

Genesis 14-16

Bible Study

Chapter 14

“Occurs 6 times, always marks a time of trouble ending in blessing”
(Companion) [Ruth 1:1; Isa. 7:1; Jer. 1:3; Est. 1:1; II Sam. 21:1]

Genesis 14:1

¹And it **came to pass in the days** of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of ^εnations,

“Amraphel is king of Shinar (**Babylonia**),

Arioch king of Ellasar:

Last part of the name ‘asar’—city of Asar or Asshur—an **Assyrian** king (1938-35)

Chedorlaomer king of Elam:

Elam was Asshur’s (Assyria) brother

Tidal king of nations: Tidal the name is Indo-Germanic; he also probably came from the area of Anatolia

Josephus wrote that this was an Assyrian confederation

You might say we have a Babylonian-Assyrian confederacy here....this will be repeated in history....and at the end time as well

Genesis 14:1

¹And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of ^εnations,

First time word used in Bible



Genesis 14:2

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).

Genesis 14:3

All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea)

The kings of verse 1-2 all battled in the Valley of Siddim—most likely under the waters of the Dead Sea today

Map of Ancient Near East

Tidal King of nations

Arioch King of Ellasar

Amraphel King of Shinar

Chedorlaomer King of Elam

v. 2
Dead Sea Kings



⁴Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

v. 4 The Mesopotamian Kings won the battle and made them pay tribute 12 years..... then the Dead Sea kings rebelled the 13th year

v. 5-7

A list of the cities the Mesopotamian kings attacked as they made their way to punish the kings of the Sodom-Gomorrah alliance who had rebelled



⁵In 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,

⁶and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which *is* by the wilderness.

⁷Then 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.

Wars and rivalries in the ancient world were becoming common—

a conquered city or nation **paid tribute** to the victors

Monument of
an
ancient victory



Genesis 14:8-9

⁸And 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

⁹against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of [£]nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five.

A second battle of the coalition of Mesopotamian kings against the Sodom-Gomorrah kings-- and they lose again

Genesis 14:10

¹⁰Now 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.

(The Bible is history, Ian Wilson)

“The local inhabitants main occupation seems to have been harvesting the regions abundant bitumen”

(NSB) “The Hebrew term for pits is written twice, meaning that bitumen pits were everywhere”

(NIV Study Bible) “Lumps of asphalt are often seen even today floating in the southern end of the Dead Sea”

Genesis 14:11-12

¹¹Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. (Sodom sacked)

¹²They also **took Lot**, Abram's brother's son **who dwelt in Sodom**, and his goods, and departed.

The reason Abram would get involved

Lot, previously had been camping 'towards Sodom'.....now he is **living there**

Genesis 14:13

¹³Then 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.

“Hebrew”—first time used in the Bible

The word is related to a verb which means: ‘crossed over’ from another place—to remind us that Abram obeyed God

Abram's two allies were Amorites had a mutual pact together and stood by Abram to help

Genesis 14:14

¹⁴Now 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**.



Dan

Mamre

318 'trained servants'—shows the wealth of Abram...they were born in his house and not even the servants who had been acquired in Egypt

Genesis 14:15-17

¹⁵He 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.

¹⁶So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well

1) Abram was not afraid—trusted God would be with him

2) ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.”

3) There are no details of slaughter or killing

(Word) “The fact that Abram could defeat the Eastern kings with this number suggests that this was more like raiding expedition than a full-blooded conquest”

¹⁷And 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.

➤to thank and congratulate him

Genesis 14:18

¹⁸Then **Melchizedek** king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God Most High.

Melchizedek= **King of Righteousness**..... Salem—Jerusalem (Ps. 76:2)

- King and priest—description of the Messiah
- Bread and wine—later symbols of Christ's Passover sacrifice

Prophecy of the Messiah



Psalms 110:1 ,4

¹ The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

⁴ The Lord has sworn And will not relent, “You *are* a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

Hebrews 7:1-3

¹For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,

²to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,”

³without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

¹⁹And 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.

v. 19-20

“Blessed”—occurs three times...reflects back to chapter 12:2-3
Abram was promised to be a blessing, and all of the families of the earth would be blessed through him

v. 20 (last part)

“And he gave him tithe of all”



Abraham sets an example for all of his descendents to follow

Abraham understood tithing as a law instituted by God:

Genesis 26:5 “Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments and My laws”

Genesis 14:21-24

²¹Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.”

