

***Christ In The Old Testament
"Merciful & Mighty"
Genesis 18***

Introduction:

1. One Of The Ways:
 - We Find Christ In The Old Testament:
 - Is When He Personally & Visibly:
 - Appears *To* Man:
 - *As* A Man!
 - These Appearances Are Called:
 - "Christophanies!"
 - And Wherever You Find One Of These:
 - Physical Manifestations Of Christ:
 - I Believe - You Will Learn Something More:
 - About The Nature & Character:
 - Of Your Savior:
 - Jesus Christ!
2. Last Week:
 - We Started In Genesis 3:
 - Where We Saw With Adam & Eve:
 - "The Lord God Walking In The Garden In The Cool Of The Day!"
 - And - Even Though Our First Parents:
 - Had Already Rebelled & Sinned Against The Lord:
 - Christ Himself:
 - Came To Them!
 - Called Out To Them! And Even:
 - Committed Himself To Them:
 - So That Their Fellowship With Him Could Be Restored!
3. *Before* His Incarnation:
 - Christ Appeared To Man:
 - For Fellowship!
 - Which Is The Same Reason He Appeared:
 - *In* His Incarnation!
 - To Redeem You:
 - From Your Sin!
 - To Reconcile You:
 - With The Father! And:
 - To Restore You:
 - To Fellowship:
 - With Him!
4. Well - Tonight - We Are Going To Head Over:
 - To Genesis 18 - Where We Find Another:
 - Appearance Of Christ - This Time:
 - To The Great Patriarch Of The Old Testament:
 - Abraham!
 - Let's Read Together:
 - Genesis 18:1-33!
5. At The Very Beginning Of This Chapter:
 - We Read These Words:
 - 18:1 - "And the LORD appeared unto him [Abraham] in the plains of Mamre!"
 - The LORD Here - Is The Personal Name:
 - Of God - Yahweh - Which Is Why:
 - In All English Translations:
 - It Appears In Capital Letters!
 - This Is The Same Living God:
 - Who Created This World - And:
 - By This Time:

- Had Already Called Abraham & Made A Covenant With Him!

- But - In The Very Next Verse:

- We Discover That:

- Even As Abraham:

- “Sat In The Tent Door In The Heat Of The Day – He Lift Up His Eyes And Looked,
And, Lo, Three *Men* Stood By Him!”

- These Three Men:

- Were Not *So* Close To Abraham:

- Since He Had To “Run To Meet Them!”

- But - They Were Close Enough For Him To Recognize Them:

- *As Men!*

6. But - As We Continue To Read Through This Chapter:

- We Notice That There Is Something Very Unique:

- About *One* Of Those Men!

- Because - The “LORD” We Are Introduced To In 18:1:

- Who “Appeared” To Abraham!

- Is The Same “LORD” Who:

- Spoke With Abraham!

- As Seen In 18:13, 17, 20, 26:

- “The LORD Said!”

7. We Didn't Read The First Verse Of The Next Chapter:

- But - In 19:1 - We Are Told Clearly:

- That *Two* Of Those Men:

- Were Angels!

- So - The *Other* Man Who Appeared To Abraham:

- Was The LORD!

- The LORD In Human Form!

- The Meeting Between:

- Abraham & The LORD:

- Was A Personal, Physical, Pre-Incarnate Visitation Of Jesus Christ!

8. And - What We Can Learn:

- From This Special Encounter:

- Between Abraham & Christ Is:

- How Christ Comes To Man:

- As Well As:

- How Man Ought To Come To Christ!

- So - When Christ Came To Abraham:

- In Genesis 18 - How Did He Come?

- First:

1. ***He Appeared As A Man – To Abraham!***

- In Fact - *All Three* Of The Heavenly Beings:

- Appeared To Abraham:

- In Human Form!

- We Can Tell This Because:

- They *Walked* Like Men!

- Which Is Why Abraham Offered Them Water:

- To Wash Their Feet!

- They Would Have Been Dry & Dusty From The Pathway That Ran By Mamre! Also:

- They *Talked* Like Men!

- They Would Have Spoke In A Language:

- Known & Understood By Abraham!!

- No Need Of A Translator! Also:

- They *Rested* Like Men!

- It Was The Heat Of The Day - And Abraham Encouraged The Men:

- To Sit Under The Trees - Likely Oak Trees - For Rest & Refreshment!

- And - So They Did! Also:

- They *Ate* Like Men!

