

The Four Beings of Genesis 18

Mark Sappington
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Brethren, we are indeed so blessed to understand the identity of God the Father as Yehovah in the Bible. There is much confusion in the Churches of God about who Yehovah, the God of the Old Testament, is. Most of the Churches of God preach and teach that Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament, and that He was the Yehovah in the pages of the Bible. Many verses are put forth to prove that Jesus was indeed Yehovah, but each of those verses and the meaning of those verses can be disproven through closer examination of them. One such section of scripture is in Genesis 18.

In Genesis 18 we read about a very well-known interaction between Abraham and Yehovah.

Genesis 18:1 *And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;*

2) And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

3) And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

4) Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

5) And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. (KJV)

In the past and even presently, the Churches of God have taught that there were three spirit Beings with Abraham in these passages in Genesis 18, the LORD, that is Yehovah, and two angels. Again, brethren, these scriptures in Genesis 18 have even been used to promote and prove that Jesus Christ is the Yehovah of the Old Testament.

I would like to explore the passages in Genesis 18 to show that there were actually four spirit Beings with Abraham, and that those four Beings were God the Father, the Being who became Jesus Christ, and two angels.

My sermon this afternoon is entitled:

The Four Beings of Genesis 18

I would like to explore this subject through four points. The first point concerning understanding Genesis 18 is:

1. No one has seen God the Father.

Again, many of the scriptures that we will be reading are actually used by the Churches of God to prove that Jesus, not God the Father, is the Yehovah of the Old Testament.

1 John 4:9 *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*

10) *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* [So, the God in these verses is referring to God the Father]

11) *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*

12) *No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.* (KJV)

The Being referred to as God in this verse is God the Father. So, the Apostle John is writing here that no one has ever seen God the Father.

The Greek word for *no man* is οὐδείς oudeis Strong's #3762 which, according to HELPS Word-Studies, means "not one, no one, nothing". Oudeis is a powerful negating conjunction. It rules out by definition, i.e. "shuts the door" objectively and leaves no exceptions. So oudeis means "no one" with no exceptions.

The Greek word for *at any time* is πώποτε popote Strong's #4455 means "ever, at any time."

So, 1John 4:12 is referring to God the Father, the Great Yehovah. This verse unequivocally states that no one, with no exceptions, has ever seen God the Father. This means that no one has ever seen Yehovah.

In Colossians 1, the Apostle Paul discusses the redemption that we have through the blood of our Heavenly Father's Son, Jesus the Anointed One, who is the image of His Father.

Colossians 1:12 *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*

13) *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

14) *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

15) *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:* (KJV)

The Apostle Paul is telling the Colossian congregation that Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Father, the Son of Yehovah, was the image of His Father, Yehovah. And Paul stated that God the Father, Yehovah Himself, is the invisible God.

In Deuteronomy 4 Moses explains to the Israelites why Yehovah, God the Father is invisible and does not show Himself in any way to mankind. Moses tells the Israelites that they never saw Yehovah and that they only heard His voice.

Deuteronomy 4:10 *Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.*

11) *And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.*

12) *And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. (KJV)*

Similitude in Hebrew is “תְּמוּנָה” temunah – Strong’s #8544 which means “likeness, image, form”.

13) *And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.*

14) *And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.*

15) *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude [temunah – image or likeness] on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire:*

16) *Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude [temunah] of any figure, the likeness [temunah] of male or female,*

17) *The likeness [temunah] of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness [temunah] of any winged fowl that flieth in the air,*

18) *The likeness [temunah] of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness [temunah] of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:*

19) *And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven. (KJV)*

God the Father has never shown Himself because of the proclivity of mankind to make idols of deities. Yehovah did not want the Israelites going around with sticks and poles and medallions with images on them of a Yehovah that they had seen. So, God the Father has always remained invisible to mankind.

In Genesis 3. Adam and Eve had just sinned, and they knew that they had sinned and that something was terribly different in their minds. They were afraid and hid from Yehovah.

Genesis 3:6 *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

- 7) *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*
- 8) *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*
- 9) *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*
- 10) *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (KJV)*

The important aspect of these passages is that Adam and Eve heard the voice of Yehovah walking in the Garden. The Bible does not say that they ever saw Him.

Again, in Genesis 18, we will read the first part of verse 1. The Churches of God use this verse to prove that the Yehovah in Genesis 18:1 is not God the Father but that Yehovah has to be Jesus because He *appeared* to Abraham.

