

GENESIS

THE WAR OF THE KINGS VSS.1-12

THE PLAYERS AND RATIONALE FOR INVASION VSS.1-4

EXEGESIS VERSES 1-4:

וַיְהִי בַיָּמֵי אֲמֶרְפֶּל מֶלֶךְ־שֹׁנַעַר אַרְיֹךְ מֶלֶךְ
אֱלָסָר כְּדָרְלֶעֶמֶר מֶלֶךְ עֵילָם וְתִדְעַל מֶלֶךְ גּוֹיִם:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:1 **And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, (ב הִידָּהוּ)** ^{WTT} Genesis 14:1
וַיְהִי בַיָּמֵי אֲמֶרְפֶּל מֶלֶךְ שֹׁנַעַר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah + prep: bet +
n/com/m/pl/constr: yom; "And it came about in the days of"; + proper n: 'amerphel {used 2x;
vs.9}; "Amraphel"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek; "king of"; + proper n: shine-ar {same as 10:10;
11:2}; "Shinar""]

Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, (אֲרִיֹךְ)
וְגֹיִם מֶלֶךְ תִּדְעַל וְעֵילָם מֶלֶךְ כְּדָרְלֶעֶמֶר אֱלָסָר מֶלֶךְ [proper n: 'areyok {used 2x;
vs.9}; "Arioch"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: 'ellasar; "king of Ellasar"; + proper n:
kedarela-omer {used 5x; vss.4,5,9,17}; "Chedorlaomer"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n:
-eylam {same as 10:22; used 28x}; "king of Elam"; + waw conj. + proper n: tide-al {used 2x;
vs.9}; "Tidal"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + n/com/m/pl: goiym {lit. nations; used 4x}; "king of
Goiim""]

וַעֲשׂוּ מִלְחָמָה אֶת־בְּרַעַ מֶלֶךְ סֹדֶם וְאֶת־בִּרְשָׁע
מֶלֶךְ עֵמֶרְהָ שִׁנְאָב וּמֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה וְשִׁמְאֵבֶר מֶלֶךְ צְבֹיִם
וּמֶלֶךְ בֵּלַע הִיא־צְעֹר:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:2 **that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, (עֲמֶרְהָ מֶלֶךְ בִּרְשָׁע אֶת ו סֹדֶם מֶלֶךְ בְּרַעַ אֶת מִלְחָמָה עֲשָׂה)**
[v/qal/PF/3cpl: -asah; "they made"; + n/com/f/s/abs: milechamah; "battle/war"; + prep: 'eth +
proper n: bera- {used 1x}; "Bera"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: sedom; "king of
Sodom"; + waw conj. + prep: 'eth + proper n: biresha- {used 1x}; "and with Birsha"; +
n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: -amorah; "king of Gomorrah""]

Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).
(צְעֹר הִיא בֵּלַע מֶלֶךְ ו צְבֹאִים מֶלֶךְ שִׁמְאֵבֶר ו אַדְמָה מֶלֶךְ שִׁנְאָב) [proper n:
shine-ab {only here}; "Shinab"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: 'ademah; {same as
10:19} "king of Admah"; + waw conj. + proper n: sheme'eber {only here}; "Shemeber"; +
n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: tsebo'iym {5x; same as 10:19}; "king of Zeboiim"; + waw
conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: bela- {city name 2x, vs.8}; "Bela; + pro/3fs: hiy +
proper n: tso-ar {same as 13:10}; "that is, Zoar""]

GENESIS

כָּל־אֵלֶּה חִבְּרוּ אֶל־עַמֻּק הַשְּׂדִיִּים הוּא יָם הַמֶּלַח: ^{WTT} Genesis 14:3

^{NAS} Genesis 14:3 **All these came as allies to the valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea).** (כָּל־אֵלֶּה חִבְּרוּ אֶל־עַמֻּק הַשְּׂדִיִּים הוּא יָם הַמֶּלַח [n/com/m/s/constr: kol + adj/b/pl: 'eleh; "all these"; + v/qal/PF/3cpl: chabar; "joined/united/came as allies"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr: -emeq; "to the valley of"; + d.a. + proper n: shiddiym {used 3x, vss.8,10}; "Siddim"; + pro/3ms: hu' + n/com/m/s/constr: yam + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: melach; "that is the sea of salt"])

וּשְׁלֹשׁ־עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה מָרְדוּ: ^{WTT} Genesis 14:4

^{NAS} Genesis 14:4 **Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but the thirteenth year they rebelled.** (מָרְדוּ שְׁנָה עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁלֹשׁ וּכְדֹרְלַעֲמֹר אֶת עֲבַד שְׁנָה עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנִים) [adj/f/dual/abs: shenaiym; "two"; + adj/f/s/constr: -esereh; "ten of"; + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "year"; + v/qal/PF/3cpl: -abad; "they worked/served"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: kedarelaomer; "Chedorlaomer"; + waw conj. + adj/f/s/constr: shalash; "but three of"; + adj/f/s/constr: -esereh; "ten of "; + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "year"; + v/qal/PF/3cpl: marad; "they rebelled/revolted"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 1-4:

1. The narrative advances into the not too distant future.
2. Abraham was 75 years of age when he departed from Haran and entered Canaan circa 1871 BC.
3. Ten years elapsed when Sarah schemed to produce an heir via Hagar in Gen.16:2-3.
4. So all of the events recorded in chapters 12-15 occurred within this 10 year window of time between 1871-1861 BC.
5. Some 427 years post flood, civilized nations had become established across the new world.
6. For the first time recorded in the Bible the reader is informed that with nations came **war**.
7. Gen.14 records an uprising and conflict involving 9 kings of Abraham's time.
8. The recording in part is because it involved both Abraham and Lot (14:12-16).
9. Further, it is a literal historical incident as reflected in the naming of the kings.
10. Many historians and liberal theologians reject the narrative as actual citing no firm archeological confirmation.
11. In 1982 AD, Dr. Peter Huber of Harvard University and his colleagues restudied the Ammisaduqa Venus Tablets of Babylon and compared the astronomical data with 33,000 lunar dates and various solar eclipses recorded in Babylonian history.

GENESIS

12. Huber concluded that King Hammurabi (of the Hammurabi Code fame recognized by scholars as one of the earliest sets of civil laws discovered 1901 AD) of Babylon should be re-dated 56 years earlier than the previous astronomical dates of the 1972 edition of Cambridge Ancient History.
13. Adding the 56 years to Hammurabi's previous accession year of 1792 BC, he revised it to 1848 BC.
14. The new astronomical dates for Hammurabi's reign (not length of life) are 1848 to 1806 BC.
15. This makes Hammurabi a contemporary of Abraham during his life in Canaan (1871 to 1771 BC; Gen.12:5 cp.25:7).
16. This fact finds interest in the listing of kings in our vs.4.
17. While **Chedorlaomer king of Elam** is the leader of the coalition and would be expected to be first on the list (cf.vss.5a,9), he is listed number three.
18. **Amraphel king of Shinar** and **Arioch king of Ellasar** are listed 1 and 2 respectively.
19. In understanding the ancient languages, one recognizes that vowels were not present and were handed down through memorization.
20. Vowels were easily modified over the centuries before they were gradually written down.
21. Analyzing the consonants of names of "**Amraphel**/אַמְרַפֶּל ('mrpl)" and Hammurabi, the two names are practically identical.
22. One commentary explains concerning the name Hammurabi: "*The...writing of the name from Ugarit (mrpi) would argue for a "p" instead of a "b" and "h" does not represent the first consonant. Perhaps, 'Ammurapi would be the best spelling...Ammu or Hammu is most likely a god...should be translated "Ammur Is Great".*"
23. With the name of **Amraphel** in the Hebrew, the "A" can be aspirated in Aramaic as "Ha" as the "Apiru" in the Egyptian texts is equivalent to "Hapiru" in the Mari text.
24. Also, the "B" is often interchanged with "P" when translating one language into another as "Hapiru" is also translated by the word "Habiru".
25. Naysayers to the parallels point out that the end consonant of **Amraphel** is a "L/lamed", not included in the name "Hammurabi".
26. The "el" stem at the end of **Amraphel** means "god".
27. Thus, **Amraphel** or *Hamraphel* in Hebrew means, "Ammu [Hammu] is Great".
28. Moses interpreted the Akkadian (Babylonian) name of Hammurabi as *Hamraphel/Amraphel* so that his Hebrew readers would know that it was the name of a god by the el ending.
29. Still, others further take issue even with the revised dates for Hammurabi as he was only a crown prince at the time of the narrative (~15 years before accession).
30. Why then does Genesis 14 call him a "**king of Shinar** (Babylon)"?
31. Princes were often called kings before their fathers die.
32. Nebuchadnezzar was crown prince and Babylonian commander, while his father Nabopolassar was **king**.
33. 2Kgs.24:1 calls Nebuchadnezzar, "**king** of Babylon" in 609 BC, 3 ½ years before he became **king** in 605 BC.
34. In addition, once one has attained to an exalted position in life (e.g. President), it is not uncommon to refer to them as such even if referring to their life earlier or post entitlement.
35. Cambridge Ancient History then connects Hammurabi/**Amraphel** of Babylon and **Arioch of Ellasar** as cousins.
36. Hence, the logical reason for their listings as 1 and 2 while showing reason for their alliance.

