

Wednesday Morning Devotional on September 4, 2024

Passage: Genesis 14:1-24

Without God, the human world becomes like the animal kingdom.

In Genesis 14, we read about Abraham rescuing his nephew Lot. The story begins with a war between an alliance of four nations and five nations. The four nations were located near Babylon, while the five were in the region of the Jordan River. Though the alliance of five nations stopped paying tribute to the more powerful Babylonian nations, they were swiftly defeated and plundered.

The purpose of this war is made clear in verse 11: “They carried off all the goods and provisions.”

Human history has often been a history of war. In the Garden of Eden, God provided everything, but once humanity was expelled, people had to work to survive. Unfortunately, one way humans sought to live without working was by taking from others, leading to wars and conflict.

Where God is absent, the world becomes driven by materialism and the law of survival of the fittest, much like the animal kingdom. History teaches us this truth time and time again.

In contrast, where God is present, we see people living in the relationships God intended—marked by respect and love. Abraham exemplifies this when he puts God first and allows Lot to choose the better land. This act of generosity reflects Abraham’s trust in God over material wealth, leading to peaceful and loving relationships.

When we prioritize God and let go of material concerns, it may seem like we’re losing out. But in the end, Abraham received more blessings, including vast land, from God.

On the other hand, those who prioritize material wealth without God, like the four nations from Mesopotamia, find themselves in a cycle of destruction and tragedy (verse 12).

The Bible shows us, through the contrast between Abraham and the actions of the Mesopotamian nations, that living for others with love leads to joy and peace, while a life focused on materialism brings only destruction.

When we love and serve others, as God commands, we experience happiness and maintain healthy relationships. Without God, however, materialism leads to destruction and ruin, as the Word of God teaches us.

Glory Belongs to God Alone

When Abraham returns victorious from battle, King Melchizedek meets him and attributes the victory to God. Abraham humbly agrees and gives a tenth of the spoils to Melchizedek.

Some Bible scholars believe that Melchizedek may have been a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.

Here, Abraham sets an example for us. Despite his victory, he doesn't become prideful but acknowledges that God deserves the credit for his success.

Mature children of God are those who give all the glory to God and confess that He is the one who accomplished everything.

War, which seeks to take from others, goes against God's command for humanity to work for a living and, even more, violates His greatest commandment to love our neighbors.

God's command to love one another leads to joy and satisfaction, while conflict and selfishness bring only tragedy and destruction, as today's passage teaches us.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious and loving God!

As we begin this new day, we come before You with grateful hearts. Thank You for the lessons from Your Word, reminding us that when we put You first, we find peace, love, and purpose. Help us to live today with a heart that seeks to serve others, just as Abraham demonstrated through his generosity and faith in You.

Lord, guide our steps as we face the challenges of this day. Fill us with Your Spirit so that we may walk in love, choosing kindness over conflict and trusting in Your provision over material concerns. Teach us to give all glory to You in every success, knowing that You are the source of our strength and blessings.

As we go through this day, may we be a reflection of Your love to those we meet.
Empower us to live in the joy and peace that comes from knowing You are with us,
guiding and protecting us.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.