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**The Testing**

*Will you believe that God will do something extraordinary?*

(Genesis 18)

Child to old people? = laughter​

Abraham laughs​

Sarah laughs​

Destroy a major city? = laughter​

Sons-in-laws of Lot laugh​

“too hard” for God? = extraordinary

*God brings hope to the future by creating life out of nothing* (18:1-15)

* God controls timing
* God controls process

“Abraham, and especially Sarah, are not offered here as models of faith but as models of disbelief. For them, the powerful promise of God outdistances their ability to receive it.”

**Walter Brueggemann**

Israel waiting for deliverance 400 years

Israel waiting for their Messiah 400 years

We are waiting for the return of Christ

**1 Corinthians 15:51-52**

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

**1 Thessalonians 5:3-4**

2For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.

*He brings justice by meting out gracious judgment* (Gen 18:16-33)

* God does not rush judgment

**Exodus 34:6-7**

6The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty,

* God listens to interceding prayer

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