GENESIS

37. It is no secret that dating among historians and archeologists are consistently flawed as Huber's study reveals.
38. The historical events of the Bible are without error and provide a solid tool to harmonize archeological findings if it would be used as such by academia.
39. Here, Moses uses a readily recognized historical person to orient his readers to a setting of Biblical players existing at the time, yet of lesser renown.
40. Hammurabi is listed first because of his renowned historical reputation of the era that Moses readers would readily identify, not because of his rank among the coalition at the presiding event.
41. So the setting is during the life of Hammurabi as crown prince in which his father's kingdom along with, **Arioch and Tidal** were vassals of the Elamite **Chedorlaomer**.
42. These were rulers of city states west of Canaan contemporary with Abraham.
43. At present it can be said that the names all point to the early period of the Elamite rulers called Kudirides, before the land of Tiamtu or Tamdu (Tammuz/Mesopotamia) was fully settled by the Chaldeans.
44. It was one of the heroic periods of Babylonian history and some scribe of about 350 BC had collected together a number of texts referring to it.
45. 3 cuneiform tablets suggesting the existence of these kings were purchased (not excavated) by the British Museum and reached that institution through the same channel. Ref: *Journal of the Victoria Institute*, 1895-96; Professor Sayce in *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* (1906), 193ff,241ff; (1907), 7ff
46. The name **Chedorlaomer** in the LXX form is *Chodollogomor* implying a different vocalization, the assimilation of "R" with "L" and the pronunciation of "o" as "gho" (*Codorlaghomer*).
47. This suggests that the Elamite form, in cuneiform inscribed on the tablets, would be *Kudur-lagamar*, the 2nd element being the name of a god and the whole therefore meaning "servant of La'omer".
48. Further, 2 of the 3 tablets mention also a certain *Eri-Aku* (**Arioch**), son of *Durmah-ilani* and one of them refers to *Tudhula* or **Tidal**.
49. Hammurabi/**Amraphel** was the 6th king of Babylon/**Shinar**.
50. **Arioch** ruled in **Ellasar** (a.k.a. Eri-aku of Larsa), the ruins presently known as Senqara on the East bank of the Euphrates between Warka and Ur of the Chaldees.
51. The area of "**Goim/goiym**" literally means "nations" and suggests that **Tidal** ruled an area that was a melting pot of ethnic origins.
52. Most conservative theologians identify these areas of Mesopotamia to include Turkey as the vast empire of **Chedorlaomer** located south southwest of Canaan.
53. All 4 kings lead by **Chedorlaomer** united to make "**war/milechamah**" with 5 kings of the Jordan Valley (vs.2).
54. The 5 Jordanian kings represented the primary powers of the valley listed as **Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela**.
55. The only written record of these kings is here in the book of Genesis.
56. Vs.4 tells us what precipitated the attack: **Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but the thirteenth year they rebelled**.
57. These cities of the plain were under discipline for their evil practices (cf.Gen.13:13).

GENESIS

58. As a result of national discipline, they had been subjugated and forced to pay tribute to **Chedorlaomer**.
59. Being subjugated like this is a common form of national DD. Cp.Lev.26:17; Jgs.3:12-15; 2Kgs.17:1-3
60. These kings must have recognized their rebellion would bring a response from **Chedorlaomer** and so “**these came as allies to the valley of Siddim**”.
61. They banded together seeking to find strength in numbers.
62. Moses includes two parenthetical explanations:
 - A. “**Bela (that is, Zoar)**.”
 - B. “**The valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea)**.”
63. These explanations were necessary even in Moses’ time since things had changed drastically from the time of this event to the time of writing.
64. Readers would not have understood that the area of the Dead **Sea** had been called **Siddim** or **Zoar** was previously known as **Bela** without the references.
65. At least 4 of these cities bordered Canaan. Cf.Gen.10:19
66. It is of interest to note that no kingly name is mentioned in connection with **Zoar**.
67. Of the 5 cities, only **Zoar** is spared in God’s future judgment. Cp.Deu.29:23 cf.Hos.11:8
68. It would become refuge for Lot in escaping Sodom obtaining a new name. Cp.Gen.19:22
69. At the least, the omission of the king’s name avoids some personal embarrassment as to his association with the evil condoned by the other 4.

GENESIS

THE MILITARY CAMPAIGN AND STRATEGY

EXEGESIS VERSES 5 – 7:

WTT Genesis 14:5
 וְהַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וַיָּכּוּ אֶת־רַפָּאִים בְּעַשְׂתַּרְת קַרְנַיִם
 וְאֶת־הַזּוּזִים בָּהֶם וְאֵת הָאִימִים בְּשׁוּה קַרְיָתַיִם:
 וּבְאַרְבַּע עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בָּא כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר

NAS Genesis 14:5 **And in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, came** (וְ כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר בּוֹא שָׁנָה עֶשְׂרֵה אַרְבַּע בַּ וְ) [waw conj. + prep: bet + adj/f/s/constr: 'areba-; "and in the four"; + adj/f/s/constr: -esereh; "ten"; + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "year"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: bo'; "he came"; + proper n: kedareloa-omer; "Chedorlaomer"; + waw conj. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: melek + rel/pro: 'asher + prep. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "and the kings which were with him"])

and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, (וְ עַשְׂתַּרְת קַרְנַיִם בַּ רַפָּאִים אֵת נִכָּה וְ וְ זוּזִים הָ אֵת וְ עַשְׂתַּרְת קַרְיָתַיִם שׁוּה בַּ אִימִים הָ אֵת וְ) [waw conj. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: nakah; "and they caused to smite/strike/defeat"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: repha'iym {lit. departed spirit; used 28x}; "Raphaim"; + prep: bet + proper n: -ashetteroth-qarenaiym; "Ashteroth-karnaim"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + d.a. + proper n: zuziym {used 1x}; "and the Zuzim"; + prep: bet + proper n: ham; "in Ham"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + d.a. + proper n: 'eymiym {lit. dread}; "and the Emim"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: shaweh {lit. level}; "Shaveh"; + proper n: qireyathiym {used 7x}; "kiriathaim"])

WTT Genesis 14:6
 עַל־הַמִּדְבָּר:
 וְאֶת־הַחֲרִי בְּהַרְרָם שְׁעִיר עַד אֵיל פְּאָרָן אֲשֶׁר

NAS Genesis 14:6 **and the Horites in their Mount Seir,** (וְ חֲרִי בַּ הָר הָ אֵת וְ) [waw conj. + sign of d.o. + d.a. + proper n: horiy {used 17x}; "Horites"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: har; "in their mountain of"; + proper n: se-iyar; "Seir"])

as far as El-paran, which is by the wilderness. (עַד אֵיל פְּאָרָן אֲשֶׁר הָ עַל אֵיל פְּאָרָן עַד) [prep: -ad; "as far as"; + proper n: 'eyl pa'ran; "El-paran"; + rel.pro: 'asher + prep: -ad + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: midebbar {lit. mouth}; "which is as far as the wilderness"])

WTT Genesis 14:7
 אֶת־כָּל־שָׂדֵה הָעַמְלָקִי וְגַם אֶת־הָאִמּוּרִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּחִצְצָן תִּמְרָ:
 וַיָּשְׁבוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־עֵין מִשְׁפַּט הוּא קָדֵשׁ וַיָּכּוּ

GENESIS

^{NAS} Genesis 14:7 **Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh),** (וְשׁוּב קָדְשׁ הִיא עֵין מִשְׁפָּט אֶל בּוֹא וְשׁוּב [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: shub; "and they turned back"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: bo' + prep; 'el + proper n: -eyn mishepath; "and came to En-mishpat"; + pro/3fs: hiy'; "that is"; + proper n: qadesh {lit. make holy e.g. Gen.2:3}; "Kadesh"])

and conquered all the country of the Amalekites, (וְעָמְלִיקֵי הָאֲרָצָה כֻּלָּא אֶת נָכַח וְ [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: nakah; "and conquered"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/s/constr: sadeh {field/land}; "all of the country of"; + d.a. + proper n: -amaleqiy; "the Amalekites"])

and also the Amorites, who lived in Hazazon-tamar. (וְכִּי אֵת גַּם וְיָשַׁב הָאֲמֹרִי הָאֶת חַצְצֹן תְּמָר [waw conj. + conj: gam; "and also"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + proper n: 'moriy; "the Amorites"; + d.a. + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: yashab; "the ones dwelling"; + prep: bet + proper n: chatsetson tamar; "in Hazazon-tamar"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 5 – 7:

1. **Chedorlaomer** wastes little time in reprisal against the rebellious vassal cities.
2. They had served him 12 years and in the 13th, they revolted.
3. “**In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him**” initiated a military campaign designed to re-subjugate the rebels.
4. It appears that **Chedorlaomer** used the opportunity to further expand his kingdom.
5. The real booty for success would lie in the final attack of the Siddim kings.
6. In the ancient world “service” of vassal kings included the payment of tribute and these 5 cities had refused to pay.
7. The 5 cities were very prosperous and if they would not pay willingly, he was determined to plunder their wealth and take it by force.
8. Chedorlaomer’s tactic to hit surrounding regions first was designed to instill fear not only on the rebellious 5 kings, but to others that may flirt with trying the same thing.
9. His campaign first moves north of the Jordan valley.
10. The first 3 targets, “**the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim**” were designed to show the power of the armies and cut off any attempted escapes by the rebels north and seaward.
11. All 3 races were names associated with exceptional physical specimens.
12. The **Rephaim, Zuzim and Emim** were all giants.
13. The **Rephaim** were like the Anakim and the Moabites had named them **Emim**. Deu.2:11
14. These resided coastal and northward of Jordan.
15. Genesis Apocryphon and Symmachus equate the **Zumim**, only mentioned here, with the Zamzummim of Deu.2:20.
16. The size of some of these peoples is illustrated in the person of Og, king of Bashan, a remnant of the **Raphaim** that had a bed 9 cubits by 4 cubits (13.5’ long x 6’ wide).