- And Likely Enjoyed The Bread & Meat & Milk:
 - Prepared For Them!
- Christ - And The Two Angels:
 - Appeared To Abraham:
 - As Men!
 - But - His Appearance - *This Time*:
 - Was Only Temporary & Transitory!
- But - The Day Would Come:
 - When Christ Would Appear As A Man:
 - By Humbling Himself:
 - To *Become* A Man!
 - Even As Paul Wrote In:
 - Philippians 2:7-8 - When Christ:
 - “Made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: / And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!”
 - Christ Came To This Earth Again:
 - And *Became* A Man:
 - So That We Could Have A High Priest Who *Can* Be “Touched With The Feeling Of Our Infirmities!” Being “In All Points Tempted Like As We Are, Yet Without Sin!” (Hebrews 4:15)
- This Is How Christ Came To Abraham!
 - And - This Is How Christ Came:
 - For Us! So - How Should We Come:
 - To Christ?
- The Same Way Abraham Did!
 - When Christ Appeared To Abraham As A Man:
 - Abraham Approached Him:
 - *With Haste!*
 - In 18:2 - It Says That:
 - “When He Saw Them, He *Ran* To Meet Them From The Tent Door!”
 - And Then - When He Went To Prepare A Meal For The Men, In 18:6-7 - He:
 - “*Hastened* Into The Tent Unto Sarah!”
 - And - He “*Ran* Unto The Herd!”
 - And - He “*Hastened* To Dress” The Calf!
 - Abraham Did Not Want To Waste:
 - Any Of The Precious Time & Opportunity He Had:
 - To Meet With Christ!
 - And - Neither Should We!
 - Since Christ Came *To Us & For Us*:
 - We Should Approach Him:
 - With Haste & With Urgency!
 - Listen To The Words Of Isaiah:
 - 55:6 - “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near!”
 - This Is Why Christ Came For You!
 - So That You Might Run To Him:
 - *With All Haste!*

* Then - Second:

2. Christ Appeared As A Messenger - To Abraham!

- And - As A Messenger:
 - Christ Came To:
- *Confirm* His Promise:
 - To Abraham & Sarah!
 - In 18:10b - He Said - “Sarah thy wife shall have a son!”
 - Now - If Abraham Did Not Recognize This Man:
 - *Before* This Verse - Surely He Did:
 - *By* This Verse!

- Because - The LORD Had APPEARED To Abraham Before:
 - And Made To Him The Same Promise!
- Back In 12:7 - We Are Told:
 - “And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land!”
- And Then Again - In 17:1 & 15-16 - We Are Told:
 - “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram!” & Promised: “As for Sarai thy wife – I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be [a mother] of nations; kings of people shall be of her!”
- So - To Abraham - This Was:
 - A Familiar Promise:
 - From A Familiar Person:
 - It Was The Message Of Christ!
 - But - He Didn’t Come This Time *Just To Confirm* His Promise:
 - But To Even Further:
- *Certify* His Promise:
 - To Abraham & Sarah!
 - And To Increase Their Faith!
 - In 18:10 - He Says:
 - “*I will certainly return* unto thee according to the time of life!”
 - In Hebrew - Intensive - “Return Return!” - No Doubt About It!
 - In 18:14 - Again He Says:
 - “Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed *I will return unto thee*, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son!”
 - What A Magnificent Message - And:
 - What A Magnificent Promise:
 - From The Lips Of Christ Himself!
 - He Introduced To Abraham The Beginning Of *His Own* Line!
- So - Christ Appeared To Abraham:
 - As A Messenger:
 - With A Glorious Message & Promise!
 - But - Isn’t This How Christ Came:
 - To Us?
 - As The Final Messenger From God With An Even Greater Promise!
 - Hebrews 1:1 - “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, / Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son!”
 - And This Is His Message - John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life!”
- This Is How Christ Came To Abraham!
 - And This Is How He Came:
 - For Us! So - How Should We Come:
 - To Christ?
- The Same Way Abraham Did!
 - When Christ Appeared To Abraham As A Messenger:
 - Abraham Approached Him:
 - *With Humility!*
- In 18:8 - After Abraham & Sarah & Their Servants Made Preparations For Their Guests:
 - “He took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and *he stood by them* under the tree, and they did eat!”
 - Abraham - Who Was Nearing 100 Years Old - “Stood By Them” While The Men Ate!
 - He Stood By To Wait On Them & To Serve Them!
 - All Of This Took Place After:
 - Genesis 15:6 - Abraham “Believed In The Lord!”
 - And The Lord - “Counted It To Him For Righteousness!”
 - So - Abraham - At This Point:
 - Was A Saved & Justified Man!
 - And So - Out Of A Heart Of Gratitude:
 - He Served His Lord!
 - And - So Should You!

