

Genesis 14 Abram at war! Galatians 6:1-10

My name is Eliezer; you know, I am Abram's servant. I've been here many years and I have seen the estate grow. When Abram left Haran he was not particularly rich but he was given so much by pharaoh. As the main servant, I might inherit it all [look round] – unless he gets a son. God gave him a promise about that, but he is getting older. I wonder if it will ever happen. Even Sarah is not as beautiful as she was; she couldn't have a child now, could she? But Abram deserves it, for he is a good bloke. Abram is generous, kind, what you expect of a real follower of the LORD. I think the people of the LORD should be extra good. Would you agree?

You know what happened? There was a war, and many kings were involved. It was horrible! War is always horrible. One group of kings defeated another group. The king of Sodom was among those who lost. Sodom was captured and looted.

So far so bad. But Lot lived there in that city. Do you remember Lot? Abram's nephew. The one who chose the best part of the country when Abram gave him the choice. He soon moved into Sodom. Living in Sodom was never good for his soul: the city is full of riches and what they call entertainment. They invented the idea of celebrities there. Lot never does anything useful.

But despite all that happened in the past, as soon as he heard what had happened, Abram went after Lot and freed him. I had to help as well. We were in a minority but Abram made a shrewd plan and God helped us.

Why did Abram do this? He still felt responsible for Lot despite his greed and unkindness. This shows again what a good man Abram is. He is truly what you expect of a follower of the LORD. He is example of faithful care, love, thinking about others. He did not just say 'potluck' to Lot. I think he also felt some family obligations towards him. You see, Abram thinks in terms of obligations, not in terms of rights. He is a true gentleman and he could be an example to you all. He does not even look down on the cleaners and other domestic servants.

Did I tell you? I am now also a follower of the LORD, after seeing how good Abram is to all and especially to me. I am from a gentile background but now I am serving the God of heaven and earth, and I am so glad as a result! And I am grateful to Abram for his example.

But back to my story, the war. Abram is now a major player in this part of the world. But sadly, after we freed him, Lot went straight back to live in Sodom again... He has not learned from what happened. He never learns anything. It is sad when people who don't want to change. Abram does, and by God's grace I do.

The end of the story is another illustration of Abram's goodness: the king of Sodom made Abram a great offer of the captured goods, but he refused to share in these goods. The LORD will give him the land, Abram believes.

Yes, I know no-one is perfect. Even Abram is not. In the past he did betray Sarah, his wife, in Egypt, and he does not always firmly believe in having a son. Still I like him.

Then after all this ... something mysterious happened: another king appeared, Melchizedek of Salem. That city's name means 'City of peace'. He had not been in the war. How on earth he can be priest of the LORD I will never understand. He worships the same God as Abram and I. He brought bread and wine. Ordinary things, but in his hands, they became something mystical. I did not quite understand it.

This Melchizedek is both king and priest. I have a feeling that this points forward to something, are maybe rather to someone in the future... Maybe you know? [Read Hebrews 5–7 if you want to know more.]

What a contrast this was: here was the king of Sodom offering his riches to Abram – there was this enigmatic Melchizedek offering simple bread and wine... Abram wisely accepted the latter only. I hope that he will soon have a son now. I don't need to inherit the estate.