

09.28.25

## Genesis

### Chapter 14 - God's Gracious Deliverance

#### Winning by Surrendering (vs. 17-24)

**Genesis 14:17-24:** Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. He blessed him and said,  
“Blessed be Abram of God Most High,  
Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High,  
Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.”  
He gave him a tenth of all. The king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself.” Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, for fear you would say, ‘I have

made Abram rich.’ “I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share.”

Throughout our life, we have choices to make. You can either choose good or evil. A relationship, perhaps over riches, or faith over your own strength. When we look at the different paragons and the patriarchs of the Old Testament, we see men that have turned to God. We've also seen men and their weaknesses. Their desire is to do the right thing, but oftentimes they falter and fail. Noah, in his own strength, will falter at the end. Moses, in his own strength, will murder somebody. Those that go on their own strength will find disappointment; whether it's Moses or whether it's David who finally comes to the end of his rope and says, “There's nothing more I can do.” And he literally gives up. You're going to find yourself at the end, though you might be pursuing good things and

though you might be pursuing that which is good, nevertheless, you don't have the strength to carry yourself through. You're going to find yourself in a place, in a predicament, in a situation in which is overpowering to you and impossible for you to handle. Scripture says the just shall live by faith, not by their own strength. We come to Abraham, and we find an individual that desires to do the right thing. He hears the call of God, and he goes. But his faith has just begun. He made the right decision right from the very start, but we realize, like in Romans, that faith is a way of life. "The just will live by faith." And we realize that it's part of God revealing to us just how deep do we believe. How deep do you believe? Well, we're going to find out because faith is oftentimes gauged by what you're willing to surrender, and it'll be in this process that God will begin to work in Abram's life, and Abram will have to begin to surrender things until ultimately he will surrender the most, that which is most valuable to him. We all have things that are valuable to us, and for different ones, it's different things. Some it's family, some it's a way of thinking or strategy; other people, it's possessions or things that they have, but we

all have things that are valuable to us. There's going to be a time in your life in which God's going to ask you to give it up. To the rich man, he came before Him and He said, "Sell everything you have. Give it to the poor. Come follow Me." Well, he was unable to because he had much. But somewhere along the line, whatever it is that's important to you, and for some people, it's not money. Money's not an issue to them. For some people, it is family. Whatever that thing is, there's going to be a time where God will turn to you like He did to Peter and say, "Do you love Me more than these?" And that will be the test.

In this passage, Abram is going through another test. God is testing his faith, not for God to see, but for Abram to see. Once again, like Peter, we have a tendency to come before God and say, "I'll stay with You no matter what. Everybody else will leave You, not me." And God goes, "We'll see." And those tests begin to reveal just the shallowness of our commitments. We say that we believe, but it is God's grace that begins to reveal the depth of that belief, the depth of that faith.

As we open up this particular chapter in Chapter 14, we are met with an overpowering force coming from the north. We have four kings that are coming from the north, and they are formidable when you consider their power. How do we know? Well, we know by virtue of the ones that they're conquering. They're actually conquering giants, and they're conquering the Amalekites, and they're conquering the Amorites, and they're conquering those that were seemingly unconquerable. They just kind of sweep through from the northern part, from Syria all the way down to the southern part of the Dead Sea. And now there's one left and no problem, right? Nevertheless, they step on the toes of Abram and his concern for his nephew Lot. And as he begins to watch the things happen and then he hears that his nephew Lot has been taken, he musters up his men.

When we look at the number of the men that he has, and it actually gives reference to it in Genesis 14:14, that Abram had, the way I read it, 318 men, and they began to pursue. 318 men. Scripture is letting you know that's not a whole lot of guys going after four kings with all of their

soldiers. Nevertheless, he goes after them to rescue Lot. What's his motivation? Well, clearly, it's a motivation of care. Clearly, it's a motivation of love for Lot. There's no doubt about that. Nevertheless, what we talked about last week is there seems to be no dialogue between him and God in this particular matter. It's just that "My nephew needs saving and I'm going." And Abram goes in his own strength. He thinks. But yet God is with him. God has made a promise to him, "I'm going to make you a great nation. I'm going to bless you. I'm going to make you a blessing. It's going to happen. This is not in any way contingent upon you or the things that you do. I'm going to do this." So, God rescues Abram in the process of Abram perceiving to rescue Lot.

