

## Genesis 14-16 – Thursday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007

**14:1** And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, 2 that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).<sup>3</sup> All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea).<sup>4</sup> twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5 In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 and the Horites in their mountain of 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 attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar. 8 And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim 9 against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar -- four kings against five.

- The four kings of the cities in the region of Sodom and Gomorrah rebel against the five kings of nations ruling over them.
- It seems like this is a world war of sorts. I suppose it would be good at this juncture to mention that this is a true story.

Archaeologist Nelson Glueck documents the destruction left by these kings: "I found that every village in their path had been plundered and left in ruins, and the countryside was laid waste. The population had been wiped out or led away into captivity. For hundreds of years thereafter, the entire area was like an abandoned cemetery, hideously unkempt, with all its monuments shattered and strewn in pieces on the ground."

10 Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains.<sup>11</sup> Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. 12 They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

- So because they rebelled and wouldn't pay taxes, they come in and took people and goods as payment and departed.
- Lot was living with them and thus was one of them taken as slaves in this war.
- To be friends with the world is a costly mistake.

**James 4:4** You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. NIV

"Those believers who conform to the world must expect to suffer for it." (Spurgeon)

13 Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram.

- Abram is told about his nephew Lot and will now take responsibility for him and will put together an army to go rescue him.
- Interesting, this is the first mention of the name Hebrew, again because of Eber, who is in Abram's genealogy.

"The word Hebrew comes from a root that means *passed over*. The Septuagint translates it *the passenger*." (Barnhouse)

14 Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

- Abram's army consists of 318 servants, and we're told that they are armed and trained.
- It is interesting to note that though Abram was a man of faith; he still prudently had an army ready to defend himself.
- It's been said; 'trust God, but lock your house.'

15 He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. 16 So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people. 17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.

- God gives Abram wisdom militarily to divide his troops and attack at night.
- God gives Abram victory and they are able to bring back Lot, along with all the people, and all the possessions.
- What's crazy about this is that Lot will go right back to Sodom. It's as if this God was warning Lot of Sodom and Gomorrah's judgment.

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the 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 delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

- We're introduced to Melchizedek, who as a Priest and a King brings bread and wine and blessed Abram.
- Abram gives Melchizedek a tenth (or tithe) of everything. This is the (Principle) of first mention as it relates to the tithe. (It's pre-law.)
- Melchizedek is a type of Jesus Christ, and some think He's even a Christophony, but Bible scholars are unclear as to who he is.

...we can, at the very least, say he was a remarkable type or picture of Jesus. Morris

Hebrews 7:1-17 1 This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, 2 and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace." 3 Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever. 4 Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! 5 Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, their brothers—even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. 6 This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. 7 And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. 8 In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. 9 One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, 10 because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor. 11 If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come—one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? 12 For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law. 13 He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. 14 For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. 15 And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, 16 one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." NIV

MELCHIZEDEK	JESUS
King	King of Kings
King and Priest	Our High Priest
King of Salem	Prince of Peace (Salem)
King of Righteousness	Our Righteousness
Without father or mother	Without earthly father (and mother pre-Bethlehem)
Without beginning or end	Alpha and Omega
Priest of the most high God	Son of the most high God
Remains a priest forever	Our High Priest for eternity
Another priest to come in his order	In the order of Melchizedek
Brings bread	Body was broken (bread)
Brings wine	Blood was shed (wine)

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself." 22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, 23 that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich' --24 except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

- The king of Sodom tries to get the people from Abram, and it's as if Abram is saying don't think that I sell out like my nephew.
- Abram, because of his vow to God by raising his hand, say's I will never take anything from you lest you take the credit instead of God.
- There would have been strings attached, and Abram would have been unable to speak against Sodom had he accepted anything.

**15:1** After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

- Verse 1 says that "the Word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision. This is one of several ways God speaks to us.

Ways in which God speaks:

1. Chiefly, He first and foremost speaks through the Bible, God's written Word.
2. Prior to the written Word it was by a personal appearance of God.
3. In both the Old and New Testament we see times where God spoke in an audible voice.
4. Sometimes He uses visions and dreams, or the ministry of angels.
5. Often times He works by the Spirit of God upon the mind of man.
6. A more common way is by making alive a particular verse or passage of scripture to our hearts.
7. Other times He will use a minister, or preacher who speaks a prophetic Word.

- After winning this battle with those five kings, the Lord tells Abram in a vision to not be afraid, probably because Abram's afraid.

- Why would he be afraid? Because he's vulnerable to an attack in retaliation from the Kings he has just defeated.

- God reassures him that He Himself will be Abram's shield, and exceedingly great reward.

**2** But Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" **3** Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!"

- Abram is sort of asking God when He will fulfill His promise to him and reward him and Sarai with a son as an heir.

- He tells God that absent a son, Eliezer would be the heir instead of his own son.

- Some have suggested that Abram is questioning God because he doubts God but in a good way.

- There's a difference between a doubt that denies God's promise and a doubt which desires God's promise.

- Abram is sort of looking to God to strengthen him and his faith in the yet unseen promise of God.

