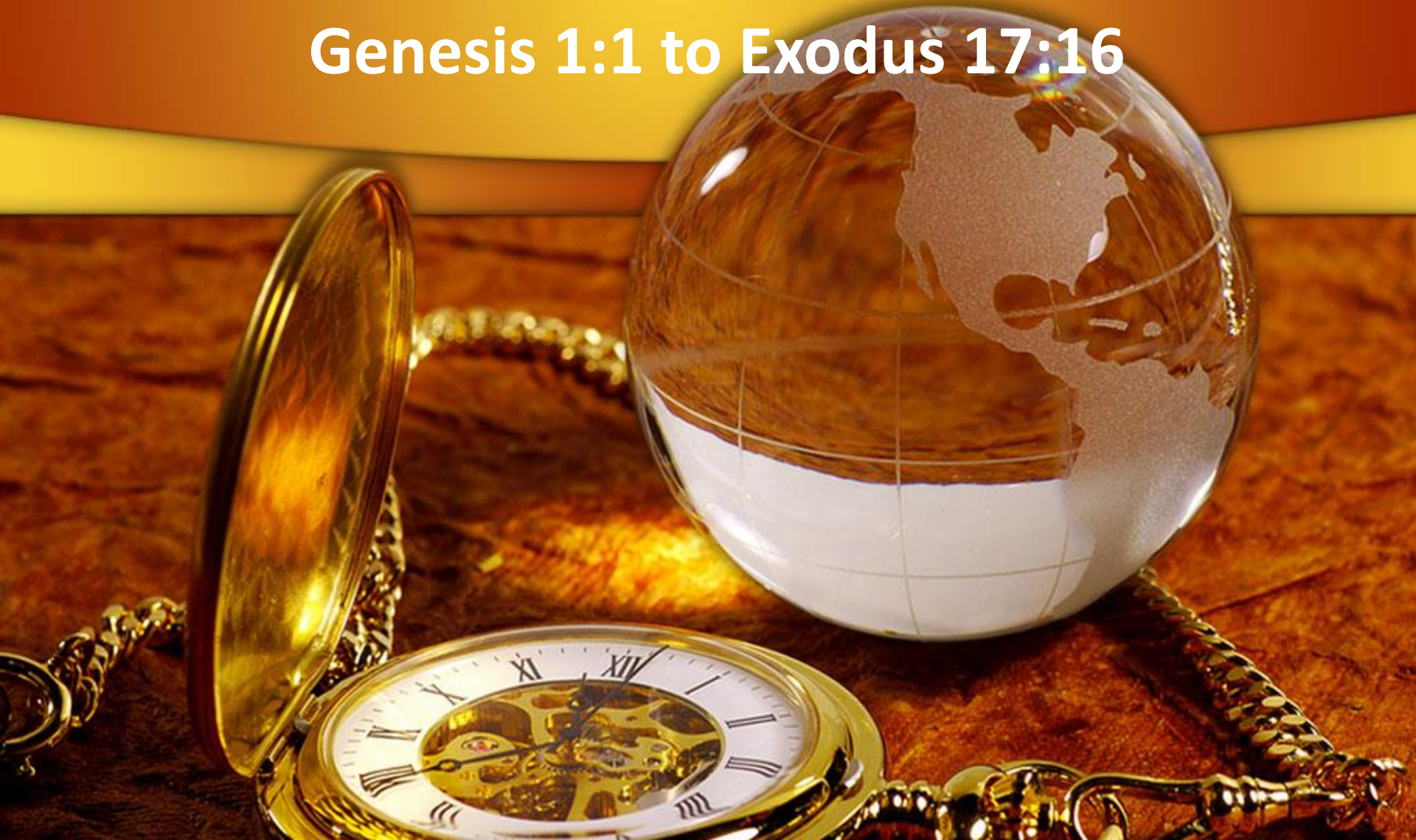
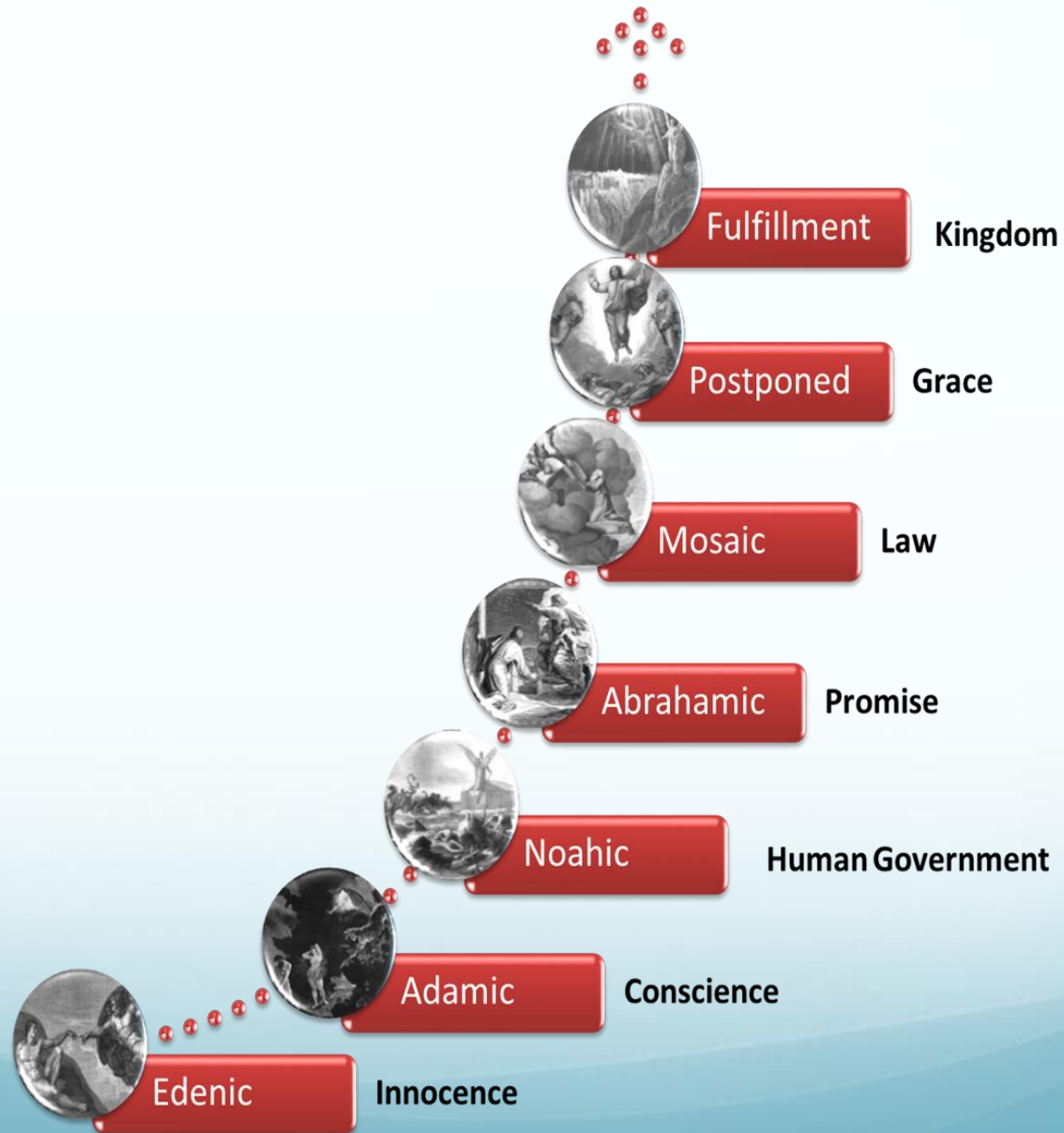


# From God's Creation to God's Nation

Genesis 1:1 to Exodus 17:16



# Review of Covenants in the Bible & Dispensations



# Chapter 14 Audio



# Quick Review Genesis 13 Outline (Review)

Primeval-----Patriarchal

## THE PATRIARCHS (12–50)

This second part of Genesis describes four great heroes: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

### **The Ascension (went up) of Abram to the Promised Land (13:1–18)**

- A. The arrival (13:1–4): Abram arrives at Bethel and worships God again. (repeats the tent/worship 12:8)**
- B. The argument (13:5–7): The herdsmen of Abram and Lot (his nephew) have a dispute over grazing rights. (Since Abram & Lot were in this area prior to going to Egypt, it is likely to conclude Lot knew about Sodom & Gomorrah, but can't be dogmatic on this)**
- C. The agreement (13:8–13)**
- D. The assurance (13:14–18): After Lot's departure, God again promises to make Abram's descendants as numerous as the dust of the earth and to give them the land of Canaan.**

