

The Horror of a Great Darkness

Presented by Adrian Ebens, Widgee Jan 30, 2021

My dear friends Let's kneel and pray. I'm excited about this presentation like most. Father, it's a delight to be here at Widgee. It's just beautiful looking out over this valley. Thank you for providing this place for Craig and Broman and for their hospitality and allowing us to come and to spend this time here. We pray for your Spirit. We pray that you would open our eyes. That you would put that clay upon our eyes for so many times we see men as trees walking and we need to see the truth of your beautiful character. And I just pray that your angels would be present with us, may they be a dome over us to protect us from the suggestions of Satan, even as you did at Mount Sinai. And we thank you in Jesus name.

Have you read that statement, in the Spirit of Prophecy, how there was a dome of angels over the children of Israel in Mount Sinai so that none of the words of God should be twisted. Did you know that Satan and his angels, if they have access when someone is speaking evil angels can twist that word and make the hearer hear something else. So pray that you hear what God wants you to hear and be vigilant. Be sober because your adversary, the devil, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.

This week I had the opportunity to go out and to my parents. And they own a two and a half acre property, and my parents being aged it falls to my responsibility to ensure that the lawn is cared for and mowed. And I went out there and was mowing the property and I don't have a very good relationship with grass seed, so I'm often having lots of fun with that. But it's something that I want to do for my parents. And so the Lord helps me through those things. And when I was coming back the other day, I was just thinking about all the wonderful things that I've learned about our Heavenly Father in the last seven years. It's just beautiful, just all the beautiful things. And I was just worshiping Him and praising Him. What did Craig say this morning? To know God is to love Him. You feel a deep sense of love for our Heavenly Father and his forbearance and his mercy in putting up with us. What does Luther say? Miserable pigmies. That's the term that he uses. But thank God that I surrender my judgment of myself to Him and that I judge myself a son of God amongst the creation of God, not what Satan thinks of me and what I tempted to think of myself.

And so in that context, I realize and I want to bring your attention to this, the problem that Adventism had in 1888 and Ellen White lays it out very clearly is that old light was presented in a new setting. Old light was presented in a new setting, and this is exactly the problem we're facing today. Old light of the foundational pillars of Adventism is now being set in a new setting, a new context. And for those who have been raised in Adventism, they hear the teachings, they hear the message that is now coming to the world.

And they're aghast because they are hanging onto the old setting. They are trying to put new wine into old wine bottles and they are judging new wine by old wine. And it doesn't work when you do these things. For me, the principles that my father allowed me to write out in this book of the judgment (As You Judge), what the judgment actually means and the framework of the judgment to show that the investigative judgment is a massive ministration of death, to show us how judgmental and condemning we are and how we keep lists and how we have time frames.

And at the end of that time frame, we cut people off and we write them off and we condemn them to death. That's what the investigative judgment is about to show us what we are like. But as it says in the Book of Psalms, you thought that I was like you. We think this is God, our heavenly father.

And the journey for me began in the principles of this book, Identity Wars and Galatians, the second last chapter of this book, No Longer a Servant, talks about Galatians, where it says that you are no longer servants but sons. That is a framework. When you shift from being a servant to being a son, your whole concept of judgment has to change, doesn't it? Does your father sit up there, put up a big bench? Does he put a wig on and take a gavel and start to judge the daylights out of his children? That's absurd. It's completely absurd. What do you do that to his enemies? Would he do that to those in a legal context? Of course, that's what a king does to his enemies. He judges, condemns and does all those things but a father to his children to call up all the lists of his children's sins and to sentence them to death and banish them from himself? When you come to Galatians chapter four and you no longer are a servant, but are a son, you have to ask questions that you never asked before of the scripture. And this is challenging a lot of people.

What is this new doctrine? What is this new understanding? We weren't raised with this understanding. We weren't raised with these things. But the Spirit of prophecy told us, hasn't it? There's much light yet to be received. And so it says in the Great Controversy, only those who have fortified their minds with the truths of the scriptures will go through the last great conflict. Study to show yourself approved. Great things will be unveiled. And as a minister of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, I struggled to correlate my understanding of Revelation fourteen with what Revelation eighteen was telling me. My understanding of fear God, was you should be afraid, because if you keep Sunday, you're going to get roasted, the smoke of your torment is going to send up forever and ever. God's going to do it to you. Babylon is fallen. All the other churches are perverse, and I've already consigned them to hell. And number three, if any man worship the beast or his image the same shall drink of the wine or the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and they shall be tormented day and night, whoever worships the beast or his image. How do I present that message? And we're told in the Spirit of Prophecy that we are to allow nothing else to absorb our attention, says in 9 Testimonies, nothing else to absorb our attention than the preaching of the third Angel's messages. So God: be afraid, the other churches are condemned, and you'll be condemned too if you do the wrong thing.

Now, of course, there's other elements that come into that picture, but this is the basic element that comes through. How do we correlate that message with the Earth being lightened with the glory of the Lord, the whole earth being light and with a message so beautiful, so wonderful that hearts are melting because of the joy they are experiencing in that message. I was having a disconnect in my understanding between what I was taught and what Revelation was telling me and when I read in 1888 where Ellen White says, Oh, how I love Him, I love Him, and I see in Him such matchless charms.

Well I want to love Him, but there's this fear of death, like I don't measure up, I'm going to die, You're going to kill me. And when I raise these questions now, people say, well, I don't even think about it. You don't think about it? You don't think about these things? Like you don't have this sneaking suspicion that there's kind of a gun held at your head saying, I do love you, but if you get it wrong, I'm going to pull the trigger.

That's the reality of the gospel I was raised on. Do you know why I'm so messed up in the head? That's why. You don't know what's inside this head and you don't know what I wake up with in the morning.

But the gospel that I have received, the gospel that I'm now seeing in the scripture, it's making sense. And people say to me, oh, you just you just making up everything to suit yourself. You're just making it up as you go along to a God that you want to worship. We will see in the end, won't we? We will see in the end who is comparing scripture with scripture, who is bringing everything, who is following Miller's rules. When you can bring everything together and harmonize it together without contradiction, then you have the truth.

