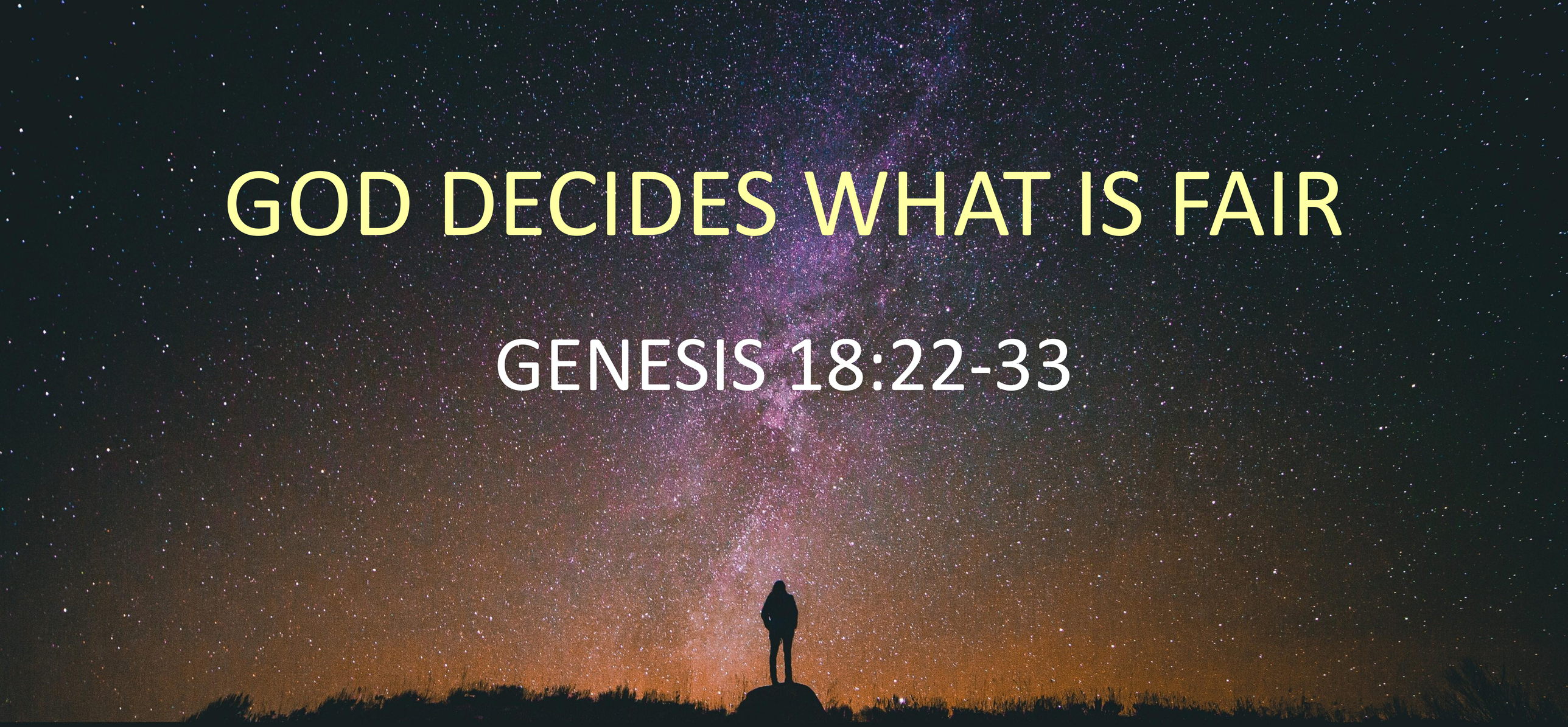
GENESIS: THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING

GOD DECIDES WHAT IS FAIR

GENESIS 18:22-33



GENESIS: THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.” (Is. 55:8-9)

God wants us to live by:

- His **heavenly certainties** (we help each other live with perseverance in hope)
- His **objective truth** (we help each other live in obedience to His commands)
- His **grace through faith** (we help each other to love and serve)

I. **God's <u>Friendship</u>** (Genesis 18:1-8)

<u>Experienced in His Condescension</u> – God came to Abraham at the Oaks of Mamre

- As God's servant, you respond to God with **<u>humility</u>** and **<u>hospitality</u>**

II. God's **Faithfulness** (Genesis 18:9-15)

Experienced in His Confirmation and Confrontation – God ministered His truth to Sarah

- As God's servant, you respond with **faith** and **repentance**

Verses 16-21 were defined by a **central question** which God asked:

"Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"