We know that God is the one that rescues because as he comes before Melchizedek, he says in verse 20,

(Genesis 14:20) "And blessed be God Most High,  
Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." ..."

Who did that? Who won the war? It was God. God is the One that did it. God's the One that rescued Abraham and Lot. I mean, the odds were truly against him. And we live

in a world in which the odds are against us, if you consider passages like 1 John 5:19, which says the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. If you ever wondered why it felt like you were going upstream, that's the reason. And as you read in Ephesians 2:2, it reads this way, that the course of this world and the prince of the power of the air is working in the sons of disobedience. Why are people so rebellious? Somebody's working here, and he's working in the sons of disobedience, and we are outnumbered, and even beyond being outnumbered, we are being infiltrated. The Book of Jude actually conveys that message, that you're going to have those in your love feasts that are sneaking in, and you're going to have those that come in within the churches, and they have hidden agendas. So, not only are we outnumbered, but we're also out-strategized. But if God be for us, who can be against us? And in spite of ourselves, in spite of our going on our own strength, oftentimes, God is gracious to us. And in this particular passage, Abram's going to realize this in a great way. And he's going to turn and say, "It was all You." This is where the victory is really won. This is where the victory ends.

So, as we come to this passage in Genesis 14, we now come after, it seems as if, Abram has wrought a victory. He has defeated Chedorlaomer within the passage and all the kings with him.

In fact, it states that in verse 17,

(Genesis 14:17) “Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley).”

The passage is telling us he's just come off of a great victory. He has the spoils with him, and what a wonderful thing that is. Wouldn't you know, one of the first people to go out and meet him is the king of Sodom. And once again, almost immediately, Abram's confronted with a choice. Which king will you bow down to? Which king will you serve? Which king will you support in any way? And so, as the passage goes on, you realize that the king of Sodom is the first one to go out to see him. Nevertheless, he will not be the first one that Abram will speak with, which is a very interesting point. Now, what this text does is it actually gives us what I would say a setting that will



define many things. And if you're careful, you'll just kind of skim over it as you read the passage, and it talks about the valley of Shaveh, the King's Valley, and you'll say, "Well, that's interesting. Those are interesting names that come up." But it has really no significant meaning to us unless you realize what he's talking about. Because this is the place where kings meet. And, more specifically, this is where battles are won. This is where kings go in, look at the phrase here, a valley. A valley, that's pretty interesting. Well, of course, the valley and the plain itself, once again, is a place of war. But "valley" itself is a word that seems to convey this broad depression. It is a word that will describe a profound depth. And what we're going to see is this is a place where you start getting deep with your faith. This is a place where you start coming to terms with your own weakness, a time in which kings will bow down and find themselves low. It will be in this valley.

I believe in some respects the psalmist will use this psalm to define this particular valley. But he'll say in Psalm 23, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death..." This is the valley called the valley of Kidron. It is

the same valley that is going to be seen throughout Scripture, and it's going to be defined every time it's seen in a different way. The Kidron valley, which is right next to Jerusalem, which is between the city of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, and in between is the Kidron valley. It is this valley that is going to be defined in other ways, but it is the valley that is spoken of within the passage.

If you were to look at 2 Samuel, we won't turn to this particular passage, but in 2 Samuel 15, you have this text in which the son of David is literally taking over David's kingdom. His own son is wishing him dead. It is at this moment that David begins to move his people out of the city, and they pass through the Kidron valley, weeping. Never before has David been so humiliated, so ashamed. Shimei will be throwing stones at him and cursing him in this place as he begins to walk away from killing his son. He cannot fight his son. Within his heart, he just cannot bring himself to do that. So, he allows his son to take over, and he finds himself walking to this valley of sorrow and of grief. Great David begins to be humbled, and a battle is being fought.

