

NOVEMBER 15, 2019

Parashat Vayera (Genesis 18:1-22:24)

Taught By: Dylan & Shira



SUMMARY

As *Avraham* sits at the opening of his tent--he looks up to see three men. Even though *Avraham* does not know right away that these men are messengers of G!d, he welcomes them warmly. He runs to greet them, invites them to stay, washes their feet, and--with *Sarah's* help-- prepares a great meal for them. After they are appropriately welcomed and settled, the visitors announce to *Sarah* and *Avraham* that a son will be born to them.



G!d then tells *Avraham* that G!d will destroy the two cities of *S'dom* and *Amorrah* because of the wickedness and injustice of the people who live there. *Avraham* argues with G!d, asking if G!d would destroy people who behave well along with those who behave badly. In the end G!d agrees not to destroy the cities if 10 people who behave well can be found there. G!d cannot find even 10 people who behave well, so G!d destroys the cities. *Avraham's* nephew, *Lot*, and his family are saved. Even though G!d told her not to look back, when she was settled safely in a new town far away, *Lot's* wife did look back to see the cities that G!d had begun to destroy. She turned into a pillar of salt.

Sarah became uncomfortable with the way that *Yishma'el* is playing with *Yitzhak* and tells *Avraham*. *Avraham* then sends *Hagar* and their son *Yishma'el* away. *Avraham* then hears G!d's command to bring his son, *Yitzhak*, as an offering, but he is stopped just in time before he actually sacrifices *Yitzhak*. *Avraham* sacrifices a ram instead.

1) This week we read that G!d cannot find 10 right-acting people in the cities of *S'dom* and *Amorrah*, so G!d takes Avraham's nephew, Lot, and his family out of that area to safety. G!d sends angels, just as the sun is coming up, to tell them to leave--but they stop and wait. Why would they wait and not leave right away?

DYLAN: I imagine that he was just waking up to the angels standing there and that the family was in shock--trying to figure out what to do.

SHIRA: I bet he was wondering why *his* family was chosen to get out and not anyone else. Maybe he's not sure they deserved to be saved and is wondering if it is just because they are part of Avraham's family.

2) Why do you think the angels told *Lot* and his family not to look back at the cities of *S'dom* and *Amorrah* that were to be destroyed?

SHIRA: Maybe G!d didn't want them to celebrate other peoples' suffering.

3) After the angels took *Lot's* family out of *S'dom* and they were safe in a small village nearby, G!d began to destroy *S'dom* and *Amorrah*. Then *Lot's* wife looked back, and she turned to a pillar of salt. Why salt? What do you think G!d might have been saying by turning her to a pillar of salt?

SHIRA: I think it's because tears have salt, so maybe this is a way of saying she was so sad and she cried so much that she turned into a pillar of salt.

DYLAN: Salt tastes good if you eat a little on your foos, but if you eat too much it can make you sick. Maybe she is feeling sick about leaving her home and seeing it destroyed.

