

GENESIS 14:1-2, 11-20

LESSON: ABRAM BLESSED BY MELCHIZEDEK — June 16, 2019

INTRODUCTION:

CHAPTER 13:13-18 The place of Sodom is described here. Lot would settle among men who were wicked and sinners beyond measure before God. They sinned openly before God. This was a drastic change for Lot. And after the separation of Lot and Abram, God tells Abram to lift up his eyes and look toward the north, south, east, and west from the place he was in now, and that He will give him all the land he gazes upon to he and his seed forever, and make his seed as the dust of the earth. Now, God tells Abram to get up and walk through the length and the width of the land, and every place his footsteps go is what He intends to give to Abram! Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron. By Abram building an altar unto the Lord in Hebron, this was the place where he formed an alliance with God.

LESSON: I. A DANGEROUS SITUATION GENESIS 14:1-2, 11-12

14:1 And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations;— War broke out. The invaders were four kings from Babylon and Elam (Persia).

1. Amraphel king of Shinar which was the land of Babylon.
2. Arioch king of Ellasar which was probably a city of Babylon or of Assyria.
3. Chedorlaomer king of Elam (Persia)
4. Tidal king of Goiim which means nations, probably the ruler over several nationalities and city states.

14:2 That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. The defenders were five kings of five cities of the plain.

1. Bera king of Sodom.
2. Birsha king of Gomorrah.
3. Shinab king of Admah.
4. Shemeber king of Zeboiim.
5. the king of Bela, which is Zoar.

NOT APART OF THE LESSON

The battlefield was the valley of Siddim, the Salt Sea (Dead Sea). The cause for the war was a revolt by the Palestian states against the rule of a foreign government. Chedorlaomer king of Elam or Persia had conquered Palestine some twelve years before. For 12 long years he had enslaved and taxed Palestine. Now, in the 13th year, the people of Palestine had had enough, and refused to pay and rebelled. Chedorlaomer had no choice but to protect his tax base and trade routes that ran through Palestine down into Egypt and northern Africa. The target was against Sodom and Gomorrah.

BACK TO THE LESSON

14:11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah suffered a humiliating defeat. All their goods were taken by the invading kings. And the defeated armies scattered to the mountains. The two cities were ransacked and plundered.

14:12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

Lot was living in Sodom when war broke out and he was taken captive as a prisoner of war by the invading armies. Lot lost all his possessions: his home property, livestock, and money, etc.

II. A DECISIVE SOLUTION GENESIS 14:13-16

14:13 And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram. There was one that escaped the captives. He survived and brought news to Abram the Hebrew. By calling Abram "*the Hebrew*" (the man from the other side of the river, the Euphrates river), Abram is set apart from the surrounding people. As time passed, the word was picked up to distinguish Abraham and his descendants from other nationalities.

- The name "**Hebrew**" was used when the Jews were dealing with other nationalities and distinction was needed, for example, in business dealings. It was used by both Jew and Gentile. It was usually the name foreigners used in referring to the Jews.
- The name "**Israelite**" was the name used primarily by Jews among themselves.
- The word "**Jew**" eventually became the most used word to designate the Hebrew people.

Thereby, no person lays claim to a land that is occupied by others without facing opposition. And Abram had joined hands with others; had made a covenant; a treaty for mutual protection. The treaty was with the Amorite, Mamre, and his two brothers Eshcol and Aner. Abram lived in the plain of Mamre the Amorite; they all being allies of Abram.

14:14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. Physically Lot was the son of Abram's brother whom he had reared since childhood; but spiritually Lot was a brother—a spiritual brother to Abram. And when a brother is enslaved by some enemy, believers must arise to help free the brother, no matter how great the opposition. This is what Abram did. A large number of people born in his own house were working for Abram, a number so large that he was able to arm 318 men that were trained to fight. They pursued the invaders past Dan.

14:15 And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. Abram wisely planned his strategy.

- He divided his men into several groups and instructed them to attack from several vantage points. This would make the enemy think a large force was swarming down upon them.
- He launched a surprise attack at night. The enemy was caught completely off guard. They were unable to tell who was attacking them, and for safety's sake they had to flee assuming that a large army was attacking them.
- Abram's servants pursued the fleeing army beyond Hobah north of Damascus.

14:16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people. Abram recovered and brought back all the goods the army had taken, also bringing with them his brother Lot, even his goods, and including the women and other captives. There are four essentials when we launch an attempt to rescue people:

1. We must choose others to help us—essentially those of the household of faith; believers. And they must be loyal and trained believers.
2. We must plan our strategy for rescuing a brother—plan to use every vantage point God gives.
3. We must participate ourselves. It is not enough for other believers to go, we must go ourselves.
4. We must pursue (go after) the enslaved brother until we have rescued him! Total victory for Christ!
 - The question is: does he want to? And what will happen if we never go at God's command.

