

Turn in your Bible tonight to Genesis Chapter 14, and we will be looking at verses 17 to 24. We continue to talk tonight about the battle that Abram and his men had just fought. Not so much the battle now, but the aftermath after his victory and what happened after Abram returned from his victory. Abram is going to be faced with a decision and the decision that is placed before him is what our graphic says, Follow God, Or Follow The World!

As we learned Lot, his nephew, was captured in this ensuing battle between King Chedorlaomer and the other three kings that joined Chedorlaomer in this campaign of war.

When Abram found out Lot, his kinsmen, had been captured along with many people from Sodom, he sprang into action. Abram, with 318 of his trained men went out after Lot. They defeated Chedorlaomer and the armies that were with him. Since they won, as we say, *To The Victor, Come The Spoils!* They rescued Lot, the people from Sodom and all the possessions that were taken. Now, they return home back to where Abram was living near the oaks of Mamre.

I mentioned a few weeks back that Lot made a decision to live near Sodom that would bring heartache to Lot's family. As we have seen, Lot looked toward Sodom, he moved toward Sodom, and as we saw last week, he had moved into Sodom. His decisions have caused his family to have to get involved to save him.

I want to speak to that just for a moment. Is that not what we should be doing? When it comes to salvation, isn't that why we share the Gospel? Because a family member, a friend, anybody we meet may be in Sodom, and they need to be rescued. Maybe we see a brother or sister in Christ, and they seem to be drifting and you see their doctrinal stances begin to change, do we not speak to that and remind them of the truth of God's Word?

You may say, well then you are just meddling. Of course, in all things, it is all in how you speak to the situation. If it is out of genuine love and concern, then it is beneficial and of course sometimes that doesn't work very well either but at least the person has been shown the possible path they are getting ready to go down as Lot followed a path that put him and his family in a very precarious situation.

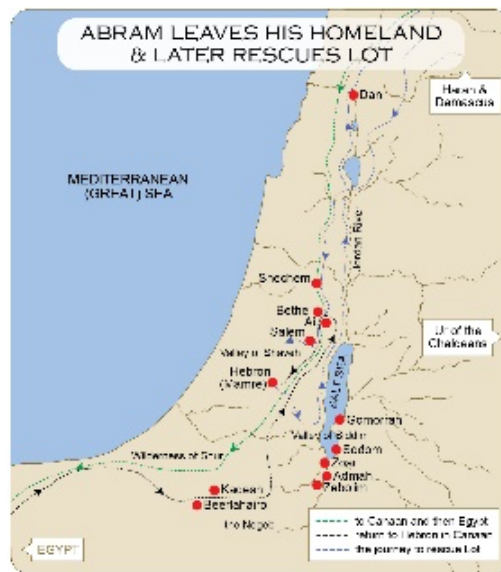
I share that to bring us to this fact that Abram is going to have some decisions to make himself that may affect his family once again. He just had a great victory, but after the great victories can come some of the greatest challenges. Let's read our verses for tonight.

Genesis 14:17-24

¹⁷ After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸ And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. ²¹ And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." ²² But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, ²³ that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' ²⁴ I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share."



As I mentioned, after Abram found out Lot had been captured. Abram goes after to rescue Lot. You see the blue line and arrow to the left of the map. Abram leaves his home in Mamre, catches up with these armies in Dan and the ensuing battles begins. As the armies fled then Abram pursues them to Hobah. Abram then returns with all the possessions that were taken from Sodom, Lot and his possessions, and the women and the people.



Look to the top of the map and you see the red dot that shows us where Dan is. It is from Dan that Abram heads south back home. As he is returning, he passes through an area called the Valley of Shaveh, or the King's Valley. You see that little cluster of red dots, Shechem, Bethel, Ai, Salem, and that is where Abram now encounters two kings. Let's read verse 17 again.