GENESIS

17. Yet, their size was no match for the superior training and skills of the **Chedorlaomer** coalition.
18. Their defeat obviously gave physiological advantage to the coalition.
19. A valley was named after the **Rephaim** (Josh.15:8; 18:16) and the territory was given to Manasseh (Deu.3:13).
20. The Philistines came to occupy the Valley of **Rephaim** (2Sam.5:18,22).
21. "**Ashteroth-karnaim**" is modern Tell Akara.
22. It was the capital of Bashan.
23. "**Ham**" is a site south of **Ashtaroth** along the King's Highway 4 miles SW of Irbid.
24. "**Shaveh-kiriathaim**" has not been identified.
25. From there the campaign swung south of the Dead Sea area.
26. This included **Mount Seir** to the immediate SSW.
27. The **Horites** occupied this region and were later dispossessed by the descendants of Esau (Deu.2:12,22).
28. This part of the campaign seems to have spread out into a sweep dividing the coalition to extend as far south as **El-paran** edging into Egyptian **wilderness**.
29. The noun "**wilderness/midebbar**" literally means "mouth" and envisions the area of the Sinai Peninsula between the gulfs of Suez and Aqaba.
30. The phrase "**they turned back/shub**" means they then turned the armies march to NNW.
31. They established a central headquarters in **En-mishpat (that is Kadesh-barnea)**.
32. **Kadesh** was Israel's base during the 40 years of **wilderness** wanderings.
33. From there they proceeded to attack the **Amalekites and Amorites**.
34. They completely occupied **all the country of the Amalekites**.
35. This puts them into Canaanite territory (cp.Num.14:25,43,45).
36. The **Amorites** are one of the peoples most commonly mentioned in the lists of pre-Israelite inhabitants of Canaan and Transjordan. Exo.23:23; Num.13:29; 21:13,25; etc.
37. "**Hazazon-tamar**" (meaning "sandy country of the palms") is identified with Engedi in 2Chr.20:2.
38. This is a settlement on the western side of the Dead Sea.
39. In the coalition's movements, they have secured their flank and now have encircled the intended prey of the 5 **kings**.
40. As a result, all outside assistance to the Jordan Valley have been cut off.
41. The details and magnitude of the campaign are provided to us as it will be contrasted to the military blessing that will later be afforded Abram by Yahweh in vss.13-16.

GENESIS

THE ROUT OF THE WESTERN KINGS

EXEGESIS VERSES 8 – 10:

וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ-סֹדֶם וּמֶלֶךְ עֲמֹרָה וּמֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה
וּמֶלֶךְ (צְבוִיִּים) [צְבוִיִּים] וּמֶלֶךְ בֵּלַע הוּא-צֶעַר וַיַּעֲרְכוּ אֹתָם
מִלְחָמָה בְּעֵמֶק הַשִּׁדִּים:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:8 **And the king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah and the king of Admah and the king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) came out;** (וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ וּמֶלֶךְ וּמֶלֶךְ וּמֶלֶךְ וּמֶלֶךְ הוּא בֵּלַע מֶלֶךְ וּצְבוִיִּים) [צְבוִיִּים] וּמֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה וּמֶלֶךְ עֲמֹרָה וּמֶלֶךְ סֹדֶם מֶלֶךְ צֶעַר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: yatsa {collective singular}; "and they went out"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: sedom; "the king of Sodom"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: 'amorah; "and the king of Gomorrah"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: 'ademah; "and the king of Admah"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: tsebo'iym; "and the king of Zeboiim"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: bela-; "and the king of Bela"; + pro/3fs: hiy' + proper n: tso-ar; "that is Zoar"])

and they arrayed for battle against them in the valley of Siddim, (וַיַּעֲרְכוּ אֹתָם עֵמֶק בְּ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: -arak; "and they arrayed/arranged/set in order"; + prep. w/3mpl suff: 'eth; "themselves together"; + n/com/f/s/abs: milechamah {same as vs.2}; "for battle/war"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: -emeq; "in the valley of"; + d.a. + proper n: siddiym; "Siddim"])

אֶת כְּדֹרְלָעֹמֶר מֶלֶךְ עֵילָם וְתִדַּל מֶלֶךְ גֹּיִם
וְאַמְרָפֶל מֶלֶךְ שִׁנָּר וְאַרְיוֹךְ מֶלֶךְ אֵלְסָר אַרְבַּעַה מְלָכִים
אֶת-הַחֲמִשָּׁה:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:9 **against Chedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim and Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar-- four kings against five.** (אֶת אַרְיוֹךְ וְשִׁנָּר מֶלֶךְ אֵלְסָר וְגֹיִם מֶלֶךְ תִּדַּל וְעֵילָם מֶלֶךְ כְּדֹרְלָעֹמֶר אֶת-הַחֲמִשָּׁה) [prep: 'eth; "against"; + proper n: kedarela-omer + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: -eylam; "Chedorlaomer king of Elam"; + waw conj. + proper n: tide-al + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + n/com/m/pl: goiym; "and Tidal king of Goiim"; + waw conj. + proper n: 'ameraphel + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: shine-ar; "and Amraphel king of Shinar"; + waw conj. + proper n: 'areyowk + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: 'ellasar; "and Arioch king of Ellasar"; + adj/m/s/abs: 'arebba-ah; "four"; +

GENESIS

n/com/m/pl/abs: melek; "kings"; + prep: 'eth + d.a. + adj/m/s/abs: chamishshah; "four kings against the five"])

וַיִּנְסוּ מִלְּךְ-סֹדֶם וְעֹמֶרָה וַיִּפְּלוּ-שָׁמָּה וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים הָרָה נָסוּ: ^{WTT} Genesis 14:10

^{NAS} Genesis 14:10 **Now the valley of Siddim was full of tar pits;** (וַיִּנְסוּ מִלְּךְ-סֹדֶם וְעֹמֶרָה וַיִּפְּלוּ-שָׁמָּה וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים הָרָה נָסוּ: [waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: -emeq + d.a. + proper n: siddiym; "Now the valley of Siddim"; + n/com/f/pl/constr: be'er + n/com/m/pl/constr: be'er; "pits/wells of pits/wells of" {double noun = "full of pits"; + n/com/m/s/abs: chemar {same as 11:3}; "tar/bitumen"}])

and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and they fell into them. (וַיִּנְסוּ מִלְּךְ-סֹדֶם וְעֹמֶרָה וַיִּפְּלוּ-שָׁמָּה וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים הָרָה נָסוּ: [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: nus; "and they fled"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: sedom + waw conj. + proper n: -amorah; "the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: naphal; "and they fell/dropped down"; + adv: sham; "there"])

But those who survived fled to the hill country. (וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים הָרָה נָסוּ: [waw conj. + d.a. + v/Niphal/ptc/m/pl/abs: sha'ar; "and the ones remaining/surviving"; + n/com/m/s/abs: har; "to the hills"; + v/qal/PF/3cpl; "they fled"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 8 – 10:

1. Some view vss.1-2 as one battle initially subjugating the Western **kings** with vss.8-10 indicating a second battle.
2. If true, then this dates vss.1-2 some 4 years before Abram entered Canaan since some 14 years have passed since then (cf.vs.5).
3. As noted in vss.1-4, Gen.16:2-3 provides only a 10 year window for all of these events to have occurred.
4. It is most natural to read vss.1-4 as a preface with vss.5ff giving the details of the war.
5. Vs.8 indicates that the **kings** of the 5 cities had obviously heard the news of the Eastern **kings** campaign recorded in vss.5-7.
6. News from the surrounding regions would be steady and the direction of the campaign would leave little doubt that they were on the hit list.
7. After conquering the surrounding areas, protecting their flank and cutting off outside assistance or escape from the 5 cities, the **Chedorlaomer** alliance attack their main target.
8. While the battle is brief in narration, details can be gleaned from the language and context.
9. Vs.8 indicates that the 5 Western **kings** united to provide a defense of their cities.
10. The collective singular of the Qal verb “**came out/yatsa**” and the use of the definite article in the reference to “**the five kings/ha chamishshah**” ending vs.9 signifies that they combined their individual forces into one.
11. The strategy implies producing an army with numerically superior numbers.
12. That the **Chedorlaomer** army has lost troops due to an extended campaign is logical.

