GENESIS 14

Four Kings Vs Five

1 It came to pass in those days that Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations,[i] **2** Made war[ii] with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (which is Zoar).[iii, iv] **3** They joined forces at the Valley of Siddim,[v] which is the Salt Sea. **4** They had served Kedorlaomer for twelve years but rebelled in the thirteenth year.

5 And Kedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came in the fourteenth year. They defeated the Rephaim[vi] in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emin in Shaveh Kiriathaim, **6** And the Horites in their Mount Seir, as far as Elparan, which is by the wilderness. **7** After they returned, they came to Enmish Pat, which is Kadesh. Then they defeated all the country of the Amalekites and the Amorites who lived in Hazezon Tamar.

8 Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar) went out together. They joined battle with the other kings in the Valley of Siddim. **9** They went against Kedorlaomer the king of Elam,[vii] Tidal king of nations,[viii] Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar.

The battle was four kings against five. **10** Now the Valley of Siddim had many slime pits. The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell there. The others, who were still alive, fled to the mountain. **11** Then Kedorlaomer's troops took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, all their provisions, and went their way. **12** They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who lived in Sodom. They took his goods and departed.

13 Now one who had escaped from the battle came and told Abram the Hebrew,[ix] who was living near the oak of Mamre the Amorite. Mamre, along with his brothers Eshcol and Aner, were treaty partners with Abram. **14** When Abram heard that they took his nephew captive, he armed 318 of his trained servants, who were born in his own house. Then he pursued them all the way to Dan. **15** After he divided his forces into groups, he and his servants attacked them during the night. They defeated them and pursued the fleeing army to Hobah, which is on the north side[x] of Damascus. **16** Then he brought back all the goods. He also brought back his nephew Lot, his goods, the women, and the people.

Melchizedek's Blessing

17 Now the king of Sodom went out to meet him after he returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, at the valley of Shaveh (known as the King's Valley). **18** Then Melchizedek,[xi] king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was the priest[xii] of El[xiii] Elyon.[xiv]

19 Melchizedek blessed him, and said, "Blessed be Abram of El Elyon,[xv] Creator[xvi] of heaven and earth. **20** And praise be to El Elyon[xvii] who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

Then Abram gave him tithes of everything.[xviii]

21 The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons and take all the other goods for yourself."

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I now raise my hand as an oath to Yahveh, El Elyon,[xix] the Creator of heaven and earth. **23** I will not take a thread or a shoelace. I will not take anything that is yours. Then you will never be able to say,

'I have made Abram rich.'

24 "I will keep nothing except that which the young men have eaten. But since Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre went with me, let them take their portion."

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i These kings come from the area settled by the descendants of Shem. But remember the Gen 6:5 preamble to the Flood: the Nephilim were the cause of extraordinary violence, wars and all kinds of evil. Remember also that the fallen angels (sons of God) were behind the Nephilim: their goal was to eliminate Adam's race. Also remember Solomon's wisdom: there is nothing new under the sun! History repeats itself. Prophecy is pattern. God uses the past to tell us about the future.

ii The Book of Enoch tells that God responded to the immorality induced by the fallen angels by having the Nephilim turn on one another (1 Enoch 4:12). As it was before *The Flood*, so it was in the days after *The Flood*.

iii These kings come from the area settled by the descendants of Ham. Sodom, Gomorrah, Zoar, and Zeboiim are connected with the Gen 19 destruction of sodomites and giants.

iv "The evidence indicates that Sodom, Gomorraah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar were the epicenter and womb for Rephaim creation after the flood. Accordingly, the Book of Isaiah referenced the evil rulers/princes of the Sodom pentapolis, their vile rituals, their abominable sacrifices, and the oppression of God's children." [Julian Morgenstern, *Mythical Background of Psalm 82*, (The Hebrew Union College, 1939, Vol 14, VII, 105-106: notes 134, 135, 135a) in Gary Wayne, *The Genesis 6 Conspiracy, Part II*, (Sistera, OR, Deep River Books, 2023, 73)].

v This could be the Salt Sea (LXX), a wooded valley (Vulgate), a plain filled with rocky hollows (Gesenius), or a valley of plains or fields (Onkelos, Raschi, Keil, Murphy). (Pulpit Commentary: https://biblehub.com/commentaries/pulpit/genesis/14.htm).

vi The Hebrew רְפָאִים (*Rephaim*) means giants. It is a loose synonym for *Nephilim*. This word describes Og, the king of Bashan (Josh 13:12), the land of the giants (Josh 15:8), and several of the Philistines (2 Sam 21:16, 18, 20, 22). This is why God tells them to eliminate them.

vii This is the name for what will later be the Persians.

viii The word גּוֹי (*goy*) refers to a nation, often Gentile. It highlights collective rebellion against Yahveh. Unlike גֵּר (*geyr*), a foreigner protected under Israel's law, (*to-shawv*), a resident alien with limited rights, נָכְרִי (*nawch-ree*) and זוּר (*zoor*) imply foreigners more distant or hostile to Israel's covenant.

ix This is the first mention of the word "Hebrew."

x Literally "left-hand side." Our western maps have north at the top. The eastern maps have east at the top. The left-hand side of an eastern map is to the north of Damascus.

xi The Hebrew מַלְכִּי־צֶדֶק means king of righteousness. Salem is a short form of Jerusalem. Paul, in the Book of Hebrews, makes a big thing out of this priest. He has no genealogy implying a timeless existence. Some commentators think he is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.

xii After Moses, kings only came from the tribe of Judah. So, there are only three people in the Bible who are both king and priest. Melchizedek and Jesus are the first two. The third is actually a group: those who are both kings and priests (1 Peter 2:9).

xiii The Hebrew is אֵל (*eyl*). It is a common Northwest Semitic word that means "god" or "mighty one." It can refer to a deity in general, but in the Hebrew Bible it often serves as a title for the God of Israel, emphasizing divine power or might. The term also appears in compound names such as El Shaddai ("God Almighty") and El Elyon ("God Most High"). Its first occurrence appears here in the title El Elyon ("God Most High"), identifying the God worshiped by Melchizedek as the supreme God, the Creator and ruler of heaven and earth.

xiv The Hebrew אֵל עֶלְיוֹן means "Most High GOD." See the article "Names of God."

xv The Hebrew אֵל עֶלְיוֹן means "Most High GOD." See the article "Names of God."

xvi The Hebrew קָנָה means get or acquire. Synonyms include make, form, invent, create, buy, and possess.

xvii The Hebrew אֵל עֶלְיוֹן means "Most High GOD." See the article "Names of God."

xviii Paul, in the Book of Hebrews, shows that Levi (who is yet unborn in Abraham's loins) gave tithes to Melchizedek. The inferior always makes an offering to the superior. That makes Melchizedek's priesthood superior to Levi's.

xix The Hebrew אֵל־יְהוָה אֵל עֶלְיוֹן means "to Yahveh, the Most High God." See the article "Names of God."