

Heavenly Visitors

Genesis 18:20-33; Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 132-144

Do you talk to God when someone you care about needs help? Do you ask God to do something for them? Even when people are bad, we can speak out for them. A long time ago, Abraham bargained with God for some people. It happened like this . . .

One hot day Abraham sat in the shade of his tent, looking out upon the valley where he lived. A movement caught his eye. Three men stood just beyond his camp talking together.

Abraham jumped up, ran out to meet them, and bowed low.

“Please, stay awhile at my tent. I will give you water and some food to eat. You can sit in the shade of the trees and rest.”

“Thank you, we will,” the men agreed. “Go and do as you said.”

Abraham hurried back to the camp and into his tent.

“Sarah,” he called to his wife, “we have guests. Please bake some bread for them.” Then Abraham hurried to get food for his servant to cook. Soon the food was ready. Abraham, himself, served his guests. While they ate he stood in the shade of a tree nearby. Sarah stayed just inside the tent, where she could listen to the men.

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“Where is Sarah, your wife?” one of the guests asked.

“She’s in the tent,” Abraham answered.

“Next year at this time she will have a son,” the guest said.

Back in the tent Sarah chuckled. Imagine having a son at her age!

“Why did Sarah laugh?”



The Message

God wants me to speak out for others.

Memory Verse

“Not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others”

(Philippians 2:4).

the stranger asked. “Is anything too hard for the Lord?”

Now both Abraham and Sarah knew that their guest was the Lord Himself.

When Abraham’s guests finished their meal, they got up to leave. As was the custom, Abraham walked a short distance with them. The Lord stopped to talk to Abraham as the others walked on.

“I have heard how very wicked Sodom is,” the Lord said.

Abraham had heard of evil things that people did in Sodom. He thought of Lot and his family who lived there. Abraham loved his nephew’s family. He was sure Lot was not wicked, but Abraham worried about the people of Sodom. Many of them did not yet know God.

“Lord,” Abraham said, “are You going to destroy the good people of Sodom along with the wicked? Suppose there are 50 good people in Sodom. Will You not save the city?”

The Lord answered, “If I find 50 righteous [good] people in Sodom, I will not destroy it.”

Abraham thought some more. His kind heart made him ask the Lord again, “What if there are only 45 good people?”

“I will not destroy Sodom, if there are 45 good people.”

Still Abraham was not satisfied. Three more times he asked the Lord to save the city. The sixth time Abraham begged the Lord, “Don’t be angry with me, Lord, but let me ask one more time. Will You save the city for just 10 good people?”

The Lord answered, “For the sake of 10 good people I will not destroy the city.”

Then the Lord went on to Sodom, and Abraham went back to his tent knowing that God would do what was right and what was good.





S A B B A T H

READ If possible, go with your family to sit under a shady tree or draw a picture of a tree. Read and discuss Genesis 18:20-33 together. Talk about the great trees at Mamre and how they provided shade to Abraham's visitors. Then thank God for trees.

SHARE Read the memory verse together. Ask your family what it means.

M O N D A Y

THINK With your family, think of another story you know about Abraham helping people. (Hint: See Genesis 14.) Why did Abraham help those people? Did Abraham receive a reward? Should people receive a reward for helping others?

SHARE Share the prayer pledge made in Sabbath School with the person of your choice. Tell them how much you care about them. Remember to pray for them every day.

W E D N E S D A Y

READ With your family, read and discuss Isaiah 58:7. What needs are found in that verse? How can your family help someone with those needs? Make a plan and do it.

SING Sing a song about helping others. Then pray that God will help you to help people in need.

S U N D A Y

READ Read the lesson story for family worship today. Why did Abraham care what happened to the people in Sodom? Who cares about us?

DRAW Draw a picture of something that especially interests you. Is your interest something that God is interested in? Why? Ask God to help you use your interest for Him.

DO Use the motions learned in Sabbath School to teach the memory verse to your family.

T U E S D A Y

DO During worship today, count out 50 small stones (or dried beans or rice grains) and pretend that they are the people of Sodom. Remove stones as you read the lesson story together, until only 10 stones are left. Does God still care about 10 people? About one person? How did Abraham help the people of Sodom?

THINK Are there bad people in your town? Does Jesus love them? How do you know? (See Romans 5:8.) Pray for people in your town who do not know Jesus.

God changed Abram's name to Abraham (Genesis 17:5). God did it to show that Abraham would be the father of a great nation.



THURSDAY

DO With your family's help, make a list of five people you know who need to know Jesus. List one interest you think each person has. How might your family "look to their interests"? Ask God to show you a way to help one of them today. Save your list for tomorrow.

ASK Ask your family to say the memory verse with you.



FRIDAY

DO Act out the lesson story during family worship tonight. Or read about the lesson in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 138-140.

DO Ask each family member to choose a person from the list you made yesterday. Think of something of interest to that person that could help you tell them more about Jesus. Then send a card (one you make is best) or a Bible verse to them. Tell them that you care about them.

SING Sing about God's love for people. Then pray for the people you care about.

PUZZLE



Directions: Abraham and Sarah took care of their visitors. Look for four hidden things that made visitors feel welcome.

A New Look at Your Neighborhood

Directions:

1. Start with your house. How can you help your parents? Draw a picture of helping at home.
2. Think of three neighbors. How can you help? Maybe one needs help with the yard. Does one need help with errands? How many neighbors need friendly smiles? Draw a picture in each box.
3. Now think about your church, your school, and your neighborhood store. How can you be a good neighbor in each of these places? Draw one or more ways.
4. When you finish your pictures, share this "map" with your parents. Tell them about this new way to look at your neighborhood.
5. Ask God to guide you every day in helping your neighbors.

How to help at home



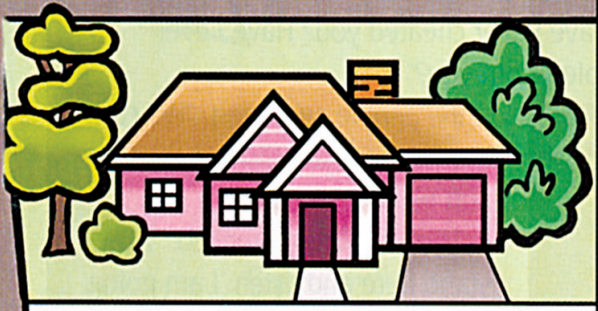
How to help at church



How to help my neighbor



How to help my neighbor



How to help my neighbor



How to help at the store

How to help at school