GENESIS

13. The 5 **kings** then “**arrayed/arranged/-arak**” their troops strategically to counter an attack.
14. That Chedorlaomer’s forces were last active in the area of Hazazon-tamar (Engedi; SW part of the Dead Sea) with central command South in Kadesh (vs.7), we might assume an attack from WSW of the defenses.
15. We know from Gen.13:10,11,12 that the Jordan **valley** was predominately an open plain seen in the use of the Hebrew word “*kikkar*” meaning “disk” translated “**valley**” in those verses.
16. However, the topography closer to the “Salt Sea” a.k.a. “**Siddim**” is described as a “**valley**” by the Hebrew noun “-*emeq*”, meaning “to be deep” or a “deep vail/ravine” here in Gen.14:3,8,10.
17. This suggests that the Western **kings** set up their defenses giving their troops cover in the deeper recesses closer to **Siddim** to ward off the attacking armies having to approach them on flat ground.
18. While higher ground is generally a tactical advantage, on a flat plain ditches or ravines give an element of protection and surprise.
19. With this setting we then have the armies of the “**four kings against the five**”:
 - A. 4 **kings**:
 - (1) **Chedorlaomer king of Elam.**
 - (2) **Tidal king of Goiim.**
 - (3) **Amraphel king of Shinar.**
 - (4) **Arioch king of Ellasar.**
 - B. 5 **kings**:
 - (1) Bera (**Sodom**).
 - (2) Birsha (**Gomorrah**).
 - (3) Shinab (**Admah**).
 - (4) Shemember (**Zeboiim**).
 - (5) Unamed king (**Bela, that is Zoar**).
20. **Chedorlaomer** now heads the list of Eastern **kings** acknowledging the Elamite (Kudirides) empire at the time (in contrast to vs.1).
21. In spite of any advantage to numbers or tactics, the fate of the 5 **kings** was no better than any of their predecessors falling to the **Chedorlaomer** campaign.
22. The brevity of narrative emulates the quick and decisive victory of the Eastern alliance.
23. The lines of Western defense broke and everyone “**fled/nus**” looking to escape the onslaught.
24. As it was, this particular area of the **valley was full of tar pits**.
25. Certain geology has petroleum oozing to the surface and can then be dug out, hence “**pits of pits of tar/be'er be'er chemar**”.
26. Commentators are surprised that the story would have the **kings of Sodom and Gomorrah** “falling **into**” the **tar pits** and so perishing, yet vs.17 has the king of **Sodom** reappear.
27. This apparent contradiction disappears once it is understood the verb “**fell/naphal**” can also refer to a voluntary lowering of oneself.
28. Such as it is used in Gen.24:64 where Rebekah “dismounted from the camel”.
29. The verb can also mean to “settle” or even “flee to”. Cf.Gen.25:18; Jer.38:19.
30. It appears that at least two of the Western **kings** attempted to hide in the **tar pits** to escape capture.
31. Others that **survived fled** to high ground as there are steep slopes adjacent to the Dead Sea basin.

GENESIS

PLUNDER AND POW'S

EXEGESIS VERSES 11 – 12:

וַיִּקְחוּ וְיִקְחוּ^{WTT} אֶת־כָּל־רְכֻשׁ סְדֹם וְעִמֹרָה וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲכָלָם וַיֵּלְכוּ:
Genesis 14:11

^{NAS} Genesis 14:11 **Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food supply, and departed.** (וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת כָּל רְכֻשׁ סְדֹם וְעִמֹרָה וְאֶת כָּל אֲכָלָם וַיֵּלְכוּ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: laqach; "Then they took {by force}/seized"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/s/constr: rekush; "all of the goods/property of"; + proper n: "Sodom"; + waw conj. + proper n: "Gomorrah"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mpl suffix; "'okel"; "and all of their food"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: halak; "and they departed"])

וַיֵּלְכוּ וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בְּסְדֹם:
וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־לוֹט וְאֶת־רְכֻשׁוֹ בֶן־אָחִי אַבְרָם
Genesis 14:12

^{NAS} Genesis 14:12 **And they also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for he was living in Sodom.** (וַיֵּלְכוּ אַבְרָם אָחִי בֶן רְכֻשׁ אֶת לוֹט וְאֶת רְכֻשׁוֹ לֹט בֶּן־אָחִי אַבְרָם וַיֵּלְכוּ וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בְּסְדֹם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: laqach; "and they took"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Lot"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: rekush; "and his property"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ach + proper n: 'abram; "the son of the brother of Abram"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: halak; "and they departed"; + waw conj. + pro/3ms: hu' + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: yashab + prep: bet + proper n: sedom; "for he himself was dwelling/living in Sodom"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 11 – 12:

1. The victorious armies led by Chedorlaomer sacked the twin cities of **Sodom and Gomorrah** following the rout of the 5 western kings.
2. All portable wealth and assets were confiscated along with “**their food supply**/'okel”.
3. This would also include those taken captive for slaves.
4. This was a common practice of those times. Cp.1Sam.30:1-5
5. That POW's were part of the plunder here is seen in vs.13 (*a fugitive*).
6. Among the POW's we see a more detailed remark about the capture of **Lot** and the confiscations of “**his possessions**/rekush”.
7. This point is new in that the last we heard of **Lot** was simply his camping near **Sodom** (cp.13:12).
8. He had finally assimilated himself into the urbanite living.

GENESIS

9. In the downward spiral of Lot's life as a believer we find him caught up in the social and economic life of prosperous **Sodom**.
10. He illustrates the principle of "he who finds his life will lose it" and "he who is first shall be last". Cf. Mat. 10:39; 19:30
11. **Lot** sees his life and property removed with no apparent hope for deliverance.
12. He becomes a nobody in the mass of captives of war moving toward a dismal existence in foreign lands.
13. All this because he loved mammon rather than the living God. Mat. 6:24
14. Principle: The believer that violates BD to get ahead for the short term never knows when disaster might strike.
15. Principle: The details of life cannot deliver us in times of real crisis.
16. It is not unlikely that the attacking armies passed near Abram in their march, yet he was spared.
17. This is a perfect example of God protecting the positive believer in the midst of surrounding disaster.
18. The following context will reveal that God not only protected Abram in this matter, but will further bless him with military success.
19. One particular contrast between the reversionist and adjusted believer is not to go unnoticed.
20. The one that is pursuing God's will is in the right place at the right time while the maladjusted believer violating MPR and the pursuit of BD is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

GENESIS

ABRAM ROUTS THE EASTERN ALLIANCE

EXEGESIS VERSES 13 – 16:

וַיָּבֵא הַפְּלִיט וַיַּגֵּד לְאַבְרָם הָעִבְרִי וְהוּא שְׂכֵן
בְּאֵלֵי מִמְרָא הָאֲמֹרִי אָחִי אֶשְׁכֹּל וְאָחִי עֶנְר וְהֵם בְּעֵלֵי
בְרִית־אַבְרָם:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:13 Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. (וַיָּבֵא הַפְּלִיט

[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bo'; "and he came"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: paliyth; "the escaped one/fugitive" {used 22x}; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: nagad; "and made known/told"; + prep: lamed + proper n: 'abram; "to Abram"; + d.a. + proper n: -iberiy; "the Hebrew"])

Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, (וַיֵּשְׁבֶה אִתּוֹ אֶחָד וְאֶשְׁכֹּל אָחִי הָאֲמֹרִי הַ מִמְרָא אֵלֹן בַּ שְׂכֵן הוּא וְ) [waw conj. + pro/3ms: hu' + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: shakan; "Now he himself was dwelling"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elon; "by the oaks of"; + proper n: "Mamre"; + d.a. + proper n: 'amoriy; "the Amorite"; + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ach + proper n: 'eshkoll {lit. grape cluster}; "the brother of Eshcol"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ach + proper n: -aner {lit. youth}; "and brother of Aner"])

and these were allies with Abram. (וְ) [waw conj. + pro/3mpl: hem; "and they themselves"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: ba-al; "possessed/were bound in {as in marriage}"; + n/com/f/s/constr: berith; "a covenant with" {hence: "were allies with"}; + proper n: "Abram"])

וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו וַיֵּרֶק
אֶת־חַנִּיכָיו יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ שְׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂר וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וַיִּרְדֹּף
עַד־דָּן:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:14 And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, (וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו וַיֵּרֶק

[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shama-; "when he heard"; + proper n: "Abram"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + v/Niphal/PF/3ms; "shabah; "he had been taken captive"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his relative"])

he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, (וַיִּרְדֹּף אֶת־רֵיקָו) [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: riyq; "then he emptied out/led out"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: chaniyke; "his trained servants"; + adj/m/pl/constr: yaliyd; "those born of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff:

GENESIS

bayith; "his house"; + *adj/m/s/abs: shemoneh*; "eight"; + *adj/m/s/abs: -asar*; "ten"; + *waw conj.* + *adj/f/s/constr: shalosh*; "three"; + *adj/f/pl/abs: me'ah*; "hundred")

and went in pursuit as far as Dan. (וַיִּתְּרַם אַחֲרָיו עַד דָּן [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: radaph; "and he followed after/pursued"; + *prep: -ad* + *proper n: dan*; "as far as Dan"])

