

Read **Gen. 14:1-24**.

### Pray

After an initial reading of this text it does not appear to be teaching anything.

We have a description of a war that has developed between 9 kings:

5 under the command of the king who has been subjugating them all, the king Chedorlaomer (no cheese intended)

4 who wish to rebel and win independence, among whom is the king of Sodom, where Lot lives.

The oppressors win and capture Lot in their victory.

Abram hears of it and puts together an army. He goes after Chedorlaomer and his allies and whips him, rescuing Lot...

After the battle Abram meets a priest-king Melchizedek, receives a blessing, and gives him a tithe from the battle.

Then Abram and the king of Sodom divide the spoils, Abram takes what was his and none of the rest.

What's the lesson in that?

However, as with much of narrative (story) in the Bible, you discover the message in the context of the whole Bible.

Asking: In the Bible, are we clearly taught messages that this passage here serves to illustrate?

If so, we shall let this passage illustrate those lessons.

And, it turns out that the Bible teaches a particular lesson over and over that this passage causes us to think about.

The lesson; in the Exodus, in the time of the Judges, under King David, spoken by the prophets; is this...

When you are God's chosen people, picked out to live with His promise, God is Himself on your side.

And, if God is on your side, you will be victorious... He honors you and you get to honor Him.

It might not be in just the way you think it will.

It is not that you will never have problems or that things will always go your way.

But, in the end, you come out on top because God has made you His promise and He is on your side.

We find the lesson in the New Testament as well...

**Rom. 8:31-39**

### If God is for you, who can be against you? (Rom. 8:31)

The implied answer is, "Nobody."

#### I. Lot Gen. 14:1-12

This first part of the chapter deals with Lot, though we don't know it until verse 12.

And, God has made no promise to Lot... and now, after the glowing prospect of his choice in chapter 13, Lot is in trouble.

What is Lot's trouble?

Well, he has apparently now moved to Sodom... into the city.

That was not his initial intent, he was a shepherd and keeper of livestock...

But, now he's not with his flocks and his people so much, he's living next to the people of Sodom.

And, so, their war becomes his war.

He has become embroiled in the world.

This, of course, is a principal problem of all those who are not living under the promise of God.

If you are not one of God's people, you are one of the world's people...

...you have no heavenly home, no upward call, no covering for sin, no eternal perspective, no protection from God.

You have no chance to see when the world is sucking you into its problems and ways of thinking.

So, Lot has become sucked in, part of the world, and the world's problems are now his problems.

He is in a war. His side loses. Now he is captured and made a slave.

*I recall back when I was in high school before I knew the Lord.*

*My thinking was all about how well I was doing in my classes. If I did well on a test I was happy and thought well of myself.*

*When I did not do well...*

*My identity was wrapped up in sports and how I did on the soccer field, which was not very good. We usually lost.*

*I was constantly focused on what other thought about me, who my friends were, whether some girl liked me.*

*I thought about money and how I could get more to buy what I wanted.*

*I thought about what I considered deep questions of the universe and imagined myself as wise...*

*My thoughts always ending up on me.*

This is what it was like to live in the world, and I never got beyond it...

Thinking of myself, what I wanted, my own success or failure... and I measured myself by the world's standards and values.

And, then God broke through, saved me, and lifted my sights above the battles of this world.

I began to learn that I was on a journey with God, of which high school was just a little part.

And, everything in high school was part of what God was doing with me on the journey. It was all for His purposes!

And, the journey itself was not mine, but his to take me through and teach me about Him!

Some people never get beyond this high school mentality... me, me, me... Who said what? How can I get more?

But, we who are on this heavenly journey... We are ever learning to lift our eyes to heaven and God who prepares it for us.

All these things are the things we find Abram learning...

## II. Abram Gen. 14:13-16

He hears about what has happened to Lot and raises an army from his trained men and possibly others and wins him back.

Actually, Abram (who is about 80) and his 300 warriors (at least) chases Lot's captors some 100 miles northward.