Outline is from: *The Outline Bible, Harold L. Willmington, p. 8*

# Genesis 14 Outline

- **SECTION OUTLINE (GENESIS 14)**
- The Courage of Abram (14:1–16)
- A. **The villains (14:1–11)**
  1. *The rebellion (14:1–4)*
  2. *The retaliation (14:5–11)*
- B. **The victim (14:12)**
  1. *Abram's army (14:13–14)*
  2. *Abram's attack (14:15)*
  3. *Abram's achievements (14:16)*
- The Communion of Abram (14:17–24)
- A. **The godly and priestly king of Salem (14:17–20)**
- B. **The godless and perverted king of Sodom (14:21–24)**

- H. L. Willmington, *The Outline Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999),

# Abrahamic Covenant (12–17)

- Abrahamic promises (12)
- Abraham's sanctification (13–14)
- Abrahamic Covenant (15)
- Ishmael's line (16)
- Circumcision (17)
  - Taken from Andy Woods power point on Genesis

# Abrahamic Covenant

**ABRAHAMIC**  
**Genesis**  
**15**

**LAND**

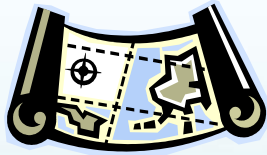
**SEED**

**BLESSING**

**LAND**  
**Deuteronomy**  
**29-30**

**DAVIDIC**  
**2 Samuel**  
**7:12-16**

**NEW**  
**Jeremiah**  
**31:31-34**



*Unconditional* covenant with a conditional blessing (Deut. 28; Lev. 26)

# Introductory Comments

- The word *king* appears in this chapter twenty-eight times
- A host of royal players make up this scene: five kings of Canaan, four kings of Mesopotamia, Abraham, Melchizedek the priest-king, and implicitly the Lord
- Yahweh, however, stands above all as King of kings
- On earth, God's faithful warrior, though lacking the title *king*, is in fact a greater king
- In 13:1-2 we see Abram come up out of Egypt a very wealthy man
- In 13:14-18 Yahweh reaffirms His land promise (Canaanite land)
- In the latter part of 14, Abram holds the wealth of the 6 Transjordan nations plundered in victory & south as far as Paran, including Lot's wealth



## Introductory Comments (Cont.)

- Abram is shown in ch. 14 to be a courageous warrior at Mamre, a complete about face from his duplicitous cowardliness in running to Egypt
- The man of faith is not shackled by his past failures but saved from them
- The man of peace, with reference to his relative, becomes a man of war, with reference to those who plunder him
- By contrasting two campaigns of the war, the scene contrasts the strength of the four eastern kings (14:5–7), the weakness of the five Dead Sea kings (14:8–12), and the superiority of Abraham to both (14:13–16)
- The battle lines of the kings of the pentapolis contrast with Abraham's surprise attack. The plundering kings have to be defeated in an unconventional way.
  - Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 226.

## The Courage of Abram (14:1–16)

- *The rebellion (14:1–4)*
- These verses & exposition of them of the accounts the ongoing battles of Mesopotamian kings parallel Israel's experiences historically
- The war of the four kings against the five begins in verses 1–2 giving the list of the antagonists, verse 1 gives who the invaders were
- This is the 1<sup>st</sup> ever recorded military campaign in the Bible: 4 kings invading the territory of the 5 kings
- Amraphel, king of Shinar: a Semitic name, most likely an Amorite name
- Rashi (Salomon Isaacides, and today generally known by the acronym Rashi, was a medieval French rabbi and author of a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Tanakh.), said Amraphel was the same name as Nimrod, but no evidence has been found confirming

## *The rebellion (14:1–4)*

### *(Cont.)*

- At one time, numerous scholars felt this was same person as Hammurabi, but the 4-king invasion took place in year 2088 B.C., while Hammurabi became king only in 2068 B.C.
- Shinar-Babylonia again becomes a major antagonistic player
- 2<sup>nd</sup> king Arioch king of Ellasar: a Hurrian name.....
- In the Mari Tablets (Archaeological excavations at Mari Discovered in 1933 along the Euphrates River yielded a monumental discovery: archives containing over 20,000 documents. These records virtually rewrite the history of western Asia. In addition to the tablets, a well-preserved palace was also unearthed. Original mural paintings were still intact, as well as some kitchen and bath installations. These artifacts and tablets shed a great deal of light on life during the period from 1810 to 1760 b.c.)

## *The rebellion (14:1–4)*

### *(Cont.)*

- In the *Mari Tablets*, the name is found as *Arriyuk*. Some historians identify *Arioch* as *Rimsin*, king of *Larsa* who came to the throne in 2098 b.c., ten years before this invasion took place
- *Ellasar* was a leading tribe in South Babylonia
- 3<sup>rd</sup> king was *Chedorlaomer* king of *Elam*, and his is a typical *Elamite* name
- *Elam* was in *Persia* or *Iran*.....(so “nothing new under the sun” as far as *Israel’s* enemy/antagonists were/are)
- 4<sup>th</sup> king was *Tidal* king of *Goim*. *Tidal* is a *Hittite* name, and in *Hittite*, it appears as *Tudhalia*
- A king by that name attacked *Babylon* in ancient history
- The word *goyim* is simply a standard *Hebrew* word for “nations,” probably a reference to the large area controlled by *Hittites* that was more than just one nation
  - Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariels Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed.

## *The rebellion (14:1–4)* *(Cont.)*

- Rabbinic tradition interpreted these four kings as symbolizing the four Gentile Empires of the Book of Daniel
- what should be noted here is that for the first time in the biblical text, non-Hebrew names appear
- This shows the effect of the judgment of the confusion of languages and tongues
- Fructenbaum contends this (I agree) “This again shows that Hebrew indeed was the original language before the event of the Tower of Babel.”
- None of the kings can be positively identified from independent sources, and the place names Ellasar and Goiim (meaning “peoples”?) are also unknown. Nevertheless, the names and events ring authentic, fitting best in the first half of the second millennium.....Matthews, *The New American Commentary*