וַיִּחַלֵּק עֲלֵיהֶם לַיְלָה הוּא וְעַבְדָּיו וַיִּבֶם
וַיִּרְדְּפֵם עַד־חֹבָה אֲשֶׁר מִשְׁמָאל לְדַמֶּשֶׁק׃

WTT Genesis 14:15

^{NAS} Genesis 14:15 **And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants,** (וַיִּחַלֵּק עַל חֵלְקוֹ הוּא וְעַבְדָּיו לַיְלָה [waw consec. + n/Niphal/IPF/3ms: chalak; "and he divided"; + *prep. w/3mpl suff: -al*; "against them"; + *n/com/m/s/abs: layelah*; "at night"; + *pro/3ms: hu'* + *waw conj.* + *n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: -ebed*; "he and his servants"])

and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. (וַיִּנְחֵם אֶת־חֹבָה עַד דָּן וְנָכַח לְדַמֶּשֶׁק׃ [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms w/3mpl suff: nakah; "and he caused to strike them/defeated them"; + *waw consec.* + *v/qal/IPF/3ms w/3mpl suff: radaph*; "and pursued them"; + *prep: -ad* + *proper n: hobah*; "as far as Hobah"; + *rel.pro: 'asher* + *prep: min* + *n/com/m/s/abs: shemo'l*; "which is from the left {north of}"; + *prep: lamed* + *proper n: dammeseq*; "toward Damascus"])

וַיָּשֵׁב אֶת־כָּל־הָרֶכֶשׁ וְגַם אֶת־לוֹט אָחִיו
וְרֶכְשׁוֹ הַשִּׁיב וְגַם אֶת־הַנָּשִׁים וְאֶת־הָעָם׃

WTT Genesis 14:16

^{NAS} Genesis 14:16 **And he brought back all the goods,** (וַיָּשֵׁב אֶת־כָּל־הָרֶכֶשׁ [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: shub; "and he returned with"; + *sign of d.o.* + *n/com/m/s/constr: kol* + *d.a.* + *n/com/m/s/abs: rekush*; "all of the goods/property"])

and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions, (וְגַם אֶת־לוֹט אָחִיו וְרֶכְשׁוֹ [waw conj. + *conj: gam*; "and also"; + *sign of d.o.* + *proper n: "Lot"*; + *n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach*; "his relative"; + *waw conj.* + *n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: rekush*; "and his possessions"; + *v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: shub*; "he caused to return"])

and also the women, and the people. (וְגַם אֶת־הַנָּשִׁים וְאֶת־הָעָם [waw conj. + *conj: gam* + *sign of d.o.* + *d.a.* + *n/com/f/pl/abs: 'ishshah* + *waw conj.* + *sign of d.o.* + *d.a.* + *n/com/m/s/abs: -am*; "and also the women and the people"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 13 – 16:

1. Ironically, what seemed like a sure thing in victory for the Chedorlaomer alliance ends with a totally different picture.

GENESIS

2. Not unlike Lot's choice of real estate as a sure thing in the Jordanian Valley.
3. Once again, we are reminded that not all things are as they might appear and that God is in ultimate control of circumstances and situations.
4. **Abram** continues to show that he has risen above one under fear and self-centered as in Chapter 12 making a spectacle of himself in Egypt.
5. As an adjusted believer he now reflects the courage and sacrifice one would expect from +V.
6. He puts full trust in his God and now overshadows Chedorlaomer's great victories defeating an able and astute military man and ruler.
7. A single survivor of the previous campaign that managed escape or capture arrives at Abram's current encampment and informs him of the news of Lot's capture, "**Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew...**"
8. The term "**fugitive/paliyth**" informs the reader of the taking of POW's as part of the spoils of war.
9. The fact this man knew Lot is not amazing if he was from the region of Sodom as Lot would have been well known as a prominent citizen of wealth.
10. Lot prospered in Sodom and his name was known accordingly.
11. What is striking is the narrator referring to **Abram** as "**the Hebrew/ha -iberiy**".
12. This is the first time in Genesis the term is used to indicate Abram's new race.
13. Already, God has provided a distinction of his person from the rest of non-Israelites in the fulfillment of the Covenant (12:2).
14. Further, the singular use with the definite article "**the Hebrew**" highlights **Abram** as the first and at present the only **Hebrew** among the nations (allowing Sarai's link in marriage).
15. Its insertion here to describe **Abram** is designed to marquee him as an example for the entire **Hebrew** race to follow i.e., place your allegiance and trust in God.
16. **Abram** was still **living** at his established residence before the war when we left him in 13:18, "**by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner**".
17. The participle "**living/dwelling/shakan**" suggests a more long-term residency than just "pitching a *tent*/'ahal" in 13:18.
18. **Abram** picked the forested highlands of Palestine for an established address noted by the phrase "**oaks of Mamre**".
19. "**Mamre**" here and vs.24 is a personal name; elsewhere it is a place name of its namesake (cf.13:18).
20. He had two brothers, "**Eshcol and Aner**".
21. "**Eshcol**" is only used here and vs.24 as a personal name; elsewhere it also is a place name of a valley (cf.Num.13:23,24; 32:9; etc.).
22. Its common meaning is a "cluster of grapes" (e.g.40:10; Num.13:23,24).
23. The name "**Aner**" means "youth" and like his counterparts is only mentioned in name here and vs.24.
24. The only other use is a place name of a Levitical city in 1Chr.6:70 (NAS).
25. It is interesting to note that these were Amorites, a target of the Eastern campaign (cf.vs.7).
26. It seems that they found protection in their association with **Abram**.
27. They benefited for being "**allies with Abram**".
28. The translation "**allies**" is a combination of two Hebrew words "ba-al berith", only used here in this way.

GENESIS

29. The first word “ba-al” means “to marry/possess/own” and the second “berith” means “covenant/contract”.
30. These 3 Amorites were “owners/bound of a covenant with **Abram**”.
31. Elsewhere, **Abram** is depicted as making agreements with Philistines (21:22-34) and with Hittites (Chptr.23).
32. In vs.14a, the brevity with which the capture of Lot and the Sodomites is described is mirrored with the speed with which **Abram** reacted in force in vs.14b,c.
33. The expression “**trained men/chaniyke**” is only used here.
34. The Hiphil verb “**led out/riyq**” means to be “empty”.
35. In other words, **Abram** used every available military professional he had in his arsenal.
36. We learn 3 things about these individuals: (1) that they were **trained** to fight; (2) they were all **born in his house**; (3) there were 318 of them.
37. The phrase “**born in his house/yaliyd bayith**” is used in 17:23 and indicates they were slaves as part of Abram’s vast fortune.
38. These have grown up in Abram’s clan rather than those recently acquired and would obviously be the most reliable of servants.
39. By all indication, they had probably been with **Abram** since Ur and were young adults.
40. Who or how these were **trained** is not noted, only that **Abram** assured his family would be ready to defend itself.
41. It is surprising that he could field so many fighting men.
42. If he had that many young men, his total organization must have numbered well over a 1000 souls.
43. The previous narrative has already implied that large groups were involved in the squabble between **Abram** and Lot (Gen.13).
44. By the standards of the Canaan period a fighting force of 300 men was a sizable army.
45. It was a group of this size that Gideon defeated the Midianites. Jdgs.7
46. The parallel of Gideon shows that it is not the number of men in an army that is the issue, but whether God is with them or not.
47. In vs.24 we are informed that 318 was not the total of the armed forces, but that the 3 Amorites also gave support.
48. No matter the additional number, it is still diminutive in stark contrast to the fighting force of the 4 major Eastern powers.
49. In vs.15, we are given a briefing on the tactics **Abram** used against the Eastern kings, “**And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants**”.
50. Rather than trying a full frontal assault, covert guerrilla style of fighting is the preferred.
51. Using the cover of darkness and element of surprise, the larger body of men was caught off guard generating an appearance of a larger superior enemy.
52. God blessed the timing and the conditions of an army wrapped up in celebrating their recent success heading home.
53. Their guards were down not expecting such a quick counter attack from all sides and panic set in, even among the veterans, and soldiers started fleeing to escape the melee.
54. Abraham possessed the psychological advantage and with surgical strikes, “**defeated them/nakah**”.
55. The attack began at the enemy encampment at **Dan** (north of the Sea of Galilee) and once the rout was on Abram’s men **pursued** the fleeing men **as far as Hobah, north of Damascus**.

GENESIS

56. The northern most border of Canaan ran some way **north of Damascus**, so perhaps **Abram** is being pictured driving invaders out of the land of promise.
57. **Damascus** was from very ancient times a very important center on the Near Eastern trade routes.
58. The victory scene concludes with **Abram** bringing back a vast baggage train containing all the property taken at the end of the previous scene in vss.11-12.
59. Note the twice-repeated “**goods/possessions/rekush**” with the double use of “**brought back/shub**” corresponding to the double “*took/laqach*” in vss.11-12.
60. **Lot** is specifically mentioned at both scenes also.
61. Lot’s harrowing experience and deliverance only foreshadows his deliverance in the judgment God brings upon Sodom and region later.
62. Ironically, he now returns back to the same place that will require the latter deliverance.
63. The magnitude of Abram’s victory is underlined by the final phrase “**and also the women and the people**”.
64. Previously the capture of Sodom’s food supplies had been noted (vs.11), but not the loss of **women** and other inhabitants.
65. The only question remains is who should take the spoils of victory.
66. This situation was recurrent and could be somewhat a complex problem (cf.Num.31:24-54; 1Sam.30:21-25) and is the subject of the final scene in vss.17-24.