You go a little bit further throughout Scripture and you begin to see that this particular valley is the same valley in 1 Kings 15 and 2 Kings 23, in which King Asa and King Josiah take and destroy all of the idols and they throw it in this particular valley and burn and throw the ashes in the valley of Kidron. It is in this valley in which they're declaring, "We will not elevate the idols of man." And a battle is being fought.

In the Book of Joel in Chapter 3, there will be a valley called the valley of Jehoshaphat. "Jehoshaphat" simply means "Jehovah will judge". It will be in this valley, the valley of Kidron, in which God will bring all of the nations and will judge all of the nations in this valley, the valley of the kings, and God will declare Himself Lord of all.

Look at the passage with me found in the Book of Joel, Chapter 3.

It reads this way in verse 1,

(Joel 3:1) "For behold, in those days and at that time, When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,

(Joel 3:2) I will gather all the nations  
And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.  
Then I will enter into judgment with them there..."

Thus the word "Jehovah judges".

"... On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel,  
Whom they have scattered among the nations;  
And they have divided up My land."

If you drop on down to verse 12, it'll read,

(Joel 3:12) "Let the nations be aroused  
And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat,  
For there I will sit to judge  
All the surrounding nations."

It will ultimately be called the valley of decision. This is the valley of decision. This is the valley in which choices are made. This is the valley where battles are fought, where kings will bow down, where strength, and I would say the true strength, is going to be proclaimed at this place.

(Genesis 14:17) “Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him...”

A choice is now presented before him in this level place that is the valley of the kings.

Now, in verse 18, a very obscure individual comes into the picture. He is the one called Melchizedek. We'll see him in Hebrews 7 made reference to. The question is, who is this individual, and what is his role in all of this? if you were to read Hebrews 7, you realize that he is a kind of a picture or a type of Christ Himself. Because the name Melchizedek, as Hebrew 7 will actually tell you, means “the king of righteousness”. “*Melek*” is the word for king. “*Ṣedeq*” is the king for righteousness. And so, the declaration is that he is a king of righteousness.

Later on, there will be those that actually rule in this particular region, and they will try to follow the suit, but they will call themselves “Adonai-zedek,” or “lord of righteousness. But they realize within the context that this is the king that is representing God. He is the great priest before God.

The way that it reads in the passage is,

(Genesis 14:18) “And Melchizedek king of Salem...”

Now, what is Salem? Well, we know that that's the word “peace,” “shalom,” and of course, we also know that this is the city of Jerusalem. So, even back then, the very foundation of this city was being inhabited by this individual by the name of Melchizedek. Hebrews 7 will say that he had no beginning, had seemingly no end, which would be a picture once again of the Christ, having no beginning, no end. The Chazalic sages of the old, even before the time of Christ, believed this one to be Shem, that is to say, the son of Noah, the one who was the righteous one. If it was, and I won't preach too much on this, but if in fact it was, it would make sense. Because at this particular time, and according to the Midrash as well, the ones who were kings were the patriarchs, were the fathers. So, he would be a father of the fathers. Shem would live to be 600 years old. So, he would actually live 500 years after the flood, which would put him not only in the day of Abram, but would actually bring him to live longer than Abraham lives. Abraham will live 175 years.

Shem will live 35 more years after Abraham. He will live to see many things. And in this particular text, if in fact it is Shem, then he is Abraham's great, great, great, great, great, great grandfather as he comes before him. It is an interesting picture, though, in the sense that you have this one who is coming before God and is really representative before God and is offering those things before God as a high priest. Priest and king.

