

Chapter 18

Angels intertained as ghefts by Abraham 10. tel when Sara shal beare a fonne, wherat she laughing, they cõfirme that they had faid. 16. They alfo fortel the deftruction of Sodom, 22. for which Abraham prayed fix times.

And God appeared to him in the vale of mambre as he fat in the dore of his tent, in the verie heat of the day. ² And when he had lifted vp his eyes, there appeared to him three men fstanding nere vnto him: whom after he had fene, he ranne to meete them from the dore of his tent, and adored to the ground. ³ And he faid: ^a)Lord, if I haue found grace in thy fight, goe not pafte thy feruant: ⁴ but I wil fetch a little water, and wafh ye your feete, and reft ye vnder the tree. ⁵ And I wil fet a morfel of bread, and ftrengthen your hart, afterward you fhall paffe: for therefore are you come afide to your feruât. Who faid: Do as thou haft fpoken: ⁶ Abraham made haft into the tent to Sara, and faid to her: Make haft, temper together three meafures of floure, and make harth cakes. ⁷ But him felfe ranne to the heard, and tooke from thence a calfe verie tender and verie good, and gaue it to a young man: who made haft and boiled it. ⁸ He tooke alfo butter and mylke, and the calfe which he had boyled, and fet before them: but him felfe did ftand befide them vnder the tree. ⁹ And when they had eaten, they faid to him: Where is Sara thy wife? He answered: Loe ſhe is in the tent. ¹⁰ To whom he faid: Returning I wil come to thee at this time, life accompaning, and Sara thy wife fhall haue a fonne. Which when Sara heard, ſhe laughed behind the dore of the tent. ¹¹ And they were both aged, and farre entred in yeares, and it ceaſed to be with Sara after the maner of women. ¹² Who laughed ſecretly faying: After I am waxen old, & my Lord is an old one, fhall I geue my ſelfe to pleaſure? ¹³ And

Heb. 13.

Rom. 9.

^a Abraham ſaw three, and adored one, profeſſing three diuine perfons and one God. *S. Aug. li. 16. c. 29. ciuit.*

our Lord said to Abraham: Why did Sara laugh, saying: Shal I an old woman beare a child in deed? ¹⁴ Is there any thing hard to God? According to appointment I wil returne to thee this verie felle same time, life accompanying, and Sara shal haue a sonne. ¹⁵ Sara denied, saying: I laughed not: being much afraid. But our Lord: ^a)It is not so, faith he: but thou didst laugh. ¹⁶ When the men therefore were risen vp from thence, they turned their eyes against Sodome: and Abraham did goe with them, bringing them on the way. ¹⁷ And our Lord said: Can I conceale from Abraham the things which I wil doe: ¹⁸ whereas he shal be into a nation great, and verie strong, and IN HIM ARE TO BE BLESSED AL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH? ¹⁹ For I know that he wil commande his children, and his house after him that they kepe the way of the Lord, and doe iudgement and iustice: that for Abrahams sake the Lord may bring to effect al the things that he hath spoken vnto him.

Therefore said our Lord: ²⁰ The crye of Sodome, and Gomorre is multiplied, and their sinne is aggravated exceedingly. ²¹ I wil descend, and see whether they haue in acte accomplished the crye that is come to me: or whether it be not so, that I may know. ²² And they turned them felues from thence, and went their way to Sodome: but Abraham as yet stood before our Lord. ²³ And approaching he said: What! wilt thou destroy the iust with the wicked? ²⁴ ^b)If there shal be fiftie iust persons in the citie, shal they perish withal? and wilt thou spare that place for fiftie iust, if they be therein? ²⁵ Be it farre from thee, that thou doe this thing, and that thou kil the iust with the wicked, and that the iust be in like case as the wicked, this is not befeeming thee: which iudgeth al the earth, no thou wilt not do this

^a Abraham laughing with admiration for ioy was not reprehended, but Sara laughing of diffidence was reprehended, by him that feeth the hart. *S. Aug. q. 36. in Gen. & li. 16. c. 31. ciuit.*

^b What a wall are iust men to their countrie? their faith saueth vs, their iustice defendeth vs from destruction. *S. Amb. li. 1. de Abraham. c. 6.*

iudgement. ²⁶ And our Lord said to him: If I shall find in Sodome fiftie iust persons within the citie, I will spare the whole place for their sake. ²⁷ And Abraham answered, and said: Because I have once begunne, I will speake to my Lord, whereas I am duft and ashes. ²⁸ What if there shall be five leffe then fiftie iust persons? wilt thou for fortie five destroy the whole citie? And he said: I will not destroy it, if I shall finde five and fourtie. ²⁹ And againe he said vnto him: But if fourtie shall be found there, what wilt thou doe? He said: I will not strike it for fourties sake. ³⁰ Lord, faith he, be not angrie I beseech thee, if I speake: What if thirtie shall be founde there? He answered: I will not doe it, if I shall find thirtie there. ³¹ Because, faith he, I have once begunne, I will speake to my Lord: What if twentie shall be founde there? He said: I will not destroy it for twentys sake. ³² I beseech thee, faith he, be not angrie Lord, if I speake yet once more: What if tenne shall be found there? And he said: I will not destroy it for tennes sake. ³³ And our Lord departed after that he ceased to speake vnto Abraham: and Abraham returned into his place.