I put up a quote from the Spirit of Prophecy last night where Ellen White says, angels are not sent from the heavenly courts to destroy, but to guard and to protect imperiled souls. And someone said, well, what about Revelation 16, where the angels are pouring out the vials of wrath? And I said, well, what about it? How do you harmonize those two statements? I found a way to harmonize them, but you have to find a way to harmonize them. How do you harmonize? Angels do not come from heaven to destroy. You have to fit this into your paradigm. If you can't, you don't have the truth.

That's the reality that we're looking at. So we're in earnest now. There is a shaking that is taking place and it is reverberating. Many of my dear friends had urged me to follow this path. I'm indebted to Trevor and Sarah, who urged me to consider these things back in 2007. I was still reeling from accepting the truth that Jesus was the only begotten Son, so I wasn't quite ready for that. Took me another seven years, like I said, I'm a bit slow, but I got there. So all of this is an introduction into what I want to present today in the fact of the things that I've been learning over the last seven years is that everything in scripture now is in a new framework. And so the whole scripture is a new book to me. And that's why looking at Genesis Chapter one, taking up on the theme of EJ Waggoner, the Gospel in Creation, these things are not new to us. They are light. But now we're putting them in a completely new setting to show that the gospel is revealed in creation and it is revealing something very, very beautiful. And today I want to take on the story of the covenant that God made with Abraham. The horror of a great darkness.

HORROR OF A GREAT DARKNESS

I did a presentation a few weeks ago on light and darkness. And so, as you would do, once you find something about darkness; and I'd like to read let's read Acts twenty six, verse eighteen. Here's a definition of light and dark for you; 'To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light', which is to say, 'from the power of Satan unto God'. And what does this involve? 'That they may receive forgiveness of sins'. What is darkness? The inability to believe in the forgiveness of sins. That's darkness. Your sins. That's the power of Satan that makes him the author and the dominion of death resides in him because of this issue, that Satan said to the angels and to our first parents, God will not forgive you. That was a sin that was unforgivable. Why? Because Satan said it. Satan said that God won't forgive you. And if you believe that, that's unpardonable, isn't it?

But who makes it unpardonable? We make it unpardonable. And as we've studied before, the difference between nearly half of the angels, as it says in Spirit of Prophecy volume one page twenty one, nearly half of the angels were with Lucifer, but only a third of them went with Lucifer because many of Satan sympathizers were inclined to return to God. And then Satan said, look, I've got to tell you something, God's not going to forgive you. And a third of the angels believe Lucifer, but the other portion did not. And they went back to God. And no one needed to die because God is not the author of death. Satan is the author of death; Faith and Works Page seventy three.

So with those thoughts in mind about darkness, if Abraham is going into a 'horror of a great darkness', what is he going into? A misunderstanding of the character of God and an issue related to the inability to believe in the forgiveness of sin. It's lies, it's falsehood, it's deception.

FEAR NOT...

After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, **what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?** Gen 15:1-2

So let's go to Genesis 15:1-2, 'After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram', after what things? What happened in Genesis 14? Abraham established himself as a world superpower in that part of the world. He defeated Chedorlaomer and his three buddies and rescued his nephew, Lot. After these things 'came unto Abram in a vision saying, Fear not

Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward'. Isn't that beautiful? What is Abram's reward? God Himself!

There is nothing more precious in this universe than the character of God. I am thy great reward. I don't want anything other than this brothers and sisters. All I want is the character of my father and his only begotten Son. I don't want anything else. Anything else is a bonus. But I want that character, the faith of Jesus. 'Fear not: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? Lord, I know you're my great exceeding reward, but I have a problem - I don't have a seed.

Yes, I know that you promised me a seed, but we seem to have a problem - so I have a solution for you. I have someone in my house that I trust a lot, and I would like to recommend him to you as one that might be able to fulfill your inability to provide what you said you would provide. Is that too harsh to state it like that? It's a reality, isn't it? Why is he offering God a solution? Because the seed of the word of God is not abiding, but there's a reason why it's not abiding because it was abiding, but something changed in Abraham that caused him a problem. So let's go to Patriarchs and Prophets and read what happened.

ABRAM'S DOUBT PROBLEM

Abraham gladly returned to his tents and his flocks, but **his mind was disturbed by harassing thoughts**. He had been a man of peace, so far as possible shunning enmity and strife; **and with horror he recalled the scene of carnage** [webster: slaughter, massacre] **he had witnessed**. But the nations whose forces he had defeated would doubtless renew the invasion of Canaan, and make him the special object of their vengeance. Becoming thus involved in national quarrels, the peaceful quiet of his life would be broken. **Furthermore, he had not entered upon the possession of Canaan, nor could he now hope for an heir, to whom the promise might be fulfilled.** {PP 136.2}

'Abraham gladly returned to his tents and his flocks, but his mind was disturbed by harassing thoughts. He had been a man of peace, so far as possible, shunning enmity and strife; and with horror', remember that word horror? 'He recalled the scene of carnage'. Webster's Dictionary: slaughter, massacre. Carnage; carn-flesh a pile of bodies in heaps. Abraham has these scenes embedded in his mind and they're troubling him. Post-Traumatic stress disorder. 'He had witnessed. But the nations whose forces he had defeated would doubtless renew the invasion of Canaan and make him the special object of their vengeance'. This is what he's now wrestling with. And if Abraham has now become the special object of the vengeance of the Canaanites, what would this mean for God's promises to him about a seed? Could that call that into question? Could Abraham's actions have jeopardized God's ability to provide him an heir and a dynasty?

This is what Abraham's wrestling with. Notice, 'becoming thus involved in national quarrels, the peaceful quiet of his life would be broken. Furthermore, he had not entered upon the possession of Canaan, nor could he now hope for an heir, to whom the promise might be fulfilled'. Why couldn't he hope for an heir? It's written there; because he had come to the conclusion they're going to come and get me. They're going to wipe me off the face of the earth. And I'm not going to have any heir. I'm going to have nothing because I involved myself in this situation. I've completely blown it.

And we don't want to get too graphic. But the reality is that when Abraham saw that his nephew was taken, Abraham, in his love to his family as tribal; as a tribal mind works. You touch my family, I will destroy you. To get back what is mine. Isn't that the tribal mindset? Isn't that the Patriot mindset, 1776? Are you hearing that chant? It's getting louder.