- Every Opportunity To Serve The Lord:
 - Is An Opportunity To Show Your Gratitude To The Lord:
 - In Humility And Grace!
- Remember When Christ:
 - Knelt & Washed His Disciples Feet?
 - In John 13:14-15 - He Said:
 - "If I then, [your] Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. / For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you!"
- This Is Why Christ Came For You!
 - So That You Might Serve Him:
 - *With All Humility!*

* Then - Third:

3. Christ Appeared In His Might - To Abraham!

- Christ Could Not Hide His Deity:
 - Beneath The Veil Of His Human Form!
 - Instead - He Displayed His True Nature:
- Through His Divine Omniscience!
 - By Knowing Only Something:
 - God Could Know!
 - In 18:10 - When The Man Delivered His Message:
 - That "Sarah Thy Wife Shall Have A Son!"
 - It Says - "And Sarah Heard In The Tent Door, Which Was Behind Him!"
 - So - This Man Could Not *See* Sarah's Reaction!
 - Then - In 18:12 - After Sarah Heard The Message:
 - We Are Told That:
 - She - "Laughed Within Herself!"
 - So - This Man Could Not *Hear* Sarah's Reaction!
 - But - This Man Was No Ordinary Man!
 - He Did Not *Have* To See Or Hear Her Reaction:
 - Because - As The LORD - As Christ - He Already Knew!
 - In 18:13 - He Asked Abraham:
 - "Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?"
 - And - In 18:15 - He Tells Sarah Directly:
 - "Nay; but thou didst laugh!"
 - This Is The Might & The Majesty Of Christ!
 - He Also Displayed His True Nature:
- Through His Divine Omnipotence!
 - By Being Able To Do:
 - Something Only God Could Do!
 - According To Abraham & Sarah:
 - And - To The Rest Of The World:
 - They Were Too Old To Have A Child!
 - But - What Does Christ Say To Them?
 - 18:14 - "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" / Is There Anything Too "Wonderful" - Or Beyond Belief?
 - The Answer Is Clearly - No!
 - Especially Because Of The Fulfilment Of His Promise!
 - In 21:1-3 - "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. / For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. / And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac!"
 - This Is The Might & The Majesty Of Christ!
 - He Also Displayed His True Nature:
- Through His Divine Oversight!
 - Another Reason Why Christ Came Down From Heaven:
 - Was To Exercise His Oversight & Authority Over The Wicked Cities Of:
 - Sodom & Gomorrah & The Other Cities Of The Plain!

- Even Abraham Recognized This When:
 - In 18:25 - He Acknowledged Him To Be:
 - “The Judge Of All The Earth!”
- Christ Came Down This Time:
 - In His Role As Judge!
 - Because - 18:20 - “The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous!”
- I Take The Great Cry:
 - From Sodom & Gomorrah:
 - To Be The Cry Of Those Who Were Persecuted & Even Executed:
 - For Their Relationship With Him!
- So - This Sin Compounded:
 - Their Own Sins:
 - Of Violence & Sexual Perversion:
 - That Were Grievous!
- So - Christ Came Down From Heaven:
 - In His Holy Might & Majesty:
 - To Act & Render The Just Judgment Of Their Sin!
- But - Isn't This Also How Christ Came:
 - When He Was Born Into This World?
 - He Appeared In Order To:
 - Bring Judgment Upon:
 - Our Sin!
 - And So - All Throughout His Life:
 - He Proved His Might & Majesty:
 - As God The Son!
 - He Showed His Omniscience As God:
 - By Seeing Into The Hearts Of All Men!
 - He Showed His Omnipotence As God:
 - By Performing All Kinds Of Miracles!
 - He Showed His Oversight As God:
 - By Speaking With Authority & Displaying His Zeal For His Father's House!
 - But - All Of This Was To Show That He Was Qualified:
 - To Be The Judge:
 - And To Bring Forth The Judgment:
 - You & Your Sin Deserved!
 - As The “Judge Of All The Earth!”
 - Christ Had To Act!
 - And So - Act He Did!
 - But How Did He Act?
- Peter Tells Us - In 1 Peter 2:24:
 - That Christ - In “His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree!”
- This Is How Christ Came To Abraham!
 - And This Is How He Came:
 - For Us! So - How Should We Come:
 - To Christ?
- The Same Way Abraham Did!
 - When Christ Appeared To Abraham In His Might:
 - Abraham Approached Him:
 - *With Honor!*
 - After The Lord Told Abraham:
 - What He Was Going To Do:
 - To The Wicked Cities Of Sodom & Gomorrah:
 - In 18:22 - “Abraham *stood* Yet Before The Lord!”
 - I Think Abraham Was Struck:
 - With Great Awe:
 - Before The Might & Majesty:
 - Of Christ - In His Role:

