

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

AN OVERVIEW OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

JN. 5:39



Jn. 5:39 “**Search the scriptures....they are they which testify of me.**”

## Genesis 18:1-33

We began in Genesis with the beginnings of the human race.

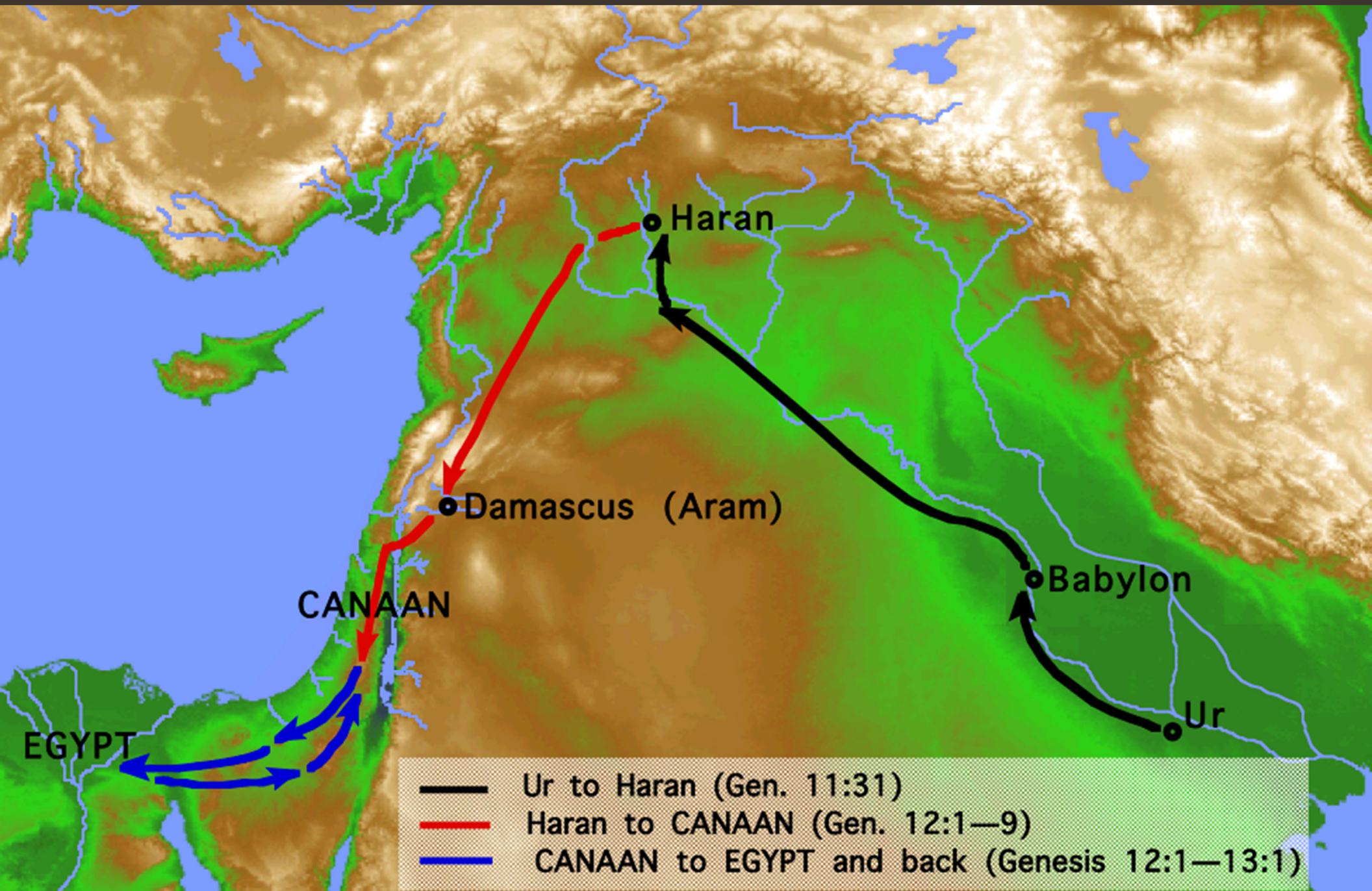
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## 7. The Perplexing of Faith, 18:1-33

### a. The Encounter With The Lord, 18:1-6

Gen. 18:1 And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth.