Genesis 14:17

17 After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

Now, as we look at this verse, I am not sure if it showed as such on the screens, but in your Bible, where it says the King's Valley, it had parenthesis around it. Since it is noted there, I think it is worth describing. In 2 Samuel 18:18, and we studied part of this. Absalom, King David's son, has put the plot together to overthrow his father and take the throne of Israel as king.

Absalom erects a monument to himself in this same area. It is in 2 Samuel that we see this area referred to as the King's Valley. It is called the King's Valley because of this very encounter between Abram, Bera, king of Sodom, and Melchizedek, king of Salem.

Though it may look like there is not much going on in these verses on the surface, war between kings, Lot captured, Lot rescued, we won, let's go home. This is going to be one of the most defining moments for Abram and for the nation of Israel. You may say, "Wait, there is no nation of Israel at this time?" You would be correct. What was God's promise to Abram?

I will make of you a great nation! I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing!

As we read in verse 17 the king of Sodom comes out to meet Abram as he and his men, the people he rescued, Lot being among them, pass through this valley. In verse 18 we see the other king that comes out to meet him also.

Genesis 14:18

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.)

Who are these two kings? What we are going to see is there is huge difference between these two kings. We are also going to see who and what they represent.

Let's begin with Melchizedek. Who was Melchizedek? As we look at Melchizedek it kind of appears that he just comes on to the scene and then disappears. There is a lot of mystery around Melchizedek. Outside of these verses, Psalm 110, and in the book of Hebrews he is never mentioned again. In Hebrews, where he is mentioned, it is in correlation to this event and in relation to the fact that Jesus would be a priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Jesus would fulfill the requirements of the Law, in that Jesus offers up himself as the last and final sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Jesus then becomes our High Priest in that he shed the blood, gave the life that we may have forgiveness of sins, through our repentance, and us giving our lives back to him in obedience, thanksgiving, and service to Jesus Christ. Listen to Hebrews 7:26 to 28.

Hebrews 7:26-28

²⁶ For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

As we look at Melchizedek, let's first look at his name. His name can be broken up into two portions.

Melchi – King, Zedek – Righteousness. Therefore, his name can be translated as King of Righteousness. We also see that he is king of Salem. Is this another description of Melchizedek or a place?



If you look closely, right in the middle of the map, we can see where it says: Jerusalem and then Salem, in parenthesis right below Jerusalem.

Salem is a place. Salem means peace. At some time, we don't have a specific time, but the name of Salem is changed to Jerusalem, which is a derivative of Salem, meaning – Possessing Peace or Possessor of Peace.

So not only does Melchizedek mean, king of righteousness, but he was also king of the city called Salem, which meant peace. King of Righteousness and King of Peace.

In verse 18 Melchizedek is described as a priest of God Most High. This is very unique to Melchizedek. He holds the offices of King and Priest! Throughout the history of Israel having kings and priests you never see one holding those two offices at the same time, except the one that is promised to come in the order of Melchizedek. That would be who? Jesus Christ!

As a priest of God on this earth, Melchizedek was a representative of man to God. Showing us a picture of the priesthood to be established for the Jewish nation, that as the Israelites would bring their sacrifices of repentance and worship to the Tabernacle or Temple, the priest would offer these sacrifices up to God.

The High Priest also going into the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle or Temple, that one day a year on the Day of Atonement. The High Priest being that go between, between God and the people of Israel as he offers the sacrifices for his sins first and then the sins for the people.

Scripture describes Melchizedek as a type of Christ. What is a type of Christ? It is a person whose life is used as an example of what Jesus has come to do for us. Isaac is a good example. Isaac, the one and only son of Abraham was to be sacrificed. He was to be pierced by the knife Abraham was about to thrust through Isaac.

It is in Hebrews Chapter 7 explains this about Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:1-4

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness and then he is also king of Salem, that is king of

peace. He is without father and mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever. ⁴ See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!

So, we see that Melchizedek is a man of righteousness and he is worshiping and serving the one true God that is Possessor of heaven and earth.

