

**Series: God & Abraham #1180**

**Title: Genesis 14.12**

***What Are the Outcomes of War? (Part 2)***

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Yesterday we began to answer the fourth and final question we are asking of our text: Genesis chapter 14, and the question is: **what are the outcomes of this war?** We will answer this *what* question in two parts. **Part one answers the question in a minor way.** We did that last time. **Part two answers the question in a major way.** And we got started with this at the tail end of yesterday's broadcast and podcast. Let's do a quick review and then proceed.

I am reading Genesis 14, verse 12, "<sup>12</sup>**They also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for [Lot] was living in Sodom.**" The key name you want to highlight there is Lot. He is the son of Abram's deceased brother Haran. And in Genesis 13 Lot separates from Abram and he chooses to go down and live as far as Sodom. Let me read from Genesis 13, verses 11 and 12, "<sup>11</sup>**So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other.** <sup>12</sup>**Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom.**"

Continuing with Lot, now in verse 12 of chapter 14, he is a prisoner of war! He was living in Sodom, down in the south there, in the cities of the valley when the northern armies came slashing through and they grabbed him. Not only the man Lot but also his possessions, which as we saw in chapter 13, were many.

Genesis 14, verse 12 is actually very specific, "Lot was living in Sodom." Back in chapter 13 he had "moved his tents as far as Sodom," but in the very next chapter he had then moved lock, stock, and barrel right into the city center. It does not appear he was in the army, defending his new homeland from the marauding armies of the northeast, but maybe he was. Whatever the case may be, he is captured. So here is this man who once stood with Abram, but now separated from his uncle, he is in deep trouble. A major outcome of this war of the kings is that Lot is now taken prisoner.

Matthew Henry, you may be familiar with him. He was born in Wales and lived in England between the years 1662 and 1714. He authored a six-volume commentary on the Bible, a real classic. Matthew Henry was a very intelligent man, a student of literature and the French language, but his real passion was theology. His commentary on the Old Testament, in particular, is useful for us to this very day. He writes in a pastoral style, emphasizing what is practicable and devotional. And here, at verse 12 of Genesis 14 he gives two insights into Lot and Lot's circumstances, which I think are worth passing along to you. So, let me do that now, on a Friday.

First, he asks us to consider that Lot had made a calamitous decision to go down to Sodom in the first place. Because when Lot got mixed up with that lot (a pun intended from me there), when he moved right into that city, it resulted in him being taken captive in the ensuing war. Importantly, Henry reminds us that the Bible says Lot was a righteous man. 2 Peter chapter 2 and verse 7 speaks of, "**righteous Lot.**" (2 Peter 2.7.) Even though Lot was considered righteous, still, he was involved in the strife at Sodom. Matthew Henry quotes Ecclesiastes 9 and verse 2.

Ecclesiastes 9, verse 2 reads, "<sup>2</sup>**It is the same for all. There is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked; for the good, for the clean and for the unclean; for the man who offers a sacrifice and for the one who does not sacrifice. As the good man is, so is the sinner; as the swearer is, so is the one who is afraid to swear.**" In other words, though Lot was righteous, still, when the trouble descended upon the Sodomites amongst whom he lived, there was no exemption for him. What happened to others in the city also happened to him.

And related to this, Henry says (quote), "Many an honest man fares the worst for his wicked neighbors. It is therefore our wisdom to separate ourselves, or at least to distinguish ourselves from them and so deliver ourselves (*Genesis 14*, online)." He then quotes 2 Corinthians 6, verse 17.

“Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,’ says the Lord. ‘And do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you.’” (That was 2 Corinthians 6.17, itself a quote from Isaiah 52, verse 11.)

By way of application of this for us: what is your relationship with the people among whom you live? What is mine? As God’s people we are to live in the world, in the sense that we serve as light in the darkness, pointing the way to Jesus. We are not to live in the world, to be just like everyone else. That is, the Christian person distinguishes himself and herself from our neighbors. We stand out as being different, because we do not touch what is unclean, we do not share in their perversions and sin. Oh, many of us need to hear this. We need to be convicted by this.

May God grant us much grace, and we are desperately in need of His grace, to be in the world but not of the world. May our lifestyles be ones that pull us out of their midst and cause us to be separate unto the purity of our Lord and our God. This was not something Lot did, and we will see this was a repeating sin in his life, in relation to this place Sodom.

Matthew Henry is pastoring us today and second he says, Lot had stepped outside the will of God for his life. He had made a foolish choice to leave Abram and move with his possessions down into the city in the plain, the city of Sodom. Quoting Pastor Henry, “So near a relation of Abram should have been a companion and disciple of Abram, and should have abode by his tents; but if he chose to dwell in Sodom, he [has only himself] to thank if he share in Sodom’s calamities. When we go out of the way of our duty we put ourselves from under God’s protection, and cannot expect that the choices which are made by our lusts should issue to our comfort (*Genesis 14*, online).”

Again I remind you that the reason Lot went south was because God had prospered him, blessing him with many livestock. In fact, so many animals that his herdsmen and Abram’s herdsmen were arguing. So when Abram offered his nephew choice of new land to explore and on which to graze his cattle, sheep, and goats, Lot did not hesitate when he looked upon that land that was lush, like the Garden of Eden. But where his lust led him, ultimately landed him in a prison carriage with an angry army on the pathway north and east to an unknown and hostile civilization.

Matthew Henry again with a convicting word, “It is just with God to deprive us of those enjoyments by which we have suffered ourselves to be deprived of our enjoyment of Him.” I will give that again: “It is just with God to deprive us of those enjoyments by which we have suffered ourselves to be deprived of our enjoyment of [God].” We too get so caught up in the blessing that God has given us – the enjoyments – that we let *them* take us away from God Himself. And then we get upset with God when he deprives us of, when he strips away that which was once such a blessing to us.

I know of a Christian man who is a collector of books. And this is also a man that became so enraptured in his books that when they were taken away from him in a fire, boy, did he turn on God! What is wrong with books, with building a library? Nothing, assuming the content of such a collection is not evil in and of itself. But when one begins to prioritize the hobby over the enjoyment and worship of *God*, well then there is something terribly wrong. And the Lord can, of course, at any time, fully within His rights, He can take away from us anything that acts as an idol in our lives. That is what He did with Lot, in the circumstances of a war between kings.

God’s will was that Lot be with Abram in the land of Canaan. But Lot took flight down to Sodom. And as we leave him for the weekend, in Genesis 14 at verse 12, he is a prisoner. He has lost his freedom.

When we read the Book of Genesis, and even beyond that, we quickly learn that to separate oneself from Abram and the calling and blessing God had on his life, this is disastrous. It was an honor and a very good thing for Lot to be connected to Abram. It was when he was separated that Lot had his trouble. But, as we will see, the story is not over for him. Not by a long shot. And so when we (Lord willing) meet together again at the start of next week, we will get into the heart of this text and discover *the major* outcome of the war of the kings. Hint: this involves the radical rescue of Lot by...Abram!

I want to thank Matthew Henry for his insights, which have been so convicting for us today. And I want to thank you for setting aside this time each weekday. I really do love you, and appreciate you, and I pray for you. Most of all, I want to thank God for giving us His grace, His protection from the evil one, and His strength to make it through another week discovering who He is.

I hope that you will take all that we have learned and think on it; apply this to your life. I hope you will worship Christ our King this weekend and join us again on Monday because God Is!

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