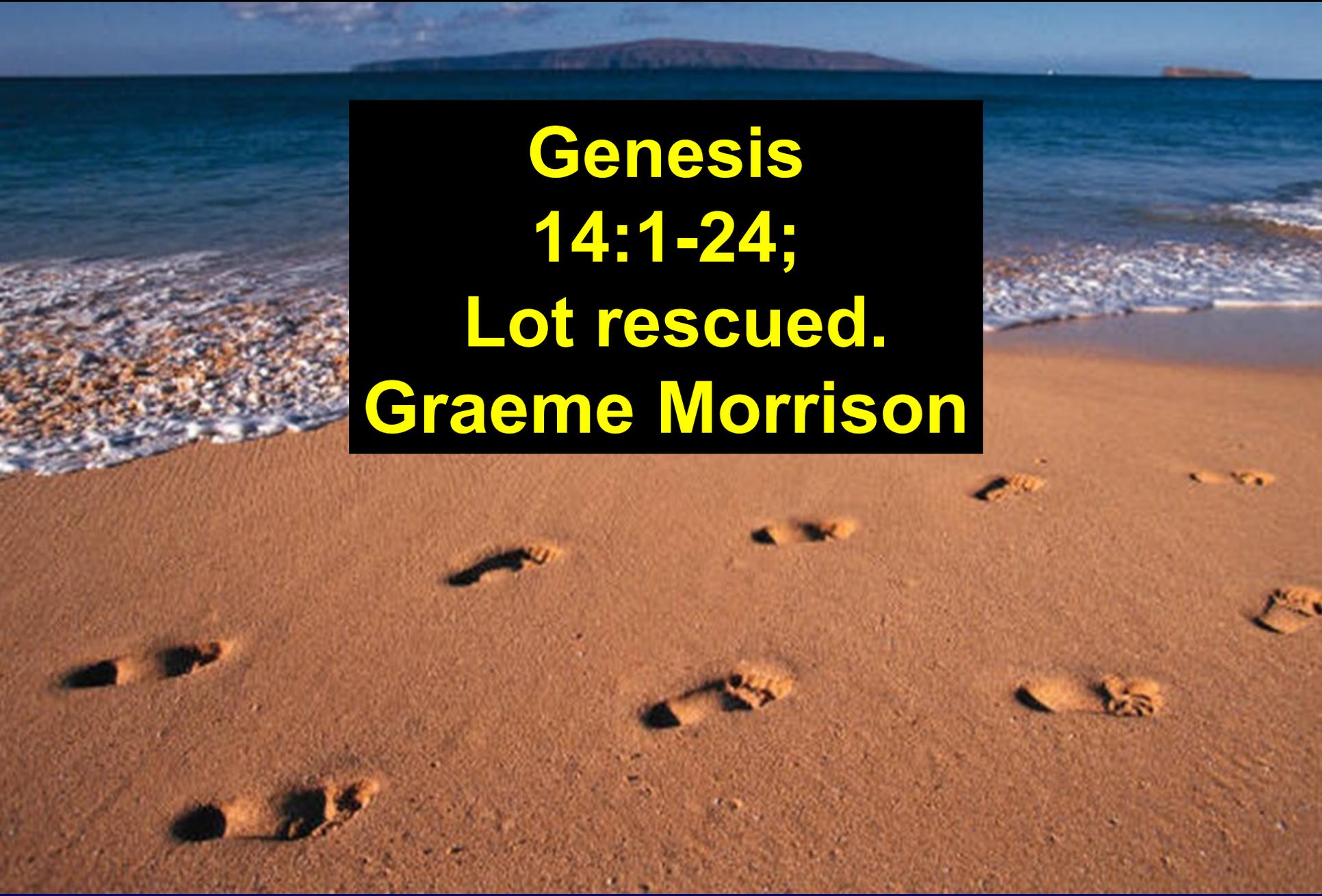
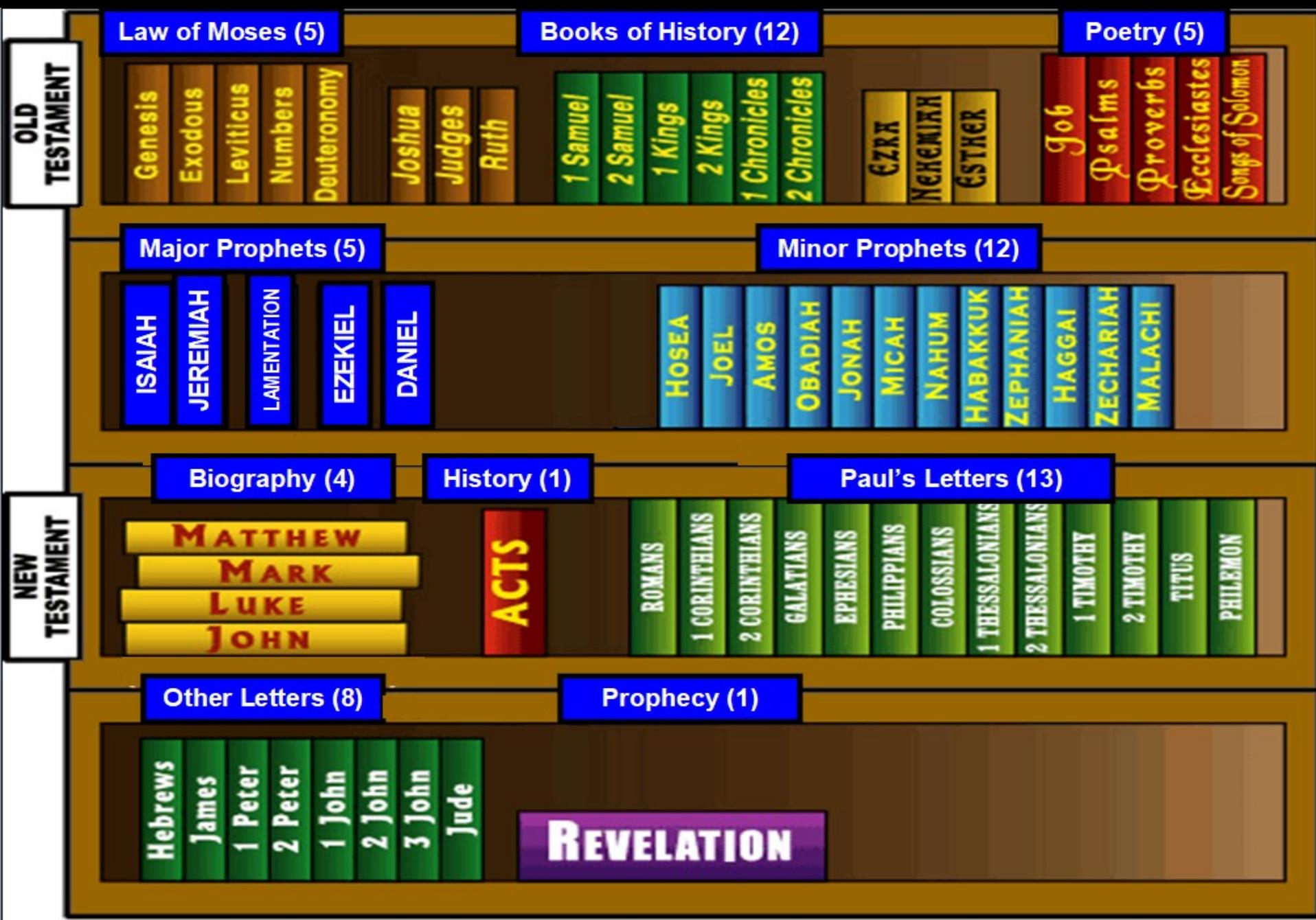


