

How Does God Deliver a Family?

- Alrighty. Good to see you all. Hey, we're in a great book of the Bible called Genesis and one of my favorite things is helping people learn the Bible. So thanks for giving me that opportunity and honor. We're in Genesis 14. And today we're gonna answer the question: How does God deliver a family? You're gonna see a family. They do know the Lord, but they get into quite a battle. And so we're getting to know one of the most famous people in the history of the world, his name is Abraham. His wife's name is Sarah. And what you're gonna learn today is how faith works either when you're in a battle or you're receiving a blessing. And these are the two seasons that we're gonna see today in Genesis 14. How many of you right now, you're in a battle, physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, political, governmental, global battle? Amen. Somebody like don't talk about it. Okay. It's a season of blessing. Like it's going really well. I'm encouraged, I'm hopeful. I'm joyful. All right, you people need to hang out together. Those other people need your help. How many of you are in both right now? You're like, I'm in the middle of it. I've got good and bad going on at the same time. That's the book ends of life. It's battles and blessings. And we're gonna look at how Abraham and his family navigates both together today. And so what we're gonna do, we're gonna get into a chapter of the Bible. You've probably never heard anybody preach on because it's Phil with a bunch of names that no one knows how to pronounce. So what I'm gonna do, I'm gonna say them confidently and quickly. And you're just gonna pretend like I'm doing a good job, 'cause I went to public school and words are hard. And so that's just where we find ourselves today. So here's what we're gonna do. We're gonna jump right in. We're gonna look at the battles first. Genesis 14:1 through 16. So if you woke up and you're like, I hope a middle-aged man, ancient names. That's what I probably answered. It's about to happen. It's going down right now. All right, "In the days of," here we go, "Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Eliazar," we're gonna call him king Chedor. 'Cause I can't say that. "So king Chedor and Tidal, king of Goyim, and these Kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, That is Zoar," of course it is. "And all these joined forces in the valley of Siddim. That is the salt sea. "12 years," that it's an important number. We'll revisit that, "They had served king Chedor but in the 13th year they rebelled. In the 14th year king Chedor and the Kings who were with him came and defeated Rephaim in," uh-oh "Ashteroth-karnaim," Oh, "the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim," yes or no?

- [Crowd] Yes.

- Yeah. None of us know. "And the Horites in the hill country of Seir," some of you're like I know, cling on, I think you got it wrong, all right. You're a nerd Trekkie, you don't get to speak into these things, all right. "And the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El-paran on the border of the wilderness. then they turned back and came to En-mishpat, that is Kadesh, and defeated all the country of the Amalekites and also the Amorites who were dwelling in Hazazon-tamar. The king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, of the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, that is Zoar, went out and they joined the battles," we're looking at a war, "in the valley of Siddim against the king of Chedor, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar, make Shinar great again, "and Arioch king of Eliazar four Kings and five. Now the valley of Sodom

was full of bitumen pits." These are tar pits. "And as the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into the tar pits and the rest fled to the hill country. So the enemy took all the possession of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their provisions. So all their livestock and wealth and went their way. They also took," ta ta ta, here's the big problem. "They took Lot, the son of Abraham's brother." This is where God's people get involved and they're taking captive in war. "Who is dwelling," where? "in Sodom." Should the believer have moved to Sodom answer? No, he's a terrible dad. He's like, "Hey, let's move to the Vegas Strip. You girls can find a job." Terrible idea, terrible idea, horrible idea. "And his possessions and went their way. Then one who would escape came and told Abram the Hebrew," first time, that word appear in your Bible, "who was living by the Oaks of Mamre," ancient site, "the Amite brother of Eshcol and Aner. These are the allies of Abraham." Last slide for this section. "When Abraham heard that his kinsman," his relative, "had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men born in his house," how many assassins? "318." Rambos in the Hebrew. Trust me, I'm a scholar. "And went in pursued as far as Dan. And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah north of Damascus. Then he brought back all the possessions. He also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions and the women and the people." Okay. Here's what's going on. You either there, like what is happening? Here's what's happening. Genesis 3, human beings sin, sin enters the world. And there's a curse. Ever since every generation is trying to figure out how to manage, work around, live under sin and the curse. What we saw earlier in the book in Genesis 4, is that Cain killed his brother Abel. And so conflict is between individuals. Here it is escalating. Now it's between armies. Now you've got military forces, military campaigns, weaponry, strategy, and wars and conflicts, things are getting worse. And the sin and the curse is causing escalation and military buildup. The other thing that we see here is that God knows what is going on geopolitically, and He cares and pays attention. God says, here's the nations, here's their boundaries and borders. Here's their kings and rulers. Here's the current geopolitical climate. Sometimes God's people today will say we shouldn't pay attention to earthly things, just heavenly things. We shouldn't pay attention to politics and conflicts and issues, well God does. And if God does, then God's people should. Now to be sure the kingdom of God should be our highest priority, but to be good citizens, and to care about human life and flourishing, we need to pay attention to what's going on politically and nationally and internationally. And that's what's going on here. It's an international pick from God's perspective of what is an escalating series of regional conflicts. All of this takes place with a number of nations, two of which we know what they are. The others, there's some debate. For sure, Shinar is what today we would call Iraq. And in the ancient world, it was called Babylon. And then when it mentions Elam, today, that is Iran. The other nations were smaller, sort of feudal states that we know far less about. But true or false, we still have some conflicts around Iran and Iraq. And these are their great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandchildren. And Americans, sometimes we're a little cute, we're like, well, let's just fly over there and talk to them. I'm sure we could sort this out. No, they've been fighting for a very long time. Thousands of years of geopolitical conflict between these people groups, and it tends to go back all the way to the days of Abraham. And here's what happens. To me like, that's smart. Why does this matter? Here's what happens. It says that four kings invaded five kingdoms, and overtook them. This is the first invasion of a sovereign nation by another, and a foreign