Then he pounces on them by night, wins the battle, and brings Lot back with all of his people and possessions.

It is a huge undertaking and a phenomenal victory.

Abram wins.

Why?

The text does not tell us... but in the context of the book of Genesis we know. God is on His side.

We know this as well because of what Melchizedek is going to tell us later in the chapter.

God is blessing and protecting Abram on his journey on this earth.

God has made him a promise and God intends to keep His promise. This is what God does. This is what God does with us as well.

Abram finds himself at the very beginning of the revelation of this promise.

It is a promise of blessing to him, his descendants, and ultimately to people from every tribe and tongue... meaning us.

The promise actually began, cryptically, with a prophesy to Adam. Gen. 3:15

We see it in the rainbow that God showed to Noah... and now Abram is learning of it. "Blessed to be a blessing"

The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and then Joseph learn to hang on to the promise no matter what.

The nature of the promise will become more clear when God gives His Law to His people under Moses.

We learn about God then; what He cares about, what our problems are, and how He binds Himself to His people.

We see then the failure of God's people to keep up their end of the promise... over and over.

But, God who has made the promise does not forget, does not quit...

King David shows us how to love the promise, subsequent kings show us how to wreck the promise...

Though the prophets warn them and the people, they ignore God and miss out on His promise.

But, God has not forgotten. The promise is His. No one can wreck it. He is committed to keeping it.

And, so, some 2000 years after Abram, Jesus comes to fulfill the promise, and extend the offer of salvation to the ends of the earth.

That by believing in Jesus you can be rescued from sin and the penalty of sin... death and hell.

By believing in Jesus you can be freed from this world and its slavery to its values and thinking.

Like Abram rescued Lot out of the clutches of the world, Jesus goes and wins the battle and rescues you!

**Eph. 4:7-8**

**2 Cor. 3:14-17**

So that you, and anyone who believes, can live life for God and under His promise... rather than for yourself.

So that your life can be a fantastic adventure with heaven as its final chapter.

God is teaching Abram the first lessons in all of this... for his sake, and for ours.

So, in comes one of the most unusual characters in the entire Bible.

## III. Melchizedek Gen. 14:17-24

It is now after the battle and the king of Sodom meets with Abram back down in the south.

And, Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, comes out to meet them bringing a feast. He is honoring Abram.

Salem, it is important to note, is the future location of Jerusalem,

as well as near the location where Abram will be required to sacrifice his son Isaac. It is a holy place.

Melchizedek is a person surrounded in mystery. He shows up here and we never meet him again.

He is not mentioned again in the Old Testament.

How has He become a priest? How does He know about the God Most High? We don't know.

However the New testament tells us more about him.

**Heb. 6:19-7:25**

vs. 19 "This hope" = the hope of the promise made by God who keeps His promises

vs. 3 Melchizedek of a special priesthood

vs. 10 Melchizedek superior to Abraham and priest before the Law (Aaronic priesthood)

vs. 22 Jesus a priest superior to Melchizedek

So, Melchizedek as this superior priest, a forerunner to Jesus Christ, the great and perfect priest-king, comes and blessed Abram.

**Gen. 14:19-20**

He blesses Abram "of God Most High."

He identifies who this God is. "Possessor of heaven and earth"

In contrast to all other gods who are local, limited in influence and power, and not really gods at all.

Gods of Egypt and of these other kings and their cities.

And he blesses God and tells us that it was God who gave Abram the victory.

Abram then honors Melchizedek with 1/10 of the spoils of victory. This is worship... honoring God through His priest.

Then Abram refuses any of the spoils of victory that were not his in the first place.

Why? Because he wants it to be clear to all that it is God who gives him his success, and not anyone else.

So Abram is learning this most important lesson: What does it mean to live this adventure that is life in the promise of God?

You live life trusting in God and not the world... you honor God...

When you do that you discover that no matter what happens, God will give you victory and success... He will honor you.

God will keep you on your heavenly journey.

*Pray*