# **Patriarchal Age - After the flood.**

**Genesis  
14:1-24;  
Lot rescued.  
Graeme Morrison**



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# **Lot Taken Captive and rescued. Ch 14**

## **War of the Kings. Gen 14:1-7;**

- 1. And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim,**
- 2. {that} they made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela. (that is, Zoar.)**
- 3. All these came as allies to the valley of Siddim. (that is, the Salt Sea).**
- 4. Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but the thirteenth year they rebelled.**

## **Lot Taken Captive and rescued. Ch 14**

**5. In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth - karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, 6. and the Horites in their Mount Seir, as far as El- paran, which is by the wilderness.**

**7. Then they turned back and came to En- mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and conquered all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, who lived in Hazazon-tamar.**

**Gen 14:1;** “And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim.”

## **WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST.**

In the previous chapter, we pondered the decision of **Abram to separate himself from his nephew Lot.**

**Abram allowed Lot to have the first choice to which part of the land he would move and Abram consented to take the remainder.**

**Lot chose for himself what appeared to be the most fertile and desirable portion of the land; that land that was reminiscent of the land of Egypt.**

**Gen 14:1;** “And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim.”

The **reference to Egypt** is **significant**  
when we remember  
who is the author of the book of Genesis  
and who are **the original readers** of the book.

They are **the Israelites** in the wilderness  
**who have come out of Egypt.**

**Lot** chose to enter a land  
that was reminiscent of the land  
from which **they had been delivered.**

**Gen 14:1;** “And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim.”

**As we shall see in this chapter, going down to Egypt will be seen as a costly mistake on the part of Lot.**

**He will need to be rescued in the same way the Israelites who were in Egypt needed to be rescued.**

**This is a reminder and a call to leave Egypt and to leave the old manner of life that was represented by Egypt.**

**Gen 14:1;** “And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim.”

**After Lot moved toward Sodom,  
a disturbance arose. (14:1-4;)**

This chapter opens with a reference to a certain set of **political and military events** that took place in the ancient world of the days of Abram.

It **involved alliances and treaties** made with a variety of nations and city-states.

This alliance was made up of **four powerful kings** from the lands to the east of Canaan.

**Amraphel king of Shinar:** We have already seen references to **Shinar in Genesis 11.**

It is the land in which the **Tower of Babel** was constructed. **It is a reference to Mesopotamia.**

**Gen 14:1;** “And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim.”

**Arioch king of Ellasar:** Ellasar is commonly thought to be another name for the Sumerian city of Larsa, located in southern Mesopotamia.

**Chedorlaomer king of Elam:** The Elamites were one of **the superpowers** of this era.

They lived to the east of Mesopotamia, but also exerted influence over all of Mesopotamia.

**Chedorlaomer is seen to be the leader of this alliance**

**Tidal king of Goiim:** The term “**goyim**” is the regular word for “**nations.**” It seems to be a reference to a collection of city states in **North Western Mesopotamia.**

**Gen 14:3;** “All these came as allies to the valley of Siddim.  
(that is, the Salt Sea).”

These **five rebellious cities** were all located in the **valley of Siddim**. The word “**Siddim**” is normally rendered “**harrow**” and describes **the process of ploughing up the ground**.

We are **not told the significance** of the **name “Siddim.”**

It could be that the entire **Jordanian Valley** was **considered** to be a giant indentation in the earth **caused**, as it were, **by a divine plough**.

**Gen 14:3;** “All these came as allies to the valley of Siddim.  
(that is, the Salt Sea).”

The passage goes on to **explain** that this **Valley of Siddim** is to be identified with **the Salt Sea**.

Evidently, by the time Moses penned this narrative, this location was **no longer known as the Valley of Siddim** and that was a designation lost in history.

So a **clarification** is given  
to note that this place  
is **now known as the land of the Salt Sea**.

**Gen 14:4;** “Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer,  
but the thirteenth year they rebelled.”

**The five cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zoar,  
and Zeboiim had been serving and paying tribute  
to Chedorlaomer of Elam for twelve years.**

**War breaks out during the 13th year  
When the five cities with their kings formed  
an alliance of their own and determined to  
stop payment of the annual tribute  
which they had been paying for 12 years.**

**Bera king of Sodom.**

**Birsha king of Gomorrah.**

**Shinab king of Admah.**

**Shemeber king of Zeboiim.**

**The king of Bela (that is, Zoar)**

**Gen 14:5;** “In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth – karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim.”

During the **13th year** the **five cities** with **their kings rebel** and in the **14th year** **Chedorlaomer of Elam** brings his armies to battle the five rebellious cities.

The rebellion of the five cities of the Jordanian Plain brought about a quick retribution as **Chedorlaomer, this king of Elam,**

**Gathered up a coalition of kings and armies** and set forth on a **campaign** designed to **sweep down the Jordan River Valley** all the way to the land of Edom.

**Gen 14:5;** “In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth – karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim.”

