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## Sowing the Word

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*"...Look now toward heaven and count the stars if you are able to number them," and He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."*

### **Genesis 14-15** **February 11th, 2009**

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So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.

(Nehemiah 8:8)

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## **Helpful Study Links:**

Additional Commentary: (Great Resource!)

[http://preceptaustin.org/genesis\\_commentaries.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/genesis_commentaries.htm)

## **Further Research Sources**

<http://www.answersingenesis.org/>

Ken Ham's Website. Great resources, articles. Also a great source for books and videos you can get a hold of. (we have these in our library too)

<http://www.drdino.com/>

Kent Hovind's website. Another great site, with lots of answers, and another great video series you can get a hold of. (We also have these in our library)

<http://www.creationscience.com/>

Walt Brown's website. Very helpful, detailed, but not too hard for a non-science major to read. Has a book you can order that has all that is on this website if you prefer it in your hands.

<http://www.discovercreation.org/>

The Alpha Omega Institute's website. This institute is dedicated to teaching the Biblical and scientific evidence of creation throughout the world.

<http://www.icr.org/>

The Institute for Creation Research.

## **Helpful Study Resource:**

*Explore the Book* by J. Sidlow Baxter

### **Commentary:**

The commentary used with permission throughout this booklet is:

**With the Word Bible Commentary**

**by Warren W. Wiersbe.**

ISBN 0-8407-9108-9

# Outline

## Genesis Outline

- I. Creation (1-2)
- II. The Fall of mankind (3)
- III. Early History of mankind – first thousand years (4-5)
- IV. Noah and the Flood (6-9)
- V. Tower of Babel (10-11)
- VI. Abraham (12-25:18)
- VII. Isaac (25:19-27)
- VIII. Jacob (28-36)
- IX. Joseph (37-50)

## Detailed Outline for this week

### VI. Abraham 12-25

- A. Abram's Call (12:1-3)
- B. Abram's Journey to Canaan!
- C. Abram and his flight to Egypt
- D. Abram and Lot
  - a. Abram and Lot split up (13:5-13)
  - b. God Promises Abram land, descendants (13:14-18)
  - c. Abram rescues Lot (14)
    - i. The Battle – Lot captured (14:1-12)
    - ii. Abram rescues (14:13-16)
    - iii. Abram and Melchizedek (14:17-20)
    - iv. Abram and King of Sodom (14:21-24)
- E. Abram encouraged by God, covenant reaffirmed (15)
  - a. God: I am your shield, reward (15:1)
  - b. Abram: I have no heir (15:2-3)
  - c. God: Will have a son, multitude of descendants like stars (15:4-5)
  - d. Abram: Believed God, accounted righteousness (15:6)
  - e. God: I brought you out, to bring you in (15:7)
  - f. Abram: How will I know this (15:8)
  - g. God: Instructs Abram to prepare covenant (15:9)
  - h. Abram: Prepares covenant, drives away vultures (15:10-11)
  - i. God: Tells Abram of next 400 years, trouble (15:12-16)
  - j. God: Passes thru animals, affirming solid covenant (15:17-21)

# Booklet Notes

## Chapter 14 Highlights and Helps by Pastor Jim

### **Abram rescues Lot**

There is an important picture here for us. In Chapter 13, Abram separated from Lot, and it was right that he did so. God had long before called Abram to separate from his family, and Abram was slow to obey. In God's faithfulness, He has brought Abram to a place of obedience, and Abram has separated from Lot. In our lives, God will often call us to be separate from others, even other believers (Lot was a believer), for the sake of following Him. There are others whose lives would hold us back from all that God has for us – Lot was that to Abram – a hindrance.