occupation of a nation in the history of the Bible. So what happens is, there are these nine nations, four align, attack and invade the five and then occupy the five for a total of 12 years. 12 years of foreign occupation, following foreign invasion. Now, what's interesting is, Genesis isn't just about what happened, but about what always happens. And sometimes what happens is people say, "Well you can't just teach through a book of the Bible, you need to pay attention to what's going on in the world and deal with all the real issues in the world." And I've been teaching through books of the Bible for 26 years and what I find is every week, what's in the Bible actually speaks to what's in the world. It just works that way 'cause God is over human history. And his word is not old. It's eternal. It's timeless, therefore, it's always timely. And so what we're seeing here is the invasion of sovereign nations and occupation by foreign invaders. Does this sound like anything you've heard in the news recently? What we see now is we have Russia invading Ukraine. And they're trying to occupy and to be ruler of what was previously a sovereign nation. They wanna topple the government, they want to overtake the people. They want to claim all the resources. It's the exact same thing that's happening here in Genesis, it's the exact same thing. And so ultimately, this is a case study for how we can interpret what's even happening in our own day geopolitically, and what's dominating the headlines at this very moment. And so the four nations come together, and then the five nations after 12 years of occupation and oppression, they rise up and the citizens are fighting back and revolting, seeking to take back their nation and to push the invaders back over their borders. It's the same thing that we're seeing play out on the news currently. This is not unlike World War Two, you've got the Axis and the Allied powers coming together. And ultimately Abraham is gonna be sort of the Winston Churchill in the story, he's going to be the leader of the setting free of those who have been oppressed and invaded. And so part of the reason that Abraham, the father of faith is activated, is his relative Lot, is taken as a prisoner of war, along with his household all of his possessions, and also his wife and his daughters. Just think of this for a moment. Foreign invaders come, they invade and enslave the women and the children, the most horrifying, unconscionable things are likely to be done to those people. And Lot here cannot free his family. So let's talk a little bit about this man Lot. He's going to show up repeatedly through the life of Abraham, he has a lot of problems, he's a lot of drama, the guy has a lot of issues. He's a situation. How many of you have a relative like that? Okay. And if you brought them to church, don't raise your hand. But I mean, just raise your hand in your heart. We just know, we've all got a relative you're like, man, they always got a crisis, an emergency, they make just a cascading series of bad foolish decisions. And then it's just always a lot of work to try to save them from themselves. That's Lot. That's Lot. And so a little bit about Lot. They were together, Abraham and Lot, and God said that He would bless Abraham and bless those who bless him. Well, God fulfilled that they were both so blessed. We look previously in Genesis, that they had so much wealth, so much land, so much livestock, so many members of their extended household and servants, that the land could no longer contain them. So they had to separate. The point is this, you need to have boundaries with your family. So Abraham is like, that's your land, that's my land. That's your business. That's my business. That's your family. That's my family. Those are your livestock. That's my livestock. Those are your employees. Those are my employees. The ultimate lesson there is you can't have a healthy family unless you have healthy boundaries. And so what happens is, though Abraham does something that I think is foolish, something, it's

perhaps an act of faith, but he looks at Lot, and he's like, okay, there's a piece of land here, there's a piece of land there. It's Northern and Southern. And he lets Lot choose what piece of land do you want. I don't think he should have done that because Abraham is the leader. He's the anointed, chosen man of God, he's older, and he is the source of the blessing. But what he tells a lot is you just pick whatever land you want, I'll take whatever's left over. Well, Lot lives by sight, not by faith, and he notices this land is greener, it's got more water, and it's in the desert. And we know what that is like. And if you buy a piece of land, and it's not brown, you're winning. That's a rare miracle right there. And so he looks and he sees green, and he decides I'm gonna take that land. The problem is it's right next to a country or a nation or a people called Sodom. These are not the people you want your kids to go to school with. These are naughty, nasty people. These are the most debased, depraved people in the Old Testament. And if you just keep reading, God's gonna send road tar out of heaven to them. And it's not a blessing. And ultimately, so Lot moves his family there, he shouldn't be there, he should not be there. What we see here is he's moved over the border into Sodom. So when Sodom is invaded, his family is taken captive. And so ultimately, Sodom is a bad place to be and Lot is a bad leader. He's a bad head of household and husband and father. And so what happens is, Abraham is gonna need to deliver him. And what's really weird if you keep reading the storyline, after he gets delivered, where does he go back to? Sodom. How many people you're like, you just got out of rehab, and you went right to the bar. Like you didn't even take a day off. You know, you just got out of that bad relationship with that crazy nut-job boyfriend and then he called you and you went back out with him. We tend to go back to really bad habits and patterns and that's what Lot does. And so we can read the story we can say he's a foolish guy. Or we could say you know what, there's days that we all look a little bit like Lot, that we get out of trouble and we immediately go back into it. Now that being the case, Lot is a believer, but he is not a very courageous or active man in his faith. There's an epistle, a letter in the New Testament, written by Peter, and he says that Lot is a believer. But here's what we don't see. We don't see him worshiping God. Abraham keeps building altars that's literally planting a church. He has hundreds, maybe 1000s of people in his household and he's gonna worship and he's gonna lead his family and household in worship. We never see Lot build an altar. We never see him worship with his family. And we never see him taking his family to Abraham's church, Abraham's altar. He's a guy who does know the Lord but we don't see him praying and seeking God's will. We don't see him worshiping or leading his family in the will of God. And oftentimes there are people like this. And they do know the Lord, but they're not actively pursuing growing relationship and maturity in the Lord. And as a result, they do know the Lord, but they're not making the best decisions and usually, it's their family that pays an incredibly high price. Well, the reason that Abraham and Lot have a relationship is that ultimately Lot's dad died and so Abraham is the closest living male relative. And it seems like he has some sort of obligation that he senses toward Lot, kid doesn't have a dad, I'll be like the father figure in his life. But you need to know this, the relationship between Abraham and Lot is one way, this is not a mutually beneficial relationship, this is not a friendship, Abraham gives, Lot takes. Lot makes bad decisions, Abraham gets involved to clean up the mess that he's made. Lot moves his family to Sodom, gets taken as a captive in war and now Abraham's got to go deliver and liberate him. And you can only have a certain number of these relationships. If you have a one way relationship, where you are always pouring out and