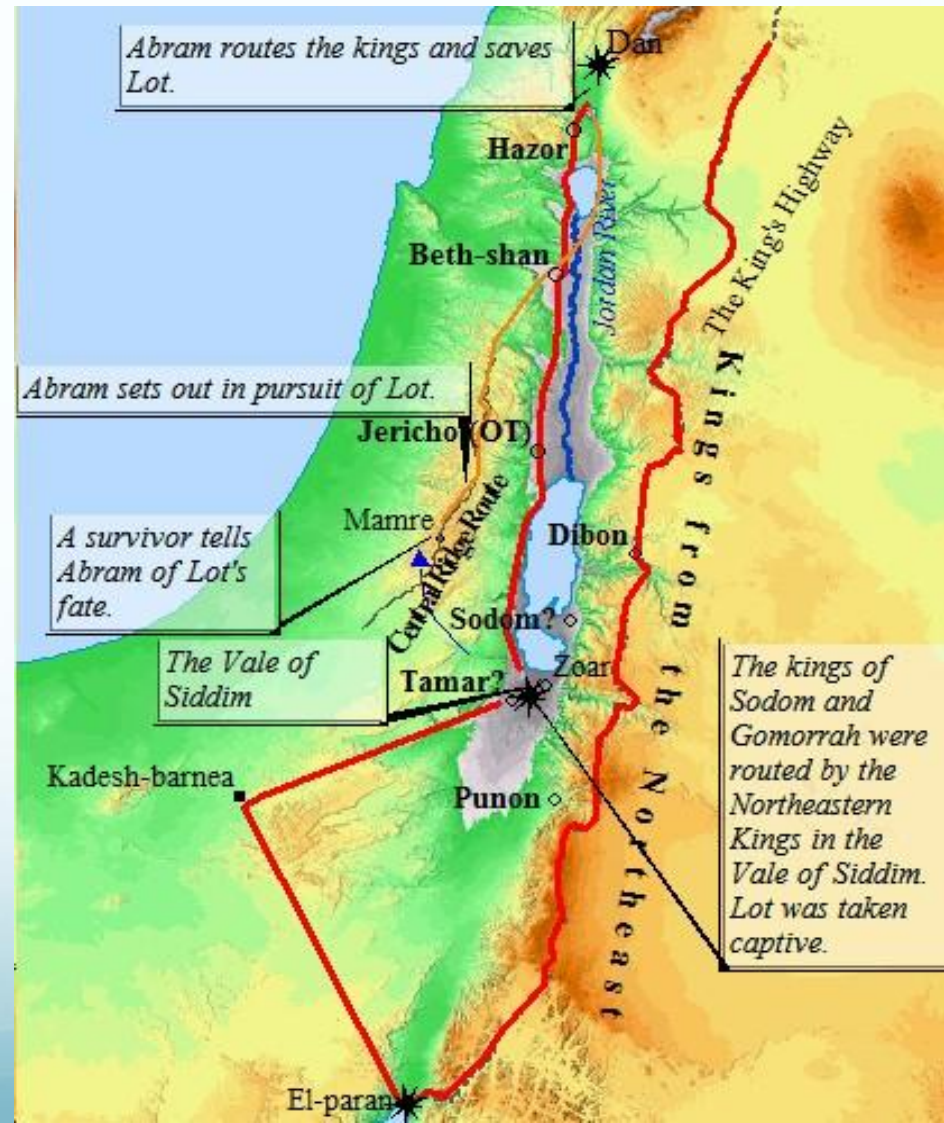
## *The rebellion (14:1–4)*

### *(Cont.)*

- 14:2 deals with the kings who were invaded (the 5 kings of the circle of Jordan)
- 1<sup>st</sup> king: Bera king of Sodom: his name meant “victor” or can also mean “in evil”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> king: Birsha king of Gomorrah: Birsha means “sturdy man” but can also mean “in wickedness”
- 3<sup>rd</sup> king: Shinab king of Admah: Shinab refers to the moon god Sin, and means “Sin is father”
- 4<sup>th</sup> king: Shemeber king of Zeboiim: his name means “Your name is mighty”
- 5<sup>th</sup> king: the king of Bela: name not given, but was same as king of the town/area Zoar

## Verse 3-4: The “where” & “why” this battle took place

- “where” v.3: the Valley of Siddim (that is the Salt Sea...i.e. Dead Sea)...the southern end of the dead sea



## Verse 3-6: The “where” & “why” this battle took place

- The “why” .....
- The 5 kings had “served” ...or “received tribute” so they were vassal states.....we call this taxation in America, or tribute to our evil king (king O)
- Time period: for 12 years.....so in the 13<sup>th</sup> they rebelled (probably stopped paying tributes) to re-subjugate (flip the script) the tributes and vassal submission to them
- Now in the 14<sup>th</sup> year (v. 5) The mention of *Chedorlaomer* shows him to be the leader of the four kings that were with him
- The campaign began in the Hill Country of the *Amorites*, which is the *Trans-Jordanian mountainous region*
- First to be attacked were *the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim*. This battle occurred in the area of *Bashan*, or the modern-day *Golan Heights*



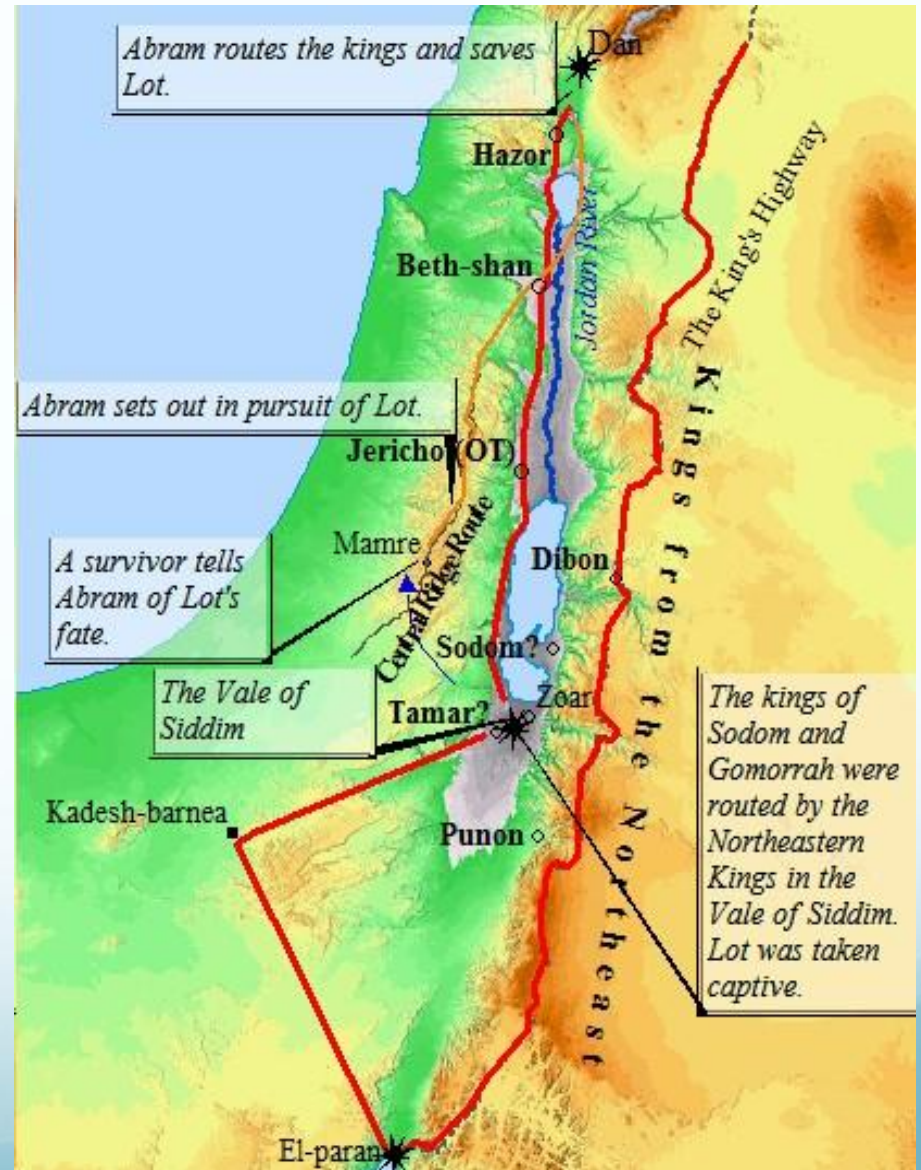
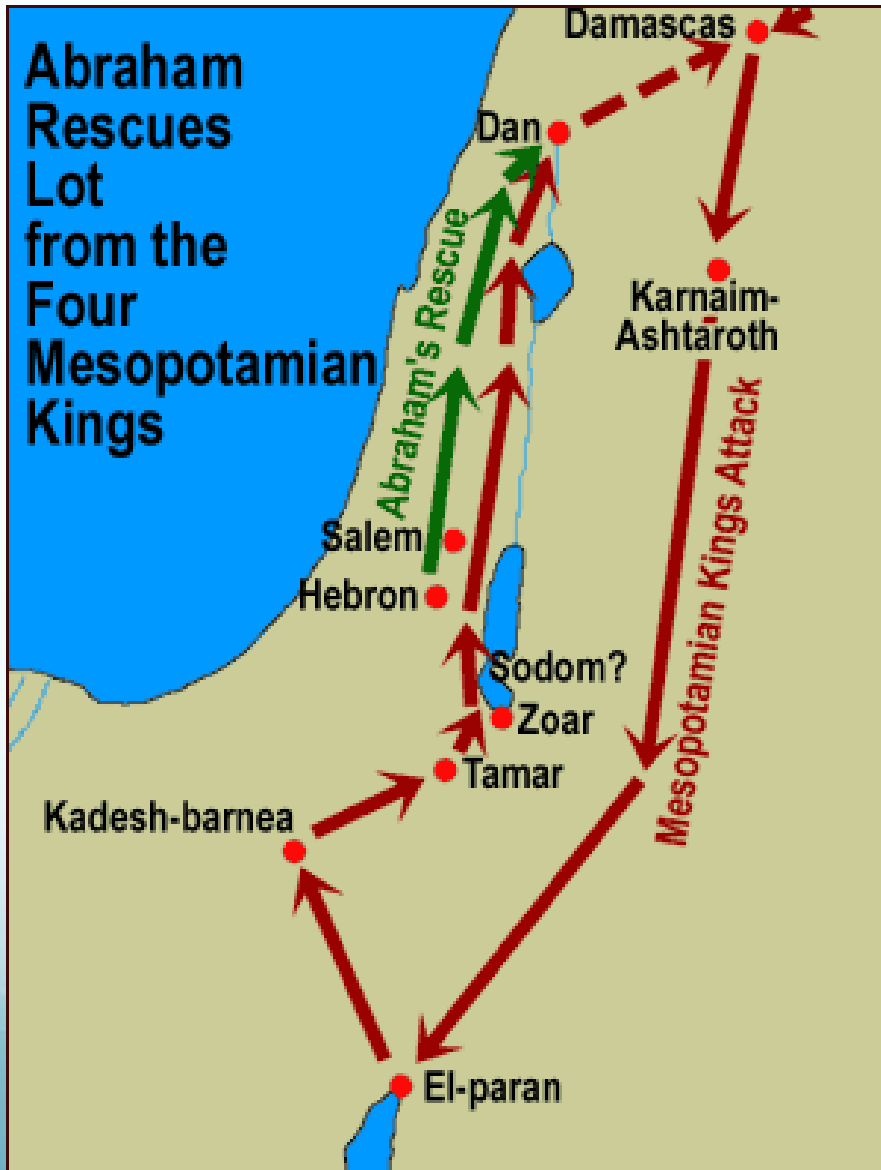
# Golan Heights (Modern day)