Abraham had an intent and he would do whatever it would take to win back his nephew. How can he remove that image from his mind of taking a sharp instrument and driving it into a torso and listening to a scream and a howl and someone drop on the ground? How is he going to - all right, I'm sorry for the detail, but people like to omit the details in talking about the glory of Abraham's triumph. Was that glorious? To hack to pieces one of God's children was that glorious? Depends which framework you're operating in, isn't it?

I'm not here to condemn Abraham. In his situation, I would have done exactly the same thing. But now he has a dilemma. His war with Chedorlaomer and the Kings of the Canaanites has caused him to loosen his grip on his belief that God can deliver the promise to him. Did Jacob have a similar problem that his actions had actually caused him to forfeit God's ability to deliver the covenant to him?

ABRAM'S DOUBT PROBLEM

In a vision of the night the divine Voice was again heard. "Fear not, Abram," were the words of the Prince of princes; "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." **But his mind was so oppressed by forebodings that he could not now grasp the promise with unquestioning confidence as heretofore.** He prayed for some tangible evidence that it would be fulfilled. PP 136.3

Next paragraph, 'in a vision of the night, the divine voice was heard again, fear not Abram'. Fear not, so the fear not in the scripture is; Abram I know you're struggling. You've got all these images going through your head that you wish weren't there. This R rated video that's playing through your mind that you just wish wasn't there, that you hear in the

night and you wake up in that cold sweat wishing that you hadn't done what you did - and now you think that it's not going to happen. 'But fear not, Abram, with the words of the Prince of princes'. Who's that? The Son of God. I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward'. But what does it say? 'His mind was so oppressed by forebodings that he could not now grasp the promise with unquestioning confidence, as heretofore. He prayed for some tangible evidence that it would be fulfilled'. What caused Abraham to demand a sign? Was it faith or faithlessness?

Abraham reasons; my actions have made it impossible for me or very difficult for me to receive this promise now. So, Lord, I need you to demonstrate to me that you're still going to do this for me. The problem with Abraham asking God this question is that it places doubt on the word of God, doesn't it? God has said, I'm going to do this for you. Abraham is not able to fully take hold of this anymore because of the way he is reasoning things in the way he understands things. And so he's asking for tangible evidence. Is that why Jesus said a wicked and adulterous generation seeker after a sign? Could that be part of the reason - is no longer believing in the word of God?

ABRAM'S SUGGESTION

And Abram said, **Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.** And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.(Gen 15:3-6)

So let's keep reading in Genesis 15:3-6 'And Abram said, Behold to me thou hast given no seed'. Could that be an accusation? 'And lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him saying, This shall not be mine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And He brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said under him, So shall thy seed be'.

This next statement is beautiful, 'And he believed the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness'. Here we see faith triumphing over doubt and darkness. Abraham chooses to believe the promises of God. He takes hold of the Word of God again, and the spirit of Christ within him overcomes the doubts that are swirling around inside. And he believes, and Abraham in this verse becomes the father of the faithful of all those who would believe, all those who overcome doubt, all those who have come in their life and said, you know what, I think I've blown it. I think I've completely destroyed my ability to be saved and for God to fulfill this to me. Abraham staggers not at the promise of God through unbelief,

but is strong in faith, believing that which God has promised is also able to perform. So when Abraham believes God, 'So shall thy seed be, and it was counted on to him for righteousness'. God speaks, Abraham believes he has faith and righteousness is credited to him. If we can use legal language, the spirit of Christ fills his soul - relational language. What animals had to die for that transaction to take place? None! And did this occur when he was in circumcision or uncircumcision? No deed was required to do this.

He simply believed the word of God and it was counted to him for righteousness. That was it. What do we see next?

ABRAHAM'S NEED OF FORGIVENESS

For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness [of forgiveness] then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. (Rom 4:2-10)

I wanted you to jump to Romans 4:2-10, because it speaks about Abraham's need for forgiveness. Sometimes this is lost in this chapter. 'For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted under him for righteousness'. That's what we just read in Genesis 15:6. 'Now to him, that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly'.

So is Abraham believing on Him that justifies the ungodly? Does that mean he considers himself ungodly? Yes, he does. 'His faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness', and I have put in brackets '(of forgiveness)', then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness', faith in the forgiveness of God. If you are a man of peace and suddenly you find yourself with a sword in your hand stuck into some other person, is there a recognition in your being that this is not God's character?

Isn't there some... I mean, in my experience, I've said this before, having had the misfortune of driving over a dog. And pulling over and, the dog hadn't died, holding it in my arms, its just looking up in my eyes, it's imprinted in the back of my mind. That dog is imprinted in my mind, and I went home after I found the owners and I explained what happened, the dog came out, I went home and I howled like a baby. Is that because I'm

pathetic and weak? Or is it because God never intended us to kill - like what it says in His commandment, thou shalt not kill.

We think of all those families, of all those soldiers that now were fatherless because of those actions that took place, do we think about those things? Well, no, because they're the enemy and we don't care about their family. They're irrelevant to us. But they put their hand up for the task. They knew what was involved, they knew the risks. Abraham is wrestling, having been a man of peace. He's looking for forgiveness. He's looking for solace for his soul.

And why am I penetrating in this direction? Why am I putting a spotlight on this particular issue? There's plenty of other things, and I read some of them to you that would tell you that what Abraham did was heroic; it was a great deed. Melchizedek comes out and blesses him! What else do I need? I can put that frame on it and we will, we're going to look at that soon, but I'm looking at it from a different perspective, a different framework, a framework that says that when the spirit of Christ comes into your heart, you cry, Abba Father, you don't cry O holy righteous judge, don't kill me. You cry, Father. That's what I'm looking at.

So Abraham was in need of forgiveness. He needed forgiveness of his sin, that he felt that he'd botched everything up, that he'd destroyed his ability to inherit a dynasty and then become a great nation. He thought that he'd wiped it all out, and these thoughts Satan kept pressing into his mind, reminding him of all of that feeling of hatred. How dare you take my nephew? Oh, I'll teach you! Isn't that the natural human experience - wrestling with, why did I do that?

