



We Are Abraham's Seed

The Family *of* Promise

We are Abraham's Seed

A Study on the life of Abraham in relation to the current day Christian

Class 3 The Promise Reaffirmed

Genesis 13-14

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Living in the Triangle

- **Mishpat** - fair protection / “use power to protect”
- **Tzedakah** - restore dignity and voice / “lift up the low”
- **Chesed** - loyal love / “don’t discard people”
- **Shalom** - wholeness / “life works as intended”

Righteousness

- But the heart of tsedeq/tsedaqah lies in **doing the right thing by people to whom one has a commitment**. It is closer to **faithfulness** than to righteousness or justice. Yahweh will not restore Judah because Judah deserves restoration, which would make it an act of simple justice. Yahweh will restore Judah because he had made a commitment to his people and has to do the right thing by them in order to be himself.

(J Goldingay. - Reading Jesus' Bible)

How we see God

- Chesed is the motive
 - God acts because of his covenant loyalty, not because people deserve it
 - **I will be faithful** even when you are not
- Mishpat is the discerning judgement
 - God's faithfulness aims at **restoring order, dignity, and life** — especially for the weak.
 - What destroys life must be confronted and removed
- Tzedakah is the action
 - God does **whatever is required** to bring about restoration — mercy, discipline, forgiveness, rescue.
 - I will do what the situation requires for life to flourish
- Shalom is the result
 - It is **not achieved directly**, It emerges when the other three are rightly held together
 - This the life as God intended, flourishing, all things set in order

The Melody (Gen 1-9)

- 1. God initiates at a sacred site
- 2. Vocation stated
- 3. Threat - scarcity/fear/pressure
- 4. Human strategy: grasping or trust
- 5. Relational fracture or displacement
- 6. God's intervention/rescue
- 7. Reoriented worship and renewed blessing
- 8. Covenant deepening

- 1. God creates ordered space and walks with human
- 2. Humans are blessed and told to be fruitful, rule
- 3. The humans are given a rival choice from God's declaration
- 4. They grasp for wisdom apart from God
- 5. Exiled, leads to more violence
- 6. Anti shalom elements are judged but one family saved
- 7. New blessing and told to be fruitful and rule
- 8. Bow in clouds with new covenant

Babel (Gen 10-11)

1. God initiates at a sacred site
2. Vocation stated
3. Threat - scarcity/fear/pressure
4. Human strategy: grasping or trust
5. Relational fracture or displacement
6. Gods intervention/rescue
7. Reoriented worship and renewed blessing
8. Covenant deepening
3. Humans fear spreading and congregate
4. Build a tower and city
5. God disrupts language and disperses

Abraham - God's rescue

1. God initiates at a sacred site	1.
2. Vocation stated	2.
3. Threat - scarcity/fear/pressure	3. Humans fear spreading and congregate
4. Human strategy: grasping or trust	4. Build a tower and city
5. Relational fracture or displacement	5. God disrupts language and disperses
6. Gods intervention/rescue	6. Abraham - but he then enters into the cycle...
7. Reoriented worship and renewed blessing	7.
8. Covenant deepening	8.

What to look for Questions

How does Abram restrain power? (Mishpat)

When does he restore dignity? (Tzedakah)

Who does Abram refuse to discard? (Chesed)

Where does he pursue peace over grasping? (Shalom)

Where we have Been

- Gen 1-11 is the prologue to the rest of Scripture
 - The promise of a seed
 - The result of rebellions
 - God's mishpat (justice) and His tzedakah (righteousness) are working together
- Abram is called to be a blessing
 - Called to leave land, kin, home
 - God will give him nationhood, blessing, a great name
 - Yet in time of crisis (famine) his trust waivers and he fails

Where we are Going

- Avram retraces his steps to the beginning
- He and Lot separate
- The promise is restated
- The battle of the kings
- Lot is rescued
- The encounter with Melchizedek

Go Forth

Gen 12:1 YHWH said to Avram,

Go you forth

from your land (Economic Security)

from your family (Social security)

from your father's house (Identity security)

to the land that I will let you see.

The Vocation

² I **will** make a great nation of you
and I **will** bless you
and **will make your name great.**

Be a blessing!

Leaving Egypt

^{12:18} Pharaoh had Avram called and said:

What is this you have done to me!

Why did you not tell me that she is your wife?

¹⁹ Why did you say: She is my sister?

So I took her for myself as a wife.

But now, here is your wife,

Take her and get out!

²⁰ So Pharaoh put men in charge of him

Who escorted him out and his wife and all that was his.

^{13:1} Avram traveled up from Egypt,

He and his wife and all that was his

And Lot was with him

To the Negev.

² And Avram was **exceedingly heavy laden** with livestock,

With silver and gold.

Back to the Beginning

13:3 He went on his journeyings from the Negev as far as Bet-El,
As far as the place where his tent had been at the first,
Between Bet-El and Ai,
⁴ to the place of the slaughter-site that he had made
There at the beginning,
There Avram called out the name of YHWH.

