

# Faithful Living in a Fallen World: A Study in the Life of Abraham

Lesson #4: *Genesis 14:1-24*

{“ . . . people do not come to church Sunday after Sunday in breathless anticipation waiting to hear another historical lecture about what happened to the Amalekites . . . ” -- JSS}

## The “Attention” Covenant People Get



When it comes to your place on this world’s stage, and your place in this particular point in history, what’s important is your perspective. After all, why are some things more valuable than other things? [PEOPLE assign value to things. Why does a Bret Favre Atlanta Falcon card fetch \$500? B/C someone will pay that much for the card. WHY does a signed

Beatles poster fetch \$5K? Same reason!] And why do we want attention so much that if we don’t get it, we get upset. [Attention is a NEED we have, some more than others. Reg McClelland story from RTS . . . ] [15 minutes of fame is short-lived media publicity or celebrity of an individual or phenomenon. The expression is credited to [Andy Warhol](#), who in 1968 included the words "In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes"] Seems like everybody’s wanting what Andy Warhol used to refer to as their fifteen minutes of fame. But the Bible Truth is, on the stage of what’s going on every day all over the world, all through history, God’s Covenant People (Christians) *are* the main players! The historical narrative of **Genesis 14** has something to say to us, right here, right now.

Here’s the main ideal of the chapter:

**\*\* When living in this world, God wants Abraham’s seed (CHRISTIANS) to find ENCOURAGEMENT and to be ADMONISHED. \*\*** That is the pattern of Scripture; we are ENCOURAGED by our Identity in Christ, then we are admonished to “grow into” the identity we have. In Exodus, God’s people are DEVIVERED from oppression to WORSHIP The Living and True God.

**1. Let’s find the ENCOURAGEMENT in this Narrative.**

Basically, what's happening here?

- We find a clip of World POLITICS (**Vv 1-12**). It's someone in power being rebelled against, and the one in power going after those who are rebellion. Happens every day, everywhere, in politics. People "rebel" and those in power rush to put down the rebellion. [Obama & 1<sup>st</sup> time his VETO has been OVERRIDDEN].
- We find a clip of a daring RESCUE (**Vv 13-16**). Abraham rescues a captured relative, LOT from Sodom.

It is an attempted, and failed, rebellion by the city-state of **SODOM** against **Kedorlaomer / Chedorlaomer** + 4 Kings allied with King "C".

Abraham won the battle to get Lot back, but ultimately, the rebellion of Sodom did not work

- What do you suppose God is intending for us to see here in this chapter?

It's that the **NEWSMAKERS** of any era are merely a **BACKDROP** for (from God's perspective) the main character(s) in the history of this nation and this world, namely, **GOD'S COVENANT PEOPLE**. World History = the STAGE, not the POINT!

It's like in this story, you got the "Time Magazine Man-Of-The-Year" types strutting their stuff, yet, the CENTRAL CHARACTER in the story is ABRAHAM, our Father of the Faithful! The ONLY reason "C" is even included in this narrative is B/C of ABRAHAM!

In this fallen world, rather than realizing WE (GOD'S PEOPLE) are central to the story of this world, we want to be part of the WORLD'S STORY. [The "Today Show" mentality . . . People line up before dawn w/the hopes of getting on camera for a split-second on that big, national, early AM show. We're hollering where we came from, holding a poster that says "Brandon, MS", and doing a starving for attention dance out in the freezing cold & wet of NYC in the middle of January. & IF we can just get a picture made w/Matt or AL, well . . . we enter the "Facebook" hall of fame & are the envy of all our Facebook "Friends".] We even tie something significant about to the fact that we "shared the screen" w/the movers and shakers on NBC's "Today Show"!

That's NOT what we have here! The point is NOT to say, "You know once upon a time, Abe was in on some international action of "Mr. C" and company." No, the

only reason “Mr. C” and company are even mentioned here is b/c THEY happened to be in an episode of the life of Abraham!”

- ***From God’s perspective, In this world, you have **WORLD** history, and you have **SIGNIFICANT** history. And the later (THE SIGNIFICANT HISTORY) revolves around Abraham’s **SEED** (plural and singular)! They (BELIEVERS) are the main show, and the head knockers (& POLITICIANS AND CELEBRITIES) of this and every age are simply the background, the setting, for the main **DRAMA**, which is: What God is doing **REDEMPTIVELY** in the lives of **CHRISTIANS**!***
- Want proof? Just read **Luke 2:1-4 & 3:1-3!** What is most significant in those accounts?

