

## **A Father's Day Message**

### **Genesis 18:19**

For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

Abraham is one of the main characters of the Bible. Many of the characters before and after have an important role but Abraham is seen throughout the entire Scriptures.

Among other things he is referred to as the father of the faithful. And as a result becomes one of Paul's basic definitions of what salvation is all about.

Abraham is a unusual character in that he comes from a pagan people who worship multiple God's. And the only reason my God ever revealed himself to Abraham is a matter of pure grace.

Like the rest of us Abraham was not a perfect person. He wasn't a perfect husband. One of the defining words for Abraham throughout the Scriptures is father.

The pathway that led to Abraham's fatherhood was difficult and arduous. Called by God at age 75 and promised a son and more than a son, he was promised heirs that would be like the stars of the heavens.

And although he and his wife would try to help God out through Hagar the slave girl yet Ishmael would not be the promised son.

God would wait until Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 before the promised son was given.

The passage that we have before us comes at the end of that period of time. And what we don't realize is that 100 years old Abraham was far from dead. When Abraham is 160 years old his son Isaac will be the father of two boys Jacob and Esau.

This means that Abraham would've enjoyed his grandchildren until they turn the age of 15.

Abraham had spent the first 14 years of Ishmael's life with him before Ishmael and Hagar were sent out from before Abraham.

Later on after Sarah died Abraham would marry Keturah. In Genesis chapter 25 1 ¶ Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2 And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

So Abraham had six more children each one who would become their own nation later on.

Why do I bring up all of these children of Abraham? Because it is Abraham's children that God is referring to in verse 19 when it says that he will command his children after him. I am not aware, although there may be, of any other place where it is said of a father that his children will follow after him.

There is a place in Jeremiah chapter 35 where the sons of the Rechabites had obeyed their father for many generations. But I already preached on that several years ago.

So let us look at this passage this morning.

- I. For I have known him, in order that
  - A. Known him here means that God chose Abraham.
    - 1. This is a basic principle. That when God chose Abraham he did not choose any other.
  - B. Not because of anything in Abraham but only out of grace.
    - 1. God has always operated on the basis of grace. For there is not a just man on the earth that does good and sins not. That's in the past as well as the present and also the future.
  - C. God will later tell the nation of Israel, you only have I known out of all the families of the earth.
    - 1. Am 3:2 “You only have I known of all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”
- II. He may command his children and his household after him
  - A. The word command here is just exactly what it means. It is used of a father telling his son David to go look after his brothers at the battlefield.
    - 1. It has the idea of the father giving a command and the children following what they were told.
    - 2. But in this case it goes much further than that.
    - 3. In this case it has the idea that Abraham will not only command his immediate children but his children's children and his children's children's children and so on so forth.
    - 4. I could tell you that 12 generations ago my grandfather's name was Francis Harmon. But besides telling you the names of his two children and that he came over here from England on a boat called Love I can't really tell you anything else about him.
    - 5. I don't know what his goals in life were, why he came to this country, what his beliefs were or almost any other thing.
    - 6. Because after 400 years those things are lost.
    - 7. But not for Abraham and his descendants.
  - B. Of course we must keep in mind that God was working through Abraham and his descendants in a particular way.
    - 1. But we must also remember that if we are God's children that God is working through us in a particular way.
  - C. Is it important today for fathers to command their children?

- D. This is one of the problems of our society today if not the major problem.
  - E. I could read you the statistics, but do we really need to do that? Many if not most of the moral ills of our society can be traced back to the lack of an effective fatherhood.
- III. That they keep the way of the LORD,
- A. To do righteousness
    - 1. And notice how Abraham will affect his children.
    - 2. To do righteousness.
    - 3. I almost wonder if that's something that is even possible today.
    - 4. The often heard phrase good guys finish last has a ring of truth to it.
    - 5. Why did we like that old movie, "Mr. Smith goes to Washington"?
    - 6. And what were the first two things the Superman stood for, truth and justice.
    - 7. But why do we long for that? Is it not because we see a dearth of it in our society today.
    - 8. 3 John 1:4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.
    - 9. My father had plenty of faults but there was one thing that he instilled in me and that was you better do what is right.
    - 10. It is not too late for fathers did still do that today.
  - B. And justice
    - 1. I almost don't want even get started on this one.
    - 2. Anymore when the justice system comes after you they don't have to convict you, all they have to do is bankrupt you. Then you will confess to any crime in order to get it stop.
    - 3. Not everyone convicted of a crime is guilty of a crime, and not everyone who is found innocent is truly innocent.
    - 4. But one of the most important lessons that we can give our children is the lesson of the priority of justice in all systems.
    - 5. These two things, righteousness and justice will take your children along ways down the right pathway.
    - 6. You know the words justice for all is how we close out our pledge of allegiance.
- IV. That the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

- A. We see in this sentence that God's purpose is so that he might fulfill all that he had promised Abraham.
- B. But as we've seen in our series on Romans chapter 11 that it hasn't gone too well for the nation of Israel because they forsook righteousness and justice.
- C. There is coming a day in which God will write his law in their hearts Jeremiah tells us.
- D. Then they will have the desire for true righteousness and true justice.
- E. The problem with righteousness and justice is that if it is not for everybody than it is for nobody.
- F. If we were a nation really concerned about righteousness and justice what would change?
  - 1. Do you suppose we would still have a problem with bullying in schools?
  - 2. Do you suppose that we would have so many broken homes and devastated children?
  - 3. Do you suppose that we would still have a government that depended upon gambling to raise money on the backs of those who can least afford it?
  - 4. Do you suppose that abortion would still be celebrated? A thought on abortion. Do you realize when a child is aborted that you are not only killed that child would you have destroyed an entire family of people.
  - 5. If Francis Harmon, when he was crossing the Atlantic, had decided that two children would be too much to raise in the New World and he had thrown his son overboard so his life would be so much better when he arrived in America, do you realize that I wouldn't be here 12 generations later.
  - 6. If there's one thing that abortion does not have it his righteousness and justice.
- G. God is allowed Israel to stray far from where God intended for the descendents of Abraham to be.
  - 1. But you must realize that just because God allows something does not mean he approves of it.
  - 2. Do you realize that God has a plan for your children and that he is known you so that you can command your children to walk in the house of righteousness and justice?