**4** And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." **5** Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

- God is reminding Abram and even encouraging Abram by reiterating to him that which He has promised to do.

- God tells Abram that Eliezer will not be his heir, but rather, he will have a biological son who will be his heir.

- God then takes Abram outside and sort of gives him a visual demonstration by showing him the uncountable stars.

- The problem now, as we'll see, is that the fulfillment of God giving him a son is still 15 years away.

- God's delays are not God's denials. Wait for the Lord, and you will see His goodness in the land of the living. (Psalms 27:13-14).

**6** And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

- This is the first use of the word believe and righteousness in the Bible. Abram's belief in God was accounted to him as righteousness.

- Actually, this is account here in verse six is quoted four times in the New Testament.

**Romans 4:1-3** **1** What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? **2** If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about-but not before God. **3** What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." NIV

**Romans 4:9-11** **9** Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. **10** Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! NIV

**Romans 4:19-24** **19** Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead-since he was about a hundred years old-and that Sarah's womb was also dead. **20** Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, **21** being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. **22** This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." **23** The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, **24** but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness-for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. NIV

**Galatians 3:5-7** **5** Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard? **6** Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

**7** Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. NIV

**7** Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

**8** And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

- God again reminds Abram of His promise to him to give him the land as an inheritance.

- Verse eight is interesting because Abram is asking God how he will know that he will actually inherit it.

- In all fairness to Abram, I think he's asking God for some documentation so others will know it as well. He will need a title deed.

9 So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. 11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

- This is how they would cut a deal, or sign an agreement; they would cut the sacrifice and walk in between them repeating the terms.
- The idea was that if one of the parties were to break the agreement; then what happened to the animals happens to me.

12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. 13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

- First, notice that Abram fell into a deep sleep. He didn't actually sign this agreement when they were cutting a covenant. Only God did.
- God then tells Abram that his descendants will be afflicted as slaves for 400 years in a foreign land that He will judge, then be released.

- Also, we have here what is called a "Bible Difficulty." Verse 13 says they were afflicted 400 years, but Exodus 12:40 says 430 years.
- The first thirty years, the Israelites were still in favor with Pharaoh because of Joseph. They stayed 430 years, but were afflicted for 400.

15 Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16 But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

- This is very interesting because God in His grace is not judging Amorites right away. He waits four generations before He does.
- The reason for this is that it's not God's will that any should perish.
- However, when the Amorites pose a threat to the Israelites then His judgment comes.

- This brings up a question as it relates to Islam. "What's the difference between Islam wiping people out and Israel wiping people out?"
- God only commands it after giving people time to repent, and only as a way of protecting the children of Israel.
- The illustration is used of a dog with rabies. Before that dog gets to my children, it has to be taken out.

17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. 18 On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates --19 the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, 20 the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

- Some have suggested that this was because God can't break it because He's God, and Abram can't break it because he didn't sign it.
- God appearing as a smoking oven and burning torch is reminiscent of how He leads the Israelites, cloud of smoke by day, fire by night.
- God recites the terms of the covenant in that He is giving all this land to Abram and his descendants.

"For a very brief time, under Solomon (1 Kings 8:65) and possibly again under Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25), the children of Israel ruled all this territory, as a token of the final and permanent possession they will have in the future." (Morris)

**16:1** Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.  
- There is a 10 year gap between chapter 15 and chapter 16. 10 years is a long time to wait for God's promise to be fulfilled.  
- Sarai will, out of impatience make the worst decision of her life.  
- She's impatient with God, and now will try to help God out and take matters into her own hands.

2 So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. 3 Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. 4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.  
- When we take matters in our own hands in our impatience with God and disbelief of God, it will always end in this way.

5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me."  
- It's like Sarai is admitting that she's wrong, but is basically saying that it's Abram's fault.  
- The consequences of what both Abram and Sarai did with Hagar are still being realized today.

6 So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.  
- Abram doesn't handle this right at all. He basically tells Sarai to deal with Hagar however she wants.  
- So, Sarai deals harshly with Hagar, and she flees from Sarai's presence.

When I don't wait for God to do it...  
- I will create tension with others (There is tension between all of them now)  
- I will despise others (Hagar despised Sarai)  
- I will blame others (Sarai blames Abram)  
- I will deal harshly with others (Sarai deals harshly with Hagar)  
- I will break fellowship with others (Hagar flees from Sarai's presence)

7 Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. 8 And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." 9 The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." 10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." 11 And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction."  
- After Hagar flees, the Lord comes to her and because of His great love for her, tells her that He's going to bless her.  
- He tells her to go back to Sarai and submit herself to her and Abram, and that He's going to multiply her descendants exceedingly.  
- He then tells her that she will have a son and that she is to name him Ishmael because it means the Lord hears her affliction.

12 He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." 13 Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?" 14 Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered. 15 So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. 16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.  
- God now tells Hagar what's going to happen to Ishmael and his descendants in the future, and it's not good.  
- This isn't God cursing Hagar or Ishmael, it's God telling Hagar about Ishmael and how it's going to be for all generations to come.  
- So, Ishmael is born, and because he's a symbol of the flesh, will cause unspeakable problems for his half brother Isaac.