they are always taking, you can only have a certain limited number of those relationships, and oftentimes, we see in the dynamics here, the family system play itself out. Oftentimes, you would not pick someone like this to be in relationship with. But if they're family, you kind of feel stuck with them. If I was picking friends, I wouldn't pick them. If I could just go choose who to do life with, I wouldn't choose to do life with them but they are family. So we're going to try and make it work. And there are only three kinds of relationships: there's healthy relationships, unhealthy relationships, and no relationships, those are your options. So with Lot, he can't have a healthy relationship 'cause Lot's not a healthy person. If you're wise, it's easy to have a healthy relationship with you. Lot is not wise and he's not healthy. So you can't have a healthy relationship with him. So now Abraham's got two choices. He can have an unhealthy relationship with Lot, or he can have no relationship with Lot. Now when it comes to no relationship, you need to know that you should reserve that for people who are evil, right? They're dangerous, is Lot evil? No, he's just foolish. He's not hurting his family. He's just making dumb decisions that allow other people to hurt his family. And so what Abraham decides is, I can't have a healthy relationship, I'm gonna not choose no relationship so we're gonna have an unhealthy relationship. There's wise foolish and evil, healthy relationship, unhealthy relationship, no relationship. The truth is, though, you can only have a limited number of relationships with foolish people, 'cause they're very expensive. They take a lot of time and energy and money. Imagine if Abraham was doing this for all of his relatives. His whole life would be consumed with just caring for the needs of grown men and their families, but he chooses to invest in Lot. And so what we see here then is Abraham decides we're gonna have an unhealthy relationship. And when you have an unhealthy relationship with someone, you need boundaries and consequences. He's already established the boundaries and throughout the rest of the book, you're gonna see the consequences. But what happens here Lot has gotten himself into a position he can't get himself out of, and it includes Abraham's other relatives. This would be like let's say I'm an uncle. And this is my brother, and this is his wife, and these are my nieces and nephews, and, oh, gosh, they got taken prisoner of war. Am I going to be active or passive? Now, what we just saw previously is when it came to his wife, was Abraham active or passive? Very passive. He's on the border of Egypt. He looks at his wife. He's like, oh, baby, you're so good, you're pretty. You look so great. I love your shoes. Thanks for the nails. Hair is amazing. Oh, and by the way, I think we get to Egypt, they're gonna look at you, and they're gonna want you, so they're gonna kill me, so here's what we're gonna do. I'm gonna give you away and you're gonna marry the cult leader who runs Egypt, and you're gonna be his wife, and I'll be alright, so don't worry about me. How many of you ladies are like, "Yeah, I'd stab him?" So he gives his wife away 'cause he doesn't like conflict and he doesn't want to have this dangerous situation. And you would think he would activate 'cause it does say in the story that he gave his wife to the Pharaoh and then he took Abraham's wife into his house. How many of you guys when you see your wife going into another dude's house and it's not for a prayer meeting, how many of you at that point you're like, I will activate right then, like, even if I was passive, that's where I'm activated. Not Abraham. He's like, you know. So God delivers and saves Sarah. But here, now that Lot is taken, Abraham is not going to be passive, he's going to be active. He's gonna do something. He's going to be willing to have the conflict and risk his own life, the very thing he was unwilling previously to do for his wife. This may be him repenting and growing and

saying, I blew it last time, I'm gonna get it right this time. I will say though, this probably frustrated Sarah. She's like, "You let me go and you go get your crazy relatives? You have some fight in your old man, Next time fight for me." And we'll see what happens cause he's gonna get another opportunity with his wife. That's a little coming in the future. But here's the big idea when it comes to faith, faith manifests itself in two ways. And Abraham is called the father of faith, he's the pattern, precedent and prototype of faith in the Bible. And faith is active and passive. Active faith and passive faith are really requiring that you and I know what the will of God is. There are times that God says, don't do anything, don't say anything, I've got this, pray, fast, wait, trust me, I'm gonna go take care of it. This is not for you to do, this is for me to do. You need to be passive and trust that I'll be active. Other times God shows up and He's like, you need to get up and go do something. You can't just sit there, you're part of the plan. You're part of the solution. Trust me, if you go, I go with you. And I'll work through you. And what happens is most people have either active or passive faith. How many of you are passive faith folks? You're like, I fast, I pray, I trust the Lord, I just wait for the Lord. How many of you have passive faith? And I know it's hard, I'm asking you to do something, but raise your hand. How many of your passive faith folks? How many of you are more active? You're like, I don't know what we're doing. But we're doing something. Like you're gonna do something. See my wife, Grace, tends to start more passive faith. She's like, let's pray, let's fast, let's seek the Lord. I'm like, yeah, let's do that after we've acted. And that doesn't end well, just so you know, it's ready, fire, aim. It's not the right sequence. And so we work better together 'cause she's like, well, let's fast and pray and seek the Lord, and then figure out if we're supposed to act, and if so, how, when and where we are to act. And what happens is people will get into a route with either passive or active faith. They will not activate, and God will do something amazing and then they think, okay, this is how I have my relationship with God, I just am passive. And then there are times that they need to be active. Other people are like, "Well, God works through me. And he shows up when I'm active." So every single time they just sort of rush into the battle. But that's not always the answer, sometimes the battle is the Lord's, you need to wait for him to prevail. So Abraham here is gonna activate his faith. And so what we see here, he's called the Hebrew. And this is the first time that this word appears in your Bible and it means outsider, the stranger. It's the oddball, the outlier. It would be similar to the word used in the New Testament, holy. See, everybody does it this way and then you do it that way, you're the outsider, you're the oddball, you're the unique one, you're the outlier. You're the Holy One. So he's the Hebrew, he's not gonna think and act like everybody else, because he thinks and acts on behalf of his God. And basically, here, what we see with Abraham, he's very successful. We tend to in our culture, we're like, well, if people have a lot of land and a lot of employees, and they make a lot of money, and they have a lot of power, that's a bad thing. Sometimes it's because God blessed them. And ultimately, here, God has blessed him. So we learned previously, he had a lot of land, he has livestock, he must have a large farm to feed his entire household. It said that he had gold and silver, and he's got here 318 trained assassins. He's got his own navy seals. He's got his own militia. He's got his own trained soldiers. And it says that they were born in his household. What that means is he raised them like a father. And what that means is they're incredibly loyal to him. How do we know that? Well, 318 assassins in your house, if they want to be in charge they can be. And if they still respect your authority, it's 'cause you're a great leader, and you treat them very well. And within