OK.

ABRAM'S DECISION TO KILL

And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.(Gen 14:14-15)

This is Genesis 14:14-15. 'And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, (his nephew), he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, 318, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants by night, and smote them, and pursued them into Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus'.

Abraham, made a decision to kill, didn't he? I mean, how else is he going to get his nephew back? He made that decision.

A TESTING STATEMENT

All his affection for him was awakened, and he determined that he should be rescued. Seeking, first of all, divine counsel, Abraham prepared for war. From his own encampment he summoned three hundred and eighteen trained servants, men trained in the fear of God, in the service of their master, and in the practice of arms. His confederates, Mamre, Eschol, and Aner, joined him with their bands, and together they started in pursuit of the invaders. The Elamites and their allies had encamped at Dan, on the northern border of Canaan. Flushed with victory, and having no fear of an assault from their vanquished foes, they had given themselves up to reveling. The patriarch divided his force so as to approach from different directions, and came upon the encampment by night. His attack, so vigorous and unexpected, resulted in speedy victory. The king of Elam was slain and his panic-stricken forces were utterly routed. Lot and his family, with all the prisoners and their goods, were recovered, and a rich booty fell into the hands of the victors. To Abraham, under God, the triumph [whose triumph] was due. The worshiper of Jehovah had not only rendered a great service to the country, [in whose eyes?] but had proved himself a man of valor. [in whose eyes?] It was seen that righteousness is not cowardice, [in whose eyes?] and that Abraham's religion made him courageous [in whose eyes?] in maintaining the right and defending the oppressed. His heroic act [in whose eyes?] gave him a widespread influence among the surrounding tribes. PP 135.1

Here's a good statement; let's go through this statement now, PP 135.1. One of the challenges that I've often come up against is when we look at Bible characters in the way that we've reviewed them and we start to look at them in the light of what we see in the face of Jesus Christ, people have said you are destroying all credibility of the prophets of old. You're tearing them down and you're making a mockery of them. Well, we're told in the New Testament, that Elijah was a man subject to like passions like as we are, they're not superhuman. They're just like us wrestling with the same issues as we wrestle with. And they overcame by faith alone, not by works. That's what we're looking at in this issue.

And this is part of that picture. So let's read this. 'All his affection for his nephew is awakened and he determined that he should be rescued'. He determined! 'Seeking, first of all, divine counsel. Huh? So he decides and then he consults God - see what it says? We make a decision and then we look for divine approbation. It's the same as when Moses says to Joshua, 'get some men, go!' We're looking for the verse that says, 'Lord, what do we do? Please, my nephew, Lot, please, please deliver him'. But we don't read this. Now it says that 'he sought divine counsel' and after that divine counsel, 'Abraham prepared for war'. Interesting, isn't it? 'From his own encampment he summoned 318 trained servants, men trained in the fear of God. In the service of their master, and in the practice of arms. His confederates', and we need to look at this a little bit. Who are his confederates? 'Mamre, Eschol and Aner, joined him with their bands'. Who were these?

These were Ammorite Kings. This is an alliance with unbelievers, isn't it? Should we be aligned with unbelievers? We'll look more at this later. If Abraham did not have a covenant with these three Ammorite kings, would he have ventured to take on Chadorlaomer? The possibility reduces a little bit, doesn't it? Starts to go down, but having these other men with him so that it's not just 318, they've got a few thousand, they've got a chance. 'And together they started in pursuit of the invaders. The Elamites and their allies that encamped at Dan, on the northern border of Canaan. Flushed with victory, and having no

fear of an assault from their vanquished foes, they had given themselves up to reveling. The patriarch divided his forces so as to approach from different directions, and came upon the encampment by night. He's attacked so vigorous'. What does that mean?

That means the knife is going in with velocity, that's what it means. '... and unexpected, resulted in speedy victory'. The king of Elam was slain and his panic-stricken forces were utterly routed. Lot and his family, with all the prisoners and their goods, were recovered in a rich booty fell into the hands of the victors. To Abraham, under God, the triumph', and I put in there (whose triumph) was due. The worshiper of Jehovah had not only rendered a great service to the country, (in whose eyes?) I'm asking the question, in whose eyes? 'But had proved himself a man of valor (in whose eyes?). It was seen', by who? 'That righteousness is not cowardice'. Interesting statements aren't they? In whose eyes? It was seen by who?, 'and that Abraham's religion made him courageous (in whose eyes?) in maintaining the right and defending the oppressed'. This is a very interesting study. 'His heroic act (in who's eyes?) gave him a widespread influence among the surrounding tribes'. We need a new evangelistic strategy, how are we going to get influence among those around us? Here's the secret! So if we take this statement in isolation from the rest of inspiration, we can draw some interesting conclusions.

CONSIDERED IN ISOLATION

1. You should train your household for war
2. It is perfectly fine to kill to protect your family
3. It is perfectly fine to form alliances with unbelievers and to go to war with them
4. Courageousness and righteousness are defined by the bravery to slaughter
5. It is to our advantage to gain influence with those around us by doing service for our country in killing the country's enemies.

You should train your household for war. It is perfectly fine to kill, to protect your family. It is perfectly fine to form alliances with unbelievers and go to war with them. Courageousness and righteousness are defined by the bravery to slaughter. That's what it says. And it says righteousness is not cowardice, which in that context is defined as killing people. It is to our advantage to gain influence with those around us by doing service for our country and killing the country's enemies. So can we take this statement in isolation? It's a test, it's a testing statement, but that's the conclusion that you must draw if you in any way align yourselves with the actions of Abraham in this situation. These are the principles upon which you are building your foundation. And that's why you will see videos on YouTube of the American army chanting 'there's no God like Jehovah' with their weapons in their hands, chanting, 'there's no God like Jehovah!' They can point to this story, can't they - as evidence? And so in the light of the person of Jesus Christ should we ask some questions about this? Should we see to make sure we've got all of the pieces together or

not? The first thing I would do is look at the implications for Abraham, what fell upon Abraham, what happened to him after he did this deed. If what Abraham did was a righteous deed, fully approved of God, why would he be attacked by harassing thoughts? And why would he suddenly lose his ability to take hold of the promises of God? This is the consequence of his actions, which suggests to me there's a problem.

audience The same discouragement with Elijah as he just had a massive victory and then he gets tormented and runs and hides.