²²But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth,

²³that 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’—

²⁴except 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 offered Abram a deal—to keep the spoils which would have made him richer

Abram refuses to take even the smallest item of booty (thread, sandal strap)

Only that which was consumed by his allies and the share they had gotten would not be given up

Chapter 15

God makes a formal covenant with Abram

Genesis 15:1

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**.”

“after these things”

Refers to the victory over the kings....and indicates that some time has passed

‘**the word of the Lord came**’—first time for this expression--implying action (Word) “This is a phrase typically introducing **revelation to a prophet**. Abraham is actually called a prophet in 20: 7.

It paves the way for the prophecy of Egyptian bondage in v. 13-16”

“**vision**”—rare in Hebrew

Used only four times: here, Num. 24:4, 16; Eze. 13:7

“**I am your shield**”—military metaphor

Refers to the deliverance mentioned by Melchizedek in 14: 20

“your...reward”—prompts Abram to ask a question in verse two

Genesis 15:2

²But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house *is* Eliezer of Damascus?”

First time recorded that Abram spoke to God (he had obeyed)

“**Lord GOD**” —first time used= “Lord of all, sovereign”
(Word) “a characteristic mode of address to God in an intercessory prayer”

Abram’s ‘fear’ might have been suggested in his question: how could he have an heir without children?

Genesis 15:3

³Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!”

Genesis 15:4

⁴And 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.”

The promise is that Abram would have a real son and not just a legal heir

Genesis 15:5

⁵Then 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.”

The comparison to Abram’s descendants numbered as **the stars of heaven** occurs several times in the Pentateuch

Genesis 15:6

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

Abram’s faith= righteousness
Only here in the Old Testament

Verses 7-16 God's covenant with Abram



Genesis 15:7

⁷Then 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.”

One of four passages in Genesis where **God refers to himself** as Yahweh (the Lord)

Almost identical to the opening statement of the Sinai covenant: “I am the Lord who brought you out of Egypt” (Ex. 20: 2)

Genesis 15:8

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

Abram addresses God as he did in verse 2

And Abram asks God for a sign

Genesis 15:9-11

⁹So 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.”

¹⁰Then 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.

¹¹And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

v. 9 Abram prepares a sacrifice and brings it to God as God directed him...God would enact the sign (v. 17)

These **five** are species that would be offered for a sacrifice

(Five) [Companion] “the number of grace, because the covenant was unconditional”
(NSB) “This emphasizes the unilateral, unconditional nature of the covenant”

v. 10

“cut them in two, down the middle”—the way covenants were made (Jer. 34: 18-20)

(Expositors) “The act of dividing the animals and walking through the parts was apparently an ancient form of contractual agreement”

V. 11

Abram while waiting for God’s sign kept the vultures away

Genesis 15:12

¹²Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror *and* great darkness fell upon him.

A deep sleep similar to that of Adam (2: 21)

“horror and darkness”—suggest divine activity
appears to foreshadow Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19: 18)

(NSB) “This kind of reaction to the indescribable Holiness of the Lord is natural—Abram was about to experience the presence of the Almighty”

Exodus 19:18

¹⁸Now Mount Sinai *was* completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and [£]the whole mountain quaked greatly.

Verses 13-16

Prophecy of the Egyptian bondage and Exodus after 400 years



Genesis 15:13-14

¹³Then 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**.

¹⁴And also the nation whom they serve **I will judge**; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

Prophecy of Abram’s descendents to be afflicted in Egypt four hundred years

Strangers dwell temporarily in a foreign place.....

Abram was a stranger in Canaan.....his descendents would be strangers in Egypt

Verse 14

God’s prophecy of judgment (by the plagues)

And the spoiling of the Egyptians by Abram’s descendents

Genesis 15:15-16

¹⁵Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.