## “where’s” of vv. 5-6 (Cont.)

- Interesting note: Later, Og, king of Bashan, was the last king of the *Rephaim*; he was killed in the battle against the Israelites before they crossed the Jordan River (Num. 21:33–35)
- Second to be attacked were *the Zuzim in Ham*. The Zuzim are the same as the *Zamzummim* of Deuteronomy 2:20 and 3:11. Previously, this was the territory of the *Rephaim*, of Bashan, and the Ammonites called them *the Zamzummim*
- The Ammonites, descendants of Lot, later disposed them out of what later became Ammon. When the Ammonites dispossessed the *Zamzummim*, it forced them to retreat into Bashan, where they were originally from
- The name *Ham* (v. 5b) was the original name of *Rabbah*, which became the capital of the Ammonites. Today, it is the city of Amman, the capitol of Jordan

# Map of the War's of the Dead Sea area Kings vs. the Eastern coalition of Kings



## “where’s” of vv. 5-6 (Cont.)

- Third to be attacked were *the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, (V. 5c) also mentioned in Deuteronomy 2:10–11. Previously, this was also the territory of the Rephaim*
- Note: “The itinerary of conquest is given as is common in chronographic texts. The route goes from north to south along what is known as the King’s Highway, the major north-south artery in Transjordan, just east of the Jordan valley” .....Walton, *The NIV Application Commentary*, p.417
- Previously, this was also the territory of the *Rephaim. The Moabites called them the Emim, and these were dispossessed by the Moabites. Moab was the other son of Lot.*
- Emites. The original inhabitants of Moab, they were strong, numerous, and giants (Deut. 2:10–11). Their name means “terrors.”

## “where’s” of vv. 5-6 (Cont.)

- Fourth to be attacked were *the Horites in their mount Seir, and these were later dispossessed by the Edomites (Deut. 2:12), who were the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, the son of Isaac*
- The invading kings went as far south as *unto Elparan, the modern day Akaba and Eilat, which is by the wilderness, meaning the wilderness of Paran, the place where Ishmael grew up (21:21) and mentioned in Numbers 10:12, where later Israel would also camp*
- Fruchtenbaum makes this excellent comment: “observation is that they invaded the area later to be occupied by Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites. In the providence of God, this very invasion, and the destruction by this invasion, prepared the way for the takeover of these areas. Indeed, the very areas they destroyed were later inhabited by descendants of people related to Abraham; that is, the sons of Lot, the Ammonites and Moabites; and the sons of Isaac, the Edomites, through Esau”
  - Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariels Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed. (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2008), 263.

## “where’s” of v. 7

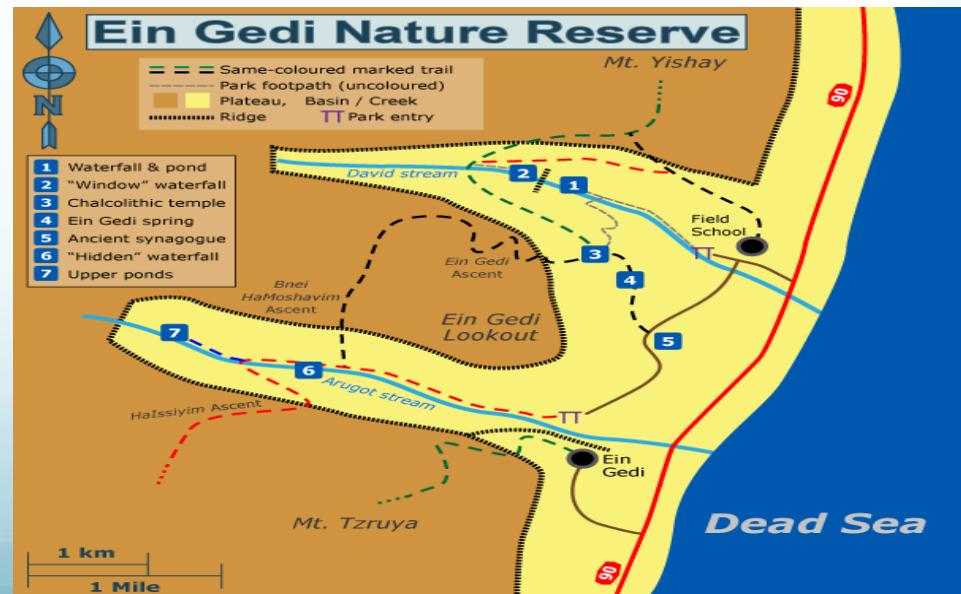
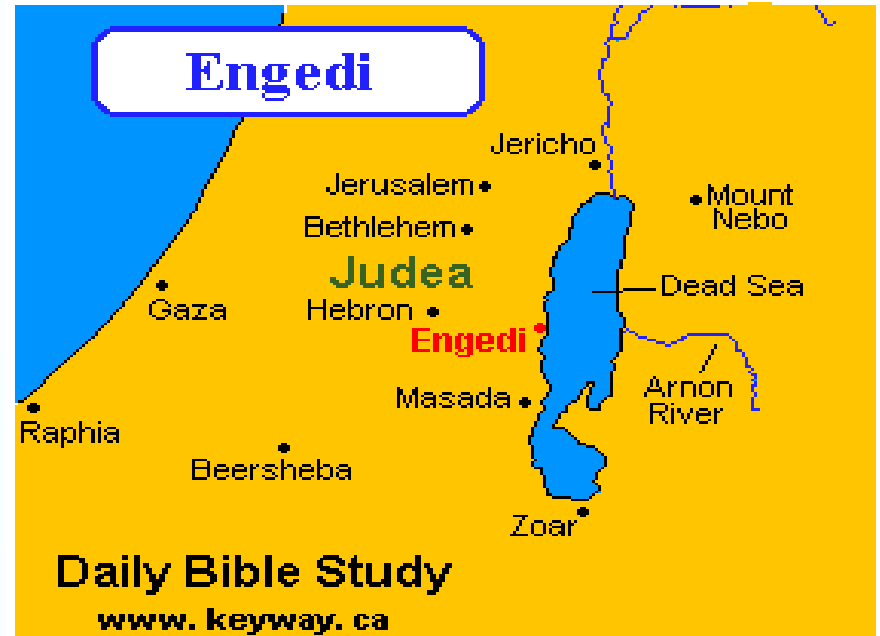
- verse 7, the invasion changed directions: *And they returned. The invasion had been from north to south, but they now turned north and invaded the Negev until they came to En-mishpat, (the same is Kadesh), meaning Kadesh-Barnea*



## “where’s” of v. 7 (Cont.)

- Kadesh-Barnea, where the Israelites would camp some time later. *They smote all the country of the Amalekites, referring to the territory that the Amalekites would later inhabit, since at this point the Amalekites did not as yet exist*
- Waltke on this:
- “Amalekites. A seminomadic tribe living primarily in the Negev (Num. 13:29), they were so despicable that eventually blotting them out was the only appropriate response toward this warlike people, who provoked unwarranted attacks against God’s people and took advantage of the weak (Deut. 25:17–18; 1 Sam. 27:8–11; 30:1–20). The term may come to refer sometimes to any group of people who resist God’s purposes (cf. **Ex. 17:8-15**)”, **go to and read it** (Ex. 17:8-15)
- Finally, they closed in on *the Amorites, that dwelled in Hazazon-tamar, the same as En-Gedi (II Chron. 20:2)*. *Thus they flanked the five kings from the northeast as well and were then ready to move against the them*