Same for Samuel. Samuel hacks up Agag into little pieces and next thing he's afraid Saul is going to kill him. Up until that point, he wasn't afraid of anyone.

THE FRUIT OF ABRAHAM'S VICTORY

Abraham gladly returned to his tents and his flocks, but **his mind was disturbed by harassing thoughts**. He had been a man of peace, so far as possible shunning enmity and strife; **and with horror he recalled the scene of carnage** [webster: slaughter, massacre] **he had witnessed**. But the nations whose forces he had defeated would doubtless renew the invasion of Canaan, and make him the special object of their vengeance. Becoming thus involved in national quarrels, the peaceful quiet of his life would be broken. **Furthermore, he had not entered upon the possession of Canaan, nor could he now hope for an heir, to whom the promise might be fulfilled.** {PP 136.2}

PP 136.2, 'Abraham gladly returned to his tents and his flocks, but his mind was disturbed by harassing thoughts'. Something tells me that if you are doing actions on behalf of God, that God would prevent you from having those harassing thoughts. Why does God allow him to have these harassing thoughts if it is a heroic act, if it is all these things that it is said in the previous statement, why does Abraham have these troubled thoughts to the point where he no longer can believe God's promises? That tells me that there is a problem. A breach has opened up and allowed Satan to get in and darkness to take hold. 'With horror he recalled the scene of carnage'. We've read this, and he could no longer take hold of the promise. This is the fruits of Abraham's victory. This is what he obtained for himself.

THE FRUIT OF ABRAHAM'S VICTORY

In a vision of the night the divine Voice was again heard. "Fear not, Abram," were the words of the Prince of princes; "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." **But his mind was so oppressed by forebodings that he could not now grasp the promise with unquestioning confidence as heretofore.** He prayed for some tangible evidence that it would be fulfilled. PP 136.3

Abraham's actions had caused him to give up his faith in the promises of God. He no longer had hope that this could be achieved.

PP 136.3, 'But his mind was so oppressed by forebodings that he could not now grasp the promise with unquenched questioning confidence as heretofore'. So his actions had actually broken his hold on the promises of God, and that tells me there's a problem with the actions he took. Even though God works with us in our brass thinking, He meets us where we are, He walks with us all those things. 'Abraham's actions had caused him to give up his faith in the promises of God, he no longer had hope that this could be achieved'.

MORE DOUBT

And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to **give thee this land to inherit it.** And he said, Lord GOD, **whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?** Gen 15:7-8

Still the patriarch begged for some visible token as a confirmation of his faith and as an evidence to after-generations that God's gracious purposes toward them would be accomplished. **The Lord condescended to enter into a covenant with His servant, employing such forms as were customary among men for the ratification of a solemn engagement.** PP 137.1

And so we come to verse seven and eight of Genesis 15 in the story. 'And He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it'. Why doesn't it say next, 'and Abraham believed the Lord and it was counted on

to him for righteousness?' God is entering; the law is entering and He's touching on the issue of the land because this is the issue that Abraham is wrestling with. The land of Canaan, which he was promised. But we know it was more than that, don't we? The promise that Abraham should be heir of the world, Romans 4:13. He'd been promised the whole earth. And Abraham now can't take hold of that promise. So God now is touching on the point where Abraham is doubting and because Abraham is doubting, because of his sins, because of the actions that he took, he's asking God to give him a sign. 'And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?' This is not the question of faith. This is the question of unbelief.

PP 137.1 'Still the patriarch begged for some visible token as a confirmation of his faith'.] Isn't it beautiful the way she writes that? Less caring people would write that differently. Confirmation of his faith. 'And as an evidence to after generations that God's gracious purposes toward them would be accomplished'.

Now, listen to these next statement, because it's very important, because this chapter is the basis of the everlasting covenant, isn't it? The covenant that God makes with Abraham. It's very important that we understand this. 'The Lord condescended to enter into a covenant with His servant, employing such forms as were customary among men'. The question is which men? The heathen nations around! God is condescending to enter into a ritual of heathenism to prop up Abraham's failing faith. Why does He do this? Because He loves him! He's meeting Abraham in his darkness and his despair and He's hanging on to him, that's why. Well, let's keep going, because it gets even more interesting. When I read that the Lord condescended to enter into a covenant with His servant employing such means that were customary among men, 'for the ratification of a solemn engagement'. I'm like, whoa!

CUSTOMARY AMONG MEN

Rabbi Solomon Jarchi says, "It was a custom with those who entered into covenant with each other to take a heifer and cut it in two, and then the contracting parties passed between the pieces." See this and the scriptures to which it refers particularly explained, Gen_6:18. A covenant always supposed one of these four things:

1. That the contracting parties had been hitherto unknown to each other, and were brought by the covenant into a state of acquaintance.
2. That they had been previously in a state of hostility or enmity, and were brought by the covenant into a state of pacification and friendship.
3. Or that, being known to each other, they now agree to unite their counsels, strength, property, etc., for the accomplishment of a particular purpose, mutually subservient to the interests of both. Or,
4. It implies an agreement to succor and defend a third party in cases of oppression and distress.

