

LESSON 15

The Meeting with Melchizedek and the Covenant with Abram

Genesis 14:17-15:21

BEFORE WE BEGIN, we remember that Abram, with strength from his heavenly Father, freed his nephew Lot, along with the captives from Sodom. But Lot did not learn a lesson. He went back to that evil city. God had a more serious lesson to teach him.

Read Genesis 14:17-24

LESSON OUTLINE

A. The Meeting with Melchizedek

1. After the enemy armies were conquered, the king of Sodom and the other kings hiding in the mountains came out to greet Abram. And suddenly a new king entered the picture. His name was Melchizedek, and he was called the King of Salem (which means peace), and Priest of the Most High God.
2. We do not know the history of Melchizedek. He was not descended from the line of Abram, but probably from the line of Japheth, Noah's son, for some of Japheth's God-fearing descendants were still in the land of Canaan. Melchizedek ruled his people, who were a small God-fearing nation in the middle of the wicked Canaanites, as king-priest under God.
3. Melchizedek brought bread and wine to Abram; and as Priest of the Most High God, he blessed Abram. Verse 20 tells us that Abram gave Melchizedek tithes: that is, a tenth part of the spoils of the battle he had just fought.

Why?

- a. Other passages in the Bible tell us that Melchizedek was a picture – a type – of Christ. In Hebrews 7 we read, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek;" and we read that Melchizedek was "made like unto the Son of God;" and "abideth a priest continually."
 - b. So when Abram gave Melchizedek the tenth part of the spoils, he was saying that all the spoils of battle belonged to Melchizedek, because he was a type of Jesus, to whom everything in heaven and earth belong. Abram understood that Melchizedek was a type of Christ, and that Melchizedek was a greater priest-king than he was.
4. After a wonderful time with Melchizedek, Abram had to deal with the wicked king of Sodom. The king of Sodom offered to give him a big reward

for rescuing his city and winning a victory, but Abram would not take even a shoe lace, lest the king of Sodom would say, "I made Abram rich." He did not want the riches of evil men.

Read Genesis 15:1-6

B. God's Appearance to Abram

1. This appearance happened some years after the battle with the four kings from the East. Abram was nearly eighty-five years old when God came to him, and still the promise that his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan had not come true. Abram did not have even one son, and he was becoming very old, almost too old to have children.

2. The reason that Abram and Sarai had no son was not that they lived in sin. No, they had repented from their sin and weakness in Egypt, they had come back and lived as strangers in the land of Canaan; Abram had the faith and courage to fight the four kings, and he had built altars as a witness to the heathen people around him.

3. Now was the time for God to comfort him, and He came to Abram in a vision*. In this vision while Abram was awake, he was "in the spirit" and saw spiritual, heavenly things. But in the vision he also saw and handled real things.

- a. God first told Abram that He was his shield*, his protection, to keep all dangers from him. God was also his reward*, the gift of Himself God gave to Abram, the gift of forgiveness, peace, and all His blessings.
- b. Next, in the vision Abram talked with God about the problem which troubled him most in his life: he had no son. Maybe his servant Eliezer could be his son?
- c. God gave the answer. He took Abram outside to look at the stars, and promised that Abram's seed would be as many as the stars which he could not count. This seed would be born from Abram's son. Abram could not understand how God would do this, but he believed by faith.

Read verses 7-21

4. Abram asked the question you and I would ask: "How will I know?" He knew the Lord would do it all for him, but how will God keep His promise? In the vision, God showed him. This is what God told Abram to do:

- a. Take three animals, each three years old: a heifer*, a she-goat, and a ram. Abram must kill the animals, divide them in half, and lay the halves opposite one another, in rows. At the end of one row he must put a dove,

which he had killed, and at the end of the other, a pigeon. Remember that Abram did this all in a vision.

b. When the birds of prey swept down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

5. Abram knew what this part of the vision meant. In those days, when people made agreements of friendship or of promises, they walked between the parts of the animals. And if they made promises to one another, they said they would rather die, as these animals had died, than break their promises.

6. Abram's vision must have lasted from the night before, when he saw the stars, through the next day, when he saw the animals, until sunset, verse 12. Then, when the sun went down, Abram saw a smoking furnace and a burning lamp.

C. The Meaning of Abram's Vision

1. What was God's meaning of these rows of dead animals? God was showing Abram that He had made a covenant of friendship and of promise with him, which would look forward to the promise of the birth of Jesus. He would send salvation. God alone made the covenant, and He made all the promises. And the vision meant that God would pass through the pieces of the dead animals to show that He would keep His promise; and that He would die rather than break His promise. How did God pass through the halves of the animals?

a. In a smoking furnace which was a picture of God's anger as He burned the wicked with fire. That is the way God always treats the wicked – in anger.

b. In a burning lamp which was a picture of the light of salvation He gives to His people.

2. What did all this mean? When God passed through the pieces, He showed Abram and us that He did have to die to save His people. When? At the cross, when the Son of God shed His blood for our sins. God was showing Abram the story of salvation.

3. The birds of prey which Abram chased away had a meaning, too. They were pictures of the power of sin and hell which try to take God's people away from God.

Discuss how we have to fight
the birds of evil each day.