# Hazazon-tamar, the same as En-Gedi





## En-Gedi pictures from Israel trip 2014



# More En-Gedi Pics



## *The retaliation (14:8–11)*

- Genesis 14:8–10 describes the war of the four kings against the five, with verse 8 dealing with the defenders: *And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar)*
- Waltke: “The narrator describes a traditional battle matching strength against strength, five kings on the home ground against four kings far removed from their homeland. The contrast underscores the might of the eastern kings.”
- The verb is the opposite of “came” that introduced the two Transjordan battles. Thus, this is the first mention of resistance. The verb is singular, suggesting that the king of Sodom heads the Dead Sea coalition.
- So General Chedorlaomer king of Elam (Eastern kings) verses General Bera king of Sodom (Salt Sea area kings)

## *The retaliation (14:8–11)*

- Verse 10 summarizes the actual battle, beginning with a background statement: *The vale of Siddim was full of tar pits, meaning pits of bitumen, a rich source of building materials. It probably helped in the building of these five cities*
- This battle had two results. First: *The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah (meaning two of the five) fled after the military defeat, and they fell there, meaning that the two kings died in the vale of Siddim*
- Second: *and they that remained (meaning the other three) fled to the mountain. Those that were still alive fled from the cities of the Plain, and they fled to the mountain, in Hebrew, a specific mountain...Fructenbaum*
- “To fall” is also often a term in battle, but verses often cited to support “threw themselves into” include an additional preposition that clarifies the meaning. Probably this verse refers to the troops, not the kings, since the “rest” (of the troops) is juxtaposed with “they.” .....Waltke

## *The retaliation (14:8–11)*

- Genesis 14:11 records the taking of the spoil: *And took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and they went their way. The victorious kings now intended to return to their own cities. The spoils will play a role later in chapter 14.*
- **The victim (14:12):**
- Chedorlaomer’s armies then gathered up all the possessions of the vanquished cities, including the women and children and servants, as well as many captured soldiers, and headed north again. Unfortunately for them, however, **they also took Lot and his family captive as well**. Lot was living in Sodom proper by this time. In spite of his carnality, Lot was a “righteous man” (2 Peter 2:8), as well as nephew of Abram, who had received God’s call; so God would not allow Lot to be carried off by Chedorlaomer
  - Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1976), 315316.

## *Abram's army (14:13–14)*

or as Unger Entitles this section: **Abram the Warrior**

- The man of peace now became the man of war, and the object of both peace and war was Lot
- “Abram the Hebrew” ....(v.13a)
- **the Hebrew [‘*ibrî*; cf. 10:21]. There is uncertainty about the meaning of this word during this time period. Some think it is a geographic term, deriving from the Hebrew root ‘*br*, “to pass over,” and thus meaning “one from beyond” (cf. Josh. 24:2)**
- Others think it is a social term, designating a landless people of many ethnic backgrounds known in West Semitic as the ‘*apiru*, who hired themselves out as slaves or mercenaries and could be a socially disruptive force in society
- Others think it is an ethnic term, connected with Eber, the last ancestor in the line of Shem before the earth is divided (10:21–25)

## *Abram's army (14:13–14)*

### or as Unger Entitles this section: Abram the Warrior

- Waltke makes this conclusion on why “The Hebrew” is used
- The latter is the preferred meaning based on the following:
  - (1) The form (*‘ibrî*) consists of *‘eber* + a gentilic *î*, like *Israeli* or *Israelite* from *Israel*;
  - (2) this form is appropriate with the proper name *Eber*, not with *‘apiru*;
  - (3) the term always occurs in opposition to other ethnic groups, especially the Egyptians and Philistines;
  - (4) though landless, the other characteristics of Abraham do not fit the *‘apiru*. *The Bible ascribes the term only to Abraham and his descendants to show that they are the legitimate descendants of Shem through Eber.*

## *Abram's army (14:13–14)* or as Unger Entitles this section: *Abram the Warrior*

- Fructenbaum on use of “the Hebrew”.....confirms/agrees with Waltke
- *and [he] told Abram the Hebrew. This is the first use of the term Hebrew in the biblical text, and it will be used a total of thirty-three times in the Old Testament*
- *The term Hebrew is always used as an ethnic identification*
- great trees of Mamre. See 12:6; 18:1. The narrator links this scene with the preceding one by noting that Abraham still resides “near the great trees of Mamre” (13:18; 14:13) and Lot has moved into Sodom. Indeed, both scenes pertain to Abraham’s relationship with his nephew Lot.
- *This Mamre was both the brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner, who had an alliance with Abram*



## *Abram's army (14:13–14)*

or as Unger Entitles this section: **Abram the Warrior**

- *These were confederate with Abram. The Hebrew text means they had a covenantal relationship with him. Indeed, in those days even to live there temporarily required a treaty*
- “this treaty also required the other three covenantal parties to join him in battle, and they now honored this treaty and did so. These may also have been *Abram's converts in the worship of Jehovah.*” .....Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariels Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed. (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2008), 265.
- Genesis 14:14 describes Abram's army. The occasion was: *And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive*
- the word *brother* was used in a wider sense, and in this case it refers to *his nephew Lot*
- relative. The Hebrew here is usually rendered “brother,” as in 13:8. The term explains Abraham's action: the godly display “loving-loyalty” toward their kin.....Waltke, *Genesis commentary*

## Abram's army (14:13–14)

### or as Unger Entitles this section: Abram the Warrior

- The Hebrew word for *trained men* is a *hapax-legomenon*, (a term of which only one instance of use is recorded.) *found only here and nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible*
- This term is found in the *Tel Amarna Letters*, where it denotes *Canaanite chieftain retainers*,<sup>41</sup> *as is the case here*
- 41 Retainers refers to those kept for service, implying prepaid service, such as employees paid by a monetary sum up front.
- *born in his house. These were all part of his household, a rather large household since there were three hundred and eighteen [318] men, and this only counts the males of fighting age.*
- *Abram's army pursued the enemy as far as Dan. At that point, there was no Dan, but the point is that it was what later became Dan, the northernmost part of the territory*
- Dan. The name is modernized from Laish after the time of Moses (see Judg. 18:29; also “Composition and Authorship” in the introduction). Tell Dan lies at the southern foot of Mount Hermon. It represents the northern extremity of Palestine (Judg. 20:1; 1 Sam. 3:20).