GENESIS

TWO KINGS' RECEPTION OF ABRAM VSS.17-24

EXEGESIS VERSE 17:

וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ־סֹדֶם לִקְרַאתוֹ אַחֲרֵי שׁוּבוֹ
 מִהַכּוֹת אֶת־כְּדֻר־לְעָמֹר וְאֶת־הַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ אֶל־עַמֶּק
 שָׁוֵה הוּא עַמֶּק הַמֶּלֶךְ:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:17 (Revised) **Then he went out, the king of Sodom, to meet him after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him,** (מֶלֶךְ יֵצֵא ו) **את אשר מלך ה' את ו כְּדֻר־לְעָמֹר את נכה מן שׁוֹב אַחֲרֵי קרא ל סֹדֶם**
 [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: yatsa; "and he went out"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: sedom; "the king of Sodom"; + prep: lamed + v/qal/inf/constr. w/3ms suff: qara'; "to meet/encounter/confront him"; + adv: 'acherey; "after"; + v/qal/inf/constr. w/3ms suff: shub; "his returning"; + prep: min + v/Hiphil/inf/constr: nakah; "from defeating/smiting"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Chedorlaomer"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: melek + rel.pro: 'asher + prep. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "and the kings which were together with him"])

to the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). (מֶלֶךְ הַ עַמֶּק הוּא שָׁוֵה עַמֶּק אֶל) **אל**
 [prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr: -emeq; "to the valley of"; + proper n: "Shaveh"; + pro/3ms: hu' + n/com/m/s/constr: -emeq + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: melek; "that is the valley of the King"])

ANALYSIS VERSE 17:

1. The literal idea of vs.17a is: **“Then the king of Sodom came out to contend with (qara’) Abram after Abrams returning from defeating Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him...”**
2. Abram’s sole objective in the battle was to rescue his nephew Lot.
3. He did not risk all for booty, land or glory.
4. This first explicit mention of warfare in the Bible on the side of believers/Abraham was a just war and not a war of aggression with the usual pretense.
5. God blessed Abram with martial success because his motives were pure.
6. He came to Lot’s aid as he was a brother and he acted as his brother’s keeper.
7. Abram returned to his camp which happened to be in the **Valley of Shaveh**, which the narrator tells us was the **King’s Valley**.
8. The **King’s Valley** is just west of Jerusalem.
9. After rescuing Lot, Abram did not try to bring him back into the fold.
10. He freed him and that was that.
11. He maintained the separation that had transpired some years earlier.
12. Lot resumed his selfish life in **Sodom** never really appreciating the grace that had come upon him through uncle Abram.

GENESIS

13. The text does not indicate that the two men had any sort of a reunion following the rout of the **kings**.
14. Lot and his family slink back into **Sodom** with his precious possessions.
15. It is hard to imagine the stark contrast between two believers than that of Abram and Lot in the present setting.
16. Abram has all the dignity; Lot is clothed in indignity.
17. After the rout of the Eastern **kings** the captives of war were more or less on their own.
18. At least the **king of Sodom** (Bera) survived the conflict and made his way back to **Sodom** to reestablish his rule over his shattered city-state.
19. He cleaned himself up, learned of the person that was responsible for defeating Sodom's aggressors and recovering the POW's and wealth, and "**went out to meet**" Abram in the **King's Valley** west of Jerusalem.
20. The verb "**went out**/yatsa" is the same word used to describe hostile intent in vs.8.
21. The infinitive "**to meet**/qara" has the nuance of "calling out" and implies more of a confronting rather than a cordial reception.
22. His attitude was surly at best.
23. He appears before Abram empty-handed and has little or nothing to say.
24. Bera was an especially corrupt ruler devoid of basic human qualities of appreciation, humility and grace.
25. Even a recently defeated and disgraced monarch with minimal capacity for the well fare of others would have brought something as a token of appreciation, but not Bera the **king of Sodom**.
26. He stood before Abram sullen and arrogant as ever.
27. He stands in stark contrast to the 2nd king's reception following in vss.18-20.

GENESIS

MELCHIZEDEK'S BANQUET

EXEGESIS VERSE 18:

וּמֶלְכִי־צֶדֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם הוֹצִיא לֶחֶם וַיַּיִן
וְהוּא כֹהֵן לֵאלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:18 **And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine;** (וּמֶלְכִי־צֶדֶק

וַיַּיִן וּלְחֶם יִצְאָה מֶלֶךְ מֶלְכִי־צֶדֶק [waw conj. + proper n: malekkiy tsedeq {lit. my king of righteousness}; "and Melchizedek"; + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: salem; "king of Salem"; + v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: yatsa; "caused to bring out"; + n/com/m/s/abs: lechem; "bread/food"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: yayin; "wine"])

now he was a priest of God Most High. (וְהוּא כֹהֵן לֵאלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן [waw conj. + pro/3ms: hu'; "and he himself"; + n/com/m/s/abs: kohen; "a priest"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: 'el; "to God"; + adj/m/s/abs: -eliyon; "Most High"])

ANALYSIS VERSE 18:

1. Alongside Bera, **king** of Sodom, another **king** not previously introduced makes appearance.
2. This new mystery ruler is one **Melchizedek king of Salem**.
3. His royal name means “my **king** of (the construct form of malekkiy: *melek* + pronominal suffix *iy*) righteousness (tsedeq; cf. Job 6:29; 29:14; 35:2; Psa.4:1,5; etc.).
4. “**Salem**” is non-other than Jerusalem (cf. Psa.76:2) and means “peace”.
5. Heb.7:2 combines both name and domain bestowing a double title of honor as a king of “righteousness” and “peace”.
6. The only thing that he has in common with Bera is that they were both kings of a city-state.
7. Otherwise, the two side by side are a study of opposites.
8. In contrast to Bera appearing empty handed, **Melchizedek** “**brought out/yatsa**” food, which in the present context is a pun on Bera’s “*went out/yatsa*” in vs.17.
9. The phrase “**bread and wine/lechem waw yayin**” is an expression (merism-single explanation for everything) for a full dinner, a royal banquet (cf. 2Sam.17:27-29; Pro.9:5).
10. **Melchizedek** meets Abram prepared to celebrate the righteous action of one he had somehow come to know about.
11. He hosted a royal banquet in honor of the men that expelled the aggressors from the east from his part of the world.
12. We can safely assume that he was well informed as to who and what Abram was.
13. The two men were like-minded +V believers living out their lives in honor of **God** in the 19th Century BC.
14. Further, Moses informs us that **Melchizedek was “a priest of God Most High/kohen lamed ‘el –eliyon”**.
15. This is the first mention of a “**priest**” in the Bible.
16. Rulers of ancient times often wore two hats: **King and high priest**.

GENESIS

17. Most rulers served false gods.
18. **Melchizedek**, like Abram, served the living **God**, Possessor of heaven and earth.
19. The term **priest** here appears without the definite article suggesting that there may have been other such priests of **God**.
20. In other words, he may not have been unique though there is no doubt that only a precious few upheld the righteousness of **God** in this venue in ancient times.
21. The people he ruled over were of Canaanite descent (cp.Gen.10:14-18).
22. **Melchizedek** was a Gentile possibly of Hamitic origin, though his history is shrouded in the unknown (cp.Heb.7:3).
23. The Hebrews citation does not mean that this man did not have parents, a birth date or a death date, rather his life was not written down.
24. He appeared for a time on the scene and just as quietly disappeared from the scene.
25. Almost everything about him is a mystery.
26. What we know from the Scripture is:
 - A. He was a historical figure during the time of Abram (Gen.14:18ff).
 - B. He was ordained in office as **priest** by **God** setting a pattern for Christ (Heb.5:10).
 - C. There is no record of a beginning or end to his person (Heb.7:3).
 - D. He prefigures Christ (Gen.7:3).
 - E. His dual title/function is the order of priesthood prophesied of Messiah (Psa.110:4).
 - F. He is regarded as the greater between himself and Abraham (Heb.7:4).
27. The question to ponder is why **Melchizedek** appears here “out of the clear blue” in this celebratory setting after Abram’s slaughter of the kings (cf.Heb.7:1)?
28. The clue is the emphasis of the Hebrew passage on Christ’s Deity fulfilling His role in hypostasis (Heb.7:3).
29. The simplest conclusion is that he symbolizes the Person of Christ anticipating the victory over the enemies of God and believers through the seed of Abraham establishing an eternal reign of righteousness and peace.
30. As such he prefigures Messiah as fulfilling His role to the Father as the eternal High **Priest** qualifying his station as the Eternal King.
31. This pictures Him serving both **God** and man.
32. This is Messiah’s appointment by the Father as the Son.
33. The Father’s role is seen in the title “**God most high**” using the Hebrew word *’el* rather than the more common *Yahweh*.
34. Satan knows Him by this title. Cp.Isa.14:14; Mar.5:7; Luk.8:28 cp.Act.16:17
35. Jesus referred to Him as such in Luk.6:35.
36. The Ph₂ +V of **Melchizedek** as **king and priest** qualified him to historically represent the order by which Messiah would fulfill His role before **God** and men.
37. His appearance is a mark of validation and anticipation of the Abrahamic covenant being fulfilled in that all the families of the earth will be blessed through his seed (12:3c).
38. It is evidence these 2 men were oriented to the doctrine of the covenant that the Father’s plan for salvation was through the eternal Son of **God (Melchizedek)** incarnate (seed of Abram) having both political (**king**) and spiritual (**priest**) ramifications.
39. The complexity and broad symbolism of this event is indeed not for the dull of hearing (Heb.5:9-11).
40. Their doctrinal orientation is further seen in their actions of vss.19-20.

