

Genesis 14 –

NOTE: The Focus of the text is on Abram, Lot, and the interactions with the two kings at the end of the chapter. The relating of the rebellion and conquest of the international armies sets up the background to Abram and Lot's involvement.

I. International War Comes To The Land (1-3)

A. The Eastern Coalition (1)

1. These Seem To Be Four Kings Ruling Regional Territories
 - a. Chedolaomer King of Elam – Ancient Persia
 - b. Amraphel King of Shinar – Babylonia
 - c. Arioch King of Ellasar
 - d. Tidal King of Nations (Goiim)
2. This is a regional coalition under the leadership of Chedolaomer (see v. 4)

B. The City-King's Coalition (2-3)

1. These are kings of particular cities in the land of Canaan that banded together to rebel against Chedolaomer
 - a. Bera King of Sodom
 - b. Birsha King of Gomorrah
 - c. Shinab King of Admah
 - d. Scemeber King of Zeboiim
 - e. The King of Bella (Zoar in Moses' day)
2. The City-Kings Joined Together at Siddim by the salt sea (i.e. The Dead Sea) (3)

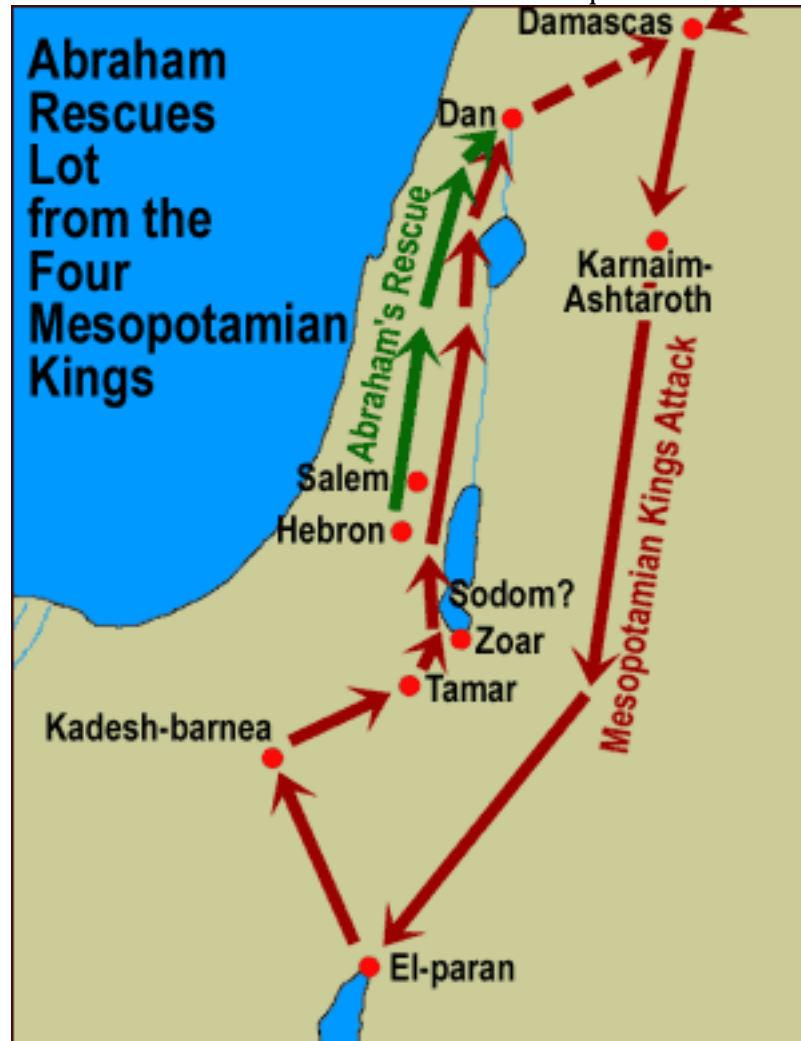
II. Lot is Caught Up In The War (4-12)

