

Genesis: God and Man

Genesis 14 - Blessed be Abram of God Most High

Continued study of the relationships between God and people

Recently

- We've seen the life of Abram - going from his father's house, to wilderness, to Egypt and back to where God last spoke to Him
- He's truly turned to the Lord at this point
- It's one thing to follow God, it's another to be a true disciple - to learn, to grow, to bring others to faith
- We've seen him be blessed at every turn - we don't have to be perfect because God is

14:1-9

Kings make war - it's what they do. Everyone trying to be the best, most powerful. Have the most influence. Alexander the Great conquered the known world by the time he was 30

Tribal kings, like Abram, but ruling over a territory, more invested in their own domain

The salt sea / dead sea (east of Jerusalem)

Serve another king then rebel.

Wordly alliances only last so-long

Proxy wars, Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Syria

By the wilderness. Started encroaching on where Abram had been settled and travelled through

Four kings against five in this valley. A showdown. It rings a bell of the last days battle of Armageddon. No where near in scale, but alliances and coming down into a valley to do battle are nothing new.

The battle is always in the valley.

Psa 23

A Psalm of David. The LORD [is] my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You [are] with me; Your rod and Your staff,

they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Matthew 17:1-9

Mat 17:1-9 NKJV - Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" And when the disciples heard [it], they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

The mountain top experience is wonderful. It is good. A lot of times it will come after the wilderness.

Abram had that when he met with God under the tree again and truly started following. But what happens next he would not have been prepared for without it.

Going up the mountain is essential. But, we cannot stay there. We must come back down ready for whatever comes next.

God wants to prepare you. The best place to get prepared is before the valley.

Pro 6:6-11 NKJV - Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, Provides her supplies in the summer, [And] gathers her food in the harvest. How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep-- So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

Being prepared is essential in life. It is the best way to survive. Even the animals know it.

Somehow today we think we don't need to be prepared. We can wing it in our drive-thru, amazon prime, throw-away society. Milk & bread disappear before a storm.

But if we're not prepared for what's next, we'll have a hard time surviving through it and may not make it at all.

Pro 22:3 NKJV - A prudent [man] foresees evil and hides himself, But the simple pass on and are punished.

When we see potential danger ahead, it is wise to avoid it.

That's half of parenting...teaching kids how to see danger before it happens.

Stop standing on the table, if and when you fall you'll fall over and break something!

It's a major factor in a self-check in our maturity. Physically, mentally, emotionally, & spiritually

To think that it can't happen to us is foolhardy.

God doesn't want us to be unprepared.

Matthew 25 ten virgins oil lamp

He loves to give us a heads up, but that only comes if we're willing to spend time with him when things are good. All too often we wait until the valley to cry out. Cry out in the mountain top.

:10-12

Asphalt/slime/fountains not a good place to wage a war. Many die, the rest flee Sodom and gomorrah left defenseless

These battles and losses come right before the end for S&G. Soon enough we know their end with Lot and his family fleeing later on.

Lot, who looked toward prosperity and the world for provision, now finds himself captive of the enemy, his protectors gone.

Remember how God told Abram to leave Lot behind in Ur?

This was for his benefit as well as Lot's. God knew Lot would get himself in trouble.

- Why does God chose this person or that?
- Why does God not want this relationship to work out?
- Why does God call me to do this or that when it doesn't make sense?
- Why would God call me there? Or here?

God sees everything. He knows the end from the beginning. His direction is right, even if we can't see why or how.

:13

Abram still dwelling by the Terebinth trees at Mamre...where he heard from God and met with God.

Abram knew to dwell where God was meeting with him (remember the Garden?)

Luke 2:42-52

And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know [it]; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among [their] relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was [that] after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Jesus was right where he was supposed to be. Doing God's business.

Like Abram, like the Lord, so should we be.

People should know they can run and find us in God's house.

Either physically, but more important, spiritually

That they know we've been with God and are with him

That we can be trusted, turned to and have provision for them spiritually and physically

Because God has prepared us for it

2Co 1:3-7

Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. Now if we are afflicted, [it is] for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, [it is] for your consolation and salvation. And our hope for you [is] steadfast, because we

know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also [you will partake] of the consolation.

God comforts us so we can comfort others.

We go through the wilderness, through the valley, that God will strengthen us and prepare us to minister to others.

But we only can do that if we've allowed him to first minister to us.
Only then will we be in the right place to hear their call for help
To give them exactly what they need - not our own advice, not our own speculation as never having gone through it - but to give them only what God has given us.