this, we see this very important principle. If God is going to bless you need to defend it. And oftentimes, if you're like, "Well, I just wish God would bless me," and sometimes it's hard because if God did bless you, would you be able to defend it? Like a marriage is a blessing, but you've got to defend it. Children are a blessing, but you need to defend and protect them. A business is a blessing, but you need to defend and protect it. A church or a ministry is a blessing, but you need to defend and protect it. 'Cause soon as you have something, someone else wants to take it so you've got to defend it. So there's God's blessing and then you're defending. Abraham's Empire is so significant that he has 318 full-time soldiers on his payroll. These are guys that for them, military combat is not a four-year assignment, and they're not reserve you know, in the military. This is their lifelong vocation. These are highly trained warriors and assassins. That's all they do is prepare for war. And the big idea is this, they're gonna be smaller number. It's like David had 400 mighty men and God whittled Gideon's army down to 300. Abraham only as 318. But here's the big idea. It's not how many men are in the fight. It's how much fight is in the men. And ultimately, 318 guys that have drilled their whole life, they've got the right weaponry and strategy, they're going to be far more effective. Think of it like a sporting event, let's say it's basketball, you're like, that team's gonna win, they got 25 guys. If they've never played basketball, and these five guys are all on the NBA, all star list, these five guys are gonna beat those 25 guys, 'cause they know what they're doing and they're prepared. And so ultimately, it's not about the number of people but it's about the quality of people that are in the battle. And the key here is this, the key to every battle is this. It's the logistics. You can have great soldiers, but if they don't have a clear path toward the point of battle, if they don't have the right weaponry, if they don't have the right strategy, if they don't understand the topography and the weather, supplies cannot get to them, they're going to lose. So battles are won and lost off the battlefield. And then they're executed on the battlefield. What's really interesting here with Abraham, he shows up, and he becomes the logistical expert for the military campaign. He's the one who actually brings together the five Kings, and he is the leader of their armies and his. They all defer to him as the military strategist and expert. And this is going to be defending a nation and liberating an oppressed people. And what he does he attacks at night, we read. And the point is this trust the Lord, but have a good plan. So if you're like, "I just trust the Lord." Well trust the Lord and have a good plan. Why does he attack at night? Element of surprise, enemy can't see you coming. Most of your opposition is probably asleep. And what we see here is that Abraham is a warrior and he is willing to fight. And at this point, this may shock you. He's 75 years old. He rides over 100 miles into battle. How many of you guys are 75? You're like, I won't get on a ladder, right? You're like, I won't do it. If you shoot me with a Nerf gun, I might die. 75 is a thing. He's 75, rides over 100 miles, takes over the military forces of five small kingdoms and he rides into battle. And what's interesting is he pushes the invading, occupying forces over 100 miles. You know how strong you gotta be to fight somebody for 100 miles? Every day they're running and you're like I'll see in the morning. It's track shoes on son. Until you cross over the border and you vacate these sovereign nations, we are going to bring the fight to you. And he drives them over 100 miles and it says that they fall into the tar pits. And you could read that and be like those are the dumbest soldiers ever. Nobody's looking at a tar pit going let's jump in and see what happens. What happens is you're driven into a tar pit. What that means is that Abraham understands the topography and he's like,