*Abram's army pursued the enemy as far as Dan*

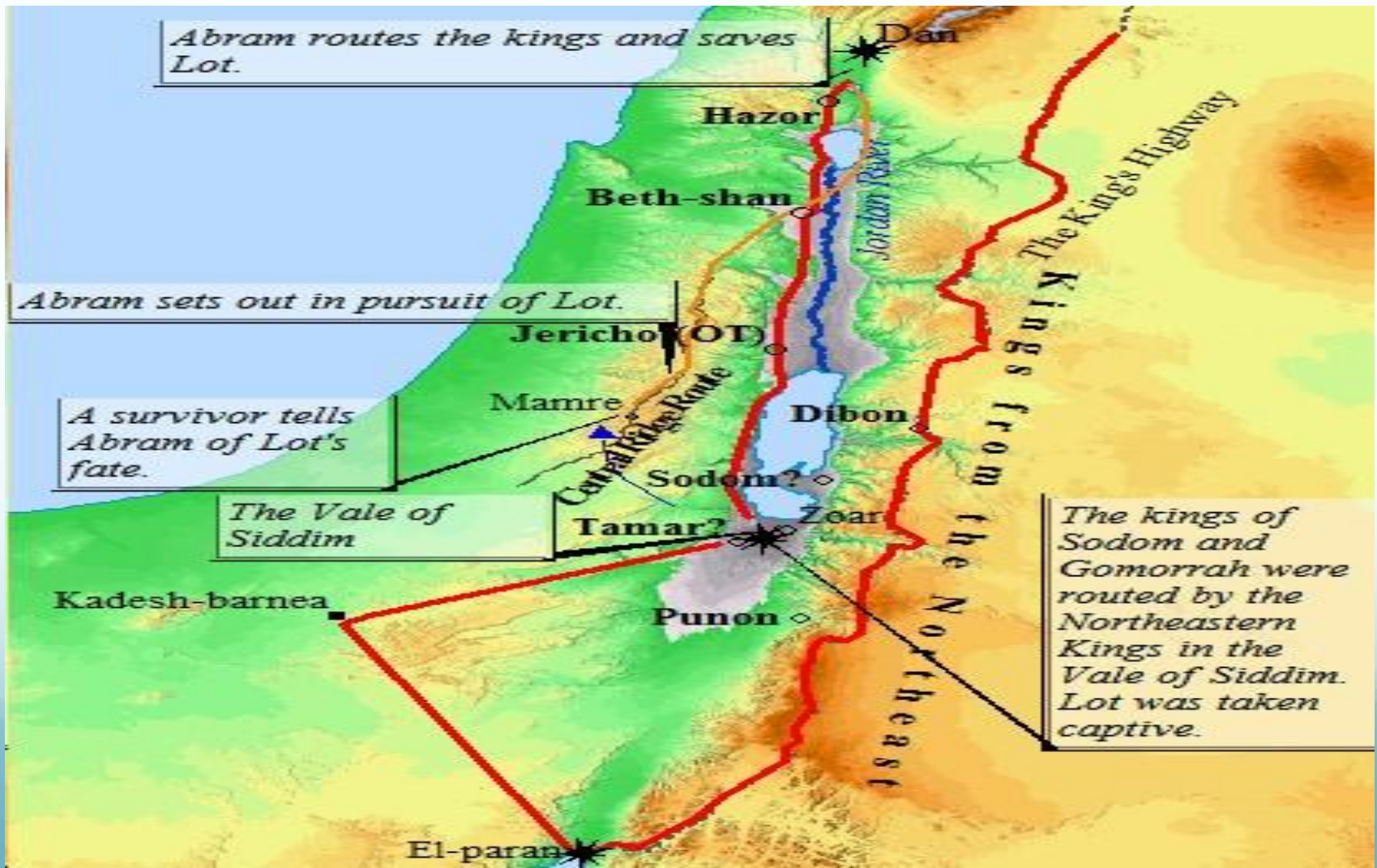


## Abram's attack (14:15)

- Genesis 14:15 describes the attack. The strategy was: *He divided himself against them by night. He means Abram, on one side with a force of his servants, the 318*
- Those that were confederate with him would have been on the other side.
- Furthermore, the attack came *by night, which was not a normative time to fight in those days, but it was part of the strategy since they would have been tremendously outnumbered anyway*
- This is really cool to me.....since my direct descendant (on my dad's mom's side), General Pickering was in charge of one of the Militia in the American Revolution against the Brits.....so this type of fighting is....well..... "in the blood"
- The battle is described in a very simple statement: *and defeated them, on both sides....i.e victory!*

## Abram's attack (14:15)

- The attack was followed by Abram's response, which was that he *pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus, quite a lengthy pursuit even in later times.*



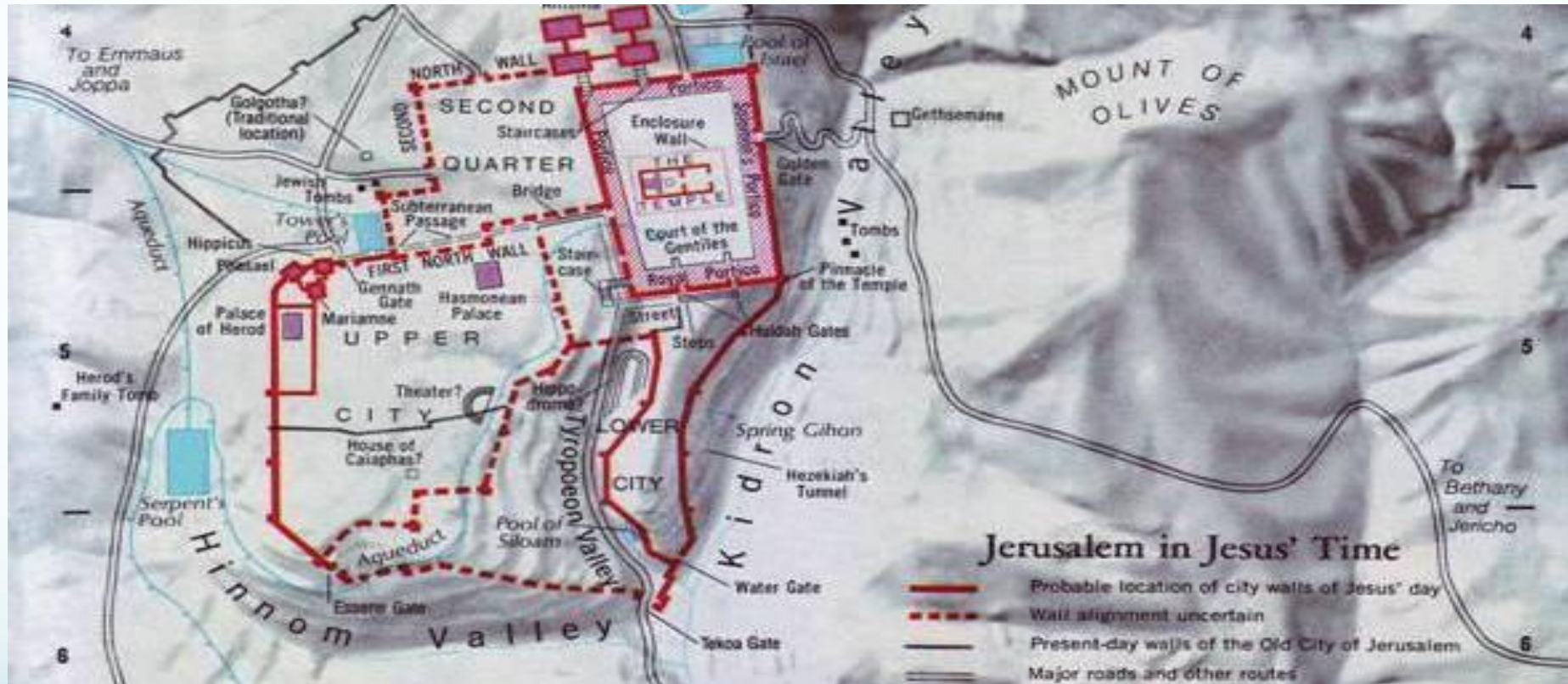
## *Abram's achievements (14:16)*

- Genesis 14:16 records the rescue: *And he brought back all the goods, meaning the spoils of war, and also brought back his brother Lot, and his goods. So as a result, Lot was liberated.*
- The fact that his possessions were recaptured shows *Lot was able to retain his wealth. He liberated the women also, the female captives, and the people, meaning the citizens of the cities who had become prisoners of war*
- Fructenbaum aptly summarizes this verse:
- “although they were rescued by Abram, representing the true God, they experienced the grace of God and the knowledge of the true God through Abram and Melchizedek. Nevertheless, these freed citizens of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim all failed to respond spiritually and turn away from their sins. Although they were rescued at this point, all of these people died in Genesis 19 when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed.
  - Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariels Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 266

# Verses 17-20 Encounter with the 2 kings & the contrasting encounter with Melchizedek (king of Salem)

- The first king, in verse 17, was *the king of Sodom, who went out to meet him*
- Two contrasts occur in this section:
- first, the king of Sodom's welcome to Abram contrasts the beneficent action taken by the king of Salem, Melchizedek (vv. 17–20)
- second, the selfish request of the king of Sodom contrasts the unselfish response of Abram (vv. 21–24)
- The timing of this meeting was: *after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him*
- the place of this meeting was *at the vale of Shaveh, and he explains: The same is the King's Vale. Today this is known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat in the Valley of Kidron*

## Valley of Kidron Map



However, that part of the Kidron Valley which parallels the Old City of Jerusalem on the west and the Mount of Olives on the east is known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat. It was in this valley where the *king of Sodom came to meet Abram*. Later, it would be the place that Absalom would build his pillar (II Sam. 18:18)



## Verses 17-20 (Cont.)

- The king of Sodom “came out” (*yāṣā`*) to meet Abram (v. 17), but Melchizedek “brought out” (*yāṣā`*)<sup>160</sup> food (v. 18) and offered a blessing (vv. 19–20). The first word spoken by the king of Salem is “blessed” (*bārûk*), but Sodom’s king first says “give me” (v. 21)
- The second king, in Genesis 14:18–20, was the king of Jerusalem. Verse 18 introduces this individual by giving his name, *Melchizedek*, and his two positions. His first position was king of Salem. Salem is a shortened form for Jerusalem (Ps. 76:2)
- The name *Melchizedek* means “king of righteousness.” Thus, he was the king of the City of Jerusalem, which in those days was a Jebusite city.
- His second position was: *the priest of God Most High*. This is the first biblical mention of a priest

