

# Abraham and Melchizedek

## *Genesis 14:1-24*

- I. BATTLE OF THE KINGS (Genesis 14:1-12)
  - A. The Attendants of the Battle (Genesis 14:1-3)
    1. Kings from the east (Genesis 14:1)
      - a. Amraphel king of Shinar (Genesis 10:8-10; Genesis 11:2; Daniel 1:2)
        - (1) Some commentators note this as Hammurabi of the Assyrian tablets or better known as “Hammurabi’s Code” or “Code of Hammurabi.”
        - (2) Hammurabi is a powerful figure in history, according to some modern-day sources, even after the empire he built collapsed, he was still revered as a model ruler, and many kings across the Near East claimed him as an ancestor.
        - (3) Because of Hammurabi’s reputation as a lawgiver, his depiction can be found in several United States government buildings. Hammurabi is one of twenty-three lawgivers depicted in marble bas-reliefs in the chamber of the US House of Representatives in the US Capitol.
      - b. Arioch king of Ellasar
      - c. Chedorlaomer king of Elam
        - (1) Elam is in Persia according to the book of Daniel (Daniel 8:2) – Where Daniel would have the vision of the ram with two horns.
          - (a) Named from a son of Shem (Genesis 10:22; 1 Chronicles 1:17).
          - (b) Mentioned by Isaiah (Isaiah 21:2; Isaiah 22:6)
          - (c) Mentioned in the New Testament with the apostles as they spoke in tongues (Acts 2:9)
        - (2) Chedorlaomer leads the kings of the east (Genesis 14:4, 17).
      - d. Tidal king of nations
    2. Kings from the cities of the plain (Genesis 14:2; see Genesis 13:12; Genesis 19:28-29)
      - a. Bera king of Sodom
      - b. Birsha king of Gomorrah
      - c. Shinab king of Admah
      - d. Semeber king of Zeboiim
      - e. King of Bela, which is Zoar (See Genesis 14:8).
    3. The location of battle – The Vale of Siddim
      - a. Likely at the south end of the Dead Sea (See Appendix 1, pgs. 2 & 3).
      - b. Perhaps under water now, the south end of the Dead Sea is shallow.

- c. A place of slimepits (Genesis 14:10); these would have been pools of natural asphalt or tar (Genesis 11:3; Exodus 2:3).
- B. The Events of the Battle (Genesis 14:4-9)
1. The insurrection by the cities of the plain (Genesis 14:4)
    - a. They served twelve years.
    - b. They rebelled the thirteenth year.
  2. The campaign by Chedorlaomer in the fourteenth year (Genesis 14:5-7)
    - a. Against the Rephaims, the Zuzims and the Emims (Genesis 14:5)
      - (1) The Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim
      - (2) The Zuzims in Ham
      - (3) The Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim – Note: These people were accounted as giants (See Deuteronomy 2:10-11).
      - (4) People east of the Jordan
    - b. The Horites of Mt. Seir (Genesis 14:6)
      - (1) In the country of Edom (Genesis 32:3)
      - (2) Later to be inhabited by Esau and his posterity (Genesis 36:8-9).
    - c. The Amalekites and the Amorites (Genesis 14:7)
    - d. The cleverness of the campaign (Genesis 14:5-7)
      - (1) The four attacking nations used good strategy in their campaign.
      - (2) Instead of directly attacking their main enemies, they took out the neighboring city-states. They made a circular approach, removing any help or aid from these city-states.
  3. The conflict in the vale of Siddim (Genesis 14:8-10)
    - a. The advantage for Sodom and Gomorrah
      - (1) **The advantage of size.** Sodom had five kings to their enemies four. They were larger in size than their attackers. However, it is not always size that matters in a battle.
      - (2) **The advantage of site.** Sodom and her allies were fighting on home turf. They were acquainted with the area, unlike their enemy. They would have known the asphalt pits and could have used them to their advantage.
      - (3) **The advantage of supplies.** Being at home, they should have supplies ready at hand.
    - b. The downfall of Sodom and her allies (Genesis 14:10)
      - (1) They fell in the vale of Siddim – in the slime pits.
      - (2) The remainder fled to the mountains.
      - (3) These kings should have been able to fend off their attackers but could not.
      - (4) It is of interest to point out that these are the cities that were full of idolatries. When a nation or group of people become consumed with all manner of lusts their ability to be strong in character and morals degrade. It was their debauched manner of life that cost them the battle.