okay, when you push, you push those troops toward that region, and we're going to encircle them and they have two choices. They're gonna die or jump in the tar pit. And so what he's doing, he is strategically driving all of his enemies toward death. It's gonna say in Hebrews that he slaughtered them. He slaughtered them. And so to point out the obvious, Abraham, true or false, is not a pacifist. He's more of a pass the fist. That's more Abraham, okay? And a lot of times people read the Bible, even Christians, they be like "I think God's people should not engage in conflict and war" it's like, "Well, yeah, good luck with that." And if somebody shows up at your house, you're gonna call somebody who's not a pacifist. Because here's the big idea. Evil never stops itself. So evil needs to be stopped. Evil never stops itself, it needs to be stopped. So that's why Abraham is active. This is why we believe in law. We believe in law enforcement, we believe in police officers, we believe in soldiers, we believe in borders because we believe in the Bible, which tells us that sin and the curse is real and evil won't stop itself. And those who don't believe the Bible and think we're basically essentially good, they're like, "We don't need borders, we don't need soldiers. We don't need police officers. And let's see what happens." Well, we did a little experiment on that. And it literally is hell on earth. They're like, "Oh, everybody's getting shot and everything's getting ruined, and businesses are cratering, and cities are emptying. And that was only 15 minutes of the experiment." Give it generations, and there's nobody left. Because evil doesn't stop itself and it has to be stopped. And so ultimately, that's what we see in the example of Abraham. And I would say this as well, our God is not a pacifist, we just saw, that God saw that everyone was evil all the time and he flooded the earth, and He killed everybody, except for eight people. God said, they're not gonna stop, so I'm gonna stop them. So in this, this is a case study for what we're seeing right now. I tend not to talk a lot about political candidates or political issues. I think God's people shouldn't go left or right, they should go up. Say okay, God, what do you say? What's your kingdom like? What's your word, say? And then apply that to the situation. So we're doing here, we're going up. And we're looking at this case study in Genesis 14, of invasions and then liberating an oppressed people. And ultimately, we're seeing this play out right now in Russia and Ukraine. And it raises a question of something called just war. And some people will wrongly translate the 10 commandments into Thou shalt not kill. No it says, Thou shalt not murder. There's a big difference between murder, taking an innocent life and killing, defending from someone who wants to take innocent life. So let me just explain to you something called just war. It's something that philosophers, Christian theologians, ethicists and others have postulated and it is predicated on seven things. Number one, is the person in the campaign, a legitimate authority? So in this case, the five kings and kingdoms that were invaded and overtaken, are they a legitimate authority? Yes, they're sovereign nations and they're the leaders of their government, and they've been invaded. So they have the right to fight back. Does Abraham have legitimate authority to go to battle to liberate his family? Yeah, if somebody takes your family hostage, feel free to get involved. Second thing, is the act defensive, not offensive? Offensive would be those nations that invaded the sovereign nations. Defensive is the sovereign nations defending their sovereignty and seeking to expel their opponents. So this is a defensive not an offensive modality. In addition, is the cause noble, is it a noble cause? Is what Abraham leading a noble cause? Yeah. Four Nations invade five, enslaved the people for 12 years. And they've taken everybody's private property, and they have taken their women and children. And

so it is a noble cause to go set captives free. And Abraham is doing this as a man, is it noble for a man to go put himself in harm's way to protect and defend women and children? Yes. And I know this is crazy 'cause you're pastor Mark seems like you believe in male and female. 100%. And I believe that men should use their strength to defend in love and protect and serve women and children. And if you don't, you're not in glory. A lot of guys are like, "well, I don't believe in masculinity." It's 'cause you're beta male and you've gotta repent to that. So, ultimately, ultimately, it says in 1 Corinthians 16, it says, "Act like men" okay? Two things I'll pull out of that there are men. And they should act like it. So when the bad guys show up to hurt the women and the children, the good guys got to show up to protect the women and the children, that's a noble cause. And if you can't see that, you went to the wrong College. Okay. Number four, is it proportional force? So this is where dictators and thugs and crazy demon-possessed cult leaders like in North Korea, they want nuclear weapons because what they want, they want to always threaten disproportional force. Well, if you shoot a bullet, we'll shoot a nuke, I guess not proportional force. And here, does Abraham use and do those aligned with him use proportional force? Yeah. They've got bows and arrows, and they're fighting hand to hand combat. This is proportional force. In addition, number five, are civilians targeted or just soldiers? Is Abraham here targeting civilians? No. He's just targeting soldiers. Now, the invading soldiers, they targeted civilians, they took Lot and his family. And so the question is, are you going to remove the soldiers so that the civilians can have freedom? Or are you attacking the civilians so that you can oppress them? In addition, number six, does it preserve more life than it takes? The answer here is, yes, we're going to lose some soldiers, but we're going to liberate five kingdoms. So ultimately, if it's some soldiers for five kingdoms, and if these kingdoms rule, or rather, if the four kingdoms ruling over the five, if this continues for generations, now we're looking at generations of human suffering. So to remove them today, so that there is no oppression tomorrow, that is, in fact, preserving more life than it takes. And then the seventh causation for just war is, is it a last resort? Have you tried everything else? The answer is, it's 12 years. It's 12 years, and they're not leaving. It's not getting better, okay? Based upon this, what's happening right now, in Russia and Ukraine, it's not just war. It was unprovoked. They're targeting civilians. It's disproportional force by an army that has far more technological capacities. It's unjust. It's just unjust. I don't care where you're on the political spectrum and to say, in a day, like, when these people invade and bomb these people, that's wrong. And these people have a right to push back. And both sides are fighting and one side is just and the other is unjust. And I'm not saying one side is perfect, and the other side is perfect but I'm saying that one side has the right to defend itself, and the other does not have the right to oppress the other. And the case study here is Genesis 14. And so ultimately, we need to think biblically, not just politically, not just according to our ideology, but according to God's will. And here what Abraham does true or false, good thing, it's a good thing. It's the right thing to do. And as a result, God will bless him for it. That's how we know that he did the will of God. There's a battle and immediately after that, there's a blessing because what Abraham did, was good in God's sight. So we move from the battle to the blessing. And I wanna encourage you, some of you right now, you're in the battle may not be to this magnitude or level, but you've got a health battle, you've got a financial battle, you got a spiritual battle, you've got a battle of some sort of kind, and God He's asking you to be activated in your faith, to push through it, to fight through it, and if you do on the other side,