For whatever purpose a covenant was made, it was ever ratified by a sacrifice offered to God; and the passing between the divided parts of the victim appears to have signified that each agreed, if they broke their engagements, to submit to the punishment of being cut asunder; which we find from Mat_24:51; Luk_12:46, was an ancient mode of punishment. This is farther confirmed by Herodotus, who says that Sabacus, king of Ethiopia, had a vision, in which he was ordered μεσσοις διατεμεν, to cut in two, all the Egyptian priests; lib. ii. We find also from the same author, lib. vii., that Xerxes ordered one of the sons of Pythius μεσσοις διατεμεν, to be cut in two, and one half to be placed on each side of the way, that his army might pass through between them. That this kind of punishment was used among the Persians we have proof from Dan_2:5; Dan_3:29. Story of Susanna, verses 55, 59. See farther, 2Sa_12:31, and 1Ch_20:3. These authorities may be sufficient to show that the passing between the parts of the divided victims signified the punishment to which those exposed themselves who broke their covenant engagements. And that covenant sacrifices were thus divided, even from the remotest antiquity, we learn from Homer, Il. A., v. 460. – Adam Clarke Commentary on Gen 15:10

Customary among men, let me read you a bit from Adam Clark. Adam Clark was a commentator of Scripture, contemporary to our pioneers who are often like to quote from him. And Rabbi Solomon Yarchi says 'it was a custom with those who entered into covenant with each other to take a heifer and cut it in two. And then the contracting parties passed between the pieces. See this and the scriptures to which it refers, particularly

explaining Genesis 6:18, a covenant always supposed one of four things. One, that the contracting parties had been hitherto unknown to each other and were brought by the covenant into a state of acquaintance. That they had been previously in a state of hostility or enmity and were brought by the covenant into a state of pacification and friendship. Number three, 'Or, that being known to each other, they now agreed to unite their counsels, strength, property, etc, for the accomplishment of a particular purpose mutually subservient to the interests of both. Or, it implies an agreement to succor and defend a third party in cases of oppression and distress.' This is how men entered into a covenant by dividing animals. And he goes on, 'For whatever purpose a covenant was made. It was ever ratified by sacrifice offered to God, and the passing between the divided parts of the victim appeared to signify that each agreed if they broke their engagements to submit to the punishment of being cut asunder.' Interesting, isn't it? And we'll look at this a bit later in Matthew 24:51. Come down to the highlighted point below, 'These authorities may be sufficient to show that the passing between the parts of the divided victims signified the punishment to which those exposed themselves who broke the covenant engagements.

CUSTOMARY AMONG MEN

This spring lamb has been brought from its fold not for sacrifice, not for a banquet, not for a purchase; . . . it has been brought to sanction the treaty between Ashurnirari and Mati'ilu. If Mati'ilu sins against (this) treaty made under oath by the gods, then, just as this spring lamb, brought from its fold, will not return to its fold. . . . Mati'ilu, together with his sons, daughters, officials, and the people of his land . . . will not return to his country, and not behold his country again. **This head is not the head of a lamb, it is the head of Mati'ilu, it is the head of his sons, his officials, and the people of his land.** If Mati'ilu sins against this treaty, so may, just as the head of this spring lamb is torn off, . . . the head of Mati'ilu be torn off.[22] <https://rsc.byu.edu/gospel-jesus-christ-old-testament/cutting-covenants>

This is from the 1st millennium B.C. 'This spring lamb has been brought from its fold, not for sacrifice, not for banquet, not for purchase. It has been brought to sanction the treaty between Ashumirari and Mati'ilu. If Mati'ilu sins against the treaty made under oath by the gods, then just as this spring, lamb brought from its fold will not return to its fold. Mati'ilu, together with his sons, daughters, officials and the people of his land, will not return to his country and not behold his country again. This head is not the head of the lamb and is the head of Mati'ilu. It is the head of his sons, his officials and the people of his land. If Mati'ilu sins against this treaty, so may just as the head of this spring, lamb is torn off the head of Mati'ilu be torn off.' These are the customs of men, of making covenants and agreements. And this is a classic one of a vassal making agreement with a greater king. This is what God descended into.

THE COVENANT

And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. (Gen 15:9-10)

By divine direction, Abraham sacrificed a heifer, a she-goat, and a ram, each three years old, dividing the bodies and laying the pieces a little distance apart. To these he added a turtledove and a young pigeon, which, however, were not divided. **This being done, he reverently passed between the parts of the sacrifice, making a solemn vow to God of perpetual obedience.** PP 137.1

And so God utters the words, 'And He said unto him, Take me a heifer of three years old, and she goat to three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.' Now God doesn't speak any further from this point. That's all He says. Take me these things. It's all He says. Is that interesting? He doesn't say kill them, but He says take them. Well, obviously it's for the purpose of killing them isn't it? But there's more to the story. But yes, he's entering into a covenant. He's following an agreement. He's following the principles. He doesn't need to tell Abraham what to do because Abraham already knows what to do, doesn't he? According to his own customary practice and what he taught in Babylon in Ur of the Chaldees. So he didn't have to be told what to do, which means that what Abraham was doing was something that he was very familiar with in forming a covenant.

PP 137.1, 'By divine direction, Abraham sacrificed an heifer, a she goat, and a ram of three years old.' So by divine direction he's told to take them. But she also says, remember, 'according to the customs of men', this is not God's way of doing things. So God is not instructing him to do something that he Himself wishes to be done, its for another reason. 'To these he added, a turtledove, a young pigeon, which, however, were not divided. This being done, he (Abraham), reverently passed between the parts of the sacrifice, making a solemn vow to God of perpetual obedience.' Who's making the promises here? Is this the new covenant? No. This is not a good promise, is it? What is Abraham saying? He's saying, I promise to be obedient to you, and if I'm not, you can cut me and my sons and my family in half. Isn't that what he is saying? You read other commentators and this is the only place where I've ever read - because many others say, no, Abraham didn't he didn't pass between it was only God, even AT Jones made this statement once; it was only God who passed between. Spirit of Prophecy says Abraham passed between, and he made a vow of perpetual obedience. All that the Lord had said I'm going to do, which means that Abraham passed a death decree upon himself, didn't he? But not only upon himself. But he seed! And this is where it gets really interesting because who is the seed? Christ! He's passing a death decree upon the Son of God by taking this vow.

WHAT WAS ABRAHAM DOING?

He was telling God that "if I fail to obey you then I expect you to slay me and my seed."

Abraham had made a death decree on himself before God.

The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, **And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites:** there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Mat 24:50-51)

Col 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances [death decrees] that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

What was Abraham doing? 'He was telling God, if I fail to obey you, then I expect you to slay me and my seed. Abraham had made a death decree on himself before God'. This is all before God walks through Himself, but Abraham has done this. Notice what it says in Matthew 24:50-51. Now, this gives a bit of light in Matthew 24, 'The lord of that servant shall come in that day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites', this is coming from the Covenant. The 'cutting asunder', because Abraham has made this covenant. But what Abraham is doing is reflecting our natural human nature when we are afraid and we are fearful of a great deity, we make ridiculous promises of things that we could never fulfill. We promise to obey because we're afraid to die.