❖ The Lord interrupted Abraham's and Sarah's daily life with a perplexing visit.

❖ The appearance of the “three men” was actually a theophany and two angels.

Gen. 19:1 And **there came two angels to Sodom** at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

Heb. 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby **some have entertained angels unawares.**



❖ Abraham was very hospitable, and he and Sarah prepared them a meal.

## b. The Enlightenment From The Lord, 18:7-15

18:7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

10 And he said, **I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son.** And Sarah heard *it* in the tent door, which *was* behind him.

11 Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old *and* well stricken in age; *and* it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, **my lord** being old also?

13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

14 **Is any thing too hard for the LORD?** At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.



- ❖ During the meal, the Lord asked for Sarah's whereabouts and then announced that she would be having a son.
- ❖ Sarah revealed a perplexing response – unbelieving the announcement, she “laughed within herself,” because of practical circumstances.

18:12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, **my lord** being old also? → 1 Pet. 3:3-6



1 Pet. 3:3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even as **Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord:** whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

- ❖ The Lord asked, “Is there any thing too hard for the LORD?” Such a question was a precursor to His direct verification of His promise – “...At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”
- ❖ Luke 1:37 For **with God nothing shall be impossible**. (Zacharias and Elisabeth)
- ❖ Sarah’s fear led to her denying truth and was then rebuked by the Lord – v. 15.
- ❖ Between this incident and the birth of Isaac was a perplexing challenge to Sarah’s faith.

- ❖ Was Sarah to trust the Lord and His promise, or lean unto her own understanding?

Prov. 3:5 **Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.**

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and **he shall direct thy paths.**

- ❖ Eventually, Sarah's perplexed faith triumphed over circumstances!

Heb. 11:11 **Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed**, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

❖ The Lord was about to explain other perplexing enlightenment regarding Sodom.

### c. The Explanation By The Lord, 18:16-21

18:16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

17 And **the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;**

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?



**19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment;** that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

**20 And **the LORD said**,** Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

**21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.**

- ❖ While walking with the Lord, Abraham was revealed God's plan for the future.
- ❖ The Lord revealed His knowledge of Abraham's future and character.

## d. The Engaging With The Lord, 18:22-31

18:22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but **Abraham stood yet before the LORD.**

23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein?

25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes:

28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack of* five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*.

29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake.