III. A DEFINITIVE SALUTATION GENESIS 14:17-20

14:17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale.

Abram had chased and defeated Chedorlaomer king of Elam (Persia) and the other invading kings. Abram had won the impossible victory that saved thousands from the tyranny of defeat and enslavement. And according to the law of war and conquest, it was the victor's right to keep the spoils of victory. Now, recognition and honor were to be heaped upon Abram. On his way home, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh, which is later called the king's dale. *"The valley of Shaveh"* is the valley of the plain situated just north of Salem (Jerusalem). It was called *"the king's dale"*, either as a memorial of this incident or from the fact that on this piece of level ground the kings of Judah assembled and exercised their forces. Abram received visits from two kings after his victory. So, the **first king represented worldly honor**. The king of Sodom came to honor and express gratitude, for he knew that most of the people and the goods had been brought back with Abram, and he probably felt that he might be able to bargain and strike a deal with Abram to return his people to him (verse 21) so, he could rebuild his kingdom. His kingdom, Sodom was a worldly kingdom and city given over to the flesh, pleasures, possessions, cheating, immoral sex, homosexuality, lawlessness, violence, and corruption etc.. Remember, he had escaped death from the invading kings, and now he comes out to meet Abram. The enemy can come at you all kinds of ways when you have the victory! This would be a temptation for Abram to compromise.

Have you ever spoken somewhere and you had been fasting and praying, and afterwards they fed you and you sit down and eat after the Spirit of God had been on you so mightily? I had— My very first talk, God showed me a very important lesson. The intentions of desiring food, and even sitting down to eat was not what God wanted me to do because later on that night I got so sick—chills and fever for no reason. As fast as it came, it left in 8hrs or more. God spoke to me that it was a spirit of gluttony! The enemy will come at you all kinds of ways. He will even try to come at your family when he can't get to you. God is still my KEEPER! So, I keep doing what He tells me, and He keeps taking care of me and my family! Things come at you, but they don't work because of Jesus' blood!

14:18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. The second king represented godly honor. Melchizedek king of Salem (Jerusalem) came before Abram to honor and express gratitude. Salem had not been attacked by the invading army so far. Abram had eliminated the danger of attack by defeating the invaders from the East, but they could return to conquer not only Salem, but all of Canaan. And for this, Melchizedek was so thankful and appreciative of what Abram had done, that he wanted to bestow a godly blessing upon Abram. He even brought bread and wine. This was the only time Melchizedek appeared on the scene of world history. His name meant *"king of righteousness"* and *"king of peace."* He was a priest of the Most High God (El Elyon); of the highest heaven. The significant fact that he was a priest of the Most High God represented God and brought the honor of God to Abram. He knew worldly honor is fleeting, but godly honor was lasting and permanent. Jesus Christ was to be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrew 5:6). So Melchizedek was a type of Christ (Hebrew 7:3). David had declared under the inspiration of God's Spirit that the priesthood of Melchizedek was to be eternal (Psalm. 110:4).

1. Godly honor met the physical needs of Abram. Abram and his army must have been weary, fatigued, and aching to the bone. Most likely some were wounded in battle; he brought bread and wine to refresh them and to celebrate their great victory over the invaders.

The king of Sodom brought no food. Most times if we can meet a person's physical need, the door is open for the spiritual need also.

14:19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:—

2. Godly honor met the spiritual need of Abram as he prayed a blessing upon him—*"Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth."* That's quite a blessing. And this was a witness to the thousands who were with him.

14:20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. Melchizedek continued to bless Abram.

3. Godly honor stirred a commitment of stewardship within Abram. Abram was so thankful for the prayer and blessing that he gave a tenth of everything to the priest.
 - This is the first time tithe is mentioned in the Bible.
 - "Tithe" means a tenth.

A Tithe was brought into Law in Leviticus 27:30-33 to support the Levitical priesthood. Giving tithes (a tenth) of the spoils of war or of all the goods he brought back was acknowledging that he could not have done it without God, for all the blessings came from God. God was the one who delivered his enemies into his hands.

SUMMARY:

War broke out from four kings from the Babylon invading five kings of Canaan (14:1-2). The invading armies took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot was taken captive as a prisoner of war, for he lived in Sodom when the war broke out, and it included all of his goods (14:11-12). There was one who escaped the captives. He survived and brought news to Abram and they all being allies of Abram. When Abram heard that Lot was taken captive he armed his trained servants, 318 from his house, and pursued them to Dan. Abram divided his men into several groups, launched a surprise attack at night, chasing them to Hobah north of Damascus. He brought back all the spoils, even Lot and his possessions including the women and people (14:13-16).

Abram received visits from two kings upon his return after his victory. The king of Sodom came out to meet Abram after his victory. And Melchizedek king of Salem brought bread and wine: and he was the priest of the Most High God. He blessed Abram and Abram in turn gave Melchizedek tithe, for God had delivered his enemies into his hands (14:17-20).