**Chedorlaomer begins by marching North Westward to Ashteroth-Karnaim.**

**(a city due east of the Sea of Galilee.)**

**The four kings defeat the Rephaim and the Zuzim people in Ham.**

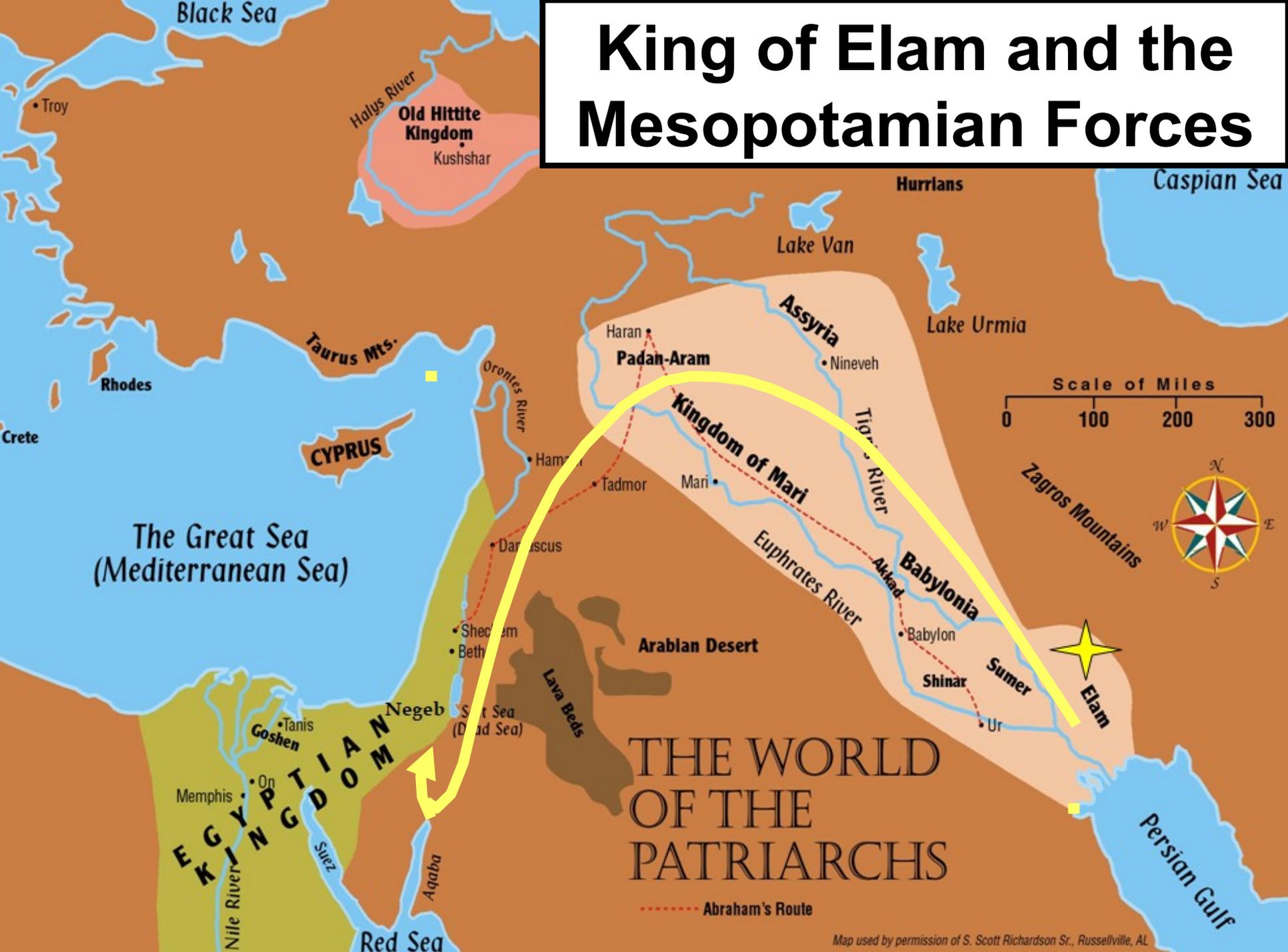
**(a city 5 miles south of Ashteroth.)**

**Leaving Ham, the four kings of the area of Elam march Southward to Kiriathaim.**

**The Emin are in this city and are defeated.**

**Most likely, at this point, Chedorlaomer travels around the Dead Sea and then travels Southward to attack the five rebellious cities from the South.**

# King of Elam and the Mesopotamian Forces



THE WORLD OF THE PATRIARCHS

Map used by permission of S. Scott Richardson Sr., Russellville, AL

**Gen 14:7;** “Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and conquered all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, who lived in Hazazon-tamar.”

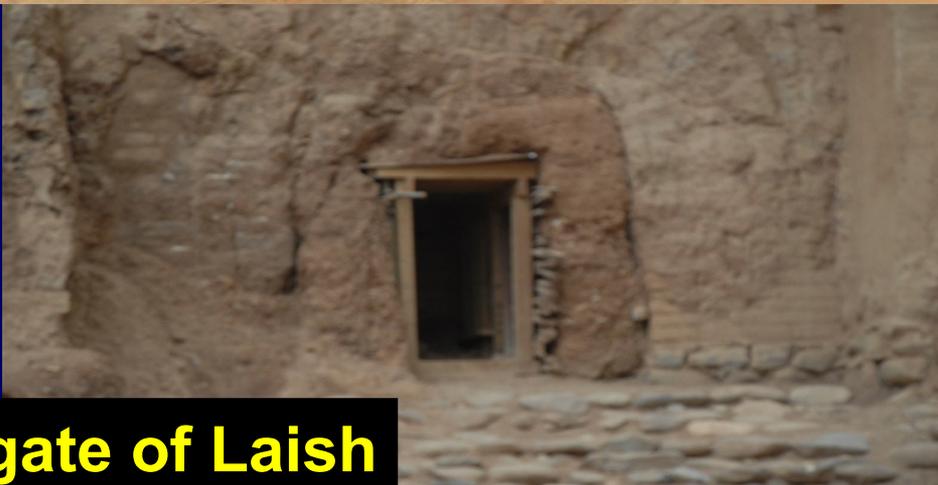
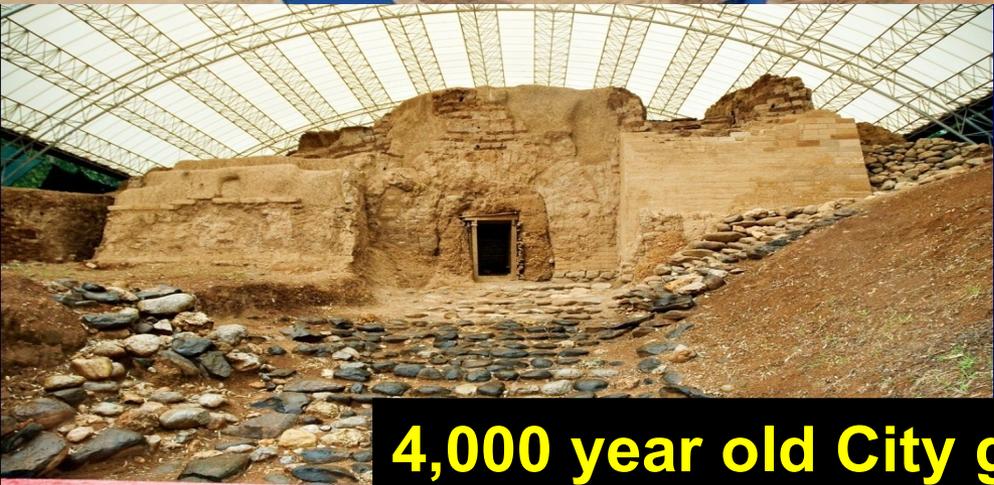
**The route followed by Chedorlaomer was known as the King’s Highway.**

**It was one of the major trade routes from Mesopotamia to Egypt during this period.**

**King’s Highway** ran from Damascus southward along the eastern side of the Jordan River, passing on the east side of the Dead Sea and continuing southward to the Red Sea.