GENESIS

THE GREATER BLESSES THE LESSER; THE LESSOR TITHES TO THE GREATER

EXEGESIS VERSES 19 – 20:

וַיְבָרֶכְהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לֵאלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן ^{WTT} Genesis 14:19
קְנַה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:19 **And he blessed him and said,** (וַיְבָרֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms w/3ms suff: barak + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he blessed him and said"])

"Blessed be Abram of God Most High, (לֵאלֹהֵי אַבְרָם בְּרוּךְ) [v/qal/pass/ptc/m/s/abs: barak + proper n: 'abram; "blessed be/being blessed Abram"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: 'el + adj/m/s/abs: -eleyon; "of God Most High"])

Possessor of heaven and earth; (וְאֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם קְנַה) [v/qal/Ptc/m/s/constr: qanah {lit. to get/acquire}; "Possessor of"; n/com/m/pl/abs: shamayim + waw conj. + n/com/f/s/abs: 'erets; "heavens and earth"])

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן אֲשֶׁר־מָגַן צָרֶיךָ בְּיָדְךָ ^{WTT} Genesis 14:20
וַיִּתֵּן־לוֹ מֵעֵשֶׂר מִכָּל:

^{NAS} Genesis 14:20 **And blessed be God Most High,** (וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן [waw conj. + v/qal/pass/ptc/m/s/abs: barak + n/com/m/s/abs: 'el + adj/m/s/abs: -eleyon; "and blessed be God Most High"])

Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." (יְד בְּצַר מִגַּן אֲשֶׁר) [rel.pro: 'asher + v/Piel/PF/3ms: magan; "Who has delivered up"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: tsar {lit. distress}; "enemies"; + prep: bet + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2ms suff: yad; "into your hand"])

And he gave him a tenth of all. (וַיִּתֵּן מִן מֵעֵשֶׂר לְנָתָן) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nathan; "and he gave"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ma-eser; "a tenth"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/abs: kol; "from all"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 19 – 20:

1. The symbolism of the scene culminates in the actions of vss.19-20.
2. The multi-layers of symbolism between Melchizedek and **Abram** are now compressed into the basic function of both parties in the POG: Melchizedek as king-priest; **Abram** as +V delivered by **God**.

GENESIS

3. As such it combines the role of office (Melchizedek) and person/seed (**Abram**) prefiguring the Person of Christ in vs.18 projecting its result upon +V in serving **God**.
4. As king-priest, Melchizedek mediates Divine power and protection by placing God's name (El Eleyon) on **Abram** (see 1:22,28; 9:1 cf.Num.6:22-27; 1Chr.16:2).
5. One can rightly infer from this that Melchizedek is greater than Abraham in rank. Cp.Heb.7:7
6. As such, the symbolism prefiguring the Person of Christ is now restricted to the office of Melchizedek in affect.
7. That is, Melchizedek as a king-priest is representative of Messiah performing his priestly function toward +V on behalf of the POG.
8. "**Blessed be**/barak" is a doxological benediction on **Abram** (cf.Noah's blessing on the **God** of Shem in 9:26).
9. This blessing reaffirms God's promise to **Abram** that he would **be blessed** and be a blessing to others.
10. "**Possessor**/qanah" means owner of something.
11. It is a synonym for "Creator". *Ref. Theological Word Book of the Old Testament*
12. It emphasizes "purchasing a slave" and highlights the universe as created for God's own purpose. Isa.46:10,11 cp.Pro.16:4; Jer.4:28; 49:20; 50:45; 51:11,12,29; Lam.2:17; etc.
13. It is important for the believer that in suffering the trials of life to remember that his **God** is the source of all things.
14. As such He works on behalf of the believer under testing to bring about a favorable end, if the believer will simply keep his trust and faith in the originator of all things.
15. A similar expression is found in Psa.115:15; 121:2; 124:8; 134:3 and 146:6.
16. It is associated with "helping" in 121:2; 124:8 and 146:6 (cp.vss.5,7-9).
17. Melchizedek continues with his priestly blessing in vs.20 where he "praises" **God Most High**".
18. In vs.22, **Abram** associates this **God** with YHWY.
19. In the present context of our two verses it recognizes the necessity of both the Father and the Son in worship and orientation to the POG.
20. The praise reaches its highest edifice in the Father **Most High**, though both members of the God-head are co-equal and co-eternal. Joh.10:30
21. Further, the association of **God** with YHWY is the narrator letting his readers know that the **God** worshipped by the patriarchs is indeed Yahweh.
22. The name YHWY was not revealed until Moses. Cp.Exo.6:2-3
23. Moses' use of the term in Genesis reflects his own orientation and freedom in interpretation as to the true **God** of the universe.
24. *El* is simply a term for deity, pagan or real.
25. It was used in compounds in Canaanite and in the OT.
26. It was the top deity in the Canaanite religion and was as corrupt as were the Canaanites themselves (judging from texts around 1400 BC).
27. The **God** invoked by Melchizedek is YHWY, not *el* of the Canaanite pantheon.
28. His praise of **God** centers on the situation at hand in the conquest of the eastern armies that had taken Abram's nephew captive (enslaved).
29. This pictures the POG providing mankind freedom from the slave market of sin. Rom.8:2
30. Everyone present at this scene is reminded that it was **God** that brought victory to pass.

GENESIS

31. The verb “**has delivered**/magan” has the same root as the noun “shield/magen” in 15:1 providing a key word linking the two scenes.
32. **God** delivers and then protects.
33. This illustrates eternal security. Cp.Rom.8:1
34. After the blessing, Abraham in turn “**gave a tenth of everything**”.
35. This is a one-time tithe of booty (cf.Num31:25-41), not an annual tithe to the priest.
36. Tithing is an old and ancient practice in the world of the Bible.
37. When tithing became a practice is not known.
38. Could it be that Abram’s application here set the percentage standard for the future?
39. If so it was an amount he determined as appropriate applied in grace.
40. It is safe to say that there was much more doctrinal understanding by the patriarchs than is explicitly revealed in the OT and often given credit for by commentaries otherwise.
41. The levy here means that Chedorlaomer’s booty ended up as being a tribute paid as a tithe to the Lord! Cf.Heb.7:4
42. The text does not suggest the Melchizedek has come to collect his tithe, though some foist this suggestion upon it.
43. While the present verse is not clear, Heb.7:4 makes clear that **Abram** pays the tithe.
44. The most natural reading is that his actions were simply a response of gratitude for Melchizedek’s application and role as God’s servant.
45. It reflects grace serving grace.
46. The combined actions of these two +V believers now symbolically prefigure the Person of Christ towards +V in grace. Cf.Joh.1:16
47. So the culmination of symbolism illustrates cause and affect by **God Most High** through the Person of Christ towards +V...grace upon grace in honor of the POG.
48. Grace contextually/historically is thus seen as the underwriter of the Abrahamic Covenant.
49. What better scenario to illustrate this fact than the appearance of Melchizedek in honor of Abram’s +V enjoying the defeat and deliverance from his enemies by the power of **God**.
50. This in a scenario immediately following the transition of the Covenant from conditional to unconditional in chapter 13:14ff.
51. The ending phrase “**of all**/min kol” refers to the booty and fulfills the proverb “*And the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous*” in Pro.13:22b.