So, the passage reads this way in verse 18,

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

A term that you're going to see repeated several times, and that is really the description of God. In the Hebrew it reads, “'Ēl 'Elyôn”, the strongest strong one. The declaration is conveying that there's no one greater than Him, therefore He's the one that is controlling all things. What's interesting is that you're going to have the king of Sodom come out to meet him, he backs off because clearly one who is greater stands before them all, that is Melchizedek, and Melchizedek takes the scene and begins to literally control the matter. As he comes out, he brings

wine and bread to Abram. There's not really a whole lot of discussion except for the fact that he proclaims a blessing upon Abram.

And the way that it reads in the passage is,

(Genesis 14:19) “He blessed him and said,

“Blessed be Abram of God Most High,

Possessor of heaven and earth.”

I like the word “Possessor” because it gives a kind of two sides to the coin, and that is to say that it first begins to describe the fact that He's Creator of all things. But it also is conveying that He's the One that is going to recover all things. We've been talking about in the Book of Genesis, the reconciliation and the redemption of mankind, and God is bringing him to Himself. So, that word not only displays the fact that He creates all things, but that He is the recoverer of all things, that He will bring all things back to Himself, and that ultimately, as we read in Philippians, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.

Melchizedek, king of Salem, blesses Abram:



“... “Blessed be Abram of God Most High,  
Possessor of heaven and earth;

(Genesis 14:20) And blessed be God Most High...”

Once again, “‘*Ēl ‘Elyôn*”.

“... Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” ...”

Now, the way the text ends, once again, can be a little bit confusing, because we're not really sure who gives the tenth, until you read Hebrews 7, and it clarifies. It was Abram that gives the tenth.

But the way that it reads in the passage is,

“... He gave him a tenth of all.”

See how it just ends there within the passage? He gave him a tenth of all.

If you look with me in Hebrews 7, once again, we'll clarify just exactly who it is that gives the tenth, and the clarification is going to be that Abram gives a tenth of all. And I just want to emphasize that phrase. He gave a tenth of what? All. Okay, I just want to make sure we got that one straight. There's actually a reason for it in the passage.

If you look with me in Hebrews 7:1, it reads this way,  
(Hebrews 7:1) “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,  
(Hebrews 7:2) to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth...”

So, now we know who did it, right?

“... apportioned a tenth part of all *the spoils*...”

Yeah, see, that's italicized. It should be italicized in all your Bibles. That's not in there. It just says, “of all”. Now, I'm going to bring out why that's important. But it's not the spoils that he's tithing.

It goes on in the passage,

“... was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace.”

And of course, really fulfilling, as the passage goes on to say in verse 3,

“Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life...”

I mean, if you were alive in that time and you were to meet Shem, you would go, “Did you have a father? And are you going to die? Because all the other people around you are dying.” This guy just continues to live, seemingly. And once again, what a wonderful picture that is.

“... but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually.”

Once again, the passage is making reference to he's like Him. So, it's given us this sense of we have a picture of the Christ to come, not unlike when Deuteronomy declares that one is going to come like Moses, who is going to proclaim the law of God. So, there is one that is like the Christ who resides as a priest continually forever. He ever makes intercession for us. And of course, that's the wonderful picture within the passage.

I just wanted you to note within this text, in verse 2, “To whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all...”

And I just want to clarify once again the word “all”.

As you go back to Genesis 14, and it ends in verse 20,

“... He gave him a tenth of all.”

Once again, that's just where it ends. Then the king of Sodom comes before Abram. In other words, he has this dialogue with the king of Melchizedek. Melchizedek comes out with him with the bread and the wine and blesses him. Now, the king of Sodom, as he is second in line, comes, wants to make a deal.

(Genesis 14:21) “The king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself.””

Which, by the way, that thing of taking the booty for yourself is even understood by the Arabs today. If in fact you go in and you win the battle, you get all the booty, that's yours. The king of Sodom wasn't being nice. That's just the way it was. And he says, “Look, you earned it, you won, but give me the people.” And of course, the people are more seen as possessions to the king of Sodom because they are servants that he can use, and of course he can get more possessions through them.