**Chedorlaomer took this route** and then made a swing to the west, They first come to **Mount Seir** and defeat the **Horites** and then they travel **further southward** conquering the inhabitants of **Kadesh** and the **Amalekite and Amorite tribes** living in southern Canaan.

# WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST



**4,000 year old City gate of Laish**

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; and they arrayed for battle against them in the valley of Siddim,

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.

It is fascinating to see **the amount of fighting** that had to be done **just to get to the five rebellious cities.**

The **last fighting** that took place with the kings of Elam before the Siddim Valley Battle was **at Hazazon-tamar.** (a city due south of the Dead Sea and the Valley of Siddim.)

## **Lot Taken Captive Ch 14:12;**

**10. As it happened, the valley was filled with tar pits.**

**And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some slipped into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains.**

**11. The victorious invaders then plundered Sodom and Gomorrah and began their long journey home, taking all the wealth and food with them.**

**12. They also captured Lot-Abram's nephew who lived in Sodom-and took everything he owned.**

**13. One of the men who escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was camped at the oak grove belonging to Mamre the Amorite. Mamre and his relatives, Eshcol and Aner, were Abram's allies.**

**Gen 14:10;** “As it happened, the valley was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some slipped into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains.”

**Completing a wide circle,**

**Chedorlaomer turned north** to come against the Jordan Valley from the south where an alliance of the cities of the Jordan Valley were waiting to meet him.

**The Five kings gain intelligence of the movements of the four kings of Elam and travel southward to meet them at the Valley of Siddim.**

**The Valley of Siddim was a small area located south of the Dead Sea and north of the eastward finger of the Red Sea.**

**Gen 14:10;** “As it happened, the valley was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some slipped into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains.”

These **two armies clashed** and the **kings of the Jordanian Alliance** found themselves **Overwhelmed** and forced to retreat.

They were **pushed back** into an area that was full of tar pits.

It is as though **they had escaped one foe, only to be swallowed by another.**

The **slime pits of Siddim** was a substance like caulking or **bitumen**. (the same material Noah used to seal the ark.)

**Bitumen** indicates the presence of **Oil**. It is like pitch and is **easily set on fire**, later this area became known as **the salt sea**, today it is **known as the dead sea area**.

**Gen 14:10;** “As it happened, the valley was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some slipped into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains.”

**NOTE on Dead Sea:-** Name dates from the 2 century, today it is approx. 10 miles wide and 45 miles long, surface of the water is 1300 ft below sea level, present day city called Sodom is **the lowest inhabited spot on earth** .

**Climate is almost tropical.** Practically no rain (less than 6 inches per year) fine green vegetation, air moist because of evaporation from dead sea.

**River Jordan and 5 other rivers empty into it and no one has ever found an outlet,** evaporation is so intense that it causes white bluish clouds to float just above surface of the water.

**Gen 14:11;** “Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food supply, and departed.”

**There was not much of a battle. The five kings were completely routed by the kings of Elam.**

**With the defeat of the Jordanian Alliance, the cities of the Jordan Valley were left completely defenceless. Chedorlaomer and his forces took all five of these cities.**

**The soldiers raid the five cities and carry off many goods including prisoners of war. (POW's.)**

**Gen 14:12;** “They also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for he was living in Sodom.”

**One of the POW's was Lot Abram's nephew.**

When we last saw Lot in Genesis 13, he had moved down into the Jordan Valley with **his tent pitched toward Sodom.** (13:12;)

But now, we are told that **he was living in Sodom.**

At some point along the line, he had given up the life of a nomad and a wanderer and **had moved into the city.**

**Gen 14:12;** “They also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for he was living in Sodom.”

Perhaps there **is a principle illustrated here.**

It is the principle that  
**proximity** often leads to **participation.**

When you allow yourself to **remain in the presence of sin**, it is not long before **you will soon find yourself** in its very **midst** and **partaking of it.**

It is for this reason we are give the warning: “Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,” says the Lord. “And do not touch what is unclean.” (2 Corinthians 6:17;)

## **Abram Rescues Lot.**

**Abram** and his allies **pursued the enemy** from the oaks of Mamre to Dan. (14:14-16;)

**Abram divided his men, attacked at night, and chased the enemy to Hobah.**

**Abram rescued Lot.**

# CANAAN IN THE DAYS OF THE PATRIARCHS

Scale of Miles  
0 10 20 30 40

**Lot Taken Captive  
and Rescued**



**Gen 14:13;** “Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, and these were allies with Abram.”

This is the **First time** the **word HEBREW** is used.

The name is derived, **according to some**, from **Eber** ( Gen 10:24;), the **ancestor of Abraham**.

The Hebrews are therefore **"sons of Eber."** ( 10:21;)

The more likely meaning of the word **Hebrew** is from **the root-word signifying "to pass over,"** and hence regard it as meaning **"the man who passed over."**

**Passed over the Euphrates;** or to the Hebrew word meaning **“the region”** or **“country beyond,”** viz., the land of Chaldea.

The more probable origin of the designation given to Abraham coming among the Canaanites is **a man from beyond the Euphrates.**

(Genesis 14:13;)

**Gen 14:13;** “Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, and these were allies with Abram.”

The name was **applied to the Israelites** in Scripture only **by one who is a foreigner.**  
(Genesis 39:14; 39:17; 41:12, etc.)