perhaps for you, as there was for him, there'll be a blessing. So here's what we read, Genesis 14:17 through 24, "After his return from the defeat of King Chedor, and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh, that is the Kings Valley." So after a war, the victorious leaders gather for the peace treaty and the talk about what comes next. And here comes a guy out of nowhere. "And Melchizedek," who's this guy? He wasn't in the genealogies, he wasn't just listed and he's the king, he's the king of where? Salem. You're like, what? That's actually short for Jerusalem. It's like if you're new here people are like, I'm going to flag, like where's flag? It's Flagstaff. Why don't you say Flagstaff? 'Cause you know, staff it's a Lot. So I just say flag. Where are you going? I'm going to Salem. Where is that? That's Jerusalem. Oh, okay. Short for Jerusalem. "Brought out," what? Bread and? What's that sound like? Sounds like communion. "He was a priest," what? We don't have priest yet. I'll explain all this, "Of God Most High." That's the real God. "And he," that is Melchizedek, "blessed him, Abraham and said, "Blessed be Abraham, by God, Most High, Possessor of heaven on earth, and blessed to be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies in your hand." Abraham, God told me to tell you why you won. 'Cause he went to war with you. Goes on, and then you gave him a tenth of everything. "And the king of Sodom said to Abraham, 'Give me the persons but take the goods for yourself.'" I wanna take all these people as slaves and you can have the gold. "But Abraham said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted up my hand to the Lord to God Most High." I made a note I made a vow, I made a prayer. Paul says in the New Testament, what men's to lift up holy hands in prayer. Since I prayed to God about this, "He's the Possessor of heaven and earth, and I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, "I've made Abraham rich." God is gonna bless me and nobody can take credit for it. It's his glory alone. "I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. let Aner Eshcol and Mamre take their share." Let me explain here. And so all of a sudden the battle is over. The Kings get together. And it's the peace treaty. Okay, what next? Where do we draw the boundaries? Who gets the spoils of war? What is the arrangement and agreement going forward? In addition to the five kings, and Abraham, here comes this other guy, Melchizedek. He's one of the most intriguing, international man of mystery in all of human history. Now, let me just talk briefly here, the king of Sodom is there. And he is a guy who is just leading the most debased corrupt culture and what he wants to do is he wants to get in on Abraham's blessing. And what Abraham says is, we're not doing business together, I don't want anything from you, because I can't be obligated to you. If I take from you, you're going to then want to take from me, and I don't want to be indebted to you, because I can't trust you. And so ultimately, the king of Sodom is typical of someone who wants God's blessing, but does not want God. There are people who are like, I wanna be healed, but I don't want God. I wanna be blessed but I don't want God. I want my life to go the way I want it to go but I just don't want God to be in charge of it. That's the king of Sodom. So he comes to Abraham, Abraham's like, look, this is where we have one strategic opportunity to work together and now that is concluded. You go do your thing, I'll go do my thing. I'm not going to partner with you. Now ultimately, what I appreciate about Abraham, he doesn't impose his convictions and conscience on the unbeliever. He doesn't say, Well, I give a tenth to the Lord and you need to do the same. He's like, you don't know the Lord, I do. You got your way of doing things, I got my way of doing things, we worked together on this one opportunity of mutual interest and now our

business dealings are concluded. And the point is this, sometimes the best person for the job doesn't know the Lord. Christians make a strategic mistake where they think that everything they do needs to only be with believers. If you're like, I need heart surgery, I got to find a Christian. No, find a good surgeon. If they know the Lord, bonus round. Sometimes it's like I need a Christian contractor. No, you need a good contractor. And if they happen to know the Lord, that's a bonus round. There are certain things that it's okay to just partner with do business with for a moment, someone who doesn't know the Lord and in this occasion, they had common interest and common enemy. So Abraham brings together the five kings, including the king of Sodom, and they have common interest and that is we all have people that are being victimized by the same enemy. So we're going to band together until we get our freedom and then we're gonna go back to our independence. And so for this reason, I mean I'm sure they're different but the guys in Sodom and the other guys, they're good at fighting, they're good at that. So you know these guys sure. I kinda see it like, they got a camel, they got a big flagpole on the back and it's keep Shinar great again and you know, build back Sodom better, 12 points. They don't agree on everything, but here's the thing. They're like, I'm here for the fight, me too. Who do you wanna fight? Well, I wanna fight those guys. Well, then we're on the same team. But when it's over, we're different teams, we're different teams. So who is this guy Melchizedek? He's an interesting guy. His name literally means King of righteousness. And what's really curious, he appears in no genealogy. We looked at genealogies in Genesis 5, 9, 10. He doesn't show up, he comes out of nowhere. In addition, he's a prophet, priest and king. These are the three offices of Jesus Christ. As a prophet, he shows up and he speaks authoritatively revelation from the Lord. He says, God sent me God bless you. And the reason you won the war is God gave you the victory. That's a prophet. It's like, well, God told me through you why we won. That's a prophecy. That's an insight. In addition to being a prophet, he's also a priest. He's called a priest. What's interesting here, priests don't exist. Priests don't start for many years with a guy named Aaron. And it's passed on from one generation to the next. You're born into a priestly family. And it's called the Levitical priesthood. Well, it doesn't even exist yet. And he's a priest. So he's the first priest. In addition, he's a king, he rules over Jerusalem. Jerusalem, doesn't exist. 'Cause see, the promise to Abraham is you're gonna have a son, they don't have a son yet. Through this son is going to come a nation, the nation of Israel, they will live on a piece of land called the promised land. And through that nation will come a blessing to the nations of the earth, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The centerpiece of the nation of Israel will be the city of Jerusalem. But Abraham doesn't even have a son yet. So we're a long way from a nation with a city called Jerusalem. So the question is, where does this guy come from? He's come from the future, did he show up in a DeLorean? Like, Who is this guy, right? Where does he come from? In addition, what we see is that he is called the King of Peace, which is similar to Jesus in the Bible. He's called the Prince of Peace and the King of Peace. And he shows up and they have bread and wine, it looks like they're taking communion. Melchizedek is greater than Abraham. And the question is, how could anyone in that day be greater than Abraham? Abraham was chosen of God. He is the head of the Abrahamic covenant. And what we see here with his military campaign is strategy. It's the beginning of the nation of Israel. Israel begins with Abraham as a business leader, church planter, husband, father, and military strategist warrior. That's the beginning of the nation of Israel. So he is great. And God told him, I will make your name great.