Genesis 18:1 *And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: (KJV)*

In Hebrew, there are different forms of every verb. The most common form of the verb is the Qal form, which is equal to our simple indicative form, such as “The dog bit the man.”

Another common form of Hebrew verbs is the Niphal form, which in many cases is equal to our simple passive voice form, such as “The man was bitten by the dog.”

The Niphal form can also be used as reflexive form which is equal to our own reflexive form in English, such as “The dog bit himself.”

Knowing this, the Hebrew verb for *appear* in verse 1 is נָחַ, *raah* Strong's #7200 which simply means “to see.” However, the verb form of *raah* in verse 1 is not in the Qal form; rather, it is in the Niphal form. According to Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon,

the verb *raah* in the Niphal form can mean “to present oneself.”

Again, the Niphal form can be reflexive. Again, in Hebrew, different verb forms of the same verb can change and do change the meaning and connotation of the verb.

If the Niphal form of the verb *raah* means “to present oneself,” then the verb in verse 1 does not necessarily mean that Yehovah was actually seen. The Churches of God have always inferred that, but it doesn't mean that Yehovah was actually seen.

The use of the verb *raah* in the Niphal form for the “appearance” of Yehovah to people in the Old Testament is quite common and is used numerous times for the interaction between Yehovah and His people.

In the past decades in the Churches of God, Deuteronomy 16:16 was read at almost every Holy Day before the offering was taken up.

Deuteronomy 16:16 *Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened*

bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty: (KJV)

The verb for *appear* in verse 16 is the verb *raah* in the Niphal form, the exact same verb form as in Genesis 18:1. The verb *raah* in verse 16 could be translated “to present oneself” so that the verse reads “and they shall not present themselves before Yehovah empty.” It doesn’t mean that all the males just manifest themselves and *appear* suddenly before Yehovah.

So, in Genesis 18:1, Yehovah presented Himself to Abraham, meaning His presence was there with Abraham. It does not mean that Abraham ever saw Yehovah. We can hear a voice from an invisible Being, without seeing the invisible Being.

The second point concerning understanding Genesis 18 is:

2. The importance of the difference between “thou” and “you”

The King James Version of the Bible was published in 1611 using the English spoken in southern England in the late sixteen century. For decades I have read the King James Version of the Bible with all of its now antiquated verbiage and with all of its “thee’s” and “thou’s.” Because we don’t use those forms in modern English, the form “thou” and “thee” takes on a religious overtone. In many movies, people talk normally until they talk to God, when suddenly they start using “thee’s” and “thou’s.”

What exactly is the word “thou” and its other forms of “thee”, “thy”, and “thine”? Although many English-speakers don’t realize it, the English language is among the simplest grammatical languages in the world. English verb forms are simple. In English, all nouns are neuter except for animate animals and humans. For example, the word “house” in English is neuter. We say “it” when we refer to the house. Yet “house” is feminine in French, masculine in Russian, and neuter in German. In modern English, we do not differentiate the difference between the singular “you” when speaking to one person and the plural you when speaking to more than one person.

Here is the conjugation chart for conjugating verbs. It is used in almost all languages, including English.

CONJUGATIONS OF VERBS

SINGULAR	PLURAL
1ST PERSON	1ST PERSON
2ND PERSON	2ND PERSON
3RD PERSON	3RD PERSON

For this sermon, we will only be focusing on the 2nd person singular and the second person plural. For the verb “to have” in modern English, this conjugation table would be:

CURRENT CONJUGATION OF THE VERB “TO HAVE”

I HAVE	WE HAVE
YOU HAVE	YOU HAVE
HE HAS	THEY HAVE

Again, we can notice that the 2nd person singular and the 2nd person plural forms are both “you have.”

However, in Spanish, if I were speaking to one person who was a friend, I would use the singular “you” form of “tú”, and if I were speaking to many people, I would use the plural “you” form of “ustedes”. The same differentiation is made in French between “tu” and “vous”, in German between “du” and “Sie”, and in Russian between “ты” and “вы”.

So, in Spanish, French, German, Russian, Italian, Greek and Hebrew, there is a difference between the singular “you” and the plural “you.” Again, in the old English of the King James English, the difference is

“thou” for the singular “you”

and

“you” for the plural “you.”

Old English also has a third “you” which was used in addressing a group of people. That group plural of

“you” in Old English is “ye”.

It is similar to the Southern group plural of “y’all”.

