

Fire and Laughter

WHAT WE FOUND

- At Mamre, hospitality becomes liturgy: Abraham runs, bows, feasts his mysterious Guest, and Hebrews 13:2 turns the scene into standing orders: strangers welcomed, angels entertained unawares.
- Sarah's laugh behind the tent wall is scar tissue, not mockery, and God does not shame it; He asks the Bible's central question: "Is anything too hard for the LORD?", and the name God had already appointed (Genesis 17:19), Isaac, "he laughs," gathers all that laughter up into joy: "God has made laughter for me" (21:6).
- Abraham's negotiation for Sodom is the Bible's first great intercession: audacity ("Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?") wedded to humility ("dust and ashes"). Ten were not found; God showed a further mercy anyway, "because God remembered Abraham."
- Sodom's full charge sheet is wider than any weaponized reading: violence against guests, and (per Ezekiel 16:49) pride, prosperous ease, and refusal of the poor; and (per Jude 7) sexual immorality. Jesus aims the chapter at religious towns, not at the broken. The Christian's role in the story is Abraham on the ridge, not the fire.
- Isaac arrives "at the time of which God had spoken": twenty-five years late by our clock, exactly on time by heaven's. And Gabriel will answer Sarah's question at Nazareth in nearly the very words of the ancient Greek translation of Genesis 18:14: "with God nothing will be impossible" (Luke 1:37).

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

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The Latin Tradition · *an ancient formula*

Of Abraham at Mamre: "he saw three and adored one." Not a proof of the Trinity understood, but the shape of a mystery not yet unveiled, a shadow thrown backward from Christ.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. John Chrysostom · *Homilies on Genesis*

Abraham entertained angels because hospitality was his habit toward everyone: he did not screen his guests for wings. Keep your door open and you will not miss your angels.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Thérèse of Lisieux · *Story of a Soul and her letters*

What obtains everything from God is bold confidence: the audacity of a child who asks largely because she knows her Father's heart. Prayer that dares little receives little; trust is the vessel.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

- Adopt one person or situation for bold daily intercession: pray by name, and argue God's own mercy back to Him.
- Practice Mamre once this week: welcome someone with running-out-to-meet-them energy.
- If Sarah's bitter laugh is yours, tell God the truth about it once this week, without performing.
- Read Genesis 22 twice, once fast and once slowly, and bring your written 12:1 sentence from Session 7.

MEMORY VERSE

"Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, in the spring, and Sarah shall have a son." (**Genesis 18:14**)

BEFORE NEXT SESSION

Read Genesis 22 twice before next session, once fast and once slowly, and bring your written 12:1 sentence from Session 7.

Catechism references: CCC 148, 332, 706, 1867, 2358, 2571, 2634–2636.