

Faith and Victory

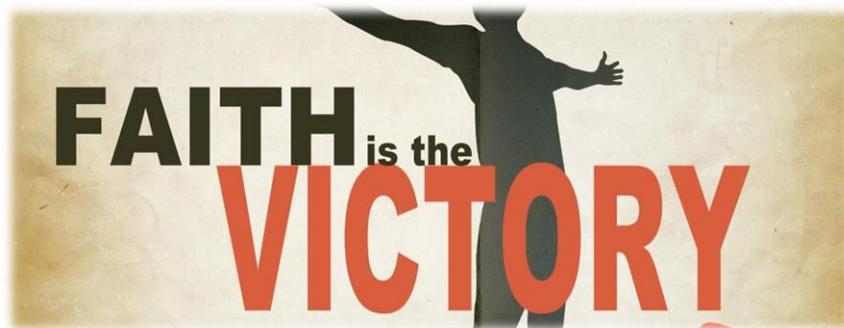
Genesis 14

Genesis 14 begins as an international conflict: Powerful kings snuff out a rebellion, and Lot is captured. Abram rescues his nephew and the other captives, but the real test comes after the battle. Two kings meet him: Abram praises God, and rejects praise from men.

- Scene 1: Four kings defeat Sodom and capture Lot (1-12)
Sodom and other cities rebel against international powers. Coalition of four kings defeats rebel cities and takes Lot.
- Scene 2: Abram defeats the kings and rescues Lot (13-16)
Abram musters a force and masterfully defeats four kings. He returns victorious, with all prisoners and possessions.
- Scene 3: Abram demonstrates his faith in God alone (17-24)
Melchizedek blesses Abram of God Most High; Abram tithes. King of Sodom offers wealth; Abram refuses worldly things.

Lessons for Today

- God alone can give us victory in the battles of life.
- Faith recognizes God as the One who gives us the victory.
- A 'greater Melchizedek' is coming (Ps. 110.4; Heb. 7)!



Digging Deeper

1. Genesis 14.1-12 tells of four Mesopotamian kings who together formed a political-military alliance with influence reaching to the borders of Egypt. Their military campaign defeated various



tribes that might want to control the mineral-rich area surrounding the Dead Sea. Then they crushed the five puny kings in the valley of Siddim. For the purposes of the story of Abram, the capture of Lot is most significant. Do you see the irony in Lot choosing the Jordan valley and moving to Sodom (Gen.13)?

2. Let's engage in a little 'sanctified reading-between-the-lines' in v.13. This verse tells us a fugitive came and told Abram what happened to Lot, and Abram had Canaanite neighbors who were "allies" with him. How do you think Abram was so well known throughout Canaan that a fugitive would come to tell *him* of the defeat of Sodom? What is the possible significance of Abram's Canaanite neighbors being allies with him? This is unusual; the Canaanites generally were hostile to the Jews and their God.
3. The battle in Gen. 14 is obviously against the four kings of the east who captured Lot, but after his victory over them, Abram faces perhaps a *harder battle*...the battle of pride. After all, he has just defeated a *world power* of his day with shrewd military planning. Two kings come out to greet him, with very different perspectives: One gives God the credit for the victory, the other gives Abram the glory. How does Abram's response to the two kings reveal his deepening walk of faith?