So God said, you're gonna be great. And now here, Melchizedek shows up and he is greater, and Abraham was great. How do we know that? It is Melchizedek who blesses Abraham. The greater always blesses the lesser, you need to know this, that blessing goes down, blessing goes down, it doesn't come up. So blessing comes down from God, to the leader, and then it should flow through the leader to those who are under their authority. So this is why God blesses mom and dad, and then mom and dad should bless the kids. And then one day, grandma and grandpa and mom and dad should bless the grandkids, blessing flows down. Anybody who looks at people under their authority, their kids or their grandkids, they're like, you need to bless me, it's like, no, no, it goes down. God forgives you, you forgive them. God loves you. You love them. God is generous to you, you're generous to them. God serves you, you serve them. When Melchizedek shows up, and he confers the blessing on Abraham, what he's saying is, I'm in authority over you, God has appointed me to be greater than you, which is kind of shocking. In addition, what we see in this interaction is we see Abraham responding by giving a tenth to Melchizedek. What is that? That's the tithe. It's the beginning of the tithe. The tithe literally means a tenth. So people are like can I tithe 4%? It's like, can I be a meat eating vegetarian? I don't understand the question. That's not what that is. 10% is the tithe and 10% is first fruits, you give the first invest to the Lord. Our family has always seen tithing as a floor, not a ceiling. It's where you start, not where you end. Tithing is just not stealing. Anything above that is generosity. And what happens is when it comes to the tithe, people ask, what right does God have to take 10% of my wealth? Issue is that's the problem. You think it's your wealth. And so ultimately, the question is not why would I give God 10% of what is mine? The question is, why would God give me 90% of what is his? See, God could have reversed it. He's like, okay, here's how it's gonna work. It's all mine, we're gonna do a 90-10 split. You're like, dang it. And you get 90, yes. When you see it all is the Lord's, you're excited that you get to share in what rightly belongs to him. And here's the big idea, 90% with God's blessing, is better than 100% without it, okay? And that's why giving is an act of faith. It's like, well, if I give to the Lord first, well, then you're gonna have to get yourself organized and architected, you can't live like an American, just rack up debt and vote for people to pay it off. You're actually gonna have to be a steward of your resources. And you're going to have to give first and best to the Lord, 'cause here's how I look at it. I look at it, the government doesn't give me a choice, they just take. And I'm not super stoked about what they do with my money. I'm just throwing it out there. Right? So it's like, if the government isn't gonna give me a choice, and God does give me a choice, why wouldn't my enthusiastically fund people meeting Jesus and having Jesus as their King and furthering the kingdom of God? And so at the end of the day, this is the beginning of the tithe. And Melchizedek is going to receive from Abraham a tenth of everything, which is a lot. So that being said, here's the question, who was Melchizedek? Okay? And somebody of you are like I know. No, you don't. No, you don't. How many of you are nerds, and, okay, one of you is a nerd, okay. This is where we have our moment to serve the nerds, okay? And I'm a total nerd, just you know. So if you wanna study Melchizedek, we can't get into the whole thing. You read Genesis 14, Psalm 110 and Hebrews 5 through 7, which is a commentary on the Old Testament. I've got a study guide, you go to realfaith.com. It's free. I do daily devotions. I love helping people study the Bible. There's more there. But who is Melchizedek? So we'll read Hebrews 7: 1 through 3, which is a commentary on Genesis 14 in the New Testament. It says, "Melchizedek, king of

Salem, priest to the Most High God met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings." Abraham did want to the kings? Slaughter. Okay. He's not a pacifist. Let's hug it out. No. Get in the tar pit. "Slaughter of the kings and blessed him and to Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything." So it's just telling us exactly what we just read in Genesis 14. "He is first by translation of his name, that is King of righteousness and then he is also king of Salem, Jerusalem, that is the King of Peace." Now here's I underlined it, just so you focus on it. Here's where the debate happens. "He is without a father or mother or genealogy having neither beginning of days nor end of life," so it sounds like it's Jesus and then here, it sounds like maybe it's not Jesus, "but resembling the Son of God, he continues as a priest forever." So who's Melchizedek? Lots of speculation. The weirdest was there was an ancient cult called the Melchizedekians, they only lasted 20 years, I think 'cause they had a branding problem. They're like, what's the name of your group? I know it's really long. We're the Melchizedekians. The Melchizedekians thought that Melchizedek was greater than Jesus. And just like were made the image and likeness of God, they thought that Jesus was made in the image likeness of Melchizedek so if you wanna be saved, you need to worship Melchizedek. Okay, so some people can get really weird with this. Some people say it's an angel, the two primary views are well, let me say this, it could mean one of two things when it speaks of his genealogy and his ancestry in its history. Number one, he's not human, that he doesn't have an earthly mother or father, he doesn't have a beginning or end. He's not a human being is a divine being. The other is, it's talking here about the family line of Genesis. That he's not part of the genealogies of Genesis, and he's not part of the Levitical priesthood. He's not a descendant of Aaron. He stands apart and alone. That would set the stage for the coming of Jesus. Hebrew says elsewhere that he is our Great High Priest, but he's not a physical descendant of Aaron. He's not from the Levitical priesthood. That being said, there are two primary ways that Christians will interpret this the first is typology. The second is Christophany . So just let me nerd with you for a moment. So prophecy is God telling us the future because God knows and rules the future. About 20% of your Bible at the time it was written was prophecy. It was God telling us what was going to happen in the future. Now, prophecy comes in two forms: visual and verbal. Prophecy that is verbal, someone speaks or they write what God reveals, that's how we got the Bible. The second form of prophecy is not verbal, it's visual. God sends a person or an image, and it points to a greater reality coming in the future. And so what typology is, it's a visual prophecy. It's a picture of something greater that is coming as the greater reality. So I'll give you an example of typology thus far in Genesis. So there's Adam, and he is the father of mankind. And in him, we all fall into sin. Jesus is the greater Adam. He's the father of the new humanity, and in Him, we are forgiven of sin. So Adam is a type of Jesus. In addition, we saw Cain killed Abel in Genesis Chapter 4. Abel loved and worshiped the Lord, Cain was jealous and murdered him. So Abel is the first martyr in the Bible and in the human history. Jesus comes as the greater Abel. Abel is a picture pointing to Jesus. Jesus comes and he loves and worships and serves the Lord, his jealous, angry brothers murder him. And so Jesus is the greater Abel. And Abel is a picture of what happened to Jesus. We saw with the life of Noah, that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, and then he prepared a means of salvation through judgment. Jesus comes as the greater Noah, He preaches, and He provides for us a means of salvation through judgment. In addition, Abraham is a type of Jesus Christ. Here's the big idea. The Bible's about Jesus.