**Or by the Israelites** when they **speak of themselves to foreigners.**  
(Gen 40:15; Exod 1:19;)

Or when spoken of as **contrasted with other peoples**  
( Gen 43:32 ;Exod 1:3; 1:7; 1:15; Deut 15:12;)

**In the New Testament**  
**there is the same contrast**  
**between Hebrews and foreigners.**  
(Acts 6:1; Philippians 3:5;)

**Gen 14:14;** “And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.”

**Now our scene shifts. It moves from Lot who is a prisoner of war and a captive, to Abram who is dwelling peacefully among Amorite allies of the land.**

**The oaks of Mamre were located near to the ancient city of Hebron and due west of the Dead Sea. (Genesis 13:18;)**

**Lot's actions in choosing the best land for himself and at the expense of his uncle would have been perceived as a slight in those days when respect for one's elders was considered the norm.**

**Gen 14:14;** “And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.”

One might imagine a **response** that said,  
“**Lot got exactly what he deserved**  
for his blatant **disrespect** for his elder.”

None of that takes place. **Instead, Abram takes immediate steps to rescue his nephew.**

**What has taken place?  
Forgiveness.**

**Abram demonstrates a forgiving spirit toward his nephew. We are called to exhibit the same sort of forgiveness toward those who have wronged us.  
We are to forgive as we have been forgiven.**

**Gen 14:14;** “And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.”

## **While Abram dwelt in Mamre**

(Due West of Dead Sea) there is no doubt that **he knew that the armies of Elam were on the move.** (they must have travelled right past him on their way to Kadesh / remember **map.**)

An Amorite tells Abram that **Lot was captured and taken by the kings of Elam.** The kings of Elam had taken their spoils as far north as **Dan.**

Abram’s concern for his nephew was quickly translated into action as he led out his 318 trained men. **(trained in the use of weapons.)**

**These were not a new acquisition.  
They had been born under his tent.**

**Gen 14:15;** “And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.”

We are told in **Genesis 14:24;** that **Abram** was also accompanied by his Amorite neighbours.

If **Abram** had been in their midst, **building altars** and **proclaiming the name** of the Lord, then **these companions had been present to witness that testimony to the Lord.**

**Abram’s strategy was twofold.**

**He divided his forces.**

This suggests a two-pronged attack designed to **throw the enemy into confusion.**

**He attacked by night.** Such an attack under the cover of darkness would add to **the confusion** of the enemy forces.

**Gen 14:15;** “And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.”

**Abram caught up with the invaders in the vicinity of Dan, near to the slopes of Mount Hermon on the northern border of Canaan.**

Considering that **Dan** initially settled in the south and did not move to northern Palestine **until the days of the Judges**, this is evidently the **modernized addition of a later scribe (like changing “Lundinium” to “London.” )**

**Not only did Abram win a great victory, but he was able to pursue the defeated forces to a point north of Damascus.**

**As a result, Abram was able to effect the rescue, not only of Lot, but also of the people and possessions of Sodom and other cities of the plain.**

**Gen 14:16;** “And he brought back all the goods,  
and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions,  
and also the women, and the people.”

No doubt **Abram** was **an instant hero** in  
**the eyes of the five cities** that had been defeated.

The hand of God is seen to be with Abram  
because remember  
those he had beaten **had just finished fighting**  
**city state after city state and winning.**

**They were battle hardened men,**  
**Yet**  
**God gave Abram the victory.**

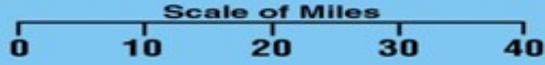
**Gen 14:16;** “And he brought back all the goods,  
and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions,  
and also the women, and the people.”

**Abram and Lot returned home  
with all the people and goods.  
(Genesis 14:16-20;)**

**The King of Sodom went out  
to meet Abram in the Valley of Shaveh.**

**Then Melchizedek, King of Salem,  
blessed Abram.**

# CANAAN IN THE DAYS OF THE PATRIARCHS



## Abram and Lot Return

The Great Sea



The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are thought to be located beneath the shallow waters at the south end of the Dead Sea. This area was called the Vale of Siddim.

Hobah?  
Damascus

# **AN ENCOUNTER WITH TWO KINGS.**

**17 Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh. (that is, the King's Valley.)**

**18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.**

**19 And he blessed him and said, “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;”**

**20 “And blessed be God Most High, who has helped you conquer your enemies. Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered.”**

**Gen 14:17;** “Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh. (that is, the King's Valley.)”

**In the King's Valley (Shaveh) is  
Gihon at the foot of the pool of Siloam -Chinor-  
There is a shaft that David used to attack Jerusalem,  
Hezekiah made the crack into a tunnel.**

# AN ENCOUNTER WITH TWO KINGS.

As Abram returns from his victory against Chedorlaomer, he is met by two kings who come out to meet him.

These two kings are seen in striking contrast to one another.

<b><i>Bera, King of Sodom</i></b>	<b><i>Melchizedek</i></b>
King of Sodom, a city of sinful pleasure.	King of Salem, a city of peace.
Came out to meet Abram.	Came out to meet Abram.
He offered riches to Abram.	He offered a blessing to Abram along with bread and wine.
Abram refused his offer.	Abram accepted his blessings and the gifts.
Abram returned all of his riches and people.	Abram gave to him tithes of all the spoils of war.

**Gen 14:17;** “Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh. (that is, the King's Valley.)”

**These two kings are intentionally presented in juxtaposition to one another.**

**This is seen when verse 17 introduces the coming of the king of Sodom, but we do not see an interaction between him and Abram until verse 21.**

**The king of Sodom and his fellow kings come to meet Abram.**

**Abram meets with Melchizedek.**

**The king of Sodom proposes that Abram keep all of the spoil he has rescued.**

**We are meant to look at these two kings and we are meant to contrast and compare them.**

**Why? Because they are both representative of more than meets the eye.**

**Gen 14:17;** “Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh. (that is, the King's Valley.)”

**The king of Sodom represents  
the sinful pleasures of the world.**

**Sodom was the place that was reminiscent of Egypt.**

**It represented the old life of the people of Israel  
when they were in bondage.**

**The world seeks to make an offer:  
“Take the riches you have won  
through your own self effort.”**

**It is an offer to make you **wealthy**.**

**It is an offer to **obtain your desires** through  
your own works and **on the basis of your own effort**.**

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

**The contrast is with the king who Comes from Salem. The word Salem becomes Shalom it is the Hebrew word for “peace.”**

That is an interesting name for Jerusalem, for the history of this city has been **a history of war and of conquest.**

It has been anything but a city of peace with **two notable exceptions.**

It was **the city** where **the God of Peace** located His temple.

It was **the city** where **the Prince of Peace** came to present Himself.