I want you to notice in context of this, Colossians 2:14 gives a very different context. And we've studied this; 'Blotting out the handwriting of death decrees'. Dogma is death decree, 'blotting out the handwriting of death decrees that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross'. That's another whole subject. I'm just putting that in there for you. What Christ did, He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

HORROR OF A GREAT DARKNESS

And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. (Gen 15:11-12)

...and with horror he recalled the scene of carnage he had witnessed. PP 136.2

It's interesting in light of what we studied in the days of creation, immediately what happened? So it's the afternoon Abraham's divided the animals and as he's sitting there, as the sun's going lowering in the sky, what comes? Gen 15:11-12, 'And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses'; every cage, the cage of every hateful and unclean bird. It's a symbol. What is it a symbol of? Abraham has put a noose around his neck and he's made himself an agreement he can never fulfill. He has basically signed his own death warrant and guaranteed that he must die, because he cannot fulfill what he has said he's going to do. And so the vultures, Satan, its representative by birds of prey coming down, ready to destroy Abraham. Abraham, drove them away. Why didn't God drive them? Why isn't it His covenant too? Why is Abraham having to drive them away? 'And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abraham and lo, an horror of a great darkness fell upon him'. Now, of course, this is talking about the thinking of his posterity in Egypt and the captivity there of course that is included in this process. But his children never would have needed to go into Egypt if he had believed that God would have given him the land. But he struggled to believe that because of what he did. Remember the words, '... and with horror, he recalled the scenes of carnage'. Horror, horror of a great darkness. But that word, horror of great darkness, is not restricted to Abraham.

CAUSE OF DARKNESS

Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Acts 26:18. What we've mentioned here, the cause of darkness; it has to do with the power of Satan and the forgiveness of sins. DA 690.2, 'Turning away, Jesus sought again His retreat, and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of a great darkness.' Here is Christ's inheritance from Abraham, isn't it? Doesn't He inherit it from His father, Abraham? The horror of a great darkness. And what is this horror that is overcome in Christ? Christ expresses that which Abraham is not written against his name; My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? This wrestle with the inability to believe that God can forgive. Christ has to carry this element within human thinking, He's manifesting that which humanity feels and He's overcome with the horror of a great darkness. Abraham has signed himself up for something that can never be fulfilled. He's like, my children are going to be terribly afflicted because of what I've done. I've destroyed all hope and all ability. This horror of great darkness comes over him. How can I be forgiven? I just find this fascinating. It's interesting that Ellen White would use exactly the same words for Christ as applied to Abraham. And what's interesting, ... I don't know if I've got the quote in there, but it was at exactly the same day of the year that this horror of a great darkness has come because this is the Passover and the events of Abraham happen exactly at that time. I think I've got the quote. I'm not sure I believe the quote comes up later.

HORROR OF A GREAT DARKNESS – THE SEED

Turning away, Jesus sought again His retreat, and fell prostrate, **overcome by the horror of a great darkness**. The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour... Will the innocent suffer the consequences of the curse of sin, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus, "O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." {DA 690.2}

LIGHT THROUGH DARKNESS

And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:(Gen 15:17-18)

As a pledge of this covenant of God with men, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, symbols of the divine presence, passed between the severed victims, totally consuming them. [man did the killing] And again a voice was heard by Abraham, confirming the gift of the land of Canaan to his descendants, "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." {PP 137.2}

Ellen White says the day they left Egypt on the night after the Passover was the selfsame day that God made a covenant with Abraham, which is the selfsame days when Christ went into the garden of Gethsemane, exactly the same day, the year the horror of great darkness fell on Abraham, when it fell upon Christ - exactly the same time. 'And it came to pass', after all this occurs, 'came to pass that when the sun went down,' Genesis 15, 17 and 18, 'and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham.'

This is beautiful! After all that Abraham has done in all his wrong understandings, and he's using things customary to men, God still condescends to enter into a covenant with him. And through Abraham's misunderstanding, God teaches him the gospel. It says, 'In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land', and He has to restrict it for Abraham because Abraham can't handle the truth. He can't handle that should God have said to him the whole world - but Abraham can't handle it. He says 'from the from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.' He has to restrict it because he can't handle the whole truth of what God wants to give him. PP 137.2, 'As a pledge of this covenant of God with men, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, symbols of the divine presence passing between the severed victims, totally consuming them'. The question I put is who did the killing? Who killed the animals? Man did! God didn't kill them. But they are consumed as that light passes between. I would suggest to you there is a linkage here to the Second Coming and the end of the world, the consuming of the wicked of those who took this covenant upon themselves; to be destroyed if they do promise perpetual obedience, failing perpetual obedience, that they would be consumed and destroyed. But the question is, who did the killing? 'And again, a voice was heard by Abraham confirming, the gift of the land of Canaan to his descendants, 'from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the Euphrates'.

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT PROCESS

Rom 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound

Dan 9:24 `Seventy weeks are determined for thy people, and for thy holy city, to shut up the transgression, and to seal up sins, (YLT)

The Cross is a revelation of man's enmity towards God

The Judgment is a revelation of man's condemning nature

The covenant with Abraham is a revelation of man's nature to bring a death decree upon ourselves if we fail to obey.

The everlasting covenant process; the law enters to cause sin to abound that the offense might have bound, 'but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound'. Rubin did a presentation on this the other week about the, 'Seventy weeks are determined upon my people, and for thy holy city,' to 'bring transgression to the full' is the accurate translation. 'And to seal up the sins', to bring sin to the full - not bring an end to sin by Me killing my own Son. That's paganism. The Cross is a revelation of man's enmity towards God. We were taught that the Cross was a revelation of God's justice being satisfied, that He could then step down from His great wrath against us - and wanting to kill us, so that He won't be angry anymore with us because He did it to His Son. You haven't heard that talk? That's the fine print. That's the fine print of Christianity.