What is important to see in this chapter, is that although Abram is separated from Lot, it does not mean he has no dealings with Lot. When Lot gets in trouble, through his own folly, Abram steps in to rescue him. God blesses and supernaturally helps Abram rescue Lot. In our lives, God will have us do the same to those that we separate from in obedience to Him. Never again do Abram and Lot walk together in life, but Abram can and does help Lot when he is in trouble. So although we are never to join and walk with those who would hinder us in our walk with God, can and should be a blessing to those in need. May God give us more insight into this!

### **Melchizedek – a type of Christ**

Pastor Phil has an article with more detail in this booklet, but just a couple words here. Melchizedek is a tremendous type of Christ here in this chapter. Honestly some believe that Melchizedek is in fact Christ in an OT appearance (a Theophany) in this chapter. Personally, I do not think so. In Hebrews, when it speaks of Melchizedek and Christ – God uses the phrase “in the likeness of Melchizedek” (Heb 7:15) To me, that makes it clear that Melchizedek is not actually Jesus, but is a fantastic foreshadowing of Jesus. Consider just a few things.

- He is King of Salem (Jerusalem). Salam means peace.
- His name means King of Righteousness.
  - ◊ He is a King of Righteousness and Peace – just like Jesus is to us!
- He also functions as a priest – offering sacrifices.

◇So now, a King and a priest – just like Jesus is to us!

- Melchizedek brings bread and wine – a tremendous picture of communion.

There is more there but what a fantastic picture Melchizedek is of Jesus!

### **Abram and two kings**

Picture the scene at the end of this chapter, as Abram meets with these two kings. There could probably not be two more opposite kings. Melchizedek, one who pictures Christ, a great and godly King. The King of Sodom – one of the most wicked cities of all time. One wonders if this King is not a picture of satan and his work. When we look at it that way, it is an amazing sight. In this light, consider how Abram deals with both of them and see what things you can see that apply to our dealings with the one who rules in this world now – the prince of the power of the air (satan) and our true King, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords – Jesus.

## **Chapter 15 Highlights and Helps by Pastor Jim**

### **God's encouragement**

As we begin this chapter, we notice God specifically encouraging Abram. As you look at the end of chapter 14, you can understand why. Abram just took on five kings and won. Yet, fears can so easily follow such a victory. Fears of the enemy coming back...of future struggles. God encourages Abram that He is his shield, that God is, has been and will be Abram's protection. Wow!

Further, Abram just turned down a ton of loot. It was the right thing to do, yet it's easy in such a situation to second guess if you did the right thing. It would be easy to find yourself imagining keeping all the loot Abram refused. God encourages Abram by reminding him that He is Abram's reward! Abram turned down what the world had to offer and God wonderfully tells Abram that in light of that – He Himself will more than make up for what Abram refused. It is the same with us today!

### **The Land**

After telling Abram to survey the land God says to him in verses 14-15, "all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever." That should settle all the squabbles in the Middle East. "Forever" constitutes a pretty long-term lease. God gave the land to Israel.

In Genesis 15:18 God provides the boundaries of His gift to Abram's heirs. The land God gives to Abraham not only encompasses the West Bank,

Gaza, and the Golan Heights – today's disputed territories. It includes the lion's share of Egypt, the Sinai, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, and Kuwait. About 300,000 square miles will one day belong to the nation Israel.

### **The Covenant Affirmed**

According to custom, Abram slaughtered a series animals – cut them in cross-sections from head to toe – then arranged the animal halves into a corridor. The two parties entering the agreement would walk side-by-side between the animals halves as a commitment to their part of the covenant.

And you think a house-closing is a hassle. Imagine signing this type of contract! But here's what happened. When Abram finished slicing up all the beef he sat down to wait on God. He expected God to literally appear and walk with him through the animal halves. He waited all day, and into the evening hours... Until finally, as he was nodding off, God appeared in the form of a burning torch and smoking censor. Instead of walking with Abram down the corridor – God walked it by Himself, all Abram did was wake up and believe in God's work.

In affirming His covenant with Abram in this way, God was reminding and declaring this to be an unconditional covenant – not based on Abram but entirely based on God and His faithfulness.