## Melchizedek (Cont.)

- What this account shows is that there were other believers in existence besides the House of Abram, since this was a *priest, not of a pagan deity like the rest of the Land of Canaan, but he was priest of God Most High*
- In Hebrew, this is *El Elyon*, and this title for God is found four times in these verses. Outside of this passage, it is found only in Psalm 78:35. Otherwise, the main phrase used elsewhere in Scriptures is “Most High,” but not “Most High God.”
- The *Ras Shamra Tablets* show that this was a rather common name for God in pre-Mosaic Canaan
- The king of Sodom “came out” (*yāšā`*) to meet Abram (v. 17), but Melchizedek “brought out” (*yāsā`*)<sup>160</sup> food (v. 18) and offered a blessing (vv. 19–20). The first word spoken by the king of Salem is “blessed” (*bārûk*), but Sodom’s king first says “give me” (v. 21) (So the king of Sodom equivalent to modern day liberal democrat.....my observation/commentary)

## Some additional observations on encounter with Melchizedek

- When Abram returned from the war, this one greeted Abram bringing *forth bread and wine. There is no reason to read into this a communion service as many have done*
- While many have taught that *Melchizedek was a preincarnate Christ, this simply cannot be. This was not a theophany, because theophanies came and went; they appeared, gave their proclamation, message, or commandment and then disappeared*
- Theophanies never held an office here on earth. Here, *Melchizedek holds two offices: that of king and that of priest. The only other reference to Melchizedek in the Old Testament is Psalm 110:4*
- In rabbinic tradition, *Melchizedek was the same person as Shem, the son of Noah (this is quite possible, as Shem would have still been living)*
- Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariels Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed. (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2008), 268.

## Melchizedek (Cont.) verse 18-20

- Here, the passage also shows the second contrast; whereas the king of Sodom bargains for a portion of the booty, Abram takes none of it for himself, providing a tenth for Melchizedek (v. 20) and the share belonging to his allies.
- the language “king of Salem,” *melek šālēm*, means literally “king of peace” (Hb. 7:2). By this parallel language between his name and his city there is an association of “righteousness” and “peace” (Salem)
- These two characteristics are found together in the Old Testament (Ps 85:10; Isa 9:7; 32:17; 48:18; 60:17). Jerusalem is often also linked with *šedek* in the Old Testament (e.g., Isa 1:21, 26; 33:5; 46:13; 61:3; Jer 31:23; 33:16; Ps 118:19; cf. the kings of Jerusalem, Adoni-Zedek, Josh 10:1; Zedekiah, 2 Kgs 24:17–18). “Salem” (*šālēm*) is widely recognized as an ancient name for Jerusalem (*yěrûšālayim*) in Jewish tradition

## Verses 18-20 (Cont.)

- “Salem” appears in parallel with “Zion,” referring to the temple at Jerusalem (Ps 76:2[3]). In the Old Testament the name “Jebus,” referring to the pre-Israelite inhabitants of the city, is used of Jerusalem (e.g., Josh 15:8) K. A. Mathews, Genesis 11:27-50:26, vol. 1B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 148-149.
- This incident, however, is the only priestly blessing in Genesis. Later, the priests were the chief agents of blessing in Israel (e.g., Num 6:24–26; Deut 10:8); however, often a national leader (Exod 39:43; 2 Sam 6:18) or a family member (24:60; Ruth 2:19–20; 2 Sam 6:20) blessed others by invoking the Lord
- V.19: Melchizedek’s prayer also blesses *El Elyon* (*bārûk ’ēl ’elyôn*; v. 20a) instead of the typical formula, which has the name *Yahweh* (*bārûk yhwh*). The psalmists praised the name of the Lord as *Elyon* (Pss 7:17[18]; 9:2[3]; 92:1[2])

## Melchizedek (Cont.)

- “Blessed be *Yahweh*” is in prayers of invocation and liturgy (e.g., Gen 9:26; 1 Kgs 8:15, 56; 1 Chr 16:36; Ps 28:6), praise for divine grace (24:27; Exod 18:10; Ruth 4:14; 1 Sam 25:32, 39; 2 Sam 18:28; 1 Kgs 1:48; Ps 28:6), and in recognition of divine blessing on others (e.g., 24:31; 26:29). To bless God means to recognize God’s goodness as shown in the bestowal of divine benefits to his subjects
- 19(2a): “Possessor” (AV, NKJV, NASB) of “heaven and earth” (vv. 19, 22). The verb *qānâ* usually means “acquire, get” in the sense of obtaining something or someone (e.g., 25:10; 39:1); metaphorically, it may be used of redeeming Israel (e.g., Exod 15:16)
- Melchizedek is claiming for Abram’s God the exalted place of Lord of the universe
- The declaration was: *Blessed be Abram of God Most High. Melchizedek recognized Abram to be a fellow believer; he recognized Abram’s God and that Abram was God’s servant.....Fructembaum*

## Melchizedek (Cont.)

- The very fact that *Melchizedek blessed the Patriarch shows Melchizedek's exalted position as the priest of God Most High*
- Melchizedek recognized two things: This was the work of the true God, and Abram was the servant of the true God
- Abram's response to Melchizedek:
- In verse 20b is Abram's response to Melchizedek: *And he gave him a tenth of all. Abram is again proving to be a blessing to others. What should be noted, however, is that Abram is giving a tenth of the spoils of war, not his income*
- What, not cash money as the "pimp" TV preachers claim?
- "Many have used this passage to try to claim that tithing was an Old Testament law even before the Mosaic Law, and they do this because they recognize that the Mosaic Law is no longer in effect. If, therefore, they want to teach tithing, they have to use a different basis for tithing; and so they often refer to this event" .....Fructenbaum

## Melchizedek (Cont.)

- Dr. Fructenbaum is spot on/contextual in the following comments
- “However, one should note the following points. First, there was no commandment to do so; Abram did it voluntarily. Second, this was a one-time event; there is no record of him doing it repeatedly. Third, this was not a tithe from his income; there is no record of Abram giving a tenth of the income he received from all the wealth gifted to him by Pharaoh, etc. This is one-tenth from the spoils of war, and the spoils originally belonged to others”
- To summarize Melchizedek’s role in the Book of Genesis, six facts can be stated: First, Melchizedek was the king of Salem. Second, Melchizedek was the priest of God Most High. Third, Melchizedek brought out bread and wine for Abram. Fourth, Melchizedek blessed Abram on God’s behalf. Fifth, Melchizedek blessed God in Abram’s place. Sixth, Melchizedek received tithes from Abram



## Some closing observations on Melchizedek

- What individual could be greater than Father Abraham? In addition, his priesthood antedated that of the Levitical order, apparently functioning independently of the traditional priesthood of Israel (Read Psalm 110 & Heb. 5:1-10; 7:1-28)
- Melchizedek, moreover, appears and disappears in the text without mention of his parentage, his priestly accession, or death. What was the nature of his priesthood? Since he worshiped the same God as Abram, how did Melchizedek also know of the Lord?
- The church fathers too viewed Melchizedek as a man, though exceptions, such as Origen, can be found.<sup>191</sup> For Justin Martyr (*Dial. with Trypho* 19:3–4; 33) and Tertullian (*Adv. Jud.* 2), it was significant that the origin of his priesthood was neither of circumcision (i.e., Gentile) nor of observance of Jewish law; the Levitical order as descendants of Abraham required circumcision

## Some closing observations on Melchizedek

- Christian interpretation rests on Hebrews 5–7, which draws on Melchizedek as the point of contrast with the Levitical order. The writer to the Hebrews may well have assumed that his readers believed Melchizedek was the first priest and hence had no genealogical requirements
- Psalm 110:4 was addressed by God to David’s “Lord” (v. 1), who was the Christ (Mark 12:35–37; Acts 2:34–36); hence, like that of Melchizedek, Jesus was appointed the head of a new order, having no predecessors (Heb 5:5–6, 10), since he like Melchizedek did not come from Levi’s succession. Melchizedek’s priesthood antedated that of Levi (7:10), and Jesus came from Judah, which possessed no priestly succession (7:11–17). The writer to the Hebrews emphasized the superiority of the priestly order of Jesus to Levi by observing the greater priesthood of Melchizedek in contrast to Levi

## Some closing observations on Melchizedek

- Whereas for Levi his divine appointment was not formalized by oath, the priesthood of Melchizedek was confirmed by divine oath (7:20–21). Melchizedek’s priesthood was perpetual (*diēnekes*) (7:3), *for he had no priestly heritage and no successors (7:3); also Abraham, representing Levi, who resided in the patriarch’s loins, presented a tithe to Melchizedek and was blessed by the priest-king’s priesthood (7:1). Jesus too has an “eternal” (aiōna) priesthood (5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24, 28).*<sup>193</sup> *Even the name of Melchizedek and his city implied, to the writer to the Hebrews, the superiority of the priest-king to that of Levi (7:2)*