As an aside, the imperative form of “ye” was to place the verb before the “ye”. That is why we have always heard the command in old English “Hear ye! Hear ye!” In the South today, we would say “Listen up, y’all:”

So, in old English, “thou” is singular, “you” is plural, and “ye” is group plural.

The following is the conjugation table in Old English:

KJV CONJUGATION OF THE VERB “TO HAVE”

I HAVE WE HAVE
THOU HAST YOU HAVE
HE HATH THEY HAVE

The important aspect in Old English is that “thou” was never used in order to address more than one person.

Hebrew also differentiates between the singular “you” and the plural “you.”

The Hebrew word corresponding to the singular “you” or “thou” is אַתָּה Strong’s #859 and the Hebrew word corresponding to the plural “you” or “ye” is אַתֶּם Strong’s #864.

However, Hebrew is similar to Spanish in that most times, the personal pronoun is omitted since the verb endings of the conjugation of the verb will tell what pronoun is being used without actually using the pronoun. Therefore, in Hebrew, you will not find the pronouns attah and atem used very often. The verb endings indicate whether the “you” is singular or plural. This is a very important concept in reading Genesis 18, which we will discuss shortly.

The third point concerning understanding Genesis 18 is:

3. The importance of the “waw consecutive” in Hebrew

Every language has its own particular and unique rules and grammatical constructions. Hebrew has a very important unique grammatical construction known as the “waw consecutive” which is used in Genesis 18. Understanding the meaning of and the significance of the “waw consecutive” in Genesis 18 is a key to understanding the actual actions happening in the first part of the chapter.

According to Mounce, the “waw consecutive” is a grammatical construct in which:

Consecutive verbal forms are used in narrative primarily to denote sequences of consecutive actions, either in the past, present or future.

This is a fancy way of saying that the “waw consecutive” is the way that a story is narrated in Hebrew. It is simply the way that a story is told in Hebrew.

The word *waw* (also known as “vav”) in Hebrew means “and”. Throughout the majority of chapters in the Old Testament, so many verses begin with the word *and*. This is the beginning of the “waw consecutive” in narrating a story with consecutive actions.

With the “waw consecutive”, each verse starting with “waw” or “and” which follows the preceding verse is therefore subsequent in action to the preceding verse.

So, a better way of translating the Hebrew word “waw” when it is used in the “waw consecutive” construct is – *and then*. So, in telling a story in Hebrew,

Action 1 happens,
and then Action 2 happens,
and then Action 3 happens,
and then Action 4 happens,

and so on. Each action is subsequent to the preceding action. This is very significant and important in understanding Genesis 18.

In Genesis 1 is a great example of the use of the “waw consecutive” in the telling of the story of creation.

Genesis 1:1 *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

2) *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.*

And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3) *And God said, let there be light:
and there was light.*

4) *And God saw the light, that it was good:
and God divided the light from the darkness.*

5) *And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.
And the evening and the morning were the first day.*

6) *And God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.*

7) *And God made the and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament:
and it was so.*

8) *And God called the firmament Heaven.
And the evening and the morning were the second day.*

9) *And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place,
and let the dry land appear: And it was so.*

10) *And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas:
and God saw that it was good.*

11) *And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth:
and it was so.*

12) *And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind:
and God saw that it was good.*

13) *And the evening and the morning were the third day.*

14) *And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:*

15) *And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth:
And it was so.*

16) *And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day,
and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.*

17) *God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,*

18) *And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness:
and God saw that it was good.*

19) *And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.*

20) *And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*

21) *And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind:
and God saw that it was good.*

22) *And God blessed them, saying, be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.*

23) *And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.*

24) *And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind:
and it was so.*

25) *And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind:
and God saw that it was good.*

26) *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (KJV)*

All of the first 26 verses of Genesis 1 overwhelmingly show the “waw consecutive” in action. And with use of the “waw consecutive” in Genesis 1, the action in verse 1 occurs before the action in verse 2 which occurs before the action in verse 3, and so forth. The actions of the fourth day did not precede the actions of the third day. Again, this simple concept is very significant and important in understanding Genesis 18.

The fourth point concerning understanding Genesis 18 is:

4. Using the grammatical rules in Hebrew to understand Genesis 18

We will read the first five verses of Genesis 18 again.

Genesis 18:1 *And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;*

2) *And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,*

3) *And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:*

4) *Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:*

5) *And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. (KJV)*

Notice that verses 1, 2, 3 and 5 start with the word *and*. Again, the very first word in Genesis 18 starts the “waw consecutive” to tell a story with subsequent actions. This means that the action of verse 1 happens before the action of verse 2 which happens before verse 3.