GENESIS

BERA'S COMMAND AND ABRAM'S OATH

EXEGESIS VERSES 21 – 24:

וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ־סֹדֶם אֶל־אַבְרָם תֵּן־לִי הַנֶּפֶשׁ
וְהָרֶכֶשׁ קַח־לָךְ: ^{WTT} Genesis 14:21

^{NAS} Genesis 14:21 **And the king of Sodom said to Abram,** (וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ סֹדֶם אֶל אַבְרָם) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms; 'amar + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: sedom + prep: 'el + proper n: 'abram; "and he said, the king of Sodom, to Abram"]

"Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself." (תֵּן לִי נַפְשׁ הַ לְ נָתַן) [v/qal/imper/m/s: nathan + prep. w/1com/s suff: lamed + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: nephesh {lit. soul}; "Give to me the people"; + waw conj. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: rekush; "and the property"; + v/qal/imper/m/s: laqach + prep. w/2fs suff: lamed; "take for it" {the feminine suff. has the idea of exchanging the "soul/people" <feminine> for the goods}]

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־מֶלֶךְ סֹדֶם הֲרִימֹתִי יָדִי
אֶל־יְהוָה אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן קָנָה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ: ^{WTT} Genesis 14:22

^{NAS} Genesis 14:22 **And Abram said to the king of Sodom,** (וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל מֶלֶךְ סֹדֶם) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms; 'amar + proper n: 'abram + prep: el + n/com/m/s/constr: melek + proper n: sodem; "and he said, Abram, to the king of Sodom"]

"I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, (אֵל יְהוָה אֵל יָד רֹם) [v/Hiphil/PF/1com/s: rum {lit. cause to be high/lift up} + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs/suff: yad; "I have lifted up my hand/I have sworn"; + prep: 'el + proper n: yahweh; + n/com/m/s/abs: 'el + adj/m/s/abs: -eleyon; "to the Lord God Most High"]

possessor of heaven and earth, (אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם קָנָה) [v/qal/ptc/m/s/constr: qanah; "Possessor of"; n/com/m/pl/abs: shamayim + waw conj. + n/com/f/s/abs: 'erets; "heavens and earth"]

אִם־מְחוּטָּ וְעַד שְׂרוּף־נֶעַל וְאִם־אֶקֶח
מִכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ וְלֹא תֹאמַר אֲנִי הֶעֱשִׂיתִי אֶת־אַבְרָם: ^{WTT} Genesis 14:23

^{NAS} Genesis 14:23 **that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours,** (אִם לֹא תֹאמַר אֲנִי הֶעֱשִׂיתִי אֶת־אַבְרָם) [conj: 'im; "whether"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/abs: chwut; "from thread"; + waw conj. + prep: -ad; "and even to"; + n/com/m/s/constr: seroke {lit.twist}; "a strap of"; + n/com/f/s/abs: na-al; "sandal"; + waw conj.

GENESIS

+ conj: 'im + v/qal/IPF/1cs: laqach; "that I will not take"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/constr: kol
+ rel.pro: 'asher + prep. w/2fs suff: lamed; "from anything which is to you/yours" {fem. suff. as
a collective singular "belonging to him or his people])

lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' (וְאֵינִי אֹמֵר לֹא וְ) [waw conj. + neg. lo' + v/qal/IPF/2ms; 'amar; "So you will not say"; + pro.1cs; "'any + v/Hiphil/PF/1cs: -ashar; "I have caused to make rich"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Abram"])

בְּלַעֲדֵי רַק אֲשֶׁר אָכְלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וְחֵלֶק
הַאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הֵלְכוּ אִתִּי עִנְרֵי אֲשָׁכּוּל וּמַמְרֵא הֵם יִקְחוּ
חֵלְקָם: ם

WTT Genesis 14:24

^{NAS} Genesis 14:24 "I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, (בְּלַעֲדֵי רַק אֲשֶׁר רַק אָכְלוּ הַנְּעָרִים) [prep. w/1cs suff: bile-adey; "apart from me"; + adv: raq {lit. thin} "the slight portion/nothing except"; + rel.pro: 'asher + v/qal/PF/3cpl: 'acal; "which they have eaten"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: na-ar; "the young men"])

and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; (וְחֵלֶק הַאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ אִתִּי) [waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: chaleq; "and the share of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'ish + rel.pro: 'asher + v/qal/PF/3mpl: halak + prep. w/1cs suff: 'eth; "the men which went with me"; + proper n: "Aner" + proper n: "Eshcol" + waw conj. + proper n: "and Mamre"])

let them take their share." (וְחֵלְקָם לָקְחוּ) [pro/3mp: hem + v/qal/IPF/jussive/3mpl: laqach + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mp suff: cheleq; "themselves, let them take their share"; end of chptr. selah])

ANALYSIS VERSES 21 – 24:

1. Following the fellowship with Melchizedek, Bera then patronizes Abram.
2. His condescending and surly demeanor is in stark contrast to the grace and generosity of Melchizedek that served a royal banquet on the plain of Shaveh.
3. Bera represents the arrogance and self-centeredness that so often categorizes –V in rejection of grace.
4. He makes a short demand of 6 words bordering on rudeness: “**Give me people, take property yourself/nathan lamed nephesh, rekush laqach lamed**”.
5. Stuff can be replaced, but without **people**, what use is a **king**.
6. There is no customary courtesy with civility being strained.
7. The word order mentions “giving” before “taking” and reflects Bera’s ungracious self-centeredness.
8. As their rescuer, **Abram** had the legal right to both the **people** (servants/slaves) **and goods** that he had recovered.

GENESIS

9. He risked his life and fortune for same.
10. He had the right to stipulate the disposition of the spoils of war.
11. Bera illustrates the begrudging nature of the STA that is forced to watch the success of others in the face of their own failure.
12. The Hebrew language insinuates a trade-off; **goods** for the **people**.
13. The preposition “**for yourself/lamed**” has a feminine suffix looking to the noun “**people/nephesh**” as its antecedent (**take the goods for it** (collective singular).
14. It reflects the mentality of one that thinks money is the answer to everything and that **people** can be “bought”.
15. Bera now tries this tactic with **Abram**.
16. Abram’s discernment as to the nature of this **king** stands out as he has already anticipated that Bera might pull such a stunt.
17. He recognized that such an offer had strings attached that would only give Bera bragging rights in his association with **Abram**.
18. Abram’s response to the ungrateful **king** is a doctrinal slap in the face.
19. The phrase “**I have sworn**” is literally “**I have raised my hand/rum yad**”.
20. Raising the hand in oath-taking underscores its seriousness. Cf.Deu.32:40; Dan.12:7
21. For the use of Yahweh in connection with **God Most High**, see analysis verses 19-20.
22. This Yahweh/**Lord** insertion is textual proof that the patriarchs worshipped the same **God** as did later Israel.
23. The description “**possessor of heaven and earth**” then highlights Who owns all things in reality.
24. It idealizes the fact that one’s acquisitions in life first and foremost belong to **God** and should be handled according to doctrine. Cp.1Tim.6:17-19
25. Monetary gain should not be blemished by moral/ethical ambiguity.
26. “**Thread or sandal thong/chwut waw seroke na-al**” is another merism used for all the plunder.
27. The reference to a narrow and wide strap (**thread or thong**) is a synecdoche (figure of speech in which the word for part of something is used to mean the whole) looking to that of least to most valuable of the spoils.
28. In other words, not a single “cent” of the spoils is open for negotiation.
29. The phrase in vs.23 “**that is yours/’asher lamed**” again uses a feminine suffix attached to the preposition similar to vs.21 (ref. to “soul/nephesh”) and should be viewed as a collective singular.
30. In other words, the **goods** Bera is offering are predominately the property of the **people**.
31. A good **king** would not sacrifice the fortunes of others for his own agenda.
32. **Abram** will not risk being stained with the moral ambiguity of keeping a victim’s plunder.
33. He desired a clear and unambiguous moral claim to all his possession so he says “No thanks!”
34. He especially does not want this creep to later boast that he **made Abram rich** (cp.1Sam.2:7 using the Hiphil –*ashar*).
35. The only exception is that the 318 men with him were allowed their living grace “**only what the young men have eaten**”.
36. This expectation should be easily embraced by all concerned as the least they could do to support the cause.

GENESIS

37. And in contrast to Bera assuming the freedom to obligate others without consent, **Abram** does not expect the allies to forfeit their **share**.
38. This is another doctrinal slap in Bera's face as it proclaims that **Abram** isn't in some way forfeiting any rights to the property otherwise.
39. His decision declining Bera's offer is a moral matter, not legal or other binding principle.
40. The company Lot has embraced, **Abram** wants to leave no impression that he is willing to cater to them on his part.
41. No comradery or yoking together otherwise will exist between the two parties.
42. This is the first explicit mention that **Aner, Eshcol and Mamre** had accompanied **Abram** on the campaign.
43. That his 3 friends and allies also risked their lives gave them legal and moral right to the plunder.
44. The phrase "**who went with me**/'asher halak eth" speaks volumes as to the kind of friends and companions **Abram** chose to embrace (cf.vs.13c).
45. There is no evidence of any other incentive for these **men** to get involved apart from their willingness to help **Abram**.
46. They in practice were willing to fulfill Joh.15:13.
47. By implication (and close association), these **men** were like-minded believers that had high moral integrity.
48. **Abram** learned to choose his friends and partners in life wisely and with the appearance of Melchizedek showed that **God** provides category 3 friends without energy of the flesh.
49. The final phrase "**let them take their share**/hem laqach cheleq" shows **Abram** respected their decision and could decide on their own.
50. In forgoing his normal fee, **Abram** speaks only for himself.
51. What has been consumed by the troops cannot be given back, nor does **Abram** expect his Allies to give up their **share**.
52. He doesn't try to play god over others and their decision in this matter was really none of his business.
53. **Abram** here is a good example of a believer that is fair, generous and sensitive to not imposing his own application upon others not under his authority.
54. He further examples the adjusted believer not willing to compromise his doctrinal and moral integrity for the sake of profit.
55. *Review the Doctrine of War.*