

- Gen 18:1** And Jehovah appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day.
- Gen 18:2** He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth
- Gen 18:3** and said, “O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant.
- Gen 18:4** Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree,
- Gen 18:5** while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.”
- Gen 18:6** And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, “Quick! Three seahs of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes.”
- Gen 18:7** And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly.
- Gen 18:8** Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

Gen 18:9 They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “She is in the tent.”

Gen 18:10 Jehovah said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him.

Gen 18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah.

Gen 18:12 So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?”

Gen 18:13 Jehovah said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’

Gen 18:14 Is anything too hard for Jehovah? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”

Gen 18:15 But Sarah denied it, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “No, but you did laugh.”

Gen 18:16 Then the men set out from there, and they looked down toward Sodom. And Abraham went with them to set them on their way.

Gen 18:1 And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day.

Mamre was an Amorite, one of the three men (brothers) who were allies of Abraham (Genesis 13) and who had joined Abraham in pursuing the four kings to rescue Lot. "Mamre" means "vigorous" or "lusty." Abraham had made a covenant with Mamre and his brothers, and eventually they became part of his service team. Abraham exercised to preach the gospel to the Gentiles who surrounded him. Wherever Abraham went, he was surrounded by Gentiles. Rather than being swallowed up by Shinar and Egypt (the world and its influence), Abraham preached the gospel to the world. The unbelievers around him became his strength and blessing.

It is in such a condition that God appears to Abraham again. The Lord will only appear to us when we respond to His prior appearing. Without our response, it is very hard for the Lord to appear. Even if he did appear, we would not be able to recognize Him. Abraham had grown to such an extent that he could abide by the oaks of Mamre, as a testimony to the nations around him. This was perhaps also the partial fulfillment of God's promise in chapter 17, that his name would be "father of many nations." Do we care for the nations? Do we testify to our friends, neighbors and colleagues? Do we exercise to preach the gospel? Based on our heart and our living, God may appear to us, and to our service team, to strengthen us in raising up pillars (spiritual children).

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Why did God again appear to Abraham (the same year)?

1. Abraham honored God's covenant by being circumcised, he and his family;
2. Abraham knew God to a much greater degree; he and God were like close friends,
3. God wanted to have fellowship with Sarah directly.....
4. God cherished what Abraham cherished.

Jehovah and two other angels appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, which were at Hebron (**Gen.13:18**). This means that God can appear as a man anytime and anywhere as the Christ, the Son of the triune God. This also shows that God has humanity from eternity past to eternity future. Angels can also have the flesh of a man. Abraham had face-to-face fellowship with them.

Jehovah appeared to him again when he was 99 years old because he and his household fulfilled God's covenant and were circumcised.

Gen 18:2 shows that Abraham knew that one of the men was Jehovah, and maybe even that the other two were angels, and was not frightened, and worshipped and respected God very humbly. He lived in a tent to show that he was a sojourner even in the land of Canaan.

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Heb 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for **thereby some have entertained angels unawares.**

Abraham was attentive to the Lord and the two angels. Did he know that the two men were angels and the third the Lord, in the beginning? Hebrews 13:2 seems to suggest that he did not know the angels. So it is with us. When we accompany people, or when we open our homes to invite people, we may not know who they are. We simply are available to love and reach out. Actually, we do not know. God is the One who sends messengers to us. The saints are messengers, to bring God to us, to show us God. If we entertain, if we accompany them, as Abraham did, if we serve them, we may know the Lord a little bit more. The Lord reveals Himself through the humanity of people.

Do we come to others as "God" or as men? Do we know the human needs of others? Are we concerned for them? Do we know their names? This is humanity. Actually, these are God's divine attributes being expressed in human virtues.

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When God appears to us, do we run to Him? Do we run to the brothers and sisters? Do we run to the gatherings? Abraham did not waste any time. He ran to meet the Lord. He left his tent. A tent means that he was not settled. He was consecrated to the Lord, ready to move, to relocate, to satisfy the Lord. He was ready to leave his tent. He did not even trust in his consecration, but was ready to leave behind even his consecrated life for the Lord, to respond to the Lord and seek the Lord Himself. Abraham served the Lord, not to gain something, not even to gain a son, but simply to satisfy the Lord. Abraham did not serve the Lord alone. He had a team. Here, he had his wife and a young man.