And here's the lesson for us. Salvation is not a tag-team effort. It's not up to us to meet God half-way. The blessing of God is not received by God doing half the work, and the recipient doing half the work. God does all the work! He takes sole responsibility for earning the blessing. All I have to do is wake up and believe.

## Q & A With Pastor Phil

### **Who was Melchizedek?**

In Genesis chapter fourteen, we are briefly introduced to Melchizedek, the King of Salem. Very little is revealed about him. In the Old Testament, his name appears only in Genesis 14, and in Psalm 110:4. Despite his brief appearance in the Word of God, Melchizedek is a very unique individual. His name literally means King of righteousness. Salem (later renamed Jerusalem) means peace. His name and title are significant and point to Jesus Christ, the King of righteousness and peace. He is also described in verse 18 as the priest of God Most High. This is one of the most interesting aspects of Melchizedek's life – he was both priest and king. This is truly important to notice because again it points to Jesus Christ alone. The nation of Israel had some good kings throughout its history. David, Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah were all good kings for the most part, but not one of them could fulfill both the office of king and priest. Some tried. Uzziah entered the temple and attempted to do what was only lawful for the priests. He was struck with leprosy for his transgression. Since office of Priest and King is held by Jesus Christ; Melchizedek becomes all the more intriguing.

### **Where Did He Come From?**

Melchizedek mysteriously appears and then disappears and isn't seen again. In seeking to understand his life, we are prompted to ask the most basic of questions. Who were his parents? Did he have an heir? When did he die? It is interesting how the Bible answers these questions. Hebrews 7:3 describes him in this way:

*"...without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God..."*

Some have considered this description and assumed that Melchizedek must be an Old Testament appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Although rare, there were instances when the pre-incarnate Christ did appear. Most often, He was given the title the Angel of the Lord. Although that title is not used here, there are some reputable Bible teachers who hold that view.

The New Testament sheds more light on the subject. The book of Hebrews is the only New Testament book that mentions Melchizedek. Hebrews never speaks of Christ and Melchizedek as being one in the

same. Instead, Jesus is said to be “according to the order of” or “in the likeness of” Melchizedek. It is therefore unlikely that Melchizedek was the Lord Jesus appearing in the Old Testament.

### **A Type of Christ**

Melchizedek becomes a perfect symbol or example of Christ in that he typifies Christ. Just as Christ has no beginning, Melchizedek appears from nowhere with no mention of his family. These details are omitted by the Holy Spirit so we could make the connection and understand that Melchizedek is pointing to our Lord. There is also no mention of his death and this allows another comparison to Jesus. Because Christ ever lives to make intercession for us as our high priest, He fulfills Psalm 110:4. It's also important to note that Melchizedek come out to meet Abraham with bread and wine. Clearly the bread and wine are familiar symbols that point to Jesus.

### **Greater Than Abraham?**

Abraham is heralded as the father of faith throughout the Bible and is widely recognized as one of the greatest men of all time. Following the accounts of creation and the flood, the book of Genesis centers upon him and his sons. God devotes a lot of scripture to Abraham's life so we might understand the key part that he plays in God's unfolding plan. However, when Melchizedek enters the scene a strange thing happens. Melchizedek blesses Abraham. Hebrews 7:7 confirms that the one who blesses is superior to the one who is blessed. We might think it would be the other way around. By this time, Abraham is very rich and has been given a promise that his name would be great, but it was Melchizedek who blessed Abraham. Furthermore, Abraham paid a tithe to Melchizedek. Hebrews 7:4 offers this insight: *Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.* The fact that Abraham gave him a tithe is evidence that Melchizedek is seen as the greater.