- This is a reboot, lets just start over after the shame in Egypt
- Avram is exalting the name of YHWH not his own (Babel)
- He is representing worship to the nations (Eden)

Separation with Lot

^{13:5} Now also Lot,

Who had gone with Avram,
Had sheep and oxen and tents.

⁶ and the land could not support them,
To settle together,
For their property was so great that they were not able
To settle together.

⁷ So there was a **quarrel** between the herdsmen of Avram's
livestock
And the herdsmen of Lot's livestock.

(Now the Canaanite and Perizzite were then settled in the land.)

⁸ Avram said to Lot:

Pray let there be **no quarreling** between me and you
Between my herdsmen and your herdsmen!

For we are brothers

⁹ Is not all the land before you?

Pray part from me!

If to the north, then I go to the south,
If to the south, then I to the north.

¹⁰ Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the plain of the Jordan—
How well watered was it all,

(Before YHWH brought ruin upon Sodom and Gomorrah),
Like YHWH's garden,
Like the land of Egypt, as you come toward Tzo'ar.
¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the plain of the Jordan.
Lot journeyed eastward,

And they parted, each **brother** from the other:
¹² Avram settled in the land of Canaan,
While Lot settled in the cities of the plain
Pitching-his-tent near Sodom.

¹³ (Now the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful
before YHWH.)

Promise Reaffirmed

^{13:14} YHWH said to Avram,

After Lot had parted from him:

Pray lift up your eyes and **see**

From the place where you are,

To the dark (north),

To the Negev (south),

To the front (east),

To the Sea (west):

¹⁵ Indeed, all the land that you **see**

I give it to you

And to your **seed**,

For all the ages.

¹⁶ I will make your **seed**

like the dust of the ground,

so that if a man were able to measure the

dust of the ground,

so also could your **seed** be measured.

¹⁷ Up, **walk about through the land**,

In its length

And in its breadth,

For I give it to you.

¹⁸ Avram took up-his-tent and came and settled

By the oaks belonging to Mamre

Which are by Hebron.

There he built a slaughter-site to YHWH.

Now it Happened...

^{14:1} And it happened in the days of Amrafel king of **Shinar**,

Aryokh king of Ellasar,

Kedorla'omer king of Elam

And Tidal king of Goyim (the nations):

² They prepared for battle against Bera king of Sedom (Sodom)

Birsha king of Amora (Gamora)

Shinav king of Adma

Shemever king of Tzevoym

And the king of Bela (that is now Tzo'ar).

^{14:11} And they took all the property of Sodom and Amora

And all their food and went away

¹² and they took Lot and all his property—

The son of Avram's brother –

For he had settled in Sodom.

Am I my Brother's Keeper?

¹³ One who escaped came and told Avram **the Hebrew** –

He was dwelling by the Oaks belonging to Mamre the Amorite,
Brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner,
(They were Avrams covenant-allies).

¹⁴ When Avram heard that **his brother** had been taken prisoner,

He marshaled his retainers
Natives of his household,
Eighteen and three hundred,
And went in pursuit as **far as Dan**.

¹⁵ He split up his forces against them in the night,

He and his servants,
And struck them and pursued them as far as Hova,
Which is to the left (north) of Damascus.

Two Kings

¹⁶ But he returned all the property,

And he also **returned his brother Lot** and his property,

And also the women and the other people.

¹⁷ The king of Sodom went out to meet him upon his return from

The strike against Kedorla'omer

And against the kings that were with him,

To the valley of Shaveh – (that is now the Kings Valley).

¹⁸ Now Malki-Tzedek, (Righteous King) king of Shalem,

Brought out bread and wine,

For he was priest of God Most High,

¹⁹ and he **blessed** him and he said

Blessed be Avram by God Most High

Possessor of heaven and earth!

²⁰ and **blessed** be God Most High

Who has delivered your foes into your hand!

He gave him a tenth of everything.

²¹ The king of Sodom said to Avram:

Give me the folk

And the property you take for yourself.

²² Avram said to the king of Sodom:

I raise my hand in oath to

YHWH, God Most High,

Possessor of heaven and earth

²³ if from a single thread to a sandal strap

If I should take from anything that is yours...!

So that you should not say

I made Avram rich.

²⁴ if nothing for me!

Only what the lads have consumed,

And the share of the men who went with me

Aner, Eshcol and Mamre

Let them take their share.

Two Kings

- King of Sodom
 - Offers wealth take the property
 - Represents a kingship that is exploitive
 - Does not give a blessing
 - Abram refuses to acknowledge any allegiance, or debt
- King of Righteousness
 - Offers bread and wine
 - Blesses God and Abram
 - Receives a tenth
 - Represents a Shalom kingship

Malki-Tzedek

- Malik-Tzedek King of Righteousness
- Priest of God El Elyon God most high
 - Not a local god
 - He already knows the one true god
 - Gods presence is not limited to Abram
- Offers bread and wine. - a show of hospitality and peace
- This is a king who feeds not exploits as the other kings we have seen
- Receives a tenth
 - A tenth was already a norm in the culture
 - This is not a precedent of the tithe but later is made the norm
- The narrative give no genealogy implying that bloodline is not needed to be a priest

Recap

How is Abram maturing in the path of God?