What about us? We may consecrate ourselves to the Lord and even serve the Lord, but according to our own terms and conditions. For example, we may serve the Lord but only speak to people that we know. We may not want to preach the gospel to unbelievers, to people whom we do not know. We may enjoy the church life, but we may be reluctant to invest ourselves in raising up people. Are we willing to leave our tent? Are we serving independently, or do we have a team? Wherever Abraham went, he raised up people. He pursued the Lord and grew himself, but as he grew, he brought others to grow with him.

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- Gen 18:4** Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and **rest yourselves under the tree**,
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- Gen 18:7** And Abraham **ran** to the herd and **took a calf, tender and good**, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it **quickly**.
- Gen 18:8** Then **he took curds (butter) and milk** and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And **he stood by them** under the tree while they ate.

Abraham understood that the reason why he could receive God and two angels was actually a favor from God: “**if I have found favor in your sight**”. Therefore, to be able to serve others in the church life is, in fact, a gracious opportunity which the saints give to us. For example, concerning preaching the gospel, the more we preach, the more we receive God’s blessing.

“Wash your feet” typifies using the living water to wash away the contamination of the dust (the world). “Rest under the tree” represents resting in the protection of the Lord to avoid the heat of the sun (the world).

Bread, calf, butter, and milk all signify the abundance of the all-inclusive Christ, and are foods that satisfy God and man. When Abraham enjoyed fellowship with God, he was typologically offering Christ to God as God's food.

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Gen 18:10 Jehovah said, “**I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.**” And **Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him.**

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Gen 18:12 So **Sarah laughed to herself**, saying, “**After I am worn out, and my lord is old**, shall I have pleasure?”

If we desire to receive God's revelation, we must first have sweet fellowship with God, and let God be satisfied in us. When God has much enjoyment in us, He will treat us as His friends and be willing to share with us the secrets of His heart.

“**Sarah your wife shall have a son**” is the second time God said the same promise to him (Gen 17:21). Perhaps the first time Sarah was not present. “**Sarah your wife shall have a son**” is God's will, but the accomplishment of God's will had to wait until the following year when God returned. It can be seen that God personally accomplished His will; He initiated it, and He accomplished it. **The accomplishment of God's will does not require human help.**

“ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years:” from the human side, Abraham and Sarah had no hope of having children. People's hopes are often based on whether they have the ability and the means to accomplish something, but God does not need the cooperation of man's ability to act, so **He often waits until people lose their hopes completely before He starts to act.**

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Gen 18:15 But Sarah denied it, saying, “**I did not laugh**,” for she was afraid. He said, “**No, but you did laugh.**”

This is a sweet picture. Sarah listened at the tent door. She was interested. Do we listen to the Lord? Even when the Lord speaks to other brothers and sisters, do we want to hear what He says to them? However, when we hear, we may not believe. We doubt. It is interesting that the Lord asked why she laughed. He spoke to Abraham (v.13). The second time, He spoke to Sarah to remind her that she did laugh. This was sweet fellowship.

Even in our incredulity, the Lord may speak to other brothers and sisters, if our heart is pure and willing to listen to Him, and if we are one with the brothers and sisters, to receive from them, even if we do not understand. Then the Lord may speak to us through others, even in our weakness. Eventually, Isaac was born ("laughter.") This may mean that Christ's life may grow in us despite our weakness of faith.

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The “I” in “**Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old**” was the source of unbelief. Sarah observed things from the human side, and inferred their impossibility, so she laughed in her heart. **Those who do not believe into God only see their own difficulties; those who believe into God know that they have problems, but still look to Almighty God.**

He (God) said, “No, but you (Sarah) did laugh” because Heb 4:12-13 says, “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, **but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him** to whom we must give account. ”

Is anything too hard for Jehovah? Matt 19:26: But Jesus looked at them and said, “**With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.**”

“Abraham went with them to set them on their way” indicates that there was a close fellowship and even an intimate friendship between Abraham and God.