parallel for you. Hebrews 13, we read it last week, but just to emphasize the point.

(Hebrews 13:1) "Let love of the brethren continue.

(Hebrews 13:2) Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

It's a great passage and a great reminder.

If you look with me in Matthew 25, you can see the qualities that you fundamentally see here with Abraham, the qualities of ever vigilant, expectant, and the great energy that he has. Of course, Paul would call it kind of alacrity, a great desire, a great joy to serve, a great desire to give, and a sense of excellence; giving the best, giving more than would be required. You know, some people are just like the Pharisees, they try to figure out mint, dill, cummin, "I don't want to give God too much. You know, He might get spoiled." But in Matthew 25, the

fundamental point of this particular chapter is that you need to be alert. And I think if we're coming away with anything, it's that. I mean, what's the rush? Well, the rush is that you need to be alert. I mean, you need to quickly recognize the doors of opportunities that God has given you. They're not only doors, sometimes they're just windows, and somebody brushes by you. Could you imagine the blessing that would have been withheld? As we're going to go on the passage, they're going to begin talking about Sarah. This time next year, she's going to be giving birth. Then they're going to go on and talk to him about Sodom and Gomorrah, "Should I withhold these things since he's my friend?" So, the dialogue is going to be magnificent and great, and we're going to see God's marvelous hand in caring for him. Nevertheless, could you just for a moment imagine if their eyes hadn't made contact and he hadn't felt that obligation and he hadn't acted upon it quickly, had they decided to pass by? You know, "I don't want you to pass by." Why is he doing everything quickly? Because he doesn't want this moment to pass by.

Matthew 25, we have the interesting narrative of the virgins that have the lamps, and some are prepared, and some are not. But as you drop down, the fundamental cry is in verse 13, "Be alert." See the phrase?

(Matthew 25:13) "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour (of your visitation)."

And I would say the passage is not only making reference to the final day of visitation, which it ultimately will, as we'll look in the passage, but he's talking about God is visiting you all the time with opportunities. That's God. That's God knocking. You feel that sense of obligation? That's God. If your heart's right, you're ready. If your heart's not right, if you're not prepared, if you haven't sanctified Christ as Lord of your heart, then you're not prepared to give an answer to every man of the hope within you. You're not thinking the right way. You're not thinking in terms of service. You're not thinking in terms of ministry. You're not thinking in terms of opportunity. You're thinking in terms of, "Get this guy out of my face."

Pick up with me in Matthew 25:31,

(Matthew 25:31) “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him...”

That's another kind of visit, isn't it? There He's sitting, but this time, with all the angels with Him.

“... He will sit on His glorious throne.

(Matthew 25:32) All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

(Matthew 25:33) and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

(Matthew 25:34) Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

(Matthew 25:35) For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;

(Matthew 25:36) naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’

(Matthew 25:37) Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink?'

(Matthew 25:38) 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?'

(Matthew 25:39) 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

(Matthew 25:40) The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them...'

Well, maybe you did have a visit from God today. Maybe He did knock on your door. Maybe there in your house. He's already there. God is visiting us. The question is, are we prepared and are we walking by faith? Do we actually believe that everything that happens in our life is an ordained moment for those that are called by Him? Abraham was called to be a blessing. Abraham was called to bless. It was a calling. So, he knew that everything that began to happen to him was God's direction in his life. The same thing is true in yours.

## **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You today, and we ask that You would prepare our hearts to walk by faith. Lord, it's hard to understand this word "faith" in the terms of spirituality, and yet what You have done for us is You've placed it in a very clear, and physical way so that we can see what You're talking about. To be prepared means I need to be vigilant and expectant of anything that comes before me. I realize that, Father. And I need to be excellent in my behavior so that when these opportunities come before me, I make the most of them. I give the best, not the worst, not the leftovers. And I give more than I'm expected, not just the minimum. I do this quickly because I desire to do it, as unto You. You have given me an opportunity to minister to You, to wash Your feet, to feed You. Lord, help me to think in these terms; help me to walk by faith, not by sight.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. What we're asking you to do is to think through what it means to walk by faith, and the reality of what that faith looks like in

your daily life. You want God to appear into your life? You'll be amazed that oftentimes the people that you would perceive to be the least that you should minister to are the very ones that God begins to reveal Himself through to you.