

the fruit of the vine yields. This may be new or old, sweet or sour, fermented or unfermented, intoxicating or unintoxicating.”

- 6) Melchizedek blessed Abram, v.19.
- 7) Melchizedek also blessed God, v.20.
- 8) Abram gave tithes of all to Melchizedek. A tithe is 10% of the total received. Tithing in the Bible has two purposes.
 - a) Tithing is an act of worship and thankfulness to God.
 - b) God later ordained tithing as a means of supporting the work of the Lord at the temple.
 - c) The principle of the tithe remains today. God does not command N.T. Christians to tithe, but He does not suggest another method of supporting His work. It is also the most tangible way to express thankfulness to God.
 - d) Since God required a tithe of His people in the O.T. to support His work, should Christians give less to support their local church?

Conclusion: This evening, we have examined three character qualities of Abram which we need to cultivate in our own lives. 1) Abram was a man of compassion. **Do you need more compassion for the lost or for those in need?** 2) Abram depended on God. When you face difficult circumstances, if you will depend on God and not worry, He is able to help you and give you victory. 3) Abram gave God the glory. This is a needed reminder for us. Many times the Lord answers our prayers or helps us through a difficulty, and we forget to give Him all the credit and the glory.

May each of us cultivate these character qualities in our lives! God can do great things through us if we will truly depend on Him and give him all the glory.

Song: Have Thine Own Way – 388

Abram's Character

16 May 2021 PM – Genesis 14:1-24 – Gen2021 – Scott Childs

Introduction: The chapter opens with the description of the first war mentioned in the Bible. Four kings from the Fertile Crescent in Mesopotamia (i.e., the area of Babylon) fought with cities in Canaan. They smote the **Rephaims** near Damascus, the **Zuzims** near the Dead Sea, the **Emims** near Jerusalem, and finally they came to **Enmishphat** south of the Dead Sea and fought. This latter was where Sodom was located. They fought the battle in the valley of Siddim where there were slime pits or bitumen pits. In the battle, the enemies defeated both Sodom and Gomorrah and Lot was among the captives they carried off.

Abram, who was again in fellowship with God, heard of the defeat (v.13), and immediately armed his servants and pursued (v.14).

Transition: This evening, I want us to examine three character qualities of Abram which we need to cultivate in our own lives.

1. Abram was a Man of Compassion, v.14

a. He responded tenderly

- 1) He could have said, “**Lot deserves this punishment because he is not walking with God.**”
- 2) Instead, he tenderly thought of Lot as his “**brother**” and determined to rescue him.
- 3) He armed his 318 servants and pursued.
- 4) Abram prepared his servants for battle. God had blessed Abram with many servants, but they formed a very tiny army. The four kings with their huge military had defeated many fortified cities. Humanly speaking, Abram and his 318 men and the allies who gathered with him (v.24) did not have a chance against such a powerful foe.
- 5) One day while on my walk, I saw several birds picking on another bird. The weak bird was down, and it looked like the others were trying to kill it. I had compassion on the weak bird and chased the others away. I hope he lived.
- 6) When Lot was in trouble, Abram came to his rescue. Abram was not bitter toward Lot. He did not desert his backslidden nephew. He had compassion on him.

- 7) Satan has captured people all around us. He is leading them to destruction. We need to have compassion on them and seek to rescue them with the Gospel. We must pray earnestly for their salvation.

2. Abram Depended on God, v.15-16

a. Depending on his little band would be foolish.

- 1) Humanly speaking, there is no way that 318 men and a few allies could defeat four powerful armies.
- 2) The trip was long (at least 270 km) and dangerous.
- 3) Humanly, his chances of success would be no better than if you were on the ocean in a dingy during a cyclone trying to paddle safely to shore.

b. Depending on God, Abram gained the victory

- 1) God gave Abram wisdom and ability for victory, v.15.
- 2) God enabled him to rescue every captive. He brought back all, v.16.
- 3) We will see that Abram gave all the glory to God.
- 4) God's mercy on Lot should have brought him to repentance, but it did not! Instead of repenting, Lot returned to Sodom.

📖 *Each of us face an enemy that is far too strong for us. Satan is a real being and our mighty enemy. The Bible calls him the Accuser of the brethren, Rev 12:10; our Adversary, 1Pe 5:8; the Deceiver of the whole world, Rev 12:9; our Enemy, Mat 13:39; the Father of lies, Joh 8:44; the Prince of devils, Mat 9:34; Prince of the power of the air, Eph 2:2; a Roaring lion, 1Pe 5:8; and the Wicked one, 1Jn 5:18. In our own strength, we cannot possibly defeat the devil. We must depend fully on the Lord for victory. (Ephesians 6:10) "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." (1 John 4:4) "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."*

3. Abram Gave God the Glory, v.17-24

a. Bera king of Sodom met Abram, v.17.

- 1) Bera must have been among those who escaped and hid in the mountain, v.10. He offered Abram all the goods that he had recovered in battle, v.21.

- 2) Abram refused to take anything as a reward because of a promise he had made to God, v.22-23. He gave God all the glory.
- 3) He took only the food they had eaten and a portion for the three allies who helped him, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre.
- 4) Certainly, Bera's offer must have been a genuine temptation after all the effort. **The devil is a ceaseless foe. He often attacks us after a victory. He seems to know our weak areas and when we off guard.** We must remember Peter's warning in 1Peter 5:8-9. *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."*

b. Abram gave tithes to Melchizedek king of Salem, v.18-20.

- 1) Who was Melchizedek king of Salem?
- 2) *Salem* is an old name for the town Jerusalem.
- 3) Melchizedek means "*king of righteousness*". He is called the king of Salem and a priest of the most high God, v.18. In the book of Hebrews, we learn that he is a type of Christ. Some people think he was an O.T. appearance of Christ or an angel. However, God does not tell us.
- 4) *"But the safest and most probable opinion is that which considers Melchizedek as a righteous and peaceful king, a worshiper and priest of the most high God, in the land of Canaan; a friend of Abraham, and of a rank elevated above him."* – Dictionary of the Holy Bible, ATS
- 5) Melchizedek gave Abram bread and wine. This was for refreshment and Abram took it.
 - a) It is good for us to note that the word "wine" in the Bible often does not refer to alcohol.
 - b) William Patton in his thorough book entitled "Bible Wines" makes this statement in chapter 17. *"In the Hebrew Scriptures the word yayin, in its broadest meaning, designates grape-juice, or the liquid which*