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

**Salem** seems to have been the **ancient name** of **Jerusalem**, the small Canaanite city that would **one day become the capital of Israel.**

Before this city became the capital of Israel, it belonged to a people known as the **Jebusites**, until it was captured by **King David** several centuries later. (2 Sam 5:9;)

Their city was alternately known as “**Jebus**” and “**Salem.**” Its name today reflects a **composite of these two names:- Jeru-salem.**

**Psalm 76:1-2;**

“God is known in Judah;

His name is great in Israel.

And His tabernacle is in Salem;

His dwelling place also is in Zion.”

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

**Melchizedek was the king of Salem.**

At the same time, he is said to have been the **priest of God** Most High. (El Elyon.)

The term **El** was a general designation for a divinity among the Canaanites.

**This is its first use in the Bible.**

**It means “the strong one.”**

The name “**Melchizedek**” is a compound of **two Hebrew words** which have been joined together.

**Melech** is the Hebrew word for “**king.**”

**Zedek** means “**righteousness.**”

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

**What’s in a name?** When we name children, it is often only because **we like the sound of it.**

But **names** in the ancient world were **full of meaning**, especially among the Jews.

Names were given to tell something about the character of the person.

This is why you occasionally see **a person** whose **name is changed**. This was the case of **Abram**. His name was changed from **Abram** (“father of high places”) to **Abraham** (“father of a multitude.”)

It was also true in the case of **Jacob** (“con-artist”) whose name was changed to **Israel**. (“prince of God.”)

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

**Melchizedek appears in our passage as he ministers to Abram.**

He comes **bringing bread and wine** as **Abram** returns from the long, tiring march.

**The parallels with the New Testament coming of Jesus are striking.**

# Melchizedek and Jesus compared.

<b>Melchizedek</b>	<b>Jesus Christ</b>
His name means “king of righteousness.”	Jesus is the Righteous King.
We are given no genealogy or narrative of his origins.	Though he has an genealogy, His true origins are from all eternity.
He is the king of the city named “Peace.”	Jesus is the Prince of Peace.
He was the first priest ever mentioned in the Bible.	He is our Great High Priest who fulfilled every Old Testament priesthood.
He brought bread and wine to Abram.	He offered His own body and blood, symbolized today by bread and wine.

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

In Hebrews 7:3; **Melchizedek** was  
**‘without father or mother?’** and, it says  
**‘having neither beginning of days nor end of life?’**

For centuries **Melchizedek** has fascinated both Bible commentators and Bible students alike, and many and varied have been the theories advanced to **explain his identity**, and especially **his origin**, in the light of the statements made in this verse.

Such is the mystery that has always surrounded the name ‘Melchizedek’ that, in the 3rd century A.D., a sect arose known as **‘the Melchizedekians’**, whose members believed that he was a **‘Christophany’**, that is, a pre-Christian manifestation of the Son of God Himself.

Or, they said, **he was the Holy Spirit in human form.** Or, at the very least, **they declared that he was an angelic being.**

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

There is even **a theory, of Jewish origin** from an even earlier period, which claims that:- **Melchizedek was actually Shem, the son of Noah, who, having survived the Flood, lived long enough to meet Abraham.**

Yet again, there are other writers who have **refused to accept** that such a person as **Melchizedek ever existed**, claiming that he is an **imaginary figure; an idealized, stylized character.**

**But this view is impossible to sustain since the account of his meeting with Abraham is as factual as any other historical event recorded in the Bible.**

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

## **What The Scriptures Reveal:-**

When we turn to the Word of God, we very quickly discover that, in the Old Testament scriptures **there is not a great deal said about Melchizedek.**

He first appears, very briefly, in the **days of Abraham** in here in **Genesis 14.**

The **second brief mention of him** occurs **1000 years later**, in **Psalm 110:4;**

After this, **we wait another 1000 years** before he appears in the New Testament, **in the two passages Heb 5:10; and 7:1-9;** Where most of what we learn about him is to be found.

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

## **‘Melchizedek – King of Salem.’**

So in Genesis 14:18; we read that it was **After Abraham had rescued his nephew Lot**, that his meeting with **Melchizedek** occurred, and, in this verse, ‘**Malkiy Tzedeq**’ is described as ‘**king of Salem**’, and ‘**priest of El Elyon,**’ or, of ‘**God Most High.**’

**Josephus**, the Jewish historian **stated:-**

“First founder of Jerusalem was a chief of the Canaanites, who, in our tongue is called ‘**Righteous King**’.”

Thus, **Melchizedek was King and Priest** in the city which was later to become ‘**the City of David.**’

This means that in this man were **combined the offices of Priest and King** – a fact which is **of profound significance.**

**Gen 14:18;** “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”

The fact that **Melchizedek** was **both King and Priest** surely reveals what **a remarkable person** he must have been.

In an age of polytheism, here was a **Canaanite king** who knew the **One True God** – ‘**God Most High.**’ or ‘**The Supreme God**’, and who served Him as priest. In Psalm 7:17; God, is described as ‘**Yahweh, the Most High.**’

Notice, also, that **this is the first time the word ‘priest’ (kohen.)** occurs in the O. T. scriptures.

From then on, it is used a massive **724 times**, and it probably means ‘**one who mediates.**’

**Gen 14:19;** “Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing:-  
“Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.”

When the New Testament scriptures  
**describes Melchizedek as a priest,**  
the word used is ‘**heireus,**’ which means ‘**one  
who is holy and set apart for the service of God.**’

**Melchizedek comes with bread and wine  
and with a blessing.** He pronounces a **blessing  
upon Abram in the name of God Most High.**

**This blessing recognizes,**  
**not a mere tribal deity, but the**  
**Possessor (and creator) of heaven and earth.**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

Furthermore, **Abraham acknowledged Melchizedek’s priesthood** as being that of the **God who had called him out of ‘Ur of the Chaldeans,’** because, **Abram offered a tithe to Melchizedek.**

Later, according to **the Mosaic Law,** **the people were required to recognize the position of the Priesthood** by the **giving of a tithe.**

**Num18:24;.**

**The idea of giving a tenth of one’s possessions was not unique to the people of Israel.**

**This concept was established in both Mesopotamia and in Egypt.**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

What about **Tithing for today?**

Any **teaching** regarding **Tithing** should be **called Old Covenant (Testament) Tithing.**

Because **there is no instruction** concerning **Tithing** in either **Genesis or Exodus.**  
Just this one brief mention in Gen 14:20;  
which **records that Abraham**  
**gave tithes to Melchizedek, King of Salem.**

We must **go to Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy,** because it was a practice which was inseparable from the **Covenant** which **God made with the Israelites at Sinai.**

## What about **Tithing** for today?

When we examine **the scriptures** relating to **the practice of Tithing**, we discover that it was far more **complicated** than those who advocate **Tithing today** seem to realize or understand.

