

# GENESIS 14

## A MAN OF CHARACTER; WILLING TO FIGHT, WANTING TO GIVE

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Last week we saw how God reiterated His promises to Abram. We saw Abram demonstrate his faith by deferring to his cousin Lot. By living in faith and walking in the Spirit Abram showed us how we can also live without fear, how we can know that no matter what the circumstance God has our back.

This week, we will see some other great characteristics of Abram. Once again he is a man after which to model our lives. Actually what we need to see is that Abram's character came to form his faith. His faith makes him what and who he is. This principle works for us also. Our faith, or the lack thereof makes us what we are, or are not.

Today let's look at another great example of the life of a Godly man. Then let's emulate it.

**Gen 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,*

**Gen 14:2** *that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).*

**Gen 14:3** *All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea).*

**Gen 14:4** *Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.*

**Gen 14:5** *In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth*

**Gen 14:6** *and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness.*

**Gen 14:7** *Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar.*

**Gen 14:8** *And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim*

**Gen 14:9** *against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five.*

**Gen 14:10** *Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains.*

**Gen 14:11** *Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way.*

**Gen 14:12** *They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.*

At this time in history there existed some large kingdoms but most of the time a “King” was the leader of a smaller city-state. These kings were something like the despots of Europe.

This was essentially East vs. West.

(Map of Chedorlaomer’s alliance)

Chedorlaomer – Rabbinic literature says Chedorlaomer is Nimrod/Gilgamesh. Assyriologists name him as Hammurabi.

(Map of the giant tribes)

What is God doing as these four Eastern kings cut a swath through Canaan? He is using them to rid the land of many of the giant tribes.

If we were to see these battles on the news today, they would look something like small tribal skirmishes compared to what we know as war.

The kings of the 5 smaller city-states had paid tribute (protection money) to Chedorlaomer for 12 years. In the 13th year they refused to pay any more. A year later Chedorlaomer and 3 others had formed an alliance and made a sweep through the region pillaging everything in their path. The kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar figured that their only way to survive would be to unite and fight the much larger armies of the eastern kings.

However, they lost.

With the Eastern kings having won, they took all the spoils of war, everything they could carry from the conquered army as well as Lot and all his things. They also took other able-bodied men as slaves. They had also taken women from their sweep through the area as we shall see in verse 16. This was common practice.

**Gen 14:13** *Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram.*

**Gen 14:14** *Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.*

**Gen 14:15** *He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.*

**Gen 14:16** *So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.*

**Gen 14:17** *And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.*

So Abram gathered his men, 318 trained servants. These men were not just shepherds but were trained in the art of war. He followed the army of the eastern kings northward towards Dan. When they camped at a place and time Abram thought advantageous; Abram attacked. He divided his men that night and scattered the camp of the eastern kings. He drove them North into what is modern day Syria and recovered all that was taken. He then returned home with the things and people he had recovered.

(Map of the route of the kings)

You might ask what possessed a man to go after an army. Once gain it was the character of Abram that was built by his faith.

Verse 13 states that Abram was an ally of the family of the man that had escaped. Abram had no choice but to go after them. It was the right thing to do. Abram's life, as well as our own is to be based on principle, not simple emotions. This takes much of the guesswork out of "how to live." It was the right thing to do. Therefore, it has to be done.

Abram's faith caused him to act on principal, not emotion. He didn't weigh the costs, he had to go. Once again it was the right thing to do. Abram could be fearless in this sense because he walked with God. His purpose in life is God's purpose for him. When we get our purpose in life synchronized with God's, then we can be fearless like Abram.

We continue to see Abram's character as the story unfolds.

**Gen 14:17** *And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.*

**Gen 14:18** *Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.*

**Gen 14:19** *And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;*

**Gen 14:20** *And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.*

**Gen 14:21** *Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself."*

**Gen 14:22** *But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth,*

**Gen 14:23** *that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'—*

**Gen 14:24** *except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."*

We see that two people met Abram outside of town. One is the king of Sodom, the other is Melchizedek, king of Salem, he was a priest of God; the same God Abram served.

Bera = gift; Sodom = burning

Salem (ancient name of Jerusalem prior to it being settled by the Jebusites) = peace

The name “Melchizedek” is a combination of two words 'Melech Tzedek'; My King is Righteousness or My King is Justice (both being synonymous). Later in Israel's history, during the conquest of the land under Joshua, there is another king bearing a similar title, “Adonizedek”, My Lord is Righteousness, who was the ruler of Jerusalem (Joshua 10:1).