## Verses 21-24 “Back to the Sodomite/Pagan king”

- Verse 21: the king made Abram an offer: And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons. These persons had become the captives of the four kings
- However, since *Abram had recaptured them, under the laws of that day, all these persons legally belonged to Abram by right of conquest. Abram had the legal authority to keep all these people, and they could become his slaves. Abram was not obligated to return them to the king of Sodom*
- Nevertheless, he chose to do so.
- Furthermore, since the general population of Sodom was captured, this king desperately needed these people back; otherwise, he would have no one to be a king over, no one from whom he could collect taxes, etc. So he made Abram this offer: *Give me the persons, and take the goods to yourself*

## Verses 21-24

- *Abram did not need the king of Sodom's permission to keep the goods; all the spoils were his by right of conquest anyway. So this was not much of an offer because the goods already belonged to Abram by right of conquest*
- *Genesis 14:22–24 records Abram's response. In verse 22, Abram relates his oath: I have lifted up my hand unto Jehovah, God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; by lifting up his hand to make an oath, Abram showed the solemnity of the oath. The content of this oath is spelled out in verse 23: I will not take a thread nor a shoe-latchet nor aught that is yours, meaning that prior to going into battle, Abram made a commitment not to keep any of the spoils*
- *in verse 23: I will not take a thread nor a shoe-latchet nor aught that is yours, meaning that prior to going into battle, Abram made a commitment not to keep any of the spoils*

## Verses 21-24 (Cont.)

- The reason was, *lest you should say, I have made Abram rich. Then in verse 24, while he himself will accept nothing*
- Abram made two exceptions that in no way benefited himself personally but instead benefited others
- First: *Save only that which the young men have eaten, meaning the food that was eaten by the 318 servants of the Household of Abram in order to sustain them; however, these servants will not take any of the spoil*
- Second: *and the portion of the men that went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion. The three brothers who participated in the invasion will partake of the spoil, for Abram cannot speak for them; but by saying that they may help themselves of the spoil, he again proved to be a blessing to others*

## Final Observations on Ch. 14

- From Fructenbaum: (3)
- The first observation is that this is the only place where Abram is viewed as a warrior
- The second observation is that in Genesis 12–25, the chapters that cover the life of Abraham, this is the only chapter where God does not speak. However, He is represented by a high priest
- The third observation is to note the outworking of the Abrahamic Covenant and the facet of blessing for blessing. Melchizedek was blessed by receiving a tenth of the spoil, and the three brothers confederate with Abram also receive a blessing of spoils
- On the other hand, there is also the outworking of the curse for curse in that the four kings suffered the curse. The principle is curse for curse in kind, meaning the way the Jew is cursed, God will take the same curse and apply it to the one doing the cursing. They cursed by a military conquest, and they were cursed by a military conquest, curse for curse in kind

## Fructenbaum's Observations (Cont.)

- As for New Testament quotations and applications, the main focus is on Melchizedek. The only place in the Old Testament where he is mentioned outside of Genesis is in Psalm 110:4. In the New Testament, the only place he is found is in the Book of Hebrews 5:6–10 and 6:20–7:17
- Moreover, Melchizedek is treated typologically, as a type in that he was both priest and a king. This was not allowed under the Mosaic Law and the Levitical Priesthood, but was allowed under the Melchizedekian Priesthood
- Again, he was not a theophany (or he was only a type), for several reasons. First, theophanies merely appeared and disappeared, not holding an earthly office like king or priest. Second, Hebrews 5:1, which begins listing several prerequisites for priesthood, makes the point that a priest had to be human. The Messiah did not become human until the Incarnation. So for Melchizedek to first be a priest, he first had to be human. Third, Hebrews states that he was *like the Son of God, not that he was the Son of God: He was made like unto the Son of God. Therefore, there is no biblical basis for making Melchizedek a theophany or the preincarnate Christ. Melchizedek was a human being who was said to be a type of the Messiah in that he was both king and priest*



## Some Final Points

- The typology being drawn is that of a continuous priesthood, as is the case with Jesus. Others try to defend the theophany view by pointing out that the name *Melchizedek* means “king of righteousness”; and, therefore, he had to be a preincarnate Christ. However, the last part of the name, *zedek*, was a Jebusite dynastic name for the kings of Jerusalem. This is seen in Joshua 10:1, where the king of Jerusalem then was named *Adonizedek*, which means the “lord of righteousness”, yet this was a wicked, idol-worshipping, Canaanite, Jebusite king. So using the meaning of the name to prove a theophany does not work here, since *zedek* was merely a dynastic title of Jebusite kings of Jerusalem, as in the case of *Melchizedek* and *Adonizedek*

## Conclusions from Allen Ross on this Chapter

- The point of the story in Genesis concerns this priest's blessing prior to the king of Sodom's offer, an offer that was a challenge to Abram's faith in the Lord to grant the promised blessings. The encounter came at a high point, a vulnerable time; the king of Sodom offered Abram all the possessions if Abram would return the king of Sodom's people to him
- Prior to this offer, however, there was the blessing of Melchizedek. This king of righteousness, as his title indicates, brought out refreshment for Abram and pronounced a blessing on Abram and on the one true God
- The expositor must concentrate on the wording of the blessing with the specific epithets used—*'ēl 'elyôn*, "*the Most High God*," *the Creator of heaven and earth*. *Abram had here found a true spiritual brother, one who believed in the Spirit God who created matter, the sovereign God who had given Abram the victory, the true God who had promised Abram the blessing*

## Ross conclusions (Cont.)

- The words of this marvelous priest surely inspired the patriarch in his anticipation of the promise of God. Herein lies the strength for Abram's discernment of the Sodomite's offer: with a fresh reminder of the nature and promise of the Lord, the appeal from the pagan was shown to be nothing more than a confusing digression from the true faith
- Abram wanted something far more enduring than the spoils of war—he wanted the fulfillment of God's promise that would be miraculous and enduring. Melchizedek's renewal of the word of blessing must have excited Abram's faith, so that he could resist this easy opportunity for "blessing."
- The people of God frame their life so that, for all success, joy, comfort, and prosperity, they depend on God—but it must be a faith like Abram's that will be able to discern what is from God and what is from the world

## Ross.....One More Page

- But Abram was not so much interested in material possessions; he was interested in the specific fulfillment of the promise—the seed in the land. And that could come only through the miraculous intervention of the Lord. A test for evaluating the source of blessings would then follow: if we call something in our lives a blessing, a provision from the Lord, can it be explained in no other way than from God—miraculous, spiritual, enduring? Abram was simply not willing to say that the best that Sodom had to offer was the blessing of God!
- The point for Abram in his battle is the same for us in ours—God gives the victory to his faithful servants. There is no army, no weaponry, and no surprise night attack that can defeat spiritual wickedness, whether powerful invaders or spirit forces. The people of God must champion righteousness in the way that God has instructed them to do so, which today requires spiritual weapons. The church cannot defeat spiritual wickedness by overthrowing corrupt governments or legislating better laws and ordinances. The conflict is far greater than such efforts and calls for divine power for the victory. This passage shows that God is fully able to give his people victory over the world. They must faithfully obey his Word and contend for his cause.

## Ross.....last one of his concluding thoughts

- In many ways, the tension that Abram faced with the king of Sodom was far more critical than the battle, for the reputation of the Lord was at stake. The people of God may win spiritual struggles, but in the limelight of their success they may give away all the glory to some pagan pretender who would be delighted to rob God of the credit for spiritual success. While believers must use all the resources God has given to them to fight their spiritual battles, they must also keep in mind the true source of their victory and their blessing so that they may discern the confusion from the world. The words of Melchizedek are thus central to the message of the whole chapter. *The realization that both victory over the world and the promised blessings come from God alone enables the believer to discern the danger of accepting worldly benefits and to wait for the untarnished blessing*
- AMEN!!

# Important Interpretive Note for **All** of the Bible

Ch. 14 Abram's sanctification progressing

Seed of the Woman

God's Wisdom/Imputed righteousness

fulfillment

Jesus Christ



God

Gen. 3:15

Serpent

14: The Pagan kings on all sides operate on this "bottom line"

Seed of the Serpent

Human reasoning/self-righteousness

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