A. The Rebellion of The City-Kings Brings Retaliation (4-9)

1. The City-Kings Rebel Against Chedorlaomer (4)
 - a. The City-Kings served Chedorlaomer for twelve years
 - i. They paid tribute (taxes, people, goods) to the Eastern Coalition for twelve years
 - ii. This is an example of a Suzerain / Vassal Relationship
 - The Suzerain King (or Kingdom) ruled over the vassal state and exacted taxes
 - The Vassal pledged allegiance to the Suzerain and was allowed to govern itself in internal matters.
 - b. The City-Kings Rebelled in the Thirteenth year
 - i. They stopped paying tribute to the Eastern Kings
 - ii. They asserted their independence from the Eastern Kings
2. The Eastern Coalition Begins A Campaign in The Land (5-6)
 - a. The Following year (14th) Chedorlaomer began conquering through the land

- i. Their armies began on the eastern side, marching south and conquering the peoples
 - Maybe they thought they would conquer the entire land while they were coming
 - Maybe they thought they would go ahead and defeat the other city states so they couldn't join together and attack their rear

3. The Eastern Coalition Turns and Conquers Toward Sodom (7)



4. The City-Kings Come Out To Fight Against Them (8-9)

- a. The Four kings of Mesopotamia against the Five City-Kings of Canaan

B. The Rebellion of The City-Kings Is Crushed (10-12)

1. The City-Kings Are Defeated (10)

- a. Some Fell Into The Pits
 - i. The Hebrew text simply says "pits pits"
 - ii. Some take this to mean tar pits (slime pits) –

- The area of the dead sea was rich in minerals, and the sea was known in Roman times as *Asphaltites*, (where our word Asphalt comes from) from the lumps of bitumen often found floating on its surface
 - The text says that the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and “fell” there (presumably in the pits)
 - The King of Sodom Himself did not die but is seen again coming out to Abram at the end of the chapter – Perhaps he was simply trapped there?
 - The “kings” of Sodom and Gomorrah could be a reference to the armies (Like when we say Vladimir Putin Conquered Crimea – it was actually his army)
- iii. Some simply see the “pits” as underground areas well-known to the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah which were used to hide and avoid capture
 - b. Some Fled Into The Hills
 - i. Those who were not killed fled into the mountain region
 - ii. This would be the route Lot would take when Sodom is destroyed later
2. The City’s Are Plundered (11-12)
 - a. They Took All the Goods From Sodom (11)
 - b. They Took Lot Prisoner From Sodom (12)
 - i. Chedolaomer’s army plundered the city of Sodom
 - ii. They took the goods and the food (presumably the valuables as well)
 - iii. They also took Lot and all his possessions
 - iv. Why was Lot dwelling in Sodom?
 - The last time we saw him he was pitching his tents “toward” Sodom
 - Lot had grown comfortable and compromising – Peter will tell us that the wickedness of Sodom vexed him, but he is still drawn deeper and deeper into the city.
 - v. Lot is now part of the spoils of Sodom
- III. Lot is Rescued By Abram (13-16)
 - A. Abram and His Allies Are Told of Lot’s Capture (13)
 1. A Survivor Comes to Tell Abram of Lot’s Capture

2. Abram is called "The Hebrew" (The first use of the term in the Bible – although the name Eber has been seen)
 - a. Abram is called "The Hebrew" to distinguish him from his allies – Mamre, Eschol, and Aner
 - i. These neighbors of Abram were allied to Abram
 - ii. They honored their allegiance when Abram went to battle and we will see that they will be blessed for it (I will bless those who bless you)
 - b. Abram is called "The Hebrew" showing that he himself is the leader of a clan of the land
- B. Abram Pursues the Army with 318 Trained Men (14)
 1. Abram goes out to rescue Lot
 - a. His love for his relative (the text says "brother") spurred him to take action
 - b. He is not going out for material gain or glory
 - c. He is truly his brother's keeper
 2. Abram took 318 "trained" men
 - a. Notice that Abram is no longer just a farmer and herdsman
 - b. Abram, as head of his family and clan, trained some of his men for defense and battle
 - c. Still, 318 men is hardly an "army" in the way that Chedorlaomer's forces were
 3. Abram chased the army down at Dan (see map)
- C. Abram Defeats The Army (15)
 1. Abram divided his forces and surprise attacked Chedorlaomer at night
 - a. Abram's intelligence and military strategy is seen here
 - b. The element of surprise and the cover of darkness aided Abram's force
 - c. However it was God's blessing that ultimately won Abram the victory
 2. Abram routed the army and chased them almost to Damascus (see map)
- D. Abram Retrieves the Spoils the Army Took (16)
 1. Abram brought back his nephew Lot
 2. Abram also retrieved all the goods and the people that were taken from Sodom
- IV. Abram Meets With Two Kings (17-24)
 - A. Abram is Entreated By Kings on His Return (17-20)
 1. The King of Sodom Goes Out To Meet Abram (17) – More on him later
 2. The King of Salem Goes Out to Meet Abram (18-20)
 - a. Melchizedek is a King and a Priest of God Most High (El Elyon)