(Genesis 14:22) “Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have sworn to the LORD (El Elyon) God Most High...””

Now, what's interesting to me is that we specifically see this title given by Melchizedek. That is to say that he seems to be a “parroting” of the definition of who God is by virtue of the way Melchizedek saw Him, the One who really is controller of these things. He's the one that was the Possessor of these things. He's the One that gave you the possession. He's the One that controls possession. He's the One that created possession. This is the God Most High. And so, he comes before the king of Sodom and he says, “I swore to the Lord.” Now, my question is, at what point did he swear to the Lord? Was it right before he went into battle? Was it after the battle? Or was it when he came before Melchizedek? And Melchizedek, he had fellowship with him, with the bread and the wine, and in that relationship, he goes, “You know what, I'm making a commitment. I'm not taking any of this stuff.” The passage begins to unfold in such a way that Abram's coming to terms with what is most valuable, and he's coming to terms with it in the sense that he's going to turn down certain things to display to God that he doesn't want, first of all, to be involved with the wicked influence of the possessions of Sodom.

There's an interesting passage in Psalm 101:3.

It reads this way,

(Psalm 101:3) “I will set no worthless thing before my eyes;

I hate the work of those who fall away;

It shall not fasten its grip on me.”

So, there's something about the things of the world, in particular the possessions of the Sodomites, that would not be alluring to him, in fact, something that he would want to stay away from. But there is something more within the passage because you really see that there's a fallacious focus if, in fact, you're focusing on the things of the world. But something has taken his eyes off of the things of the world, and it is the fellowship with Melchizedek. Melchizedek isn't trying to convince of anything. He just is having fellowship with the one who talks with God. And it is an amazing picture in which the bread and the wine are given within the passage. And it's through this that he begins to set the Lord, as the psalmist says in Psalm 16:8, “I have set the Lord who has counseled me continually before my face. I will not be

shaken because of this.” And so, the trust now seems to go from Abram trying to figure out his own strategies to “I’m going to focus on God in all of this,” and realizing that there is far greater joy in the presence of God than in all the possessions of the world. We’re familiar with the passages such as, you can’t love God or mammon. We’re familiar with the fact that the tendency of man is to sell himself to the world and lose his own soul. But God says, “What would you gain?” What would you gain in that? So, all of this is really a coming to terms with what is most valuable, and isn’t it wonderful to realize that the relationship actually is the very thing that began to spur this? And he makes a commitment to God. There’s this kind of vow that he makes, “I swore to God I wouldn’t take a thread.”

If you go on in the passage, it reads this way,

(Genesis 14:22) “Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth,”

Does that sound like he was just quoting Melchizedek?

(Genesis 14:23) “that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, for fear you would say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’”

“I'm not going to do anything in any way that would devalue the relationship that I have with God. I'm not going to make any kind of deals, and I'm not going to point to any man except God. That's all I want to do is point to God, because He's the One that rescued me. He's the One that possesses all things. If I'm good with Him, I'm good. And I don't want anybody else taking credit for anything that happens to me.”

It kind of reminds me of 3 John, in which John talks about those who went out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. In the past, we've had people come to us and they go, “Why don't you have these sales that a lot of churches have? And why don't you have ways in which the church can make money?” And I said, “Because we don't want the world participating in the building of the church. We don't want them taking credit for anything that happens. We want to point to God that God is the One that worked through our lives, in our



hearts. God is the One that caused these things to happen. Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to You be given glory. And you begin to realize that this actually is where the battle was fought, and it's actually where the battle was won.

As you go to verse 24,

(Genesis 14:24) “I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me...”

And he makes mention of not men who were followers of his faith, but men who were allies of different nations.

And I understand that the way of the world is all about funds and it's all about making money, but not with us. It's about faith. It's about trusting in God and it's about the relationship that we have with God.