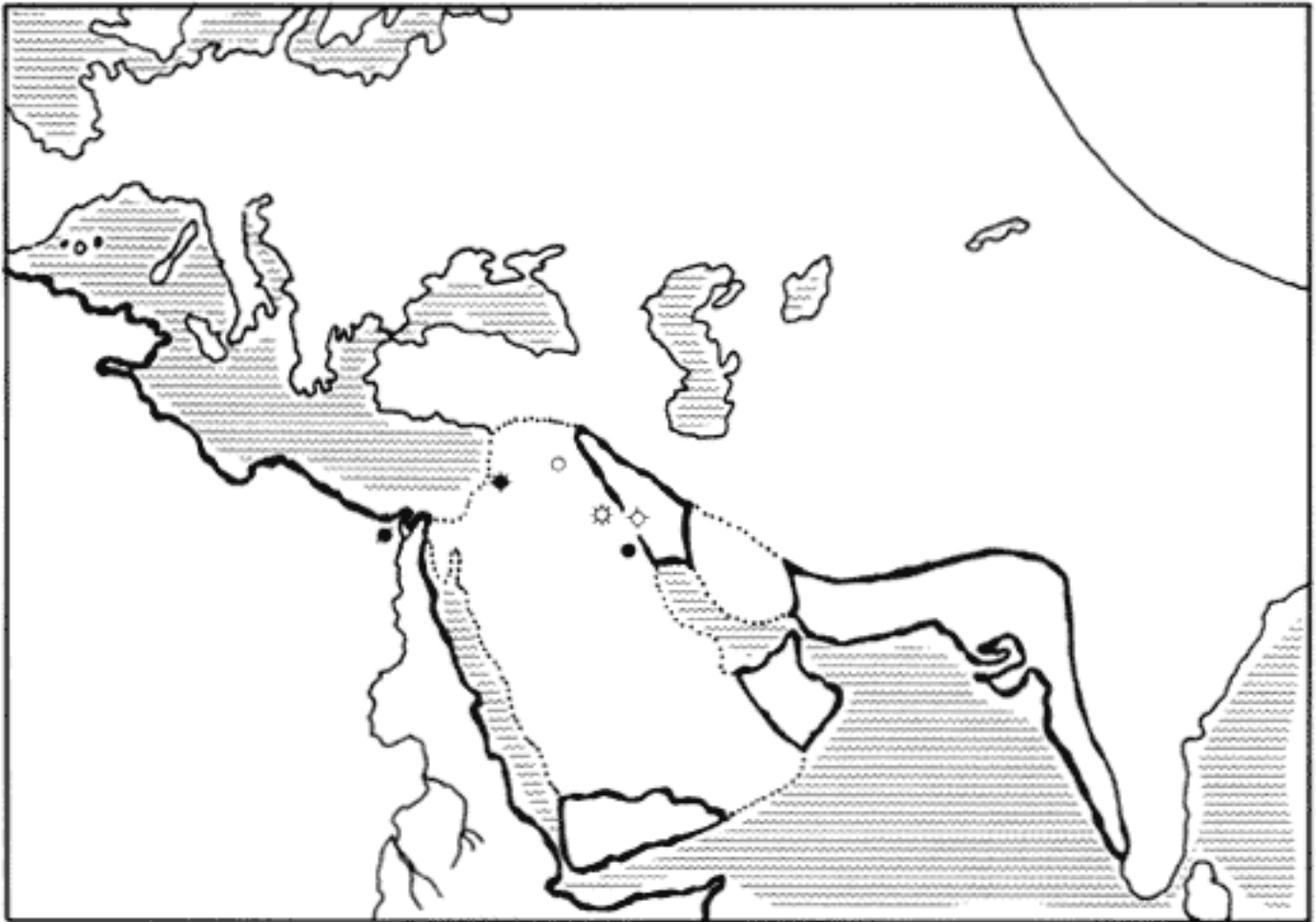
For a while, Abram felt a horror and great darkness — a picture of the dark days ahead for all of God's people.

5. At the end of the vision, God passed through the horror of darkness — a picture of the darkness of the cross, where Christ passed through death for us.

DO NOT FORGET that the vision God gave to Abram is for us, too. It is God's way of teaching us the beautiful truths and the happiness of our salvation.

WORD STUDIES

1. vision — a revelation from God to someone while he is awake
2. shield — a protection from danger
3. reward — a gift
4. heifer — a young cow



1. Print Shinar next to the \diamond . (The whole area was the Plain of Shinar.)
2. Print Babel next to the \odot .
3. Print Ur next to the \bullet .
4. Print Haran next to the \circ .
5. Print Canaan next to the \star .
6. Print Egypt next to the \blacksquare .
7. Follow the coloring instructions very carefully. Using pencil crayons:

Color the pieces of land bordered with heavy lines yellow. Ham's descendants lived in these lands. _____

Color the pieces of land bordered with dotted lines green. Shem's descendants lived in these lands.

Color the rest of the land, outlined in lighter lines, a pale red or purple. Japheth's descendants lived in these lands. _____

Color the seas and rivers light blue.

Now you can see how God scattered the descendants of Noah.

1. Print Tigris next to the ◇ .
2. Print Euphrates next to the ☼ .
- These rivers come together near Ur.
3. Print Ur next to the ● .
4. Print Babylon (a later name for Babel) next to the ○ .
5. Print Haran next to the ◆ .
6. Print Shechem next to the ✨ .
7. Print Bethel next to the ◆ .
8. Print Egypt next to the ■ .
9. Print Hebron next to the △ .

With pencil, trace Abram's journey from Ur to Babylon, to Haran, to Shechem, to Bethel, to Egypt, back to Bethel, to Hebron.

With pencil crayon, color all the land area one color. You may choose the color. Color the seas and trace the rivers in blue.

