

Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Dave Eubank (& family) here next Wed night (28th). Former U.S. Army Special Forces & Ranger officer. Founder & leader of FBR. Have also done relief missions in *Sudan, Iraq, Syria, & w/the Kurds.*

II. Intro:

- A. I have Good News & I have Bad News...*which do you want to hear 1st?*
1. Good news, Sarah you're going to have a baby...at age 90. The Bad news, I'm going to destroy two big cities.

III. Slide2a IS ANYTHING TOO HARD FOR THE LORD (1-15)

- A. (1) Once again God is *visibly present* with Abraham during this conversation.
- B. Rest yourselves under the tree - resting is a normal practice in the East. [Ab's 99 yrs old]
1. What's strange is most people did not travel during *the heat of the day.*
 2. Slide2b *Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is take a nap.* Weirsbe
- C. (2) We have 3 figures in the image of men (*standing*/so embodied). 1 is God, 2 are angels.
1. Abraham calls him Lord 14 x's.
- D. (4) As a good *Ancient Near Eastern* host he makes sure after feeding them, they're *rested & refreshed.* [bedouin hospitality 101]
- E. (7) Abraham's promise in (vs.5, *a morsel of bread*) did not indicate that he would return with *such an extravagant feast.* *Veal Parmesan*
- F. (10-12) Abraham and Sarah's reactions highlight just how *surprising & implausible* it seems that they will have a son.
- G. (11) *The way of women* - meant their *menstrual cycle.*
- H. (12-15) Sarah laughed to herself - I guess Abraham forgot to tell her :)
1. Now Sarah's faith is challenged - for she must be brought into believing participation.

2. **Also**, we're glad she laughed **for** it brought about **the great saying about God... Is anything too hard for the Lord?**
 - a) **Slide3** This question is answered by **Job** 42:2 *I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.* **Jeremiah** 32:17 *Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.* And by the angel **Gabriel** to Mary in Lk.1:37 *For nothing will be impossible with God.*
- I. (17) The question, **Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?** proves Abraham *the friend of God.*
 1. **So** Abraham not only **the servant of God** but also **the friend of God**, gets to share in **the secrets of God.** [and so do we]
 - a) As defined by **Jesus** in John 15:15, *No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.*
- J. **Slide4a Experiencing God** (connect our theology to our practical life) **[This is different]**
 1. **1st Value:** Instruction – **Experiencing God as we Believe, Read, Share, & Live His Word.** [so not just for information but also **inspiration**]
 - a) Think, His presence. Him communing with you. Reflection. Self-examination.
 - b) **It's life with God.** Predicated on the view that **relationship** is at the core of the cosmos. [Father *with* Son *with* HS. **Son** sent to live *with* us] Luv God completely, people authentically.
 2. If you are single & desire a relationship w/the opposite sex **IS IT** your desire to **learn about love, or experience love, or be in love?** [same with God]
 - a) Paul said, *Though I have the gift of prophecy, & understand all mysteries & all knowledge, & though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*
 - b) **In Your presence is fullness of joy.** Psalm 16:11
- K. I want to give you time tonight, by yourself, to **process** what God is speaking to you.
 1. **Slide4b Is anything too hard for the Lord...of what's going on in your life?**
 2. We've **read the text now** how does **this text read you?** What does God want to speak to you right now on this? What seems impossible? (just listen to Him)

3. Are you able to just **rest** right now? Physical rest. Mental rest. Emotional rest. Work rest. Relational rest. *Rest-in-God*, rest.

IV. Slide5a **KNOWN BY THE LORD (16-21)**

- A. Slide5b (19) Definitions: Chosen (*yada*) - or *known* (nkjv)
- B. Command - or *direct* (nkjv) *charge someone to do something*.
- C. Righteousness & justice - *tsedaqah* (rt), refers to what is *right or fair*. It can convey the legal sense of *innocence or vindication*. *mishpat* (justice), can refer to legal decisions that involve **both** **condemning** the guilty **and** **acquitting** the innocent.
- Slide5c msg Yes, I've settled on him as the one to **train his children & future family to observe God's way of life, live kindly and generously and fairly**.
 - nkjv For I have **known him...** [a great parenting verse then! see msg]
- D. So that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has promised him - Not mere *fatherhood or mundane instruction*, **but** the **blameless character** and **spiritual loyalty** to God that was part of the covenantal obligations. [cool parenting scripture]
- E. (20) The crimes of Sodom are more than *the general evil of inhospitality and homosexual aggression* described in Gen.19. Remember the set up for Sodom back in 13:13? *Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord*.
- F. Slide6,7 **Experiencing God** (connect our theology to our practical life)
- For I have **known him** - meditate on God **knowing you**. Knowing everything *intimately* about you, **but not** about all of your **mistakes** recently. **But about** how much He **adores** you. How much He considers you His friend. Picture just your photograph above His fireplace. Picture just your name tattooed on His arm
 - Followers of Jesus, you are **known** by Him.

V. Slide8a **BARGAINING WITH THE LORD (22-33)**

- A. Until now, Abraham has spoken few words to Yahweh. Here, pleading for the doomed cities, he is far more vocal & speaks far more here than God.

1. Abraham intercedes for Sodom & Gomorrah, pleading with God to spare the cities if 50 righteous people can be found within them, or even 10. **Only 10 righteous people are needed to save the cities.**
- B. **Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked** - Abraham is also undoubtedly concerned for his nephew, **Lot**.
1. Which in the next chapter we'll see God remembers Abraham's plea and extends His **mercy** by saving **Lot**.
- C. **Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?** - now not just thinking of his kinsmen
1. Which anticipates the **blessing the whole world** was to **enjoy** through him.
- D. **Slide8b** Is this **bargaining**, **haggling**, **or** maybe better **exploring**.
1. **Come now, let us reason together**. Isaiah 1:18
- E. Lot has been rescued by **Abrahams intervention** (ch.14), **now** he would be rescued by **Abrahams intercession** (ch.19).
1. **But a key point** without getting too far ahead in ch.19. **Abraham** prayed for the city on the basis of the **justice** of God, **but God** save Lot on the basis of His **mercy** and **Grace** (**see** 19:16, 19)
- F. **Slide9 Experiencing God** (connect our theology to our practical life)
1. **Abrahams intercession.**
 2. Should we cry out for God's Justice **or** His mercy & Grace?
 3. God seemed to be ok with **reasoning together**. Anything you need to ask Him right now? Any **why** questions? Just sit and listen to **His** answer.
 4. **Think on these vss:** [from Abraham's perspective **&** from your perspective]
 - a) Heb.13:2 ***Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!***
 - b) Rev.3:20 ***Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.***
 - c) James 2:23 ***Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness - and he was called a friend of God.***