

LESSON 8

Egermeier's Story:

Page 29 - What Happened to Sodom

Page 32 – Hagar and Ishmael

Memory Verse: Genesis 15:6 “Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.” NASB

Scripture: Genesis 19:1-21:21

Teaching Resource:

Old Testament Overview Section 3 Abraham
Bible Study Guide for All Ages Lesson 127

Object Lesson:

Pretend there is a classroom, and in that classroom no one is allowed to chew gum in the class. And pretend that Jimmy comes into the class, opens a brand new package of Juicy Fruit, puts two sticks of Juicy Fruit in his mouth, and proceeds to loudly chew away on the Juicy Fruit. Susie has been sitting in the classroom watching the whole thing take place. The teacher watches also. Should the teacher make Susie go stand in the corner? No. Jimmy is the one who has broken the rule, and he is the one who deserves punishment. If the teacher shows justice in this classroom, Jimmy will be punished, not Susie. Justice involves not only punishing those who have done wrong but also protecting those who have done no wrong.

Doctrinal Emphasis: God's Justice, God's Mercy

Key Theme: *God's justice demands punishment for sin. His mercy provides forgiveness.*

Mercy has several meanings, and here we will see that mercy means withholding punishment from those who deserve it.

Notice in the story about Sodom and Gomorrah that God intends to bring justice to the people in these two cities. The people of Sodom and the people of Gomorrah were very wicked people. None of them worshipped God. Not one. They did whatever they wanted, and they didn't care about others or about God.

Abraham knew about God's justice and God's mercy. In the passage of Genesis 18:23-33, Abraham was expecting God's justice in destroying the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah. But Abraham also asked for God to show mercy to these wicked people because if there were any righteous people in Sodom or Gomorrah, it wouldn't show justice to destroy the righteous people along with the wicked people. In the passage, Abraham asks five times for God to withhold the destruction of these two cities, and each time it is based on an appeal to God's justice.

This story teaches us that God is perfectly just and that He is merciful. There is also another lesson here for us. As we get to know who God is and what He is like, this knowledge can affect our prayers. Look at Luke 17 and 18. Jesus is teaching about a number of subjects. As Jesus is teaching about His return in Luke 17:22-37, He compares the times at His return to the "days of Lot"; and He warns His listeners, "Remember Lot's wife." From this context of a sudden happening (just like the sudden destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah), Jesus turns to teaching about prayer in Luke 18:1-8 by telling a parable about the judge who would not give justice. In this parable, the woman who wanted justice asked repeatedly for justice. We have seen how Abraham also asked repeatedly for justice. We can ask God for justice. We can ask things from God based on what we know about Him. As we get to know more about God, this knowledge should affect how we pray to Him, how we think about Him, and how we act.