Abram's allies were those by the tree, who dwelled where he dwelt.
 His neighbors - being a good neighbor and friend to those of the faith, but also those who are friendly to the faith.

I don't know that these guys were believers, but they hung around Abram's altar

:14-16

"Now when Abram heard HIS BROTHER was taken captive..."

Wait, we just read, and have read before, that Lot is Abram's brother's son...his nephew
 But Abram sees and treats Lot just as his own brother

1Co 12:12, 25-26 NKJV - For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also [is] Christ. ... that there should be no schism in the body, but [that] the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with [it]; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with [it].

When one hurts, we all hurt.

Even though Lot was doing his own thing, their people could no longer get along, Lot took the "better" land from Abram, Abram had no ill-will towards Lot, in fact, he only had love.

Jhn 15:13 NKJV - "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

But what about your brother?

Mat 12:47-50 NKJV - Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! "For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

Right away. Abram doesn't delay, he takes up arms, takes his 318 trained servants, born in his own house

As soon as Abram hears, he goes.

That's preparation. He was at the tree, spending time with God, but was ready to go at a moment's notice

That's obedience.

Delaying is disobeying.

He takes up arms

This means he had weapons. He had gear. He had prepared for war before there was one.

He wasn't arming himself to take what he wanted

He was armed to defend those he loved and to stand up for what was right

How few of us are willing to stand up for the truth, to defend what is right

Either spiritually or physically

It always becomes someone else's problem which really makes it everyone's problem

The Bible matters

The rule of law, the constitution matters

It's not someone else's job to stand up for the truth. It's ours.

If we don't, who will? ... the answer... NO ONE

And they will come for your guns. They will come for your free speech (they are already).

And they will come for your bible and your loved ones.

Think they won't? Look beyond your next piece of entertainment, your next craving,

And you'll see that being prepared begins in the house of God but extends into all areas of life.

We don't need to start a war. But we do need to be prepared to fight in one when it comes.

Abram arms the trained servants

Some servants were specifically trained for Battle, and so was Abram - he goes with them

But only the ones born in his house

They were more like family, they were personally invested in the cause
They wouldn't be a mercenary and turn for another higher
They would fight with their lives

So many "Christians" turn back when the battle comes because they were not born in the house of their master

They were not personally invested with their entire lives. They saved a return trip

Gattaca, brothers swimming

Jhn 6:63-68 NKJV - "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and [they] are life. "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." From that [time] many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Those who have died with him will rule and reign with him.
The only way to make it in life is to die to it.

Divided his forces by night

Military tactics here, divide, surround, ambush, attack under the cover of darkness

Abram had night vision because he spent time with God in the light

Psa 144:1 NKJV - [A Psalm] of David. Blessed [be] the LORD my Rock, Who trains my hands for war, [And] my fingers for battle--

Pursued as far as Damascus---that's syria...that's quite the journey. They attacked and pursued as far as necessary. They didn't stop short. They took out the threat.
All too often we stop short in our pursuit of righteousness. Like Saul in disobedience, not killing everyone, or the different kings of Israel who didn't tear down ALL of the high places.
Or if we don't take all of our antibiotics... the infection will come back, stronger.

We must pursue those we love and attack evil as far and as long as it takes.

That's why crime is so bad, violence, murder, everything..because our society doesn't pursue it as far as it needs to go...doesn't give it the death penalty.

He brought back everything
 The stolen goods from S&G
 Lot and his family and their possessions
 All of the women and people

The men were slain and afraid and fled and unprepared for battle and this left everyone else vulnerable

Look at society today, the enemy wants men slain, scattered, unprepared, unfit to fight - spiritually, emotionally, physically
 And it's left the whole of society, from the foundation of the father and the family, to the top in utter shambles.

Do you think this society can stand for much longer? It is about to crumble. And God will allow it. He's being patient because of us, the remnant in the land, but one day, we all will have to flee to the mountains as the battle will be too great. But God will provide for us even if he no longer does for the nation.

If Abram delayed, they might never have caught them.

Time is of the essence in the valley.

They might never have recovered everything. There would have been huge losses - casualties in people and possessions

Look at the destruction in our land and the church...leaders unwilling to obey. Unwilling to fight for what's right.

Unwilling to forgive. To stand up and rescue their captive brother! THE SHAME.

We are already defeated if we will not stand up for our own.

:17-20

King of Sodom now returns to the valley of Kings (crawling out from under his rock)

Melchizedek (my king is zedek), king of salem (king of peace) (future Jerusalem) comes out with gifts. I wonder if Zedek was a word for God?