- As Judge!
- For Him - It Was A:
 - “Be Still And Know That I Am God” Moment! (Psalm 46:10)
- And This Too:
 - Is How We Are To Approach Christ!
 - He *Is* The Judge Of All The Earth!
 - What’s More - He Is My Judge & Your Judge!
 - One Day:
 - Every Knee Shall Bow To Him - And:
 - Every Tongue Confess To God:
 - Including You! On Your Own Knees & With Your Own Tongue!
- And This Too Is Why Christ Came For You!
 - So That You Might Bow To Him:
 - With *All The Honor* That He Is Due!

* But Then - Fourth:

4. Christ Appeared In His Mercy – To Abraham!

- Because - Mercy Is Also A Divine Attribute!
 - Psalm 103:8 - “The LORD [is] merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy!”
- In The Conversation That Abraham Had With The Lord:
 - It Is Clear That Christ Displayed:
 - Great Patience & Mercy:
 - Toward Sarah:
 - And Her Lack Of Faith & Even Her Lying Tongue!
 - Toward Abraham:
 - And His Intercession For Sodom!
 - But Also:
 - Toward Sodom & Gomorrah:
 - And Their Iniquity Against Him!
 - Christ Already Knew How Many “Righteous” People There Were In Those Wicked Cities!
 - The Cup Of Their Iniquity:
 - Had Already Reached Its Full Measure!
 - But - Abraham Did Not Yet Know!
 - Yet - Christ - In His Great Mercy:
 - Had Already Made Provision For:
 - The 1 Just Man In Sodom!
 - It Was “Just Lot Who Was Just!”
 - But - The Lord Allowed Abraham:
 - To Appeal To Him In This Way:
 - So That He Would Learn To See Their Wickedness:
 - As Christ Saw it!
 - But - Through All Of The Back & Forth:
 - Between Abraham & Christ:
 - Speaking Face To Face:
 - Abraham Learned That:
 - Christ Is Never Wrong:
 - In His Judgments!
 - The Judge Of The Earth Always Does What Is Right!
 - Christ Is Never Withdrawn:
 - From His People!
 - Even Though We Are But Dust And Ashes Before Him! And:
 - Christ Is Never Weary:
 - Of Our Prayers!
 - That’s Mercy!
 - The Lord Is Never Angry:
 - When You - Like Abraham:
 - “Draw Nigh With Faith And Freedom, And A Holy Boldness And Confidence, And Yet With Great Reverence Of The Divine Majesty, And In All Humility, Under A Deep Sense

Of Your Own Meanness And Unworthiness!” (John Gill)

- This Is How Christ Came To Abraham!
 - And This Is How He Came:
 - For Us! So - How Should We Come:
 - To Christ?
- The Same Way Abraham Did!
 - When Christ Appeared To Abraham In His Mercy:
 - Abraham Approached Him:
 - *With Heart!*
 - After Standing For A Moment:
 - In Awe Of Christ’s Might:
 - Then - In 18:23 - “Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?”
 - Abraham Knew That:
 - The Heart Of Christ:
 - Was A Heart Of:
 - Mercy & Grace!
 - He Had Experienced It Himself!
 - And Even Had It:
 - Instilled In His Own Heart!
 - So He Prayed To The Lord:
 - And Pled For Mercy:
 - On Behalf Of Both The Righteous And The Wicked!
 - And - The Lord Granted Every Request He Made!
 - This Too Is How You:
 - Can Now Approach Christ!
 - With All Your Heart! Even With:
 - The Heart Of The Christ!
 - Because He Is “A God Ready To Pardon, Gracious And Merciful, Slow To Anger, And Of Great Kindness!” (Nehemiah 9:17)

Conclusion:

1. This Is How Christ Comes To Man!
 - This Is How Christ Came To Man:
 - In Abraham’s Day - And:
 - This Is How Christ Came:
 - In His Own Day!
 - He Appeared:
 - As The Greatest Of All Men:
 - And The Greatest Of All Messengers:
 - With The Greatest Of All Messages:
 - The Gospel!
 - The Same Gospel That Manifests:
 - All Of Christ’s Great:
 - Majesty, Might & Mercy!
2. But - Since Christ Appeared:
 - For You - Now - You Can Approach Him Too:
 - With All Haste & Humility & Honor & With All Your Heart!
 - Because He Deserves Nothing Less!

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