



Friend of God

Genesis 18:1-19

Pastor John Sloan

Introduction: What would it be like to have dinner with God? Would the tone be strictly serious (no joking permitted)? What kind of hors d'oeuvres do you serve to the One who made the world? Would God send His meal back to the kitchen if it weren't prepared to His liking? The questions that come to mind are endless. But not all the answers are left to our imagination. In Genesis 18, Abraham and Sarah unexpectedly welcomed the Lord of Hosts to their tent ... and learned first-hand some incredible things about their Creator.

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THE UNBURDENED HEART

[FORGIVENESS]

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & DISCOVERY

1. Why did Sarah laugh when she heard God's promise to her and Abraham (v.12)? How does she respond when confronted by God (v.15)?
2. What does God's response to Sarah in v. 15 reveal about His character?
3. Read v. 14a aloud. In what ways are questions better than propositional statements? How do questions get to the heart of the listener?
4. What do the words 'immanence' and 'transcendence' mean, when it comes to God? What happens when we over-emphasize one at the expense of the other?
5. What comfort is there in knowing that God's children are His friends?
6. In what ways have you experienced God's radical patience toward you recently?

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1. "Sarah's purely sensual comment adds to the impression that her interest in the covenant and promise is still shallow. Nevertheless, it drew forth one of the great sayings in Scripture, which later became the starting point of a searching colloquy on omnipotence." - *Derek Kidner*
2. "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?" - *Jeremiah 32:27*
3. "Questions from the Lord are very often the strongest affirmations. He would have us perceive their absolute certainty. They are put in this particular form because He would have us think over His great thought and confirm it by our own reflections."
- *Charles Spurgeon*
4. 01. God is a being of unlimited power, capable of doing all things that are consistent with his character and perfections.
5. "[Sarah] found favor in His sight who is not easily provoked; who does not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax; who reproves sin, indeed, even in His own people, but at the same time raises up them that fall." - *R.S. Candlish*
6. 02. God never acts hastily or impetuously; He bears with his creatures with unparalleled patience, deeply concerned with their good.
7. "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." - *2 Peter 3:9*
8. "What condescension! That the Sovereign Lord of all—to whom none may say, 'What doest thou?'—should feel Himself, as it were, obliged to open His mind to Abraham!"
9. 03. Intimacy with God is anchored in a position rather than a feeling—a position that God himself establishes and safeguards.

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