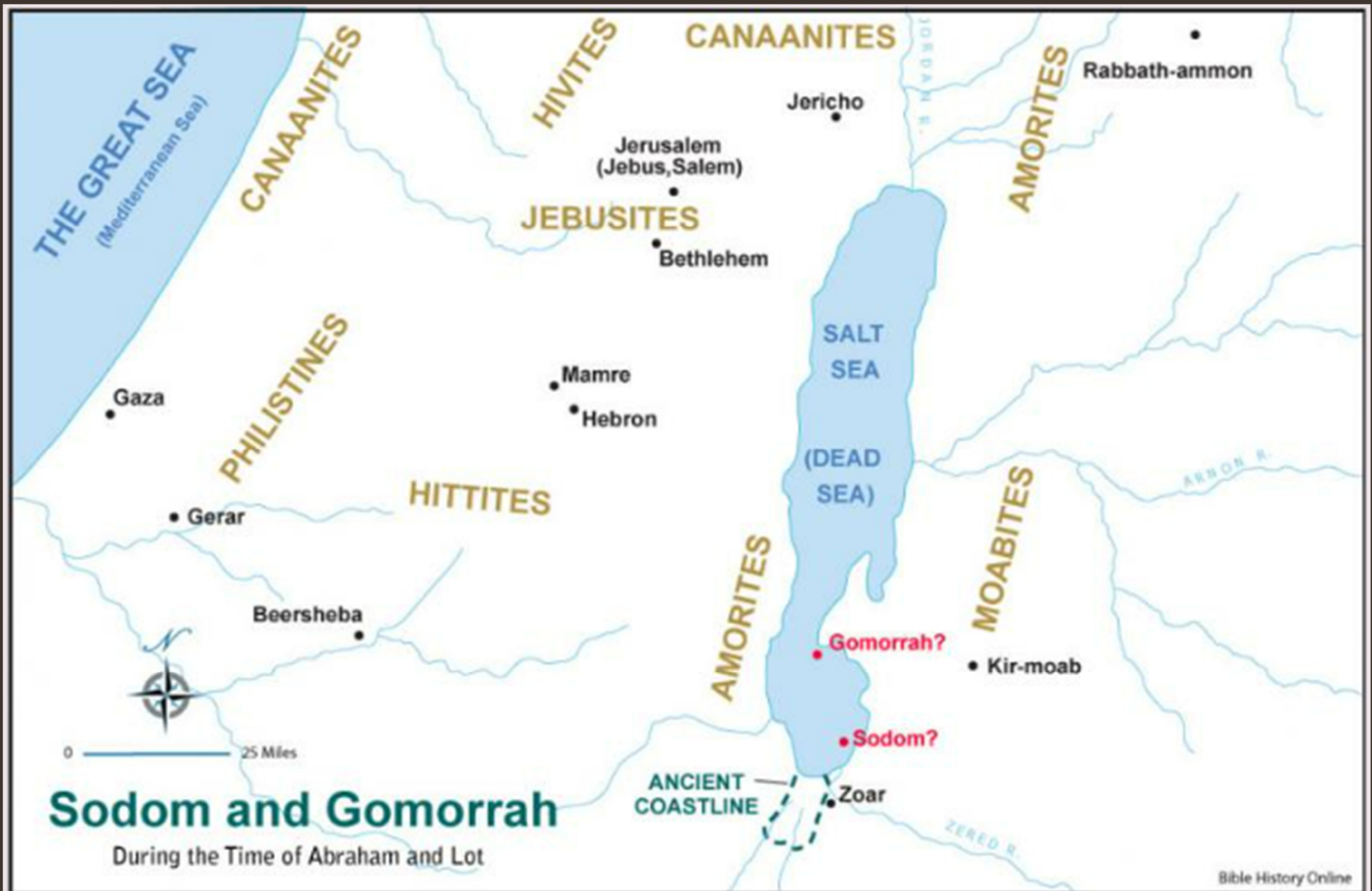
30 And he said *unto him*, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there.

31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.

32 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.

33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.





- ❖ The angels went on to Sodom while Abraham fellowshiped with the Lord – v. 22.
- ❖ Abraham was concerned about Lot and intervened for him with the Lord, going from a proposal of sparing Sodom for the sake of 50 down to 10 righteous people.
- ❖ Abraham knew that the Lord was just and evidently assumed Lot had influenced his family and a few others to be righteous.

- ❖ A most perplexing thing to consider is that Abraham's futile effort to spare Lot and Sodom squandered his opportunity of "communing" with the Lord about more important issues.
- ❖ A backslider's sins too often creates dilemmas for people in fellowship with the Lord.
- ❖ Hindrances to faithful fellowship will be a distraction if a believer does not stay alert.
- ❖ We need to be properly focused about important opportunities when communing with the Lord.
- ❖ Abraham stops asking before God stops giving:

Mat 6:8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for **your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.**

Jas 4:2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet **ye have not, because ye ask not.**

## Summary

- ❖ The Lord will interrupt our daily routine with perplexing situations.
- ❖ The Lord's plans may involve perplexing mental/spiritual challenges.
- ❖ The Lord may reveal issues that require great wisdom regarding priorities.
- ❖ The Lord is always faithful, just, loving, and true.



## Conclusion

2 Pet. 2:7 And delivered **just Lot**, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

Jude 1:7 Even as **Sodom and Gomorrha**, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, **are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.**

33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.”

- ❖ Abraham went from the shade of his tent door, to fellowshiping with the Lord, back to the shade of his tent door.
- ❖ Distracted by Lot and Sodom, Abraham misused an awesome opportunity of fellowship!

1 Cor. 1:9 God *is* faithful, by whom **ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.**

1 Jn. 1:7 But **if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another,** and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.