Now let's see how the king of Sodom is described. Well actually we can't see how the king of Sodom is described because Scripture does not describe him. We did see in Chapter 13 a description of the men of Sodom.

Genesis 13:13

¹³ Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.

Now, can we just assume that the king then can be described as the same? Not necessarily. But, if we look at Scripture, we see that if the king is wicked then many of the people are following suit in their lives. They are worshiping false gods or the god they are worshiping is themselves and they are seeking everything that pleases them with no restraints whatsoever!

We will see in a few short chapters that the whole city, as well as the king, are so wicked that not even 10 righteous people can be found to keep God from passing judgement upon the city.

Abram comes through the Valley of Shaveh! Two kings stand before him.

- One a king of righteousness, One a king of wickedness
- One a priest of God, One a priest of the Devil

Once again, Abram is at crossroads. Look at our picture from a few weeks ago.



I use this picture because it is very clear what Abram should do. In our great victory's or when we see a wonderful move of the Lord we can kind of get a bit prideful. We can also get a bit complacent, and Satan comes in with a temptation that we are not ready to meet head on. Let's see what each king does and how Abram reacts to each. Verse 18-20.

Genesis 14:18-20

¹⁸ And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Abram and his 318 trained men come back from the victory of defeating Chedorlaomer and the other three kings with him. They rescued Lot and all the people and possessions that were taken from Sodom. They charged on some 240 miles to Hobah to complete this battle. Now, they are traveling back and are almost home. Exhilarated from the victory! They were well outnumbered, but God was with them and gave them a great victory.

Melchizedek comes out to meet this weary band of travelers and as he does, he reminds Abram who gave him this victory and who deserves the credit for it. Melchizedek doesn't come out and say, "Abram, what a great man you are! You are a military genius! Because of your education, because of your brilliance and intelligence, those other armies did not stand a chance!"

What does Melchizedek do? Melchizedek pronounces a blessing upon Abram. Now, what does that mean? We use that word kind of lightly without the thought of its full intent. When someone sneezes, we say, "God Bless You!" When we are talking to someone about a tough situation we may say in a comforting way, "Bless you, may God bless you! Or someone does something nice for us and we may, "Oh, thank you! God Bless you!"

The intent of a blessing is not just mere words of good will. A blessing is the recognition that all good things are from God. In the blessing it is intended the person we are speaking to would also understand the fact all good things come from God. We are to live holy and allow God to transform us to his glory in our lives that brings us to a point of praises, worship, and gratitude to God. In this gratitude we then also serve the Lord by proclaiming the truth of salvation through God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth!

It is like this prayer that the Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Colossae as he had heard about their faithfulness to the Gospel and their love for all the believers.

Colossians 1:9-14

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

This prayer was to remind them that all our spiritual blessings come from God and then we are to be faithful in our service to the Lord and to the world! Likewise, as Melchizedek greets and blesses Abram:

"Blessed be Abram, by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;
and blessed (Praise, worship, serve) be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" (God gave you the victory, Abram!)

As Melchizedek came out to meet Abram, along with the blessing, he brought bread and wine. The bread and wine have great significance. Melchizedek was not bringing this out as mere sustenance for Abram. Bread and wine were used in covenantal meals throughout the history of Israel. We do not have time to look at all those but again it is used as a picture of the Old Covenant that would soon be bodily fulfilled in the New Covenant by Jesus Christ.

It was at the last Passover meal that Jesus had with his disciples that Jesus does and says this:

Luke 22:19-22

¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But behold the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!”

Of course, what Jesus just did in those verses, is that he instituted what we call the Lord’s Supper or Communion. What are we doing when we participate in the Lord’s Supper?

- One - We remember! We remember what Jesus did for us on the cross!
- Two - We worship! In remembrance that fact that Jesus gave up his body and shed his blood for us, we worship and give praise!