***Who is this priest of the Most High God who is King of Salem?***

Melchizedek blessed Abram, but we have to be careful not to think of this as just ceremony. What he said was very important. He acknowledged that Abram was a man of God and that his success and provision were from God. This is important.

Abram then gave Melchizedek a tithe of all. The tithe is a tenth. And it is at this point that I need to apologize to you, as a congregation.  
(Meridian)

The tithe is the mechanism that God set up to accomplish His work here on earth. It is the financial means for that anyhow.

The tithe is a tenth of what a person earns. If you earned \$100.00 then you gave \$10.00. It is an easy number to compute. Later, in Exodus when the Law is instituted, it will be stated that the people were to bring their first fruits to the tabernacle. This was a 10th of whatever their fields produced.

Abram brought a 10th of the goods brought back from the battle. That is what he had. He would also have given a 10th of his regular income that year.

Today we are skeptical when it comes to money. We like to hold onto it. There are crooks and cons out there, but if we are honest we have to admit that each of us has a little greed in us. We think of the money in our account as ours. I mean after all, we worked for it.

That is where we have to see Abram's character and how we approached this.

Abram believed just as Melchizedek did that God delivered Abram's enemies into his hands. God didn't just rain down money from Heaven. Abram had to go and fight the battle, but God was in control of the situation. Abram acknowledged that by returning home and paying his tithe to Melchizedek.

We, as Christians have to look at our lives and our finances the same way. If in fact we have given our lives to Christ then we have to give every aspect of our lives to Him. That includes our money. That sounds scary to some of us, but God set a benchmark so that we couldn't be swindled. He asked for 10% in the OT. When you get into the NT you have another standard. This is referred to as "grace giving." That goes over and above 10%.

I have always told you to pray about it and write your check before you get here. That way no one can pressure to give any more than what you have already written.

There will be some that say, "Well God didn't tell me to give 10%." Yes He did. He said it in His Word.

**Deu 14:22** "You shall truly **tithe** all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year.

**Mal 3:8** "Will a man rob **God**? Yet you have **robbed** Me! But you say, 'In what way have we **robbed** You?' In tithes and offerings.

**Mal 3:9** You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, *Even* this whole nation.

**Mal 3:10** Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you *such* blessing That *there will not be room* enough to receive it.

**Mal 3:11** "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the LORD of hosts;

**Mal 3:12** And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the LORD of hosts.

It is between you and God. There isn't a police force that will come to your house. As a rule I don't count the money and I don't know what any of you give. I don't want to know any specifics. But I will tell you that you can ask to see what I give any time you want, and the books will be made available to you.

We must acknowledge from where it is our sustenance comes. We must acknowledge who is in control of lives. We must acknowledge when God delivers our enemies, or our new job, or our spouse, or whatever the situation is to us.

Now I understand that you see and hear of this being abused. But I am required to, as Paul said, "teach the whole counsel of God." That includes teaching on giving.

This is y'all's church. Invest in the work of God.

Abram was blessed because of it. God said He would bless you because of it.

This doesn't mean that if you write a big check that you will win the Publisher's Clearing House. But just as Abram prospered, you also will prosper. The blessings may come in different aspects of your life but they WILL come. If you don't believe me then just ask some of the folks that are here. They will tell you.

In verses 23 and 24 we see that Abram is not interested in profiting from this venture. He doesn't want anyone to be able to say that they made Abram rich. That distinction goes to God. Abram makes sure that all the other men have access to the spoils if they so desire.

Abram is not against making a profit. He is a rich man. Remember he has 318 trained hired men. That makes Mr. Cartwright and the men on the Ponderosa look like small potatoes.



Abram makes money but he acknowledges where it comes from and when to receive it.

#### APPLICATION:

- We must walk with God in the Spirit if we are to be free to live fearlessly.
- To live without fear means that we are certain of our standing with God and our mission or calling.
- IF you don't know your calling then ask Him to reveal it to you.
- We must turn our finances over to God as well as everything else.
- Go home and pray about it. Ask God to reveal it to you. Treat this like any other aspect of your life. Study money and the Bible.
- Know from whence your provision comes. It comes from God.
- Acknowledge that by your giving and your living. The way you live and the way you give.
- Know that God wants to bless you and your family.