So, we can break down the verses to analyze them.

In verse 1, we have:

Genesis 18:1 *“And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; (KJV)*

So, in verse 1, Yehovah, God the Father, appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre as Abraham sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. As we discussed earlier, the English verb *appear* is the Hebrew verb *raah* in the Niphal form which has the meaning of “to present oneself.” Therefore, verse 1 could be translated as:

Genesis 18:1 *“And then Yehovah presented Himself to Abraham in the plains of Mamre as Abraham was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day.”*

Yehovah was talking with Abraham, and Abraham was probably talking with Yehovah. Abraham heard the voice of Yehovah, but He did not see Yehovah. Yehovah was present with Abraham in verse 1 before the actions of verse 2 occur. Now look at verse 2.

With the “waw consecutive”, Abraham was already conversing with Yehovah when Abraham looked up and saw three men coming toward his tent. This grammatical construct plainly shows that Yehovah was not and could not be one of the three men.

The Churches of God put the actions of verse 1 and verse 2 together and make Yehovah one of the three men. In fact, this is one of their “proofs” that is given for showing that Jesus, not God the Father, is Yehovah. Yet that belief cannot be proven without verse 1 and verse 2 occurring simultaneously. However, the actions of verse 2 are indeed subsequent to the actions of verse 1 because of the “waw consecutive”.

2) And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground. (KJV)

Abraham was conversing with Yehovah, and then Abraham looked up, saw the three men and ran a short distance to meet them. Now continuing in verse 3.

Genesis 18:3 *And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: (KJV)*

It is important to note that Abraham uses the singular form of “you” in this verse. In the King James Version, the pronouns “thou, thee, and thy” are all used.

3) "My Lord, if now I have found favour in *thy* sight, pass not away, I pray *thee*, from *thy* servant:"

Abraham is talking to one Being. And that one Being was Yehovah. Abraham and Yehovah were conversing. Abraham sees the three men, and he runs to them. But Abraham also turns toward Yehovah and asks Yehovah not to leave while he serves the three men. It's like a scenario where I am talking with you in my office, and then the phone rings and I say to you, "Wait, don't go away. Let me take this call. I'll be right back." This is similar to what Abraham did with Yehovah. Now notice verse 4.

Genesis 18:4 *Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:*

5) *And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. (KJV)*

Notice in verse 4 and 5 that Abraham addresses the three men using the plural form of "you." He does not use "thou, thee, and thy". He uses "you, ye, your, and yourselves." Again, "ye" is just a plural form of "you" when addressing a group of people.

So, a significant and meaningful differentiation occurs between verse 3 and verse 4. In verse 3, Abraham is addressing Yehovah alone using the singular "you", and in verse 4, Abraham is addressing the three men using the plural "you".

And we do believe that one of the three men was the Being who became Jesus Christ and the other two were two angels. The three men respond to Abraham's invitation by stating

5) *So, do as thou hast said.*

Again, the three men responded to Abraham in the singular "you" form of the verb, because they were talking just to Abraham. Continuing on in verse 6.

Genesis 18:6 *And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.*

7) *And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.*

8) *And 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.*

9) *And they said unto him, where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent." (KJV)*

Notice that in verse 9, the three men said to Abraham "Where is thy wife?" That question was asked to Abraham by them, not by Yehovah.

Genesis 18:10 *And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time*

of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.” (KJV)

In verse 10 Yehovah again speaks to Abraham and tells him that Sarah will become pregnant and will have a son.

Genesis 18:11 *Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.*

12) Therefore, Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

13) And the LORD said unto Abraham, wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

14) Is anything 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.

15) Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.” (KJV)

Again, Yehovah repeats in verse 14 what He had previously stated in verse 10, showing that Yehovah was indeed talking to Abraham in verse 10 after the three men had spoken in verse 9. All during this conversation, Yehovah was invisible and was heard only, while the three men were visible and were heard also. Let's read on in verse 16.

Genesis 18:16 *And the men the [the Being who became Jesus and the two angels] rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.” (KJV)*

So, Abraham and the three men left together, and Yehovah invisibly went with them. Again, we have four spirit Beings with Abraham. Yehovah privately talks to the three Beings concerning Abraham. Yehovah is not talking to Abraham in these verses. We read this beginning in verse 17.

