Week 2, One Year Bible Challenge: “Fire and Brimstone”

Men’s Bible Study meets every Saturday Morning at Christ the Rock Community Church, 11000 Stirling Road, Cooper City, FL 33328. 8am to 10am.

This Week’s Reading (January 8-14)

WEEK 2
Genesis 18:16-31:16
Matthew 6:25-10:23
Psalm 8:1-12:8
Proverbs 2:6-13:15

Next Week’s Reading (January 15-21)

WEEK 3
Genesis 31:17-43:34
Matthew 10:24-14:12
Psalm 13:1-18:36
Proverbs 3:16-4:10

Discussion Questions:

Old Testament

1. Whose idea was it for Abram to take his wife’s maid as another wife?[1. This was Sarah’s (Abram’s wife) idea. Genesis 16:1] What was the purpose of this plan?[2. Sarai said she wanted her husband to have children. The handmaid, Hagar was to bear Abram’s children instead of his own wife. Actually, Hagar became an additional wife for Abram. Genesis 16:2-3. God had previously promised to Abram that his offspring would form a great nation. Genesis 15:4-5. However God had not yet promised his wife Sarai would be the biological mother of that nation.

   Matthew Henry’s Complete Commentary says this:

Abram's compliance with Sarai's proposal, we have reason to think, was from an earnest desire of the promised seed, on whom the covenant should be entailed. God had told him that his heir should be a son of his body, but had not yet told him that it should be a son by Sarai; therefore he thought, "Why not by Hagar, since Sarai herself proposed it?" Note, (1.) Foul temptations may have very fair pretences, and be coloured with that which is very plausible. (2.) Fleshly wisdom, as it anticipates God's time of mercy, so it puts us out of God's way. (3.) This would be happily prevented if we would ask counsel of God by the word and by prayer, before we attempt that which is important and suspicious. Herein Abram was wanting; he married without God's consent. This persuasion came not of him that called him.

] How did the arrangement work out?[3. The plan did not take long to go bad. Sarah got mad and blamed her husband. Genesis 16:5. Abram told Sarai to do with Hagar as she pleased. Sarai treated Hagar so badly that Hagar fled into the desert. Genesis 16:5-6.] Genesis 16:1-6

2. Why doesn't the Bible seem to condemn or punish the great sin of Lot's daughters. Did Lot share any part in this sin? [5. God told Lot to escape to the hills in the first place. Genesis 19:17. Lot, preferring his own wisdom to the instructions of God, asked permission to go to the city of Zoar instead. Genesis 19:20,22. When God gave permission to go to the city, Genesis 19:21, Lot soon fled to the hills, in fear. Genesis 19:30.

   Kretzmann Popular Commentary (1922): *Lot was guilty as well as his daughters, first, because he gave way to dull despair instead of trusting in the Lord, and then also, because he did not watch and pray, but permitted his daughters to make him drunk.*

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3. How old was Isaac when Abramham took him to sacrifice him as a burnt offering?[6. Popular images occasionally show Isaac as an infant or toddler. Other images depict him as an older youth. The latter must be true, since Isaac was given the task of carrying the wood for the burnt offering. Genesis 22:5-6. MATTHEW HENRY'S COMMENTARY points out Isaac foreshadows Christ, who also carried wood (a cross) to his sacrifice.]
4. Why did Jacob have to work 7 years in order to marry Rachel (Genesis 29:16-18)? His father did not have to work for his bride, Rebekah. [5. Abraham's servant paid a dowry for Isaac's wife. Genesis 24:10; Genesis 24:51-53. Jacob was also obliged to pay a dowry for Rachel. Since he did not have the money, Jacob's payment was working for seven years. The uncle, Laban, cheated by providing the sister, Leah, first. Jacob was permitted to marry Rachel, but had to work an additional seven years to pay her dowry as well.]
5. Read the story of Esau selling his birthright to Jacob in Genesis 25:27-34. What does this story tell us about the character of each man?

New Testament

1. In Chapter 6 of Matthew, Jesus cautions: [v.1] "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven." (ESV) He also cautions against making a show of [v.2] giving to the needy; [v.5] praying in public; and [v.17-18] fasting. But don't we do all of these things conspicuously in many of our churches?[6. People's New Testament notes: *The Savior condemns ostentatious piety, and then he singles out three illustrations of his meaning. The Christian is not forbidden to practice righteousness before men, but to make it his object to be seen.*"

Helping the needing, praying, and fasting in public aren't condemned if the motive is not glorifying self. Some of the behavior in churches no doubt does violate this admonition.]

2. According to Matthew 6:19-21; and 6:25-34 is it a sin to plan for your future? Can you take your planning too far?
3. What does Matthew 7:6 mean? If the references to dogs and swine mean types of people, is this language too harsh?
4. A disciple of Jesus wanted to bury his dead father before he followed Jesus. Jesus told him to follow Him (Jesus) and "Leave the dead to bury their own dead." Does this response seem harsh? Could you imagine someone today addressing a fellow believer in this manner?[8. Robertson's Word Pictures (1932): *"Leave the dead to bury their own dead. The spiritually dead are always on hand to bury the physically dead, if one's real duty is with Jesus. While it is a good deed to bury the dead, it is a better one to preach Christ."*
   Family Bible Notes from the Nazrene Users Group: meaning *"Let those who are impenitent sinners without spiritual life bury your father, and do you now what I command you. The omniscient Saviour saw that such a command was necessary to impress upon that disciple the supreme importance of his service, and the necessity of making every earthly feeling and interest subordinate to it. "*]

COMMENT: No advance registration is necessary. No cost. Coffee and donuts.

FOOTNOTES: