

AN EXEGETICAL PAPER ON GEN 18:16-33 WITH SPECIAL STUDIES
ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NUMBER FIFTY AND TEN

by

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Introduction

In the pleading for the righteous in Genesis 18:16-33, Abraham begins with supposing fifty righteous persons in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and then he ends his approximation abruptly at ten. Several questions may arise here. Why does Abraham's supposition begin very optimistically with the number fifty and abruptly end at ten? What significance did this number have in his time? Were these numbers just a random selection, or did they have some cultural, historical, or theological meaning? How does the intertextual study of these numbers within the Pentateuch illuminate this text? In this exegetical paper, I intend to investigate these specific questions.

Translation

- V16 Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them off.
- V17 And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"
- V18 "And Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed."
- V19 "For I have chosen him¹, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing **righteousness** and justice so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."
- V20 And the Lord said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave."
- V21 "I will go down now, and see if the outcry² that has come to me *is because of* what they have done completely. And if not, I will know."
- V22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the Lord.³
- V23 Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the **righteous** with the wicked?"
- V24 "Suppose there are **fifty righteous** within the city. Will you indeed sweep *it* away and not spare the place for the sake of the **fifty** righteous within it?"

1

Samartian Pentateuch, the Septuagint, Targum, and the Vulgate have יִדְעָתִי (without 3ms suffix).

2

To be read with codex Sev, the Septuagint, Targum, and version Arabica with different suffix יִדְעָתִי.

3

According to the scribal emendation (*Tiqqûnê sôph^erîm*) the text originally read as אֲבִרְהָם . . . וַיְהִי. The purpose of this emendation was to avoid idolatrous and blasphemous expressions. Such emendation is also seen in Num 11:15, 1 Sam 3:13, Jer 2:11, and Ezek 8:17. MT has preserved a list of eighteen scribal corrections. See Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans Publication Company, 1995), 23.

- V25 Far be it from you to do such a thing, to cause the death of the **righteous** with the wicked, and the **righteous** be *treated* like the wicked. Far be it from you! Shall the judge of all the earth not do justice?”
- V26 So the Lord said, “If I find in Sodom **fifty righteous** within the city, then I will spare the whole place on their account.”
- V27 And Abraham answered and said, “Behold, I have determined to speak to the Lord⁴ even though I am dust and ashes.”
- V28 “Suppose the **fifty righteous** are lacking **five**, will you destroy the whole city because of five?” And *God* said, “I will not destroy *it* if I find **forty-five** there.”
- V29 And *Abraham* spoke to him again and said, “Suppose **forty** are found there?” And *God* said, “I will not do⁵ *it* on account of the **forty**.”
- V30 Then he said, “Let there be no anger to the Lord and let me speak. Suppose **thirty** are found there?” And *God* said, “I will not do⁶ *it* if I find **thirty** there.”
- V31 And he said, “Now behold, I have determined to speak to the Lord⁷. Suppose **twenty** are found there?” And *God* said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the **twenty**.”
- V32 Then he said, “Let there be no anger to the Lord, and let me speak only this moment. Suppose **ten** are found there?” And *God* said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the **ten**.”
- V33 The Lord went away when he had finished speaking to Abraham. And Abraham returned to his place.

Literary Pericope, Structure, and Context

Most scholars consider vv.16-33 as one literary unit that narrates the dialogue between Abraham and Yahweh. But Gordon J. Wenham sees this passage as part of the larger literary unit (18:16-19:29). He divides this literary unit into following eleven scenes:⁸

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Abraham’s visitors look toward Sodom (18:16) | Narrative (N) Mamre |
| 2. Divine Reflection on Abraham and Sodom (18:17-21) | Monologue (M) Looking Sodom |
| 3. Abraham pleads for Sodom (18:22-33) | Dialogue (D) Looking Sodom |

⁴ Hebrew fragments from Cairo Geniza and many Hebrew Medieval Manuscripts have יהוה instead of אֱלֹהֵי.

⁵ Samaritan Pentateuch and Septuagint have אֶשְׁחַת (destroy). Refer Vulgate which has translated as *percutiam*. See vv.28, 31, 32.

⁶ Samaritan Pentateuch and Septuagint have אֶשְׁחַת (destroy).

⁷ Several Hebrew Medieval Manuscripts have יהוה instead of אֱלֹהֵי.

⁸ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50* (Word Biblical Commentary vol. 2. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1994), 41.

4. Angels arrive in Sodom (19:1-3)	N/D	Sodom city gates
5. Assault on Lot and his visitors (19:4-11)	N/D	Outside Lot's house
6. Destruction of Sodom announced (19:12-13)	M	Inside Lot's house
7. Lot's sons-in-law reject his appeal (19:14)	N/D	Outside Lot's house
8. Departure from Sodom (19:15-16)	N/D	Outside Sodom
9. Lot pleads for Zoar (19:17-22)	D	
10. Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed (19:23-26)	N	
11. Abraham looks toward Sodom (19:27-28)	N	Mamre
Summary (19:29)		

According to him, all the above eleven scenes on the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah are interconnected.⁹ Wenham's literary structure enables us to see vv.16-33 in its broader context and also helps us to understand the rationale behind its connection with its context. But for our discussion, let us focus on the literary structure within vv. 16-33 where the word הֵלֵךְ (walk/go) in vv.16, 22, and 33 stands out as the marker that divides the discourse between Abraham and Yahweh into three progressive subsections.

1. First הֵלֵךְ in v. 16	Men got up to leave
	Looked down toward Sodom
	Abraham walked along with them
vv. 17 –19	God's covenant promise and Abraham's faithfulness.
vv. 20 – 21	Sodom and Gomorrah's great sin.
2. Second הֵלֵךְ in v.22	Men turned away and went
	Toward Sodom
	Abraham remained standing before the Lord.
vv. 23 – 32	Abraham's persistent negotiation.
3. Third הֵלֵךְ in v.33	The Lord had finished speaking, he left
	--(Absence of Sodom signifies the matter is settled)
	Abraham returned home.

The first הֵלֵךְ, whose subject is Abraham, sets the time and space for the Lord to share a time of intimacy with Abraham. The second הֵלֵךְ, whose subject is the three visitors, indicates their decisive movement towards Sodom that inaugurates a transaction between Abraham and the Lord. The third הֵלֵךְ, whose subject is the Lord, indicates the end of the visit with Abraham and anticipates the initiation of the action in Gen.19: 1-29.

The first section shows contrasts between God's plan to fulfill the covenant to Abraham (Gen.12: 17-20) and his plan to confirm the cries of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen.12: 20-21) for their indictment. The motif of the visit to Abraham is to "reaffirm" the covenant promise, while the motif of the personal inspection of Sodom and Gomorrah is his righteous judgment against their grievous sin. The second section is a dialogue of transaction between Abraham and the Lord. In this subsection of twelve verses the verb נִיאָמַר (then he said/answered) is used twelve times. The fact that both Abraham and the Lord speak six times signifies the transactional nature of the dialogue.

The geographical context of the passage begins with Mamre (Gen.18: 1) and ends with the gateway of the city (Gen.19: 1). Abraham built the altar of the Lord at Mamre (Gen.13: 18), which signified God's presence. His attachment to Mamre symbolizes his loyalty and relationship with God. Lot who accompanied his uncle from Haran (Gen.12: 4) is

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Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 41.

now found in the gateway of the city. This new location of Lot symbolizes his distance from the presence of God. The irony of the context is that although Abraham's family is outside the city under a tree, they are secure while Lot's family, who is housed in the city, is insecure. The Abrahamic narratives (Gen.11: 27-25: 11) up to Gen.18: 15 are primarily focused on the promise of the covenant heir. Abraham and Sarah are reassured that God's plan to make them a great nation is not through Ishmael but Isaac (Gen.18: 1-15). Nevertheless the covenant promise of God to Abraham in Gen.12: 1-3 surpasses the personal blessings to Abraham and his family.¹⁰ He is destined to be the father of nations and a blessing to all people on earth. Abraham is the chosen pipeline (Gen. 3: 15) to redeem the fallen creation. Thus, it is understandable why God discloses his plan for Sodom and Gomorrah to no one else but Abraham (Gen.18: 17). The purpose of Abraham's Call necessitates his new role as the mediator of the righteous of Sodom (Gen.18: 16-33). God highlights that role by revealing it to king Abimelech (Gen. 20:7). When Abraham intercedes for his potential enemy and the closed wombs are opened, Abimelech recognizes the blessings of God upon Abraham and enters a peace treaty with him (Gen. 21: 22-23).

The God of Abraham is the God who looks down on earth for righteousness but hears only an outcry (לְדָרְקָה וְהִנֵּה צַעֲקָה)¹¹ against the wicked people. He is the same God who heard the outcry (צַעֲקָה) of Abel's blood from the ground (Gen.4: 10) and the outcry of Abraham's descendants in Egypt (Ex.3: 7). He is also the one who pours out the rain from the sky (Gen.7: 4) in the times of Noah and rains down the burning sulfur (Gen.19: 24) on Sodom and Gomorrah. But it is the lake of fire (Rev.20: 14) where he will finally show his ultimate displeasure against evil.

Major Exegetical Issues

There are four major exegetical issues that have led the critical scholars to differ from each other. The first is concerning the unity of the text. Is the inconsistency in the text due to later addition or does the inconsistency itself needs to be reconsidered? The second is about the nature of the Abraham's dialogue with Yahweh. Is it an intercession or a meditation? The third is about the motivation that leads Abraham to plead. Is it his concern for his relative or the righteousness of God that motivated Abraham to plead? The fourth is about the theological implication of this passage on the old concept of the collective guilt. Is this a complaint against the idea of collectivism? For the brevity of space and the focus of this research, I have attached my discussions on these issues in Appendix A.

¹⁰

Notice the construction of imperatives followed with imperfect or cohortatives prefixed by weak *waw* which indicates the purpose or consequence in Gen 12:1-3 (NIV)

- A. Leave your country [imptv]
 - I will make [impft] you into a great nation (1)
 - I will bless [impft] you (2)
 - I will make your name great. (3)
- B. You will be a blessing [imptv]. (4)
 - I will bless [impft] those who bless you (5)
 - I will curse [impft] those who curse you. (6)
 - All people on earth will be blessed [perfect] through you. (7)**

¹¹

Gen.18: 22, 23; 19: 13; Is.5: 7.

The Significance of Number Fifty and Ten

Let me draw our attention to the supposition of numbers in this passage. Abraham begins his negotiation with fifty innocent or righteous men and then lowers three times by five (50, 45, and 40). Then again he lowers the number three times by ten (30, 20 and 10). The text does not explain why he begins at fifty or why he finishes at ten? Why he did not finish at five, or even one? This has prompted scholars to speculate the significance of these numbers.

Why Abraham Begins with the Number Fifty?

In absence of data, Wenham is rightly perplexed to speculate why Abraham begins at fifty and worked down to ten.¹² Depending on Amos 5:3, he purports that number fifty represents half of a small city so Abraham might be hypothetically expecting an equal number of wicked and righteous in the city.¹³ This intertextual connection is not very convincing. Harold G. Stigers thinks that the progress of the number from fifty down to ten is to be considered as an exhibition of God's patience and Abraham's rough estimate. According to him, Abraham did not know the accurate number of righteous.¹⁴ It is interesting to note that most commentators prefer to comment on the essence of the story but they refrain from commenting on the significance of the number.

In fact, scholars agree that the use of numbers in the OT is often associated with some kind of pattern that has significance in the ancient culture.¹⁵ For example, the word fifty (חִמְשִׁים) occurs 99 times in the OT out of which 39 times in the Pentateuch but only six of those occurs in Genesis. The largest number of occurrences (16 times) is in Exodus. In Ex 18:21, the simultaneous usage of the numbers fifty and ten denote the sizes of the two smaller groups in descending order to which Moses assigned the leaders. This is repeated in Deut 1:15. In Num 8:25, the number denotes the upper limit of the age for service.

Undoubtedly, it is impossible to ascertain what Abraham had in his mind when he used these numbers, but based on these intertextual references it may be more fitting to suggest that in Abraham's social context, perhaps these two number represented the sizes of the two smallest groups in descending order. Since Abraham was conscious of the brevity of time and opportunity, as reflected in his apology repeatedly in v.27 (*I am only dust and ashes*), v.30 (*let me speak*), v.32 (*let me speak*), he made a hurried negotiation descending from the second size of the group number (50) to the first size of group number (10) from bottom. Within a given time it was apt decision to set his margin of bargain between the two smallest group numbers.

¹²

Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 52.

¹³

Ibid.

¹⁴

Harold G. Stigers, *A Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 172.

¹⁵

This is evident by the fact that tradition has accepted the fifty chapters division of Genesis.

Why Abraham Finishes with the Number Ten?

According to Stiger and Morris, the number ten may possibly be the number of the members of Lot's family (Lot and his wife, two daughters and their husbands, two sons and their wives as mentioned in Gen 19:12).¹⁶ But for Von Rad, the number ten represents the smallest number to highlight the fact that “even a very small number of innocent men is more important in God's sight than a majority of sinners and is sufficient to stem the judgment.”¹⁷ Schmidt also reiterates: “[T]en is the smallest number to make up a group.”¹⁸ But for Westermann, ten “is the natural limit.”¹⁹

The number ten (עָשָׂר) occurs 254 times in the OT out of which it occurs 68 times in Pentateuch and 18 times in Genesis. After a careful study of the intertextual connections of the word עָשָׂר within Genesis and Pentateuch, we find the following interesting observations.

- a. It is used to designate Abraham's tithe to Melchizedek – ‘a tenth of everything’ (Gen.14: 20). Probably in Abraham's understanding, ten percent of any set is the best representation of the whole group.
- b. Abraham's descendents are promised the land of ten (עָשָׂר) ethnic groups (Gen 15:19-21).
- c. Sarah waited for ten (עָשָׂר) years in Canaan before she gave Hagar to Abraham (Gen. 16: 3).
- d. The servant takes ten (עָשָׂר) of his master's camel (Gen. 24:10).
- e. Rebekah is given two gold bracelets weighing ten (עָשָׂר) shekels (Gen.24: 22).
- f. Rebekah's family requests Abraham's servant for Rebekah to remain with them for ten (עָשָׂר) days (Gen.24: 55).
- g. Jacob, the supplanter, was cheated ten (עָשָׂר) times by Laban (Gen 31:7).
- h. Ten (עָשָׂר) of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. (Gen 42:3).
- i. Joseph sent ten (עָשָׂר) male and female donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt for his father (Gen 45:23).
- j. The smallest group formed by Moses was of ten (עָשָׂר) members (Ex 18:25).

From the above intertextual references it is plausible to conclude that in Abraham's narrative perhaps the number ten is the smallest number that ideally represents the whole. It is the number of completeness—a smallest round figure that symbolizes whole. In

¹⁶

Ibid., 173. See also Morris, Henry M. *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), 344

¹⁷

Von Rad, Gerhard. *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972), 209.

¹⁸

L. Schmidt, “De Deo,” *Studien zur Literarkritik und Theologie des Buches Jona, des Gespraches zwischen Abraham und Jahwe in Gen 18:22ff und von Hi 1*, Berlin: De Gruyter, (BZAW 143), 154-155.

¹⁹

Westermann, Claus. *Genesis 12-36: A Commentary* (Translated by John J. Scullion. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publication House, 1985), 292.

transaction it represents wholesomeness of generosity and favor, which is seen in the giving of gifts and tithing. Perhaps, this was a cultural phenomenon in Abraham's time, which carried its own significance.

Conclusion

The *waw* disjunctive (וַאֲבָרְהָם) in verse Gen.18: 22 underpins the fact that Abraham is not content with the promise that merely secures him and his family. So compelled by the integrity of his heart he takes another round (עוֹדֵנוּ) and makes a stand (עָמַד) before the Lord to plead for the righteous of Sodom selflessly. Abraham knows that his relatives in Sodom and Gomorrah are less than fifty, yet he begins his bargain from fifty (Gen.18: 24). He neither begins with the secure number of his relatives nor begins specifically naming his relatives before the Lord. In his new role, Abraham is an archetype of the righteousness that God desires in a man who is called out to His purposes - a man who is selfless, impartial, and takes a stand for the concerns that transcend his personal interests in obedience to the purpose of God's call. Perhaps, Abraham uses the two smallest round figure number fifty and ten to actually represent the entire humanity in the two cities with a hope that they may be spared. Canonically, Abraham is the type of the true Mediator Jesus Christ (Heb.9: 15), who stands in the gap between the sinful world and a righteous God. Abraham's righteousness has found total flawlessness in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Abraham's persistence (Gen.18: 32) and obedience has been perfected on the cross. Now we have a perfect mediator Jesus Christ, the last Adam, in whom the whole mankind is represented.

APPENDIX A

Major Exegetical Issues in Gen 18:16-33

1. *Unity of the Text*

In the light of the insurmountable difficulties in the text most scholars (such as Gunkel, Skinner, von Rad, Westermann, and Blenkinsopp) support Wellhausen in rejecting the unity of the text.²⁰ They suggest that Abraham's conversation with Yahweh is a later addition. One of the textual inconsistencies is concerning the "three men." In v.16, the men (הָאֲנָשִׁים) meaning the "three men," intended to go to Sodom. But in v. 21, it is the Lord (אֲרָרְה־נָא וְאֵרְאֶה) who intends to go down and see. In v. 22, the men (הָאֲנָשִׁים) turned away and went toward Sodom but in vv 23-33, the Lord is having conversation with Abraham and he leaves only in v.33. Then in chapter 19, only two angels (שְׁנֵי מַלְאָכִים) arrived at Sodom (v.1). Where did the third man go? Some scholars (mentioned by Gunkel: Fran Delitzsch; Dilmann, Proksch, and Wenham) suggest that Yahweh was present with Abraham and with the two men simultaneously.²¹ According to Wenham, these confusions are deliberate as "they express the difficulty of human comprehension of the divine world."²² Gunkel rejects their view as un-Israelite perspective, however, he does not explain why.²³ Wenham's literary analysis convincingly demonstrates the unity of the text. According to him, Abraham's intercession is the vital part of both the palistrophe and the parallel that are used to organize the story.²⁴ John H. Sailhamer claims that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (19:24) implies that "the third man went to Gomorrah."²⁵

2. *Intercessions or Meditation*

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Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 44. See also Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*: 286.

²¹

Gunkel, Herman. *Genesis* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997), 202.

²²

Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 44.

²³

Gunkel, *Genesis*, 202.

²⁴

Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 44.

²⁵

Sailhamer, John H. "Genesis" in *The Expository Commentary with the New International Version of the Holy Bible. Vol. 2. Genesis-Numbers* (Edited by Frank E. Gaebelin et al. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1990), 151.

Scholars disagree on the nature of the dialogue between Abraham and Yahweh. H. Gunkel, H. Procksch, G. Von Rad, H. W. Wolff, and W. Zimmerli see this as intercession.²⁶ But J. A. Loader joins Westermann and Schmidt in rejecting the idea because “the framework of conversation is formed not by a plea and the granting of a request (cf Am 7:1-6, Jr 11:14), but by question and answers.”²⁷ Loader’s analysis is more convincing in the light of the literary structure and the motif in the passage. I believe that the purpose of the text is to present Abraham as the archetype of righteousness. This is evidenced by the literary analysis and the exegesis of the text.

For example, the root word צַדִּיק occurs seven times (vv. 23, 24², 25², 26, 28) against the word wicked (רָשָׁע) which occurs only twice (vv. 23, 25). This supports the motif of the passage as the “Righteousness of Abraham.” In Gen.17: 1-2, the Lord requires Abraham to remain blameless (Gen.17: 1-2). The word blameless (תָּמִים) can also be translated as a man of integrity or a man who is innocent. Gen.18: 16-31 unfolds the integrity of Abraham by presenting him as a man who transcends his attachment to the personal blessings of God. Though Abraham is a leader of an ethnic group, he has now become conscious of his divine call – “...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Gen.12: 3f).

Furthermore, why does the Lord disclose to Abraham his plan to visit Sodom and Gomorrah? Can he not destroy the cities capriciously? Abraham is a friend of God (2 Ch. 20: 7), in whom he can confide. Can it be simply information without any expectation of response from his friend? Yahweh desire to stay in dialogue with Abraham until Abraham finishes implies that he expected Abraham to address the crisis as a mediator, which he indeed successfully fulfilled.

3. Filial Affinities or the Righteousness of God

Scholars disagree on why Abraham mediated on behalf the righteous. Was it because of his filial affinity towards Lot and his family or was it the righteousness of God? Abraham’s generous offer of land to Lot in chapter 13 and his rescue in chapter 14 support Abraham’s paternal and ethnic affinity towards Lot. Furthermore the focus of chapter 19 is Lot and his family. Henry M. Morris suggests that Abraham stopped at the number ten because he knew Lot had ten members in his family (two sons, two daughters with their husbands, and two unmarried daughters).²⁸ Turner also claims, “I would suggest that Abraham’s plea to save the whole city on ethical grounds is motivated by a desire to save his nephew and potential heir.”²⁹ But John H. Sailhamer thinks that Abraham’s concern was not for Lot and

²⁶ Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*: 291.

²⁷ J. A. Loader, *A Tale of Two Cities: Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testaments* (Kampen: J. H. Kok Publishing House, 1990), 29.

²⁸ Morris, *The Genesis Record*: 344.

²⁹ L. A. Turner, “Lot as Jekyll and Hyde. A Reading of Genesis 18-19” in D. J. A. Clines et al (eds.) *The Bible in Three Dimensions. Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*. (JSOTSS 87. Sheffield, 1990): 85-101, 89.

his family because Lot's family according to him had only four members and Abraham stopped his negotiation at ten.³⁰ Allan Ross sees the vv.22-33 as the Abraham's intercession for the city of Sodom. In his view, it "was not simply praying for Lot to be rescued."³¹ Hamilton thinks that Abraham was first concerned for the righteous (v.23) and then the preservation of the city where the righteous lived (v24ff).³² This is affirmed by the fact that the root word for "righteous" (צַדִּיק) occurs seven times between vv. 23-28.

4. Collectivism Vs Individualism

Is Abraham's pleading a complaint against collective guilt? or Is it a plea for a transformation in the concept of collectivism? Von Rad believes that there is no protest against collectivism. He thinks that the law of "collective guilt" is being replaced with the atoning effect of the righteous minority.³³ But Schmidt and Westermann do not agree with him.³⁴ The distinguishing of the righteous from the wicked marks the shift from collectivism to individualism. This is apparent especially when Israel ceases to be a political entity. Loader; however, rejects the either or position but embraces both. According to him, in this text collective guilt of Sodom has resulted a just punishment, and the individual act of Lot and his family has caused their safety.³⁵ In his opinion, Abraham's stopping at number ten, "does not necessarily mean that righteous individuals will have to perish if they number less than ten, but they can be saved as individuals."³⁶ This is elucidated in the rest of the story.

³⁰ Sailhamer, "Genesis," 152.

³¹ Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 351.

³² Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans Publication Company, 1995), 25.

³³ Von Rad, *Genesis*: 212-13.

³⁴ Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*: 293.

³⁵ Loader, *A Tale of Two Cities*: 30.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

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