### **A Greater Priesthood**

Abraham's tithe also provides a picture that Melchizedek's priesthood is superior to the priesthood which would be established through Abraham's son Levi (Hebrews 7:9-11). Although God set apart the Levites, and specifically Aaron and his sons as priests, the Levitical priesthood was hindered by weakness. Jesus is seen as a greater high priest because He has the power of an endless life. Again we see the connection in that Jesus is a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

## **A Striking Contrast**

Finally, note the contrast between Melchizedek king of Salem and the king of Sodom. Of course Sodom was a place of great wickedness and the king of Sodom is a type of Satan. Following Abraham's victory he goes out to meet Abraham. Understand the role that temptation plays in our lives even in times of victory. Satan wants the people and offers Abraham the goods. There is a powerful application here for the believer. Our enemy would seek to distract us with worldly things while those around us are perishing. In contrast, Melchizedek blesses and strengthens Abraham and reminds him that his victory was given by God. Abraham purposed to take nothing from the king of Sodom but was moved to offer Melchizedek a tithe of all. May our King of righteousness and peace strengthen our hearts and make us willing to offer all to Him.

# With the Word Bible Commentary

## Genesis 14

Abram won three victories.

***A victory over Lot.*** It would have been easy for Abram to let Lot suffer the sad consequences of his own foolish decision. But a man of faith is called “to be a blessing,” so Abram went to the rescue. Lot was not a very dedicated believer, but he was still a brother and needed help. When a brother or a sister creates problems for you, remember Abram and the words of Romans 12:21. Lot went right back into Sodom, but Abram did what he did for the Lord; and that’s what really counts.

***A victory over the kings.*** Abram the pilgrim would never have gotten involved in the war except to rescue Lot. Abram did not have a large army, but he battled by faith; that is what gave him the victory (1 Sam. 14:6; 1 John 5:4–5).

***A victory over himself.*** “Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle,” said Andrew Bonar. Abram was tempted to use God’s victory for personal gain, but he refused the offer. The king of Sodom came with a bargain, but the king of Salem (a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ [Heb. 7:1–3]) came with a blessing. Even a shoelace from Sodom would have defiled Abram’s godly walk! After every battle, give God the glory; and beware the devil’s bargains. If you aren’t careful, you may win the war and lose the victory.

—Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1991). With the word Bible commentary (Ge 14:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## Genesis 15

Abram's reward was not the applause of the people he rescued but the approval of the God he served. This is the first of many "fear nots" in the Bible. Fear after a battle is not unusual, but fear and faith cannot live very long in the same heart (Matt. 8:26). Abram's fears were quieted by three revelations from God.

***What God is (1).*** God is our protection and provision, so we need not fear the enemy without or our feelings within. God is the great I AM, and He can meet every need. With Him, we have everything; without Him, nothing we have is sufficient.

***What God says (2-7).*** Abram looked at himself and realized how old he was getting. Then he looked at his steward, Eliezer, and thought perhaps God could use him. But God told him to stop looking at himself and at others and to start looking up to God. This is the second time he lifted up his eyes to see what God had for him (Gen. 13:14; see also 13:10). Verse 6 makes it clear that Abram was saved by faith in God's word (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23), and that is the only way to be saved.

***What God does (8-21).*** God sealed His promise with a covenant. In those days, to walk between the divided parts of an animal was one way to seal an agreement. But God was the only One who passed between the pieces! Abram was asleep! God's covenants are all of grace (Eph. 2:8-9), and our works are but evidence of our faith.

When you find yourself afraid or impatient with God's will, look toward heaven and remember His covenant and His promises. When you bring your offering to God, be sure the enemy doesn't steal it. When you can do nothing, rest assured God is at work.

*Fear: There is a godly fear, a reverence for the Lord, that must be in every heart (1 Pet. 1:17; 2:17). If we fear God, we need not fear anyone or anything else (Ps. 112; Isa. 8:13). The fear of man trips us up (Prov. 29:25), but if we fear God, we need not fear the words or threats of men (Matt. 10:26-33).*

—Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1991). With the word Bible commentary (Ge 15:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.