There's an interesting Psalm that gives us this wonderful picture. If you look in Psalm 76, Let me just say this, there is great significance in the bread and the wine. The bread clearly is displaying the great ability of God to give us our sustenance and to cause us to survive. But the wine is

that which gives us a picture of the joy of being with God. In fact, Psalm 104 will say, God has created the wine that you might be glad. But it goes further in the Psalm in Psalm 104, and it goes on and says, “But I will be glad in the Lord.” So, you have this wonderful picture of what God has created things for, but that it might give a picture of that relationship with God. But if you read with me in Psalm 76, you're going to walk away going, “Wow, it almost feels like Abraham wrote this.” But it was a song of Asaph.

(Psalm 76:1) “God is known in Judah;  
His name is great in Israel.”

Watch verse 2. It doesn't use the word Jerusalem, does it?

(Psalm 76:2) “His tabernacle is in Salem...”

Well, that was where Melchizedek was.

“... His dwelling place also is in Zion.”

It is Jerusalem, isn't it? Yeah.

(Psalm 76:3) “There He broke the flaming arrows,  
The shield and the sword and the weapons of war.”

(Psalm 76:4) You are resplendent,  
More majestic than the mountains of prey.

(Psalm 76:5) The stouthearted were plundered,  
They sank into sleep;  
And none of the warriors could use his hands.

(Psalm 76:6) At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob,  
Both rider and horse were cast into a dead sleep.

(Psalm 76:7) You, even You, are to be feared;  
And who may stand in Your presence when once You are  
angry?

(Psalm 76:8) You caused judgment to be heard from  
heaven;  
The earth feared and was still

(Psalm 76:9) When God arose to judgment,  
To save all the humble of the earth.

(Psalm 76:10) For the wrath of man shall praise You;  
With a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself."

Now, watch verse 11, how it ends,

(Psalm 76:11) "Make vows to the LORD your God and  
fulfill them..."

This is a very interesting passage, and the reason why I would emphasize this passage, and I'm saying this in Genesis 14, is that for the first time you see man wanting to give back to God by a vow. He's making a promise to God. You'll read this throughout the Psalms, you make your vows to God, and you want to pay Him, but where did that come from? Well, it comes from the realization that God is the One that brings the victory. God is the possessor of all things. God is the One that saves. Your faith is totally in Him and not in anything else. One of the reasons why we end up praising man is we actually think that man has a hand in all of this. But if in fact you believe that you need to praise God from whom all blessings flow, that you believe that every good and perfect gift only comes from Him, you'll only give Him credit, right?

Now, what's interesting is he gives a tithe. We're going back to that. Of all. In case you missed it, he didn't keep any of the stuff. So, he couldn't have given a tithe from the things that he got. You understand what I'm saying? He just got finished saying to the king of Sodom, "I'm not going to take anything, not even a sandal from you." He

couldn't have tithed from the booty. This is why it would be wrong to interject that in the Hebrew section. He gives a tithe of all that he has. So, in spite of the fact that he doesn't take anything from the battle that he won, he in addition is going to take out of his wealth and give to God, displaying to God, "I believe that You're the One that gives everything." Once again, the word "tenth," or the number 10, is in reference to your 10 fingers. There's a reason why God made us the way that He did. So, He gives you 10 fingers. So, when you give a tenth, what you're saying is, "All that I have, I believe, comes from You." That's what you're saying when you give a tithe. And Abram is declaring, "All of this is from You. It's from Your hand. It's from Your grace." And God is beginning to work in Abram's life to where he's beginning to walk by a sense of faith. He's beginning to believe that faith is not about the things that I trust God to do in which I'm acting a certain way and I'm asking God, "Now, You've got to help me in this." Faith is me being willing to acknowledge that everything comes from Him, and I'm willing to give up whatever He asks me to give up. For Peter, it was his nets, right? For the rich man, it was his money. For

Abraham, it's going to be his only son. What is it for you? That's the question that has to come to mind when you come into a passage such as this in which God is beginning to reveal, what do you acknowledge, and what really is the battle in this world? The battle is about you humbling yourself.