- (a) They had neither the courage nor the desire to fight the battle.
- (b) Sodomy, illicit lifestyles, drugs and alcohol will destroy the character and morals of a community, state and nation.

### C. The Outcome of the Battle (Genesis 14:10-12)

1. Sodom and Gomorrah and her kings are defeated (Genesis 14:10)
2. Sodom and Gomorrah's goods are taken (Genesis 14:11)
3. Lot along with his goods are taken (Genesis 14:12)
  - a. Note: If Lot had not been living in Sodom (Genesis 14:12; cp. Genesis 13:12), he likely would not have been taken with them.
  - b. Note: From a practical application, when we take company with the world its not long before we dwell with them and begin to get caught up in their troubles, trials, and problems (Psalm 1:1). Therefore, the Lord tells us to "come out from among them" (2 Corinthians 6:17).

## II. THE RAID UPON THE VICTORS (Genesis 14:13-16)

### A. The Hearing of the Defeat (Genesis 14:13)

1. The first use of the word *Hebrew* (Genesis 14:13).
  - a. This is the first appearance of this word, the second being with Joseph while in Egypt (Genesis 39:14, 17).
  - b. Joseph used the word to describe the land he was from (Genesis 40:15).
2. Confederate with
  - a. Mamre the Amorite
  - b. Eshcol brother of Mamre
  - c. Aner brother of Mamre
3. The plain of Mamre was at Hebron (Genesis 13:18).

### B. The Arming of the Servants (Genesis 14:14)

1. When Abram hears of Lot being taken (Genesis 14:14)
  - a. It is of interest to note that Abram was not getting involved in this battle until he hears Lot has been taken.
  - b. From a practical application, the Christian should not get involved in every battle in this world (2 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 2:20).
2. Lot is identified here as the *brother* of Abram (Abraham) (Genesis 14:14, 16).
  - a. We understand that Lot is the son of Haran (Genesis 11:31)
  - b. Haran is the brother of Abram (Genesis 11:26)
  - c. The Holy Spirit could be emphasizing the relationship that Abram had with Lot.
  - d. Consider the fact that a nephew is the child of said person's sibling, making that nephew very closely associated with that sibling's role.
  - e. In family relationships you find cousins that are once, twice and three times removed, etc. These cousins are by cousins that are by cousins and so on.

- f. Also, consider the fact that Christ is called “the son of David” by the Holy Spirit and by the people (Matthew 1:1; 12:23; 21:9; 12:35), yet we understand that Abraham and Jesus are many times removed in time.
      - g. Either way, there is no need to correct the Bible.
    - 3. Abram arms 318 servants (Genesis 14:14)
    - 4. His trained servants (Genesis 14:14; Psalm 144:1; Luke 22:36)
      - a. Apparently, Abram believed it necessary to have a trained fighting force in his estate.
      - b. This would have likely proved invaluable living as he did in the land.
      - c. His servants would have been able to fight off raiding parties as well as protect the flocks against thieves and wild animals.
  - C. Defeating the Kings of the East (Genesis 14:15)
    - 1. Abram is joined by his confederates (Genesis 14:15, see Genesis 14:24)
      - a. This takes his 318-fighting force and adds the forces that Aner, Eschol and Mamre have.
      - b. Some estimate that his force at this point could be as high as 700.
      - c. Based upon the context his fellow confederates allow Abram to lead the forces against the kings of the east. We are reminded of the fact that when the righteous are in rule “the people rejoice” (Proverbs 29:2).
    - 2. He pursues them to Dan (Genesis 14:14b)
      - a. While there is the land given in the south to the tribe of Dan...
      - b. This is likely Dan found in the north (See Appendix 1, pg. 4).
    - 3. He divides his army (Genesis 14:15)
    - 4. He attacks by night—a surprise attack
      - a. Much like what Gideon would do years later (Judges 7:7-23).
      - b. Much like Gideon, Abram was facing a force much bigger than his own.
      - c. A night attack would mask his smaller number to his enemy.
      - d. Likely Abram and his confederates knew the terrain better and could use this to their advantage.
      - e. Note: If Amraphel is indeed Hammurabi, then this means that Abram defeated a very powerful, wise and renown king in history. Because of this, many scholars do not want to admit that Amraphel is indeed Hammurabi.
    - 5. He defeats them and pursues them to Hobah next to Damascus.
  - D. Abram Recovers All Captives and Goods (Genesis 14:16)
    - 1. Recovering all the goods
    - 2. Recovering Lot and his goods
    - 3. Recovering the women