- i. The name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”
- ii. He is King of Salem
 - Shalom – means “Peace”
 - Salem is the ancient name for Jerusalem in Jewish tradition
 - Salem is equated with Zion in Psalm 76:2
- iii. He is a Priest of the Most High God (El Elyon)
 - This is the first occurrence of the idea of a “priest” in the Bible
- iv. He brought out bread and wine

NOTE: Melchizedek is a type and foreshadow of Christ. “Melchizedek was the godly, residing Canaanite priest-king of Jerusalem. Whereas Abram was a descendant of the blessed Shem, Melchizedek was a descendant of the cursed Canaan (cf. Genesis 9:24–27). Nevertheless, Melchizedek, like Abram, had come to believe in the one true God. Abram had found him to be a true spiritual brother and therefore accepted his provision and blessings—and then gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything. In effect, Abram bowed before Melchizedek in paying him tithes. “Abram bows only to Melchizedek, in a story filled with kings” (Von Rad). Abram bowed before the one who was holding the place for the future Davidic dynasty and its ultimate son.” – Kent Hughes

While Melchizedek is mysterious and only mentioned historically here in Genesis 14, David mentions him in Psalm 110 as he prophecies the coming of Christ.

Psalm 110:1 - The Lord said unto my Lord,

Sit thou at my right hand,

Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Psalm 110:4 - The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent,

Thou *art* a priest for ever

After the order of Melchizedek.

The writer of Hebrews also uses the imagery of Melchizedek showing that Jesus is a greater High Priest than the Levitical priests.

Hebrews 7:1-5 - For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; ²To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; ³Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but ***made like unto the Son of God***; abideth a priest continually. ⁴ Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

- b. Melchizedek Blesses Abram By God the Creator (19)
 - i. The Priest King blesses Abram by the creator God
 - ii. The God who owns and rules heaven and earth
 - c. Melchizedek Blesses The True God (20a)
 - i. The Priest King rightly attributes Abram's victory to God who is in control
 - ii. Both he and Abram knew who the glory belonged to
 - 3. The King of Salem Receives a Tithe From Abram (20b)
 - a. Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all he had
 - b. This is the first payment of a "tithe" in the Bible (See Hebrews 7)
- B. Abram Refuses to Be Allied With the King of Sodom (21-24)
 - 1. The King of Sodom Offers Abram the Spoils (21)
 - a. The King of Sodom has watched the exchange between Abram and Melchizedek – He attempts to offer his own deal
 - b. The King offers to give Abram the goods
 - i. According to ancient warfare, Abram was entitled to it all – He conquered the army, therefore all the spoils were his
 - ii. The King of Sodom was offering Abram what already belonged to Him
 - iii. This was a way for the King of Sodom to align himself with Abram
 - Sodom had won nothing and defeated no one
 - Abram was the ultimate victor and the King of Sodom sought to join himself to Abram's victory by commanding part of the spoils
 - 2. Abram Refuses To Take Anything (22-23)
 - a. Abram refuses to align himself with the King of Sodom
 - b. Abram has sworn to God that he would take no gifts or spoils from the king so that all the glory goes to God alone
 - i. He refuses so that the king could not say "I have made Abram rich"
 - ii. When do you think Abram learned this lesson?
 - iii. Pharaoh had given Abram many gifts because of Sarai – and Abram still remembers the shame of his faithlessness and the consequences it brought
 - 3. Abram Does Not Want to Be Indebted (23b)

- a. Abram refuses to compromise with the world (unlike Lot)
 - b. Abram refuses to allow any man to take glory from God
 - c. Abram refuses to place his trust in any other's wealth or help – He will trust God and not ally himself with Sodom.
- 4. Abram Does Take Care Of His Allies (24)
 - a. Abram does understand that his allies in the battle have not taken an oath to refuse the gift of Sodom
 - b. Abram makes provision to reimburse the men with him from the spoils of war