What’s happening in world history is simply a BACKDROP for what GOD is doing in the world. World history simply is the STAGE upon which Jesus enters to do the work of redemption! **\*\*LUKE\*\*** for 6 clauses Luke builds up a sense of expectancy, he pulls up the movers and the shakers of the times, those who dominate the headlines and tabloids. But it’s all prelude to what really matters: The Word of God Came to JOHN. That a carpenter from Nazareth takes his intended to Bethlehem and she gives birth to a baby (Jesus, our Savior) in a feeding trough for cattle. CAESAR is only a BACKDROP!

- God’s premier attention is ever on the seed of ABRAHAM. And Believers are not swallowed up in **POLITICS**, lost amid governmental and social **SCANDALS**, or smothered underneath all the helpless diplomatic maneuverings and summits of governments and nations. In other worlds...

Put in it’s proper perspective, the “Mr. C’s” & DC & Moscow & Beijing & the Pentagon & the UN are merely the BACKGROUND of history. God’s people may not make the cover of PEOPLE magazine, or the evening news, But GOD’S ATTENTION is focused on HIS PEOPLE.

**\*\* God’s mind is affectionately focused on **HIS PEOPLE**, wherever they are; and what really matters is what happens among those who are of the family of ABRAHAM (that is, **CHRISTIANS**)! \*\***

Everything matters to God, but what matters MOST to God are His People!

So what counts in GOD’S World? A Father reading a Bible Story from Sally Lloyd Jones or Kevin DeYoung and a Mother going over a question(s) in The Catechism

for Young Children, talking about that question(s) and then praying w/the child. What matters is 3 or 4 ladies w/children going to school sitting around a kitchen table, discussing the prayer needs of their children & themselves, and then praying together. What matters is when we turn in a solid week's work. What matters is when a teacher or preacher agonizes over a Bible Text & teaches God's Word. What matters is parents to care enough both to DISCIPLINE their children AND to hold them in their arms and tell them how much they LOVE them. What MATTERS is what GOD'S PEOPLE are doing. What we DO catches the special attention of GOD!

**2. Let's find the **ADMONITION** in this narrative. (THE WARNING, THE CHALLENGE TO MAKE GOOD CHOICES AND NOT BAD CHOICES)**

"W/great POWER comes great RESPONSIBILITY." Who said it? To paraphrase & change what Pa Kent said to Clark Kent, and then by Benjamin Parker (Spider Man), "W/great ATTENTION from God comes great RESPONSIBILITY."

In **Vv 17-24**, Abraham encounters two Kings. Who are they?

The King of SODOM and the King of SALEM (short for Jerusalem)

No sooner has the king of Sodom climbed out of the tar pit (Vs 10) and tries to speak to Abraham, than He is cut off by Melchizedek

***What do we know about Melchizedek?***

***Vs 18-20***

He's a MYSTERIOUS figure.

He seems to be a king-priest in Jerusalem (a possible Christ-connection or type of Christ?)

He held on to the true knowledge of God & blessed God, even in a land filled w/Canaanite Idolatry.

- What dilemma is Abraham (and his seed) ALWAYS facing? ***Cf Vv 18-23.***

***\*\* It usually boils down to the **FIRST COMMANDMENT!!** \*\****

WHO ARE YOU GONNA SERVE (that's WHO you WORSHIP)? Are you going to give SODOM (this fallen world system) who appeals to our MATERIALISTIC side (all people have their price) what SODOM wants, or will you keep your oaths and vows to GOD?

- As long as we live, Sodom (this fallen world & the fallen people in this fallen world) is always looking for **LACKEYS** (hired help, people who can be “bought” w/\$\$, sex, & power), and always looking to make DEALS w/us to get what Sodom wants from us. BUT. . .
- Salem is about a GOD Who is the **POSSESSOR** (owner) of Heaven and earth, a God Who is able to give us ALL that is **NEEDED!**

What we NEED, God will provide; & if God is not providing it, if it's being offered by the King of Sodom & we're having to compromise, then we probably don't NEED it! \$\$ sex & power are GIFTS from God, but ONLY when they are acquired by Godly means & being used in the way the brings glory to God and great good to people as we seek to love our neighbors as ourselves.

- **(Vs 18 . . .) At the end of the day, all that matters is that we are **CLINGING** to the One (Jesus) who offers us **BREAD & WINE!** & we cling to Jesus even while we REJECT what the Kingdoms of this world are offering us!**