

UNIT 10 | SESSION 4

## GOD IS GOOD TO JUDGE SIN

GENESIS 18

### KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 6:5

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why does sin separate us from God? Because God is holy, sin has broken our relationship with God.

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

God is good to judge sin. He is the Judge of all the earth, and He always does what is right. God will punish the guilty. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus took the punishment our sin deserves, and everyone who trusts in Him is declared righteous before God.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

There is something inside of each of us that longs for justice. When your family or community is impacted by an atrocity, there is an innate desire in every person that longs for those responsible to be punished. Where does this come from and what should we do with this?

Our desire for justice comes as a result of our being made in the image of God. We learn from Scripture that God formed each of us (Ps. 139:13) and created us in His image (Gen. 1:27). Being created in the image of God and by the hand of God leaves us with certain characteristics informed by our Creator.

So, what should we do? Should we respond to every act of sin with an act of justice? Should we point and scream when another image bearer demonstrates her sinful nature? Should we ignore evil acts and simply “let God take care of it”?

Genesis 18 speaks to some of this. As God began to unfold His plan to punish the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham stepped in. Abraham knew firsthand just how sinful these people were, how distorted their views of the world were, and how extreme their culture had turned as a result. Yet, he pleaded for God to show mercy.

It’s likely that there were people that Abraham knew and worried about. It’s clear

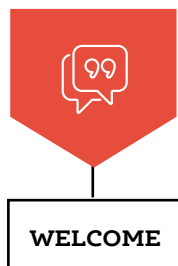
that Abraham didn’t want those who followed God to be punished along with those who did not. But it seems there was something in Abraham that desired God to show mercy to other sinners because he knew his own great need for God’s mercy as well.

When we see that the ground is level at the foot of the cross, our desire for justice is often—at least in part—overcome by a desire for mercy. When we see ourselves in need of the same mercy as the offender we have in our sights, it may likely change how we think and pray.

Ultimately, God is the judge who discerns where there is mercy. Scripture reminds us, “What should we say then? Is there injustice with God? Absolutely not! For he tells Moses, I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” (Rom. 9:14-15)

### TERMS TO KNOW

**Justice:** Order that God seeks to reestablish in His creation where all people receive the benefits of life with Him. Justice is the central ethical idea of the Old Testament.



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

**SAY** “Have you ever watched a talent show on tv? Who decides whether the performers do a good job? The judges.”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Good News vs. Bad News” on the activity page.

**SAY** “What phrases did you circle as good news? You should have circled four of the phrases. Can someone read the four good news phrases? Why is this good news? It is good news because we are all guilty of sin and because of our sin, we are separated from God.”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 1: DANCE IT OUT



Explain to the kids that they are going to have a dance competition. Encourage the kids to get their best dance moves ready for the competition. Choose some volunteers who may not want to dance to be the judges of the competition. Explain to the kids that after someone shows their dance moves, they should clap and cheer for each other. Play 15-20 seconds of a song for the kids to dance.

**SAY** “Wow, that was a lot of fun! Let’s talk to our judges to find out who won our dance competition. [Allow judges to name the winner.] Let’s all give a round of applause for everyone who participated in the dance off. While everyone did a great job, the judges were only able to choose one winner. The job of the judges was to watch each person and make a hard decision and give the results. In today’s story, we’re going to learn how God is a good judge.”

#### OPTION 2: VISITOR PREP

Distribute a plate to each kid. Explain to the kids that they must prepare a meal for some very important visitors. The kids will draw whatever foods they would serve their visitors on the paper plates. Allow a few minutes for kids to complete their plates of food. Once kids are finished, ask kids to show the group what foods they would serve their important visitors.

**SAY** “Great job! Your drawings made me so hungry! Would you change your meal ideas if you knew God and two angels were going to come visit you or would you keep it the same? In our story today, the Lord appeared to Abraham with two angels. Listen during the story to see what food items Abraham prepared for them.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN

## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LEARN the Bible Story

#### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 18. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Is Good to Judge Sin.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### GOD IS GOOD TO JUDGE SIN

“ Abraham was the father of God’s chosen people. **When Abraham was old, the Lord appeared to him. Abraham looked up on a hot day and saw three men standing near his tent. He invited them to rest, and he gave them food and water.** The men told Abraham that his wife Sarah was going to have a baby. Sarah listened at the entrance of the tent, and when she heard this news, she laughed to herself.

**When the men got up to continue their journey, Abraham walked with them for a ways. They looked out over the city of Sodom, and the Lord decided to tell Abraham about His plan.**

**The Lord said, “I’ve heard about Sodom and Gomorrah. The people living there are wicked and their sin is very serious. I’m going to go see if they are as bad as people say.”**

**The men turned and went toward Sodom. Abraham stood there and asked, “Lord, do you plan to destroy the good people along with the evil people? What if there are 50 good people in that city? Will you still destroy it? Surely you will save the city for the 50 good people living there. You are the judge of all the earth. Won’t you do what is right?”**

**The Lord said, “If I find 50 righteous people in Sodom, I will spare the whole city for their sake.”**

Then Abraham answered, “What if there’s not quite 50? Will you destroy the whole city if they’re five short?”

The Lord replied, “I will not destroy the city if I find 45 righteous people there.”

Then Abraham asked, “What if there are 40?”

God said, “I will not destroy the city if there are 40 righteous people.”

**“What if there are 20?” Abraham asked.**

**The Lord said, “I will not destroy the city if there are 20 righteous people.”**

**Abraham asked, “Suppose there are 10?”**

**The Lord answered, “I will not destroy the city if I find 10 righteous people.”**

**Then the Lord departed and Abraham went back to his tent. The next morning, Abraham returned to the place overlooking Sodom and Gomorrah. All**

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Call for active listening:** Instruct kids to listen for the word “destroy.” Ask kids to count how many times they hear the word “destroy” during the story.

**Use hand motions:** As you tell the story, use hand motions to describe the story. For example, hold your hands to your ears when it says, “Sarah listened ...”.

## 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ Have you ever been punished for doing something wrong? [Allow kids to respond.] Being punished isn't fun. But did you know that punishment is actually an act of love? I know, it is sometimes hard to understand, right? Punishment is a way to correct something that is wrong. That means that someone, maybe your parents, discipline you because they love you and want what is best for you. God is holy and righteous. Because He is holy, sin must be punished. We deserve the punishment for our sin but because of God's incredible love, He sent Jesus to die on the cross and take our punishment for us. Romans 5:8 says, “But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Have you ever thought about how amazing that is? Jesus, our sinless Savior, died in our place.

Is anyone innocent of sin? Look at Romans 3:23. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Rom. 3:23] Everyone is guilty of sin. The only person who was perfect was Jesus.

Why does God judge sin? Look at Romans 1:18. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Rom. 1:18.] God is perfect and holy. Sin is an offense to God. When we sin, we are saying that our way is better than His way. ”

## 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ God is good to judge sin. He is the Judge of all the earth, and He always does what is right. God will punish the guilty. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus took the punishment our sin deserves, and everyone who trusts in Him is declared righteous before God. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

## 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 10, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why doesn't God just forgive everyone?
2. What attitude toward sin do you think is most honoring to God?

## 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

**SAY** “ David Brainerd hadn't planned to be a missionary to Native Americans, but God had big plans for him. Many missionaries have been inspired by the story of his short but important ministry