There's actually another place in which this particular valley is recorded. It's in the Gospel, John 18. Would you turn there with me?

It reads this way in verse 1,

(John 18:1) “When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples.”

Christ enters into a humbling Himself, will give of His life for all of us. As David walked through this valley and had to give of himself, surrendered his kingdom, you and I are watching our Savior, who although, as Philippians says, existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, or as Paul would say in Corinthians, “Though He were rich, He became poor, that

you might have the riches in Christ Jesus.” He goes through the valley for us.

And what a wonderful picture when you consider Luke 22. Isn't it wonderful how Scripture all seems to come together?

(Luke 22:14) “When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him.

(Luke 22:15) And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;

(Luke 22:16) for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

(Luke 22:17) And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves.”

(Luke 22:19) “And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

That’s the bread and the wine. This is about a relationship. That's why it starts off in verse 15, He said to

them, "I have earnestly desired to be with you in this Passover, for us to eat this together." You see, because having the dinner together, having the wine and the bread together, was an act of fellowship. And the fellowship seems to change everything, doesn't it? When I begin to realize just how much God has given up for me, and how much He actually wants to have a relationship with me, it's bizarre that the King of Righteousness would want to have a relationship with me. That He's saying to me, "I've longed to just sit down with you and have this fellowship." I mean, it was so bizarre to the Pharisees that this One that was proclaimed to be Christ would be so easy and so likable to be with that tax gatherers and sinners felt at home with Him. And they accused Him of being too loose and too joyful, but in His presence is fullness of joy; at His right hand are pleasures forevermore. We misunderstand God, but if you were ever to get in His presence and realize just how much He loves you, guess what you'll start doing? You'll start giving up stuff. You'll start making promises to God. Psalm 15 says that the righteous swears to his own hurt and does not change. That's what you'll start doing. And you'll



begin to realize that faith has more to do with what you're willing to give up than what you're willing to do.

(Luke 22:19) “And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you...””

We read Romans 12, and it starts off making reference to the mercies of God.

In fact, the way that Paul writes the passage is,

(Romans 12:1) “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God...”

You know how the next part reads?

“... to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice...”

What God is asking you to do is, “Give up your life, take up your cross. Follow Me.” The perception is that once I do that, once I give up the stability of the world, the gifts of the world, the things of the world, the connections and the allies of the world, that that's going to put me in jeopardy. All you have to do is read the life of Abram. He suffers not one bit, for God is with him. And though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you will

fear no evil, for God is with you. But you know what the next one is? He prepares a table for me in the presence of my enemies. That's a great picture of Melchizedek, wasn't it? There's Sodom, there's the king of Sodom, there's the other kings that are surrounding, and they can't touch him because surely goodness and mercy are going to follow him all the days of his life; he's going to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. You're no fool to give up what you cannot keep, to gain that which you cannot lose. And God has given us this wonderful message to remind us of that.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we give You thanks for Your word, for the example that You've given us, the realization that faith is about being willing to give up sometimes our control, sometimes the possessions that we have, whatever it is that's causing this fallacious focus on the wrong things and causing us to put our hope and trust in that which would only cause degradation and pain and hurt. You are calling upon us even now to turn our eyes upon You and

to look full on Your wonderful face, that the things of this earth would grow strangely dim in the light of Your glory and grace.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. What we're asking you to do is walk by faith. Yes, faith is about you heeding the call of Christ, but the call is to trust Him for everything, to believe Him for everything. If there is one thing that is getting in your way of doing that, give it up. Now, watch the glory of God work in your life. There will be no mistake. It was all Him. And you will walk away with a friendship and a camaraderie and an Ally who will ever be with you, Who will never leave you nor forsake you, Who will cause all things to work together for your good, Who will never separate you from love, because His love will always be with you, and the peace of God will go with you. You have confusion in your life? Anxiety? Get real with your faith.