Okay, we learned to Genesis 1:1, in the beginning God, that God is Jesus Christ. They come and argue with Jesus in John Chapter 5. And he says, you think you know the Scriptures, you don't know them, they're about me. The point is this, if you don't love Jesus, you don't understand the Bible. You don't know Jesus, you don't understand Bible. If you're not following Jesus, you don't understand the Bible. And so with Abraham, he is a type of Jesus, he was told, leave your father in your home, go to a faraway place so that you can be a blessing to the nation's. Jesus is the greater Abraham. He leaves his father and His home in heaven and He comes to be the blessing to the nation's promised through Abraham. The point of this, some people will say that Melchizedek is a type of Jesus, he's a picture and a portrait pointing to the coming of Jesus as a greater reality. The other would be a Christophany. A Christophany is that Jesus is eternally God's second member of the Trinity, He rules and reigns forever in heaven and every once in a while He'll show up on the earth. This is almost like, let's say a big films coming out, they'll send trailers, and you're like, "Oh, that looks interesting. I can't wait till that comes out." Throughout the Old Testament, there are times that Jesus shows up before his birth to the Virgin Mary, and it's a bit of a trailer, the Messiah is coming. And so we're gonna see this in Genesis 18, Abraham has a meal with a number of men and then he finds that one of them was the Lord. You're gonna see this in Genesis 32, there's a guy named Jacob, he's gonna wrestle all night with God. And then at the end, the guy he's wrestling with, well, he doesn't know it's God thinks it's a guy. So at the end of the night, the guy touches his hip, and he's crippled, and he's walking with a limp for the rest of his life, it's Jesus way of going, I could have taken you at any point. And what he says is I wasn't wrestling with men, I was wrestling with God. So there are times that Jesus just shows up. That being said, is it a typology or a Christophany? Yes, it's one of those for sure. So what I would say is this, there are things in the Bible as well as things in your life, that you're going to need to take a box and write this word on it mystery. Just put in there and go, it might be this, it might be that I'm not sure. How many of you have had something in your life, you're like, I really don't know what that was about. We live by faith, not by sight, and one day we will see. And until then, we just need to wait patiently. You need to have this category for your Bible and your life. Now, that being said, the one thing we can be sure of, and it's all of this is pointing to Jesus. And so let me summarize with this. As you read the story, it's not just a little story, it's a little story that's part of a big story. And that is the story of the Bible and the story of Jesus Christ. As we read the story, the big idea is this, the world that we live in, it's Sodom. How many of you, you look at America, like it's kind of Sodomish, right? The sodomites if they logged on to the internet, they'd be like, "Oh, those people are nasty." So our world is Sodomish. And we start as Lot. We make a lot of bad decisions, we get ourselves, literally, taken as a captive in spiritual war and then we are overtaken by Satan and demons and sin and death and we are captives and we cannot set ourselves free. As you read the story, if you wanna emotionally enter in say, I start where Lot started. And then Jesus comes as the greater Abraham. He leaves His father and His heavenly home, and He rides to the earth with an angelic army. When you hear Him called the Lord of hosts, that's the Lord of the angelic army. And Jesus comes to go to war against Satan and demons, and to set captives free. Captives who could not liberate themselves from Satan, sin and death. The way Jesus does this, He substitutes Himself in our place for our sins. Colossians 2: 13 through 15, says that when He died on the cross, He died for you. And the

record of all of your sin was nailed to the cross with Him and He defeated Satan and He disarmed Satan's control of your life and He set you free to live as a citizen of His kingdom, and a worshiper of Him as King. The first time that Jesus came, He came as a prophet as the word of God, and He came as a priest to make intercession and mediation between us and the people. He brings the blessing down and the forgiveness from God. Now we are awaiting the Second Coming of Jesus. When Jesus comes again He will come as King. The Bible says that He will ride into war, riding a white horse called Faithful and True. It says that a sword will proceed from His mouth in Revelation 19 with which to slay the nations. And when the Lord Jesus returns, it will be in glory, not humility. He came first time as prophet and priest, He's coming last time is king, to set up a kingdom that will never end. He will slaughter all who are against Him, He will set all of his captives free, and even set us free from captivity to death, into eternal resurrection life. And He will bring with him something called the New Jerusalem 'cause He is the King of Jerusalem, and Heaven and Earth will come together, and everyone and everything will be ruled by Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace together forever, amen. So what do we do in the meantime? We build an altar. And you need to know that Trinity Church, this is an altar. This is an altar that was built by our family for a church family, thank you for coming to the altar. In addition, we're gonna partake of communion, the bread and the wine, reminding us of the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ, the same thing that Melchizedek and Abraham had together. And in addition, we're going to give our tithes and offerings, and we're going to worship and we're going to worship the God that we trust in by faith, until we see Him writing into history to set us free forever by side. Father, thank you for an opportunity to teach the Word of God. Thank you that it's all about Jesus. Thank You that your word is timeless so it's always timely. Thank you that Jesus is the hero of history. He's the hero of Scripture, and He is the hero of our own life and family. And God, we thank you that we see that even though Lot made some bad decisions that you delivered his family. I pray for deliverance for people, marriages and families right now, as we come to worship Jesus, our Prophet who tells us the truth, our priest who intercedes for us faithfully, and our King who is coming again to slay our enemies, and we wait for that day Lord Jesus and until then we pray in Your name, amen.