A feast, bread and wine (communion, fellowship)

He had provisions to bring Abram. Those who are of God always have provision with them. Provisions that will not go stale.

Salem was not a part of this battle that I'm aware of, but he comes out anyway.

God and Joshua, not on either side, but we must be on God's side.

Provision is always found in the pursuit of peace.

Abram tithes to this man. Abram knew that this guy was a priest of God, had a relationship with God. King & priest

Heb 7:14-24 NKJV - For [it is] evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: "You [are] a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, [there is the] bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. And inasmuch as [He was] not [made priest] without an oath (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "The LORD has sworn And will not relent, 'You [are] a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek' "), by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

Abram knew to whom the credit belonged: God.

And he was willing, without question, without being asked, to give back to God.

Tithing was a mosaic law...yet Abram did it by the Spirit before the law was written.

Abram knew who went into battle before him. Who was his rear guard.

The King of Salem, as king and priest, made in publicly known

The public ministry is always the outpouring of the private life

Public proclamation encourages private devotion

True Public proclamation cannot exist without private devotion

The church loses publically today because it is not strong privately, personally

The church fights itself today because it is unwilling to defend it's brothers and sisters yesterday

The church is weak and dying today because it didn't stand up for the truth yesterday

But the real people of God will thrive and prosper and win because God is their hope.

There will always be a remnant. And God will always use them to bless those who are lost and defeated.

King of Sodom tries to pay off Abram. But Abram didn't go out to fight the King of Sodom's battle (even though it was his fault Lot got taken), he went out fighting the King of Salem's battle - to rescue his brother.

But even the King of Sodom benefited from Abram stepping up and doing what the rest should have done being in authority.

Those in authority by title or position aren't always the ones with the real power. The ones with the real authority are evident by how they win the battle.

:21-24

Abram knew that giving anyone other than God the glory and the credit would backfire on him spiritually and physically and would rob God of the credit.

If the King of this wicked city could take any credit in Abram's victory, it wouldn't be a victory for God

So often God wins our battles but we fail to give him credit and we end up being slave to a king who has no authority

Don't get greedy. In victory, look to God for your reward

Mat 6:1-4 NKJV - "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. "But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

But in this, Abram still makes sure his people are cared for. He doesn't foist his faith on his servants and his friends. He makes sure they are well cared for.

He uses the things of the world to bless his friends that they might be blessed by his faith.

If a friend is on a diet and thrusts it on you, wouldn't that make you bitter against the diet and your friend?

So too, we should SHARE our faith, and not FORCE our faith on others

If I'm out with friends from work, and they want to drink, fine, i won't make them feel guilty for it. I'll love them, hang out with them (to a point), and let them see my lack of need for a drink and let the Spirit do the real work.

Abram was prepared.

Lot was taken captive.

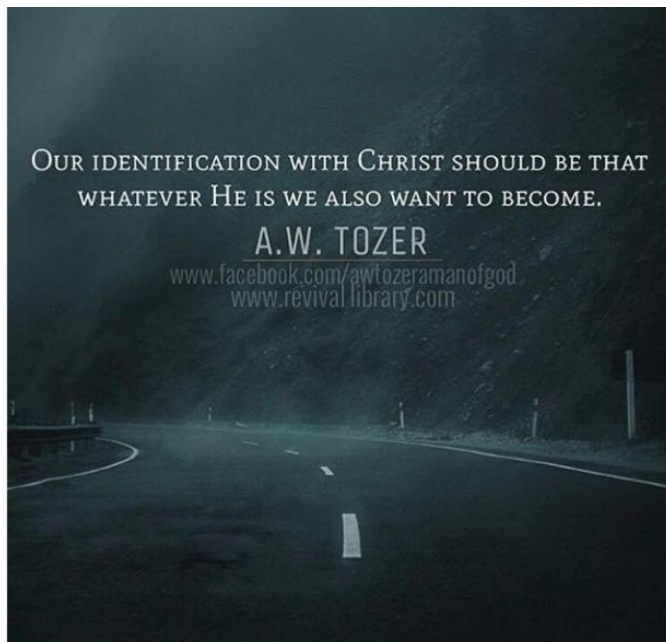
The King of Sodom was overrun.

The King of Salem overflowed.

Who are we? Abram or Lot?

Who do we give credit to? Sodom or Salem?

Give credit to where credit is do. Be prepared in the mountain top, under the Terebinth tree, that when the valley comes, we are ready to go and rescue others before it is too late.



God is a warrior for what is right. So should we be.