The Cross, as we understand it, is a revelation of man's enmity towards God in wanting to kill His Son. This is the bringing sin to the full; the full manifestation of rebellion against the Son of God and killing Him so that we could see the fullness of our wickedness. The judgment is a revelation of man's condemning nature. This is a revelation of our condemning nature. This is the new framework that we're talking about. The covenant with Abraham is a revelation of man's nature to bring death decrees upon himself if we fail to obey. It's a revelation of our nature. Can you see the point that I'm making? God is trying to reveal to us what we are like, but through that, through the darkness, He brings us light.

ABRAM'S COVENANT WITH UNBELIEVERS

Gen 14:13 Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the **Amorite**, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were **allies** [H1167 Ba'al, master H1285 beriyth covenant walking between cut flesh] with Abram.

Notwithstanding he was known as the teacher of a new religion, **three royal brothers, rulers of the Amorite plains** in which he dwelt, manifested their friendship by **inviting him to enter into an alliance with them for greater security**; for the country was filled with violence and oppression. An occasion soon arose for him to avail himself of this alliance. {PP 134.3}

I want to show you something very interesting. Why does God bring up this issue of this covenant? Because Abraham had done exactly this with the the Amorite kings. Notice Genesis 14:13, 'Then one who had escaped, came and told Abraham the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies'. Those words in Hebrew is 'Ba'al, beriyth', which is 'master covenant', which means that Abraham made a covenant with these three men with a divided animals and they walk between them. Is it possible that God is allowing Abraham to bring out this covenant so that God can show to Abraham, this is your problem, Abraham? You made a covenant with these men, which has now broken your ability to believe in My word.] Is that possible? Abraham knew exactly what to do with the animals because he'd already done it with these Amorite Kings. Ba'al beriyth, you can't make this stuff up, can you? Ba'al, he made a Ba'al covenant. Of course, it has a different context, but it's still there. There's the word, a 'master covenant'. He placed himself under punishment of death if these men should ask him to come and help in defending their property, Abraham would have to go and do it or they would kill him.

He had placed himself in jeopardy for his seed and his posterity by entering into an alliance with these men. Can we blame Abraham for what he did? You can't blame him. They didn't have police back then. They had marauding tribes coming through, wiping out. You had to band together to protect yourself. That's what they had to do.

PP 134.3, 'Notwithstanding, he was known as a teacher of a new religion, three royal brothers, ruler of Amorite plains in which he dwelt, manifested their friendship by inviting him to enter into an alliance with them for greater security'. They approached him. He wanted security. But where was Abraham?

So here's where the rubber meets the road on this issue. We might be tempted to enter into alliances with individuals in the near future. Mighten we? Individuals that want to rise up against the government and for our own protection, our own safety, we might be tempted to enter into alliances with them for our security and our protection. Mighten we? Have to think carefully about these things, about who is your protector, who is your provider, who is going to look after you? Jehovah, my provider.

So let's remember with Abraham, we're coming into a situation where it is very, very evident that there is a hostile takeover of the whole world occurring as we speak. It's called a health dictatorship. It's taking over the whole world, which automatically tells us that this is coordinated at a scale of a group of individuals that have rulership of the whole world. Isn't it evident to all of us that this is what's taking place? The question is, how are you going to respond as it gets narrower and narrower and narrower? Should you bind together with unbelievers to resist or should you trust in your heavenly Father? And in saying all of these things I'm not offering counsel to anyone on what they should or should not do in regard to the issue of vaccination. You have a mind, use it. Study, work it out for yourself. I'm not going to tell anybody else what they should or shouldn't do. You are sovereign of your own body. You have a Father in heaven. You can work it out. But I'm not going to align myself with other people that are hostile and want to kill and destroy those in leadership. I'm not going to ally myself with those individuals and place a death decree upon myself in doing those things.

So this is very relevant to us now, isn't it? I choose to trust that my Father will take care of me and that He will take care of my posterity. And I have a posterity that is pretty fragile when it comes to these kinds of issues. And so I have to trust my Father in heaven. It becomes pretty evident to me that all of the things that we learned about hydrotherapy and natural remedies, we're going to need those a lot more because the hospital system is finished. You may put yourself in that system, you may come out okay, and it may be God's will for you to still be in that situation. There's no need to be afraid, but then you're in their system. And I'm not saying you shouldn't in acute situations do these things, I'm simply saying it's becoming very dangerous now, very dangerous.

And what do you do? You say, Father, I trust that you'll take care of me. Whatever happens, you'll never leave me, you'll guard me. You will help me to make decisions. Our natural inclination is to make decisions for ourselves, make counsel, and seek God's will and then go to war. That's our natural inclination. The challenge is how do we navigate these issues? How do we deal with these issues now? So hopefully that's giving you some things to think about, about the covenant of Abraham.

Abraham was coming at this covenant from a completely different context to God. And I would suggest to you that the covenant with Abraham is exactly the same as the cross and the judgment. The way that God is coming at those three events is completely different from the way that we come to these three events. And God is working through our blind and darkened mind to bring the light of the gospel and of His character to us. It's amazing how God could turn that into an everlasting covenant. Abraham made promises to God that could not be sustained, but God used it and made it into an everlasting covenant. I find that astounding. It's amazing to me how God did this, but with God, all things are possible.

Thank you for your patience. I pray that you will consider these things. Let us kneel and close with prayer. Father in heaven, I thank you for this story of Abraham. Thank you for your wonderful condescension. I thank you for working with us in the darkness. So often so many of us are tempted to believe that we cannot be forgiven for the things that we've done. Or worse still, we think that we're better than other people and that you would destroy them and not us. Either way, it's not a good look. Father, I pray that as we study these things, as we look at these things, help us to see more deeply the reality of what is going on and how to read these stories in the Old Testament and what they mean for us. I thank you for the faith that you brought out of Abraham that he could look to the stars of

heaven and believe that you would give him a seed. Beautiful faith in our father Abraham. And Lord, let us learn the lessons that he struggled with when he was faced with a new world order system bearing down upon him and taking his family. How are we going to react? What are we going to do? For these things are now bursting upon us. Give us wisdom. Give us your grace and may we be the men and women of peace above all. And I thank you in Jesus name, amen.