Genesis:17 *And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18) Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?*

19) For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” (KJV)

Again, from these previous verses, it is obvious that Yehovah is talking to the three men and not to Abraham directly because Yehovah is referring to Abraham in the third person “he” and not the second person “thou” or modern English “you”. Yehovah is talking about Abraham, not to him. Continuing in verse 20.

Genesis 18:20 – *And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;*

21) *I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.*

22) *And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.” (KJV)*

So apparently Yehovah tells Abraham about His intentions with Sodom. And then the three men went toward Sodom. We read later in Genesis 19:1 that two of the men (angels) arrived in Sodom. This means that Jesus apparently left with the two angels, but then Jesus was not with the angels when they arrived in Sodom.

The Churches of God have always read this story as Jesus being Yehovah who stayed with Abraham, and the two angels left Abraham and went to Sodom. Again, the Churches of God have always taught that there were only three Beings with Abraham through this whole story, not the four Beings who were actually there.

.....continuing in verse 23.

Genesis 18:23 *And Abraham drew near, and said, wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?*

24) *Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?*

25) *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

26) *And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.*

27) *And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:*

28) *Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.*

29) *And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.*

30) *And he said unto him, oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.*

31) *And he said, behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.*

32) *“And he said, oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.” (KJV)*

Since Abraham knew that Lot was living in Sodom, Abraham bargained with Yehovah in an attempt to save Lot and his family. The problem was that there were not ten righteous people in Sodom. So, Sodom was indeed destroyed, but Yehovah, God the Father, saved Lot and his family.

Genesis 18:33 *And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.” (KJV)*

So, the story of Genesis 18 ends with Yehovah leaving Abraham and Abraham returning back to his place.

Brethren, today we have explored in depth the story of the interaction of Yehovah and Abraham in Genesis 18.

We have explored that the Hebrew verb *to appear* in the Niphal form means “to present oneself” and does not necessarily mean “to be seen”. This is consistent with the fact that no one has seen Yehovah. No one has seen God the Father.

We have explored, that in Hebrew as well as in old English, there is a difference between the singular “you” *thou* and the plural “you” *you or ye*.

We have explored that Hebrew has a unique grammatical construct called the “*waw* consecutive” which tells a story. The word *waw* in this construct means “and then.” This *waw* links previous actions with subsequent actions, and not simultaneous actions.

The Churches of God believe that the story is about three Beings who come to visit Abraham. One of those three Beings is Yehovah and that Being who is Yehovah is Jesus Christ. The Churches of God use the verses in Genesis 18 to prove that Jesus Christ is Yehovah and that Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament. However, this narrative taught by the Churches of God is just not true and does not follow the grammatical constructs in Hebrew.

The truth of the story of Genesis 18 shown clearly by Hebrew grammar includes the following:

- There was a total of four spirit Beings meeting with Abraham, not three.
- Yehovah, God the Father, was visiting with Abraham.
- And then three spirit Beings in the form of men appeared.
- Abraham asks Yehovah not to leave while he attends to the three men.
- Abraham washes the feet of the three men and prepares a meal for them.
- Yehovah tells Abraham that Sarah will bear him a son.
- The three men depart from Abraham’s place, and Abraham accompanies them for a short distance. Yehovah is also with them. The men then depart from Abraham, leaving Abraham alone with Yehovah, just as it was in the beginning of the story in verse 1.
- Yehovah tells Abraham about the sins of Sodom, and Abraham intervenes for the lives of Lot and his family.
- Yehovah departs, and Abraham returns to his place.

Brethren, Genesis 18 actually proves the opposite of what has been taught and is being taught by the Churches of God. Genesis 18 actually is another proof that Yehovah is God the Father, that He is the invisible God, that He is the God of the Old Testament, that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Brethren, there are so many verses in the Old Testament and the New Testament that show and prove that God the Father is indeed Yehovah, and that Jesus Christ was not Yehovah. But rather Jesus Christ was the Son of Yehovah and was the Messenger of Yehovah.

Brethren, we live in an exciting time when our Heavenly Father is opening up and revealing this precious knowledge of Who He is, His role and identity in the Bible, His role in the wonderful plan of salvation, His role in the Millennium and His role in our lives now and in the lives of all mankind in the future.

In a previous sermon, I explored the subject of the Pearl of Great Price. The precious knowledge of the truth of Who God the Father is and all the verses in the Bible which show and prove Who He is. They allow us to have an ever-deepening relationship with the most powerful Being in the universe and beyond, Yehovah, El Shaddai, God Almighty, God the Father, our Heavenly Father. May we ever deepen our relationship with Him!