Remember as we have studied in John Chapter 6. Jesus points to himself and say that this is the bread that I will give for life, my flesh. You must eat of my flesh and drink of my blood or there is no life in you. For his flesh is true food and his blood is true drink that leads to eternal life.

What does Abram now do with the blessing proclaimed upon him and the bread and wine that was presented before him? He worships! We read it at the end of verse 20. ***And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.***

The tenth of what? We read it earlier in verse four of Hebrews Chapter 7. A tenth of the spoils. Establishing what would be called, the tithe, that would eventually come into law for the Israelites to bring a tenth of their crop, livestock to the Tabernacle and eventually to the Temple for the priests and for use for the ordinances of worship.

Giving is an act of worship! It is an act of worship and in doing so we say, “God you own everything anyway. I am going to put my faith and trust in you and not this world. I give so that ministry of the church can go forward, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ can go forth around the world!”

That is what we see here in Abram’s encounter with these two kings. He had a decision to make. Am I going to put my faith in God Most High, Possessor of Heaven and Earth or am I going to put my faith in the world? By Abram’s decision he is making a faith statement. Let’s see what he was presented with from the king of Sodom.

Genesis 14:21-24

²¹ And the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself.” ²² But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have lifted my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, ²³ that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’ ²⁴ I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share.”

A couple of things to think on here. The persons of Sodom were described as what? Wicked, great sinners against God! For all intents and purposes there was no reason for Abram to give up anyone or anything he brought back with him from the war. He and his men and allies had done all the fighting.

What if Abram had taken the people? What was he inviting into his camp? Sin! Wickedness! You may say, “Well he could witness to them and share the Gospel with them!” Abram could do that anyway and may have been doing that on the journey from Hobah back home.

Again, you may be saying, “Well aren’t we supposed to invite lost people into our home and use that as an opportunity to witness to them?” Yes. How do we share the Gospel if we are not engaged in lost people’s lives? What we must be careful with is how far do we go in our engagement that their influence is not greater on our life than ours is on their life. That is what happened with Israel over and over when they would intermarry and start following the false gods of the nations that were around them.

Abram refused to take the people or take the spoils as well. What was God’s promise to Abram? That God would make a great nation of he and Sarai. A couple of Wednesday’s ago and last week as Matthew taught, after Abram and Lot separated. God reminded Abram to look to the North, South, East, West, and walk the length and the breadth of the land. Abram this is yours and I am going to give it to you.

Abram is learning something here. Abram is learning to trust and follow God. To put his faith in the Lord for God is faithful in all his promises. He is learning that our lives are a billboard to the Lord and how we live shows this:

1. *That we truly believe what we are saying we believe*
2. *We want to honor God and bring no reproach up on his Holy name by our misdirected passions to this world.*

Remember, the king of Sodom was a wicked man also and at some point, he could use this against Abram. Your God didn’t provide for you, I gave you your riches. Come on Abram, we’re bosom buddies, we’re tight, don’t play this charade before the people.

Abram said, “Sorry king! I have raised my hand, (*What are you being asked to do when you are asked to raise your hand?*) *To take an oath!* I have made an oath to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’ Abram is putting the line in the sand! I am not going after the world but I am going after the Lord!

What do I have here? A thread! Abram is saying not even this, am I going to let come between me and my relationship with my Lord! (Let it the thread go!)

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of God lasts forever! Isaiah 40:8

1 John 2:15-17

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the desire of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, the pride of life, is not from the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with it desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

I want to show the graphic we used for this portion of Scripture again.



It may be hard, but you can pick out that blue fish and it is swimming the other way of all the other fish. That is what our lives should look like. ***How many things in our life right now do we need to stop and raise our hand in our life and say, “No! I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth!***

What is it in our lives that we can go back and say we drew that line in the sand, and God showed his faithfulness when we said, “God I am raising my hand to you, I am going to do it your way, not the world’s way, not Satan’s way! God showed himself great in all those areas of our lives.

Lord, I love you more than anything the world can give me! I raise my hand! Take my life!