¹⁶But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete.”

“in the fourth generation”

(NSB) “this expression reflects the longer life spans of the people in Abram’s day”

“iniquity of the Amorites”

(NSB) “In a sense, the Lord was granting a stay of execution for the peoples of Canaan. He would allow their sin to reach a critical level. The command of God to take the land from the Canaanite peoples would come only when their iniquity was complete”

Genesis 15:17

¹⁷And 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**.

Smoking oven and burning
torch=symbols of God's presence



(Symbol)
The eventual judgment upon Canaan

In ancient times both parties to an agreement would pass between the pieces of slain animals to complete the pact

But here only God (his presence) passed between the pieces to fulfill the covenant

First time used



Genesis 15:18-21

¹⁸On 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—

¹⁹the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites,

²⁰the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim,

²¹the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

Chapter 16

Genesis 16:1

¹Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no *children*. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.

Hagar--"maidservant"...of a rich woman....she belonged to Sarai

Genesis 16:2

²So 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.

"from **bearing children**"--**serious matter in the ancient world** for a man to not have an heir...
But even more for a woman...as to have children was a sign of success

'perhaps I shall obtain children by her'—

➤ Ancient world--polygamy was resorted to as a means of achieving heirs...and also surrogate motherhood... especially by wealthy wives to use their maids to bear children

Genesis 16:3

³Then 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.

Sarai is doing the controlling here--"**took** Hagar"... "**gave her** to her husband"
➤ In this manner she could feel the child would be hers and have control over it

Genesis 16:4

⁴So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.

The reaction of Hagar when Sarai's plan comes to fruition:

(last part) (TEV) "When she found out that she was pregnant, she **became proud** and despised Sarai"

➤ seeds of animosity growing

Genesis 16:5

⁵Then 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.”

"My wrong be upon you.."---

margin: "the wrong **done to me** be upon you"--blames Abram

(TEV) "It's your fault that Hagar despises me. I myself gave her to you, and ever since she found out she was pregnant, she has despised me. May the Lord judge which of us is right, you or me!"

Genesis 16:6

⁶So 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 acknowledges Sarai's control over her maid

"do to her as your please"**and** Sarai would.....with vengeance

Sarah "dealt harshly" with her--a phrase often used of an attempt to kill...so Hagar fled Sarah, the eventual mother of Isaac, **despised Hagar**---animosity at its full

Genesis 16:7

⁷Now the Angel of the Lord found her by a **spring of water** in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to **Shur**.