III. God's <u>Favor</u> (Genesis 18:16-21)

"Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?" (Gen. 18:16)

God has highly favored Abraham as if to say to him, *'I have made known to you my righteous will. I have shown you My ways. I have revealed to you My thoughts.'*

III. **God's <u>Favor</u>** (Genesis 18:16-21)

1. Because He wants us to **<u>trust Him and His ways</u>**.
2. Because He wants us to **<u>be encouraged and faithful</u>**.
3. Because He wants us to **<u>teach His ways to others</u>**,
4. Because He wants us to **<u>be blessed in His love</u>**.
5. Because He wants us to **<u>know His goodness.</u>**

IV. **God's <u>Fairness</u>** [Justice] (Genesis 18:22-33)

In verse 23, Abraham asks a question of God: *"Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?'*

This question serves as the **<u>focal point and tension for this section of the passage</u>**.

IV. God's <u>Fairness</u> (Genesis 18:22-33)

Genesis 18:16-17

"The the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off.

*The Lord said, '**Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do…?'"***

Genesis 18:22-23

"Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the Lord.

*Abraham came near and said, '**Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?'"***

IV. God's **Fairness** (Genesis 18:22-33)

What does the Judge of all the earth want to teach us about **Himself** in the way He judges **righteous** and **unrighteous** people?

He wants to teach us about His **integrity** (uprightness/blamelessness) **demonstrated in His**:

Recompense of the **un**righteous = **punishment**

Recompense = **repayment** or **paying back**. It is God's **just**, **fair**, and **most appropriate payment** based on the deeds of the person **in their relationship to God and His laws**.

IV. **God's <u>Fairness</u>** (Genesis 18:22-33)

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21)

IV. **God's <u>Fairness</u>** (Genesis 18:22-33)

Does God make any distinction or concession between the righteous and the wicked when it comes to how He determines to repay them for their deeds?

Is God always **<u>fair</u>** or **<u>just</u>**?

<u>Does God always render a just judgment</u>?

"The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He." (Deut. 32:4)

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether." (Ps. 19:9)

IV. God's **Fairness** (Genesis 18:22-33)

God's goodness is **particularly demonstrated** in His **treatment of the righteous.** What is involved in God's pardon of the righteous is astonishingly beautiful and loving, especially considering how sinful we are in our rebellion toward God.

> *"And their sins and their lawless deeds **I will remember no more**."*
> (Heb. 10:17)

> *"Therefore, let us draw near with **confidence** to the throne of grace, so that we may receive **mercy** and find **grace** to help in time of need."*
> (Heb. 4:16)

IV. **God's <u>Fairness</u>** (Genesis 18:22-33)

Q: How did the righteous get righteous?

A: **<u>God</u>** made them that way.

IV. God's <u>Fairness</u> (Genesis 18:22-33)

How did God do this?

<u>By His Mercy!</u>

- God's mercy is His "goodness toward those in misery and distress." *(Wayne Grudem)*
- God **<u>withholds the punishment</u>** they deserve (Ps. 25:8-11; 16-18)

<u>By His Grace!</u>

- God's grace is His "goodness toward those who deserve only punishment." *(Grudem)*
- God **<u>gives the pardon</u>** they don't deserve. (Eph. 2:1-9)

<u>By His Patience!</u>

- God's patience is His goodness "in withholding of punishment toward those **<u>who sin over a period of time</u>**." *(Grudem)*
- God is longsuffering, willing to **<u>endure</u>** being wronged. (2 Pet. 3:9; Rom 2:4-11)

IV. **God's <u>Fairness</u>** (Genesis 18:22-33)

In Romans 3:21-26, God's mercy , grace, and patience come together to declare the Lord as both **<u>just</u>** and **<u>justifier</u>** of sinners.

IV. **God's <u>Fairness</u>** (Genesis 18:22-33)

God gave up His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our sinless **<u>Substitute</u>**.

Jesus stood in innocence, but He stepped into our place of **<u>guilt</u>** and **<u>condemnation</u>**.

God provided **<u>Jesus</u>** to take our punishment in our place and treated the innocent Jesus as if He had committed our sins instead of us.

Jesus, being fully God and fully man, **<u>willingly laid down his life</u>** on behalf of guilty sinners.

Jesus, the **<u>perfect righteousness of God</u>**, bore the full weight of the guilt and penalty for **<u>our</u>** sins.

IV. **God's <u>Fairness</u>** (Genesis 18:22-33)

"But He [Jesus Christ] *was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed…. the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him…. He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors."* (Is. 53:5, 6, 12)

"… and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For your were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls." (1 Pet. 2:21-25)

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