- Mishpat - rescue of the oppressed, defeat of the kings
- Tzedakah - doing what was needed for the situation
- Chesed - loyalty to kin without gain
- Shalom - peace over strife, rather than grasp power

We also see a priestly authority recognized by Abram, not based on genealogy, and other individuals outside of Abram's family who align with YHWH

The walk through the land is helping Abram become the man through whom blessings can eventually flow

Abram's Journey

- Egypt - grasping and fear
- Peacemaking - Lot and herdsmen
- Confronting oppression - the 4 kings pursued
- Rescuing the vulnerable - Lot and others taken captive
- Refusing exploitative wealth - King of Sodom

Blessing creates the conditions where Shalom can spread outward

Questions to reflect on how to be a Blessing

1. **Chesed:** Who has God placed near me that I'm tempted to distance or abandon?
2. **Mishpat:** Where is something unfair/unsafe that I have the power (even small power) to confront or set right?
3. **Tzedakah:** Who needs restoration (dignity, help, protection)—and what is one concrete action I can take this week?
4. **Shalom:** If I do (1)–(3), what would “more wholeness” actually look like in our home/church/community?

Next week - Chapter 15 - the most pivotal chapter in Abraham narrative



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Class 3 — The Promise Reaffirmed (Genesis 13–14)

Take-Home Summary

Where We Are in the Story

Genesis 12 launched Abram's calling: leave security behind, trust God's promise, and become a blessing to the nations. But fear in Egypt bent that calling toward self-protection. Genesis 13–14 shows God rebooting Abram's walk—not because Abram is flawless, but because the promise rests on God's covenant faithfulness.

A Reboot After Egypt: Worship Before Possession

Abram retraces his steps back to the place where he first called on YHWH's name (Bethel/Ai). Before he owns anything, he worships. The story quietly re-centers him: the goal is not grasping a "great name," but honoring God's name and living as a visible witness among the nations.

Peacemaking and Letting Go: Lot Goes East

Conflict arises between herdsmen. Abram restrains power and pursues peace: he offers Lot first choice. Lot "lifts up his eyes" and chooses what looks like Eden—well-watered, desirable—and he journeys east. Genesis often uses "east" as a direction of exile (away from sacred space). Lot's choice sets him nearer to Sodom and its gravitational pull.

Promise Reaffirmed: Walking the Land

After Lot departs, God restates the land-and-seed promise. This timing matters: Abram has released the possibility that Lot is the heir. God responds by reaffirming, expanding, and concretizing the promise—and then gives a strange practice of faith: "Walk about through the land." Faith is not a feeling; it's loyal trust made visible through steps.

When Empire Returns: The Kings and the Rescue

Genesis 14 brings "Babel" back into view (Shinar) through a coalition of kings. The conflict sweeps up the cities of the plain and Lot is taken. Abram is not obligated by any written law here, yet he acts as his true brother's keeper: he mobilizes his household, pursues the captors, and rescues Lot and the vulnerable. This is mishpat and tzedakah in motion—using strength to protect and restore.

Two Kings, Two Visions of Blessing

After the rescue, Abram meets two kings who offer two different futures:

The king of Sodom offers wealth and leverage: “Take the goods—just give me the people.”

Melchizedek (king of Salem) offers bread and wine, blesses Abram by God Most High, and blesses God for the victory.

Abram refuses Sodom’s wealth so no empire can claim, “I made Abram rich.” He will not build blessing through exploitative gain.

Abram gives a tenth to Melchizedek—recognizing a priestly authority outside his own family line and a “shalom kingship” that feeds rather than exploits.

What God Is Forming in Abram in Genesis 13–14

Triangle reminder: chesed (loyal love), mishpat (fair protection), and tzedakah (restoration) held together produce shalom (wholeness).

From fear to worship: returning to the altar and re-centering on God’s name.

From grasping to peacemaking: restraining power and releasing control.

From self-protection to rescue: risking strength for the vulnerable and oppressed.

From exploitative gain to covenant integrity: refusing wealth that would bind him to Sodom’s story.

For Our Own Walk This Week

Use these questions to practice being a blessing:

- Chesed: Who has God placed near me that I’m tempted to distance or abandon?
- Mishpat: Where is something unfair/unsafe that I have the power (even small power) to confront or set right?
- Tzedakah: Who needs restoration (dignity, help, protection)—and what is one concrete action I can take this week?
- Shalom: If I do (1)–(3), what would “more wholeness” actually look like in our home/church/community?

Key Takeaway

God is not searching for perfect people—He is forming faithful partners. In Genesis 13–14 Abram begins to look like his calling: a person through whom blessing can spread outward because power is restrained, the vulnerable are rescued, and exploitative wealth is refused.