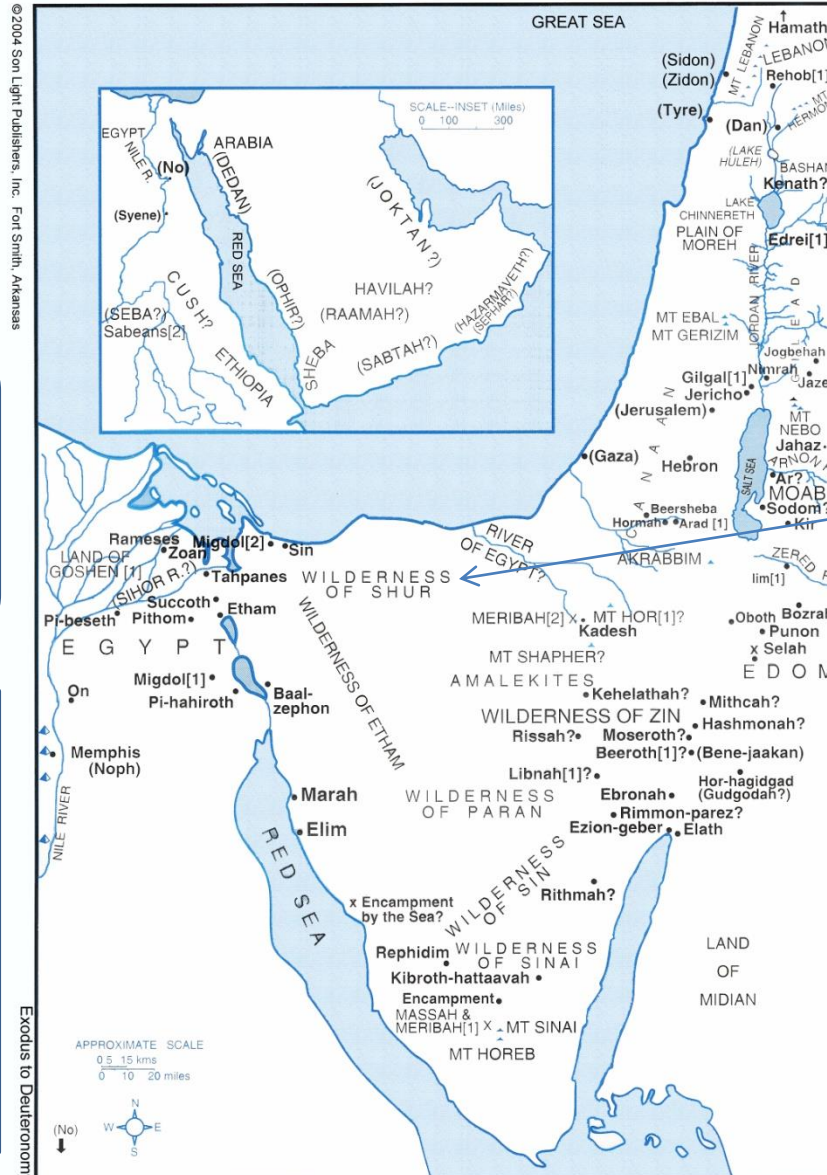
1st mention in scripture
(Ex. 3: 2) burning bush--
preincarnate Christ

“the way to Shur”—the road to
Egypt through Sinai
Hagar was fleeing back to her
hometown of Egypt

Genesis 16:8

⁸And 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.”



Shur

Genesis 16:9

⁹The Angel of the Lord said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand.”



“Return....submit—to Sarah’s authority



For obedience her descendents would receive promised blessings



Genesis 16:10

¹⁰Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, “I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.”

Prophecy concerning **Ishmael** (v. 11-12)
(father of many of the Arab peoples)

Genesis 16:11

¹¹And 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.

Ishmael= ‘God hears’

God took note of Hagar’s suffering

Genesis 16:12

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.”

“True today and for over 3,000 years”
(Companion Bible)

(NIV) “he will live in hostility toward all his brothers”
➤ a reference to the animosity that has existed down through the centuries between the Arabs and other sons of Abraham

(verse 12 last part)
“And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren”

“presence”= in defiance of

The idiom and context denote a hostility on the part of Ishmael and his descendents

➤ against Isaac and his descendents

Isaiah 21:13-15

¹³The burden against Arabia. In the forest in Arabia you will lodge, O you traveling companies of Dedanites.

¹⁴ O inhabitants of the land of Tema, Bring water to him who is thirsty; With their bread they met him who fled.

¹⁵ For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, From the bent bow, and from the distress of war.

Genesis 16:13

¹³Then 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?”

“Hagar realizes to whom she has been talking and therefore gives the Lord a new name, ‘El-Roi’ God who sees me” (Word)

“In her moment of great distress, Hagar has discovered God’s concern for her”

Genesis 16:14

¹⁴Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi;[£] observe, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered.

Genesis 16:15-16

¹⁵So **Hagar bore** Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom **Hagar bore**, Ishmael.

¹⁶Abram *was* eighty-six years old when **Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram**.

Emphasis: “Hagar bore”

The original idea was Hagar was to provide **Sarai** a son for Abram

However, Ishmael is the son of Hagar and Abram (animosity brewing)

Will Ishmael be the son to receive the promises??....Abram is now 86

Lessons from chapters 14-16

Abram took on some of the major kings of the ancient middle east but was not afraid because God was with him (maybe he had learned a lesson about fear in Egypt)

Israel..... and we learn that God gives his people victory over their enemies

Abraham was not interested in making himself rich, but was generous to others

15:6

“And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness”

➤ The kind of faith we need

Be patient and wait for God