

ABRAHAM: ONE NOMAD'S AMAZING JOURNEY OF FAITH

A Classic Series

Abram, the Greathearted
Genesis 14:1–4, 10–17, 21–24



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Countless small-hearted people smudge life's landscape. They keep score, hold grudges, and look down on others with critical, envious eyes. They manipulate and control people, watching out for Number One. Sadly, in our fallen world, small-hearted people are the norm, making the few genuinely greathearted people stand out all the more. The greathearted rise above the petty. They look beyond the past, sacrifice for others, and overflow with humility. All the while, they shun the limelight and give God alone the glory. Among their thin ranks stands Abram, who not only gave his shortsighted nephew the choicest land but also rescued him when his choice got him into trouble! In a world that pursues small-hearted "greatness" like a narcotic, we can learn a lot from Abram, the greathearted.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Four Characteristics of Greatness

While the world defines "greatness" in terms of money, power, and prestige, true greatness in the eyes of God can be better described with four characteristics:

- Genuine unselfishness
- Willingness to sacrifice for others
- Absence of greed
- Restraint of power and control



Quotable

*The great truths
of Scripture are
often missed by
the hurried reader.*

Take your time.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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2. Example: Abram the Greathearted

Through the events of Genesis 13 and 14, Abram displayed these characteristics of genuine greatness.

- Releasing the choicest land in Canaan, Abram demonstrated a genuine unselfishness (Genesis 13:8–13).
- Rescuing his nephew from captivity, Abram demonstrated a willingness to sacrifice for others (14:1–16).
- Rejecting all offers of a reward, Abram demonstrated an absence of greed (14:17–23).
- Refusing to force his convictions on others, Abram demonstrated a restraint of power and control (14:24).



A CLOSER LOOK

Melchizedek as a Type of Christ

Few persons in the Bible are shrouded in more mystery than Melchizedek, king of Salem. After the battle against the five kings in Genesis 14:17, Melchizedek stepped into the narrative as if out of nowhere . . . then vanished again. We know nothing of his ancestry, his family, or his exploits. All we know is that he was the ruler of nearby Salem—the city that would one day be called “Jerusalem”—and that he was called “priest of God Most High” (Genesis 14:18). When Melchizedek met Abram after his victory, the king came with bread and wine in his hands and a blessing on his lips.

Centuries later, after the coming of Christ, the author of Hebrews looked at the account of Melchizedek and drew a number of analogies between him and the ultimate High Priest and King of Jerusalem, Jesus. The book of Hebrews doesn't say that Melchizedek was literally the Son of God making a cameo appearance. Rather, the author drew parallels between the two figures, suggesting that what Melchizedek was *literarily* Jesus Christ is *literally*. The cue for this parallelism came from Psalm 110:4, in which the Davidic Messiah was called “a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.” Consider these analogies from Hebrews 7:1–3 that teach us about our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ:

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<i>Literarily Melchizedek was . . .</i>	<i>Literally Jesus Christ is . . .</i>
A priest outside the Levitical priesthood, therefore not a minister of the Law of Moses, which came much later	<i>The</i> ultimate priest outside the Levitical priesthood, therefore not a minister of the Law of Moses, which He fulfilled
A “king of righteousness” according to a translation of his name	<i>The</i> “king of righteousness” because He purchased righteousness for us on the cross
A “king of peace,” as <i>Salem</i> means “peace”	<i>The</i> Prince of Peace, who will one day bring a kingdom of universal peace
Without a record of parents, having neither his beginning nor end recorded in Scripture	<i>The</i> eternal Son of God, having neither beginning nor end, eternally one with the Father and the Holy Spirit as God the Son

Though not obvious to Abram at the time, the mysterious priesthood of Melchizedek pointed forward to the eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ, who ministers grace and mercy to us based on His own sacrifice for our sins (Hebrews 7:11–28).



LET'S LIVE IT

In light of Abram's examples of genuine greatness in the eyes of God, where do we start—and continue—a life of greatheartedness?

- Start by following the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Continue by following Him wherever He leads.

According to Philippians 2:3–8, what greathearted virtues did Christ Himself exhibit? Restate the commands from Philippians 2:3–4 in the form of a personal commitment: “By the Spirit’s help, I will . . .”



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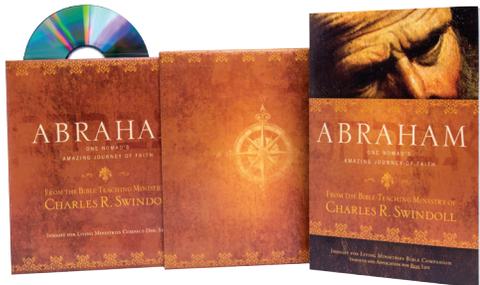
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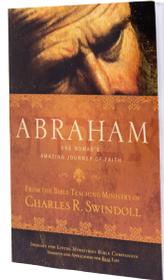
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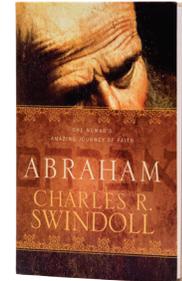
Tools for Digging Deeper



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