In a sentence:-

**Biblical Tithing** was not just a matter of giving one tenth of one's income.

The **'Tenth'** (for that is what the word **'tithe'** means) the tenth was merely the starting point!

**The Tithe** was actually a **Tax** that touched **every part** of the peoples' life, and it became an **extremely complicated** affair.

## What about **Tithing** for today?

To ensure the **strict observance** of the Law, and in order to ensure that the **many purposes** for which **the tax** was imposed were properly met.

**The Rabbis** introduced a **multitude of rules** and **regulations** which they described as:-  
**‘The First Tithe,’ ‘The Second Tithe’**  
**and ‘The Poor Man’s Tithe.’**

In fact, the **theologians** have **calculated** that by the time **an individual** had fulfilled his **obligations** under the **Mosaic Law** of the **Tithe** he had given **about 23 per cent** of his **income!**

## What about Tithing for today?

**Bear in mind, that this taxation was COMPULSORY.**

**The command to Tithe had to be obeyed.**

**A man was not at liberty to decide if he would give, or how much, or when he would give.**

**Since it was his religious duty, commanded by God in His Covenant, failure to comply with the Law was a punishable offence.**

**However, I must also add that the people who were proud to claim to be 'God's Chosen People,' were often disobedient and neglectful, and really unworthy of being called by that name. We read in Mal 3;7-10; that God rebuked them and commanded, "Bring all the tithes to the storehouse....."**

**What about Tithing for today?**

**In The New Testament.**

The reason why some people think we should Tithe today is because **they do not understand** that **the practice was only associated with the Covenant** which **God made at Mount Sinai.**

**The Covenant that God made with the descendants of Jacob, and that that OLD covenant with its sacrifices, rites and ceremonies.**

**The Old Covenant was superseded by the New Covenant, which the scriptures describe as a 'better covenant,' made effective by the blood of Christ.  
( Read Heb 8:6-13; Very Important!)**

What about **Tithing** for today?

It is under this **New Covenant** that believers now **live, and give.**

The **compulsory Law of the Tithe,** and the many sacrifices of the **Mosaic Covenant** no longer have any purpose, as Paul explains in his letters to the congregations in Rome and Corinth.

The **early Christians,** gave regularly and **consistently.** Read 1 Cor 16:1; and notice that they did it **on the FIRST** day of the week.

## What about **Tithing for today?**

On the day of Pentecost, the three thousand who heard Peter's message, believed and repented, were baptized to have their sins forgiven. Acts 2:38;

and they "**continued steadfastly** -(Greek: '**kept going on**')- in the Teaching of the Apostles, and **the Fellowship**, the Breaking of the Bread, and the Prayers." Acts 2:42;

notice the expression, '**the Fellowship.**'

The Greek text is '**ho koinonia**,' because the word

**They shared what they had!**

They were **never commanded** to give a tenth of their income.

**They gave much more than that!** Acts 4:32ff, shows **the Spirit of Christ at work**, when an emergency arose!

# What about **Tithing** for today?

**We do not give because we have been commanded to give.**

**1. We give VOLUNTARILY;** not because we have to, but because we want to give;

**2 We give because we are under Grace, not under Law.**

**3. We give WILLINGLY,** not under compulsion, **out of Love.**

**4. We give CHEERFULLY.** Joyfully. Not grudgingly, 'for God loves a cheerful giver.' 2 Cor 9:7;

**5. We give PROPORTIONALLY;** 'as we have been prospered' that is, according to what we possess, thanks to the goodness of God.

He does not ask for what we do not have. 2 Cor 8:12;

**6. We give PURPOSEFULLY.** We prayerfully consider our giving, and give as we have 'purposed in our heart'

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

Here, **Abram, the federal head of Hebrew people and the Father of the nation,** gave a tithe,

**Not merely for himself, but for all his descendants** and this included the entire priestly tribe of Levi and Aaron, its first High Priest.

**Abram had received a blessing from him.**

This blessing of Abraham by Melchizedek is something that the Scriptures stress as very significant, pointing out that **‘the lesser is blessed by the greater.’** Heb 7:7;

Or, as the **R.S.V.** renders the verse, **‘the inferior is blessed by the superior.’** No wonder the inspired writer of the letter to the Hebrews exclaims, **“See how great he is!”** (7:4;)

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

## **Statements that Puzzle!**

**The uniqueness of Melchizedek’s priesthood is stressed in Heb.7:3; where we find the statements, which create difficulty.**

**It will help if, when we read this verse, we bear in mind that the writer is setting out the similarity between Melchizedek and the Lord Jesus.**

**This is in order to show why Jesus is a priest ‘after the order (‘taxin’, meaning style or fashion’) of Melchizedek.’**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

**Firstly.** “Without father or mother or genealogy” does not mean that Melchizedek came into existence miraculously, without parents!

It means that he had no priestly ancestry, and that there were no genealogical records from which his right to serve as a priest could be established.

This reveals the difference between his priesthood and that of the sons of Aaron who came along later,

Proof of ancestry was essential before a man could become a Levitical priest, and when the antecedents of a priest had to be established beyond doubt.

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

After the **return** from **the Babylonian Captivity** certain **men wished to serve** in the Temple,

They were **excluded from priesthood** because their **names could not be found** among, **‘those enrolled in the genealogies,’** so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean.

**Nehemiah 7:64;**

So important was this law that **Heb 7:14;** tells us that even **the Lord Jesus himself could not have been a priest** during his earthly life.

‘for it is evident that our **Lord was descended from Judah,** and in connection with that tribe **Moses** said nothing about priesthood.’

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

**Secondly.** In any case, **Melchizedek could not possibly serve as a Levitical Priest,** because, as verse 10 points out, **Aaron had not yet been born!**

**The Jewish Aaronic priesthood was established centuries after the time of Melchizedek!**

**Thirdly.** When we are told that he had ‘**neither beginning of days nor end of life,**’ it would be **foolish to suppose** this means that Melchizedek was not born and did not die!

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

This refers to the **length of his service** as priest. It means that, unlike the sons of Aaron who became priests, **Melchizedek did not succeed anyone to his priestly office, nor was he himself succeeded in it by anyone.**

**His priesthood was unique. As the 3rd verse states, he, ‘abides a priest continually.’**

This draws our attention to the fact that, unlike the Aaronic priests, **Melchizedek did not begin his ministry at a set age, nor was he compelled to retire at a set age.**

**He had an ‘abiding’, that is, a continuing priesthood.**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

Under the Law of Moses, a descendant of Aaron became **an apprentice at 25 years** of age, carrying the Tabernacle and performing similar menial tasks, and he became **a full priest at 30 years** of age.

**God’s law governing priesthood** was extremely **benevolent** and was considerate of the **heavy work involved** in priesthood.

That law stated that **a priest must retire** from service upon reaching **the age of 50**, although, if he wished and was able, he might continue to serve in a voluntary capacity. (Numbers 8: 23-26;)

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

## **Not so Melchizedek!**

There was **no set time for his priestly ministry either to begin or to end**, so that in this his service was altogether unique.

**The Lord Jesus was like Melchizedek King and Priest.**

Taking all of these facts into consideration, **we see the wonderful similarity between Melchizedek and the Lord Jesus.**

**Neither had Jesus priestly ancestry.**

**Neither did Jesus serve for a set period.**

**Neither had successors in their particular ministry.**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

in both, **the offices of King and Priest were combined.**

Whilst **Melchizedek** was said to be:-  
**king of Salem and priest of God.**

Concerning Jesus the Lord Most High,  
it had been prophesied in **Zech 6:13;**  
**“He shall be a priest upon his throne!”**

Bear in mind that this was a prophecy that could not be fulfilled during his earthly ministry, since whilst on earth **he could not have been a priest according to the Law of Moses under which he lived as a Jew.**

But, having ascended to heaven,  
**Jesus now reigns and mediates as King and Priest.**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

**In the entire history of God’s ancient people,  
no one was allowed to serve  
as both King and Priest at the same time.**

**On the three-recorded occasions  
when kings intruded into the priestly function,  
the consequences were catastrophic.**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

**1 Sam 13, King Saul** presumed to offer a sacrifice, and **lost his throne as a punishment.**

**1 Kings 13, King Jeroboam** dressed himself as a priest and served at an altar to a god of his own making, and the punishment which followed **resulted in the destruction of the entire House of Jeroboam.**

**2 Chron 26, King Uzziah** entered the Temple and began to offer incense, and **was struck with leprosy.**

**Gen 14:20;** “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” He gave him a tenth of all.”

Down through the ages from the time  
of **the unique Melchizedek,**  
**God held the offices of King and Priest apart**  
until He (**Jesus**) should come of  
whom **Melchizedek** had been a symbol.

**God declared that it was His intention**  
that **His own Son** should **combine in himself,**  
**the function of Kingship and Priesthood.**

in Psalm 110:4; He said:-  
“**You are a priest for ever,**  
**after the order of Melchizedek.**”

**Gen 14:21;** “And the king of Sodom said to Abram,  
“Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself.”

## **ABRAM AND THE KING OF SODOM.**

The **King of Sodom** only asked for the people and **offered Abram all the goods.**  
(14:21-24;)

**Abram only accepted**  
**the expenses** of his men and  
**the portion that belonged to his allies.**

# **ABRAM AND THE KING OF SODOM.**

**21 “And the king of Sodom said to Abram,  
“Give the people to me  
and take the goods for yourself.”**



**22 “And Abram said to the king of Sodom,  
“I have sworn to the LORD God Most High,  
possessor of heaven and earth”**

**23 “that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong  
or anything that is yours,  
lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’”**

**24 “I will take nothing except what the young men  
have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me,  
Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share.”**

**(Genesis 14:21-24;)**

**Gen 14:21;** “And the king of Sodom said to Abram,  
“Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself.”

The **encounter of Abram** with **the king of Sodom**  
has already been introduced.

We were told in **Gen 14:17;** that  
**the king of Sodom** came out to meet Abram.

This was mentioned in order that we might  
**see him in contrast with Melchizedek**  
and it was also mentioned  
so that **we might anticipate the encounter.**

**Gen 14:21;** “And the king of Sodom said to Abram,  
“Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself.”

It seems almost **anticlimactic**,  
for **the battle** had already taken place  
and **the victory** had been won.

**Why does the author include this dialogue?**

It is because we are to see this  
as a **conflict of a different sort.**

**Abram is being faced with a temptation**  
as to **his motivations.**

**Did Abram** rescue Lot  
so that **Abram** could become rich  
or was it out of love for his nephew?

**Gen 14:22;** “And Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth.”

The **king of Sodom** offers **Abram** **all of the wealth** of the cities of the Jordan Plains.

**Abram** refuses to take anything, stating the **he has sworn to the Lord** that he would not take anything.

**Why such an oath?** Because if Abram had taken a reward, then people would have said that **the king of Sodom** made him rich rather than recognizing **that such blessings came from the Lord.**

**Gen 14:22;** “that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’”

**Abram was demonstrating** to all in the land that **his dependency** was upon **God** alone and that **his riches** were solely due to **God’s grace** in his life.

What is the attitude of **a Christian** when they are offered a great sum of money?

If they think of it at all, there is **a tendency** to begin coming up with all sorts of reasons why they ought to take it.

**Abram did not fall prey to this temptation.**

**Gen 14:24;** “I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten,  
and the share of the men who went with me,  
Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share.”

At the same time, **Abram** does not hold  
**his Amorite companions**  
to the **same standard** of conduct.

**He does not prevent their acceptance  
of the portion that is due to them.**

**This is perhaps Abram’s greatest victory of all.  
It is a victory over self-righteousness.  
This is often the most difficult victory to win.**

**Gen 14:24;** “I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten,  
and the share of the men who went with me,  
Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share.”

**After we have won a great victory,**  
our tendency is to **show off our “great spirituality”**  
by putting down a believer younger than our self  
and **by pointing at how they**  
**ought to be following our example.**

**Abram does not fall prey to this temptation.**  
He recognising it to be acceptable  
**for his companions to be recompensed**  
**for their time and energy.**

Notice **the contrast** to be seen  
between Genesis 13 versus Genesis 14.

**It is a contrast in action**  
**and it is a contrast in promises and blessings.**

### ***Genesis 13***

**Begins with strife  
between the servants of Lot  
and the servants of Abram.**

**Lot moves into Sodom.**

**As a result of the strife,  
Abram separates from Lot.**

**After his separation from Lot,  
God comes and makes  
promises to Abram.**

**God promises to give the  
land of Canaan to Abram.**

### ***Genesis 14***

**Begins with strife between  
the Elamite kings  
and the cities of the Jordan.**

**Lot is taken from Sodom.**

**As a result of the strife,  
Abram goes to Lot's rescue.**

**After Abram's rescue of Lot,  
Melchizedek comes  
and blesses Abram.**

**Abram gives tithes  
to Melchizedek.**

**Genesis  
14:1-24;  
Lot rescued.**

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**Next in the series:-**

**Gen chapter 15:1; to 17:27; Abram Covenant.**