

# **Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**

## **Bible Study Notes**

### **8-21-19**

#### **Genesis 14**

##### **Abram Rescues Lot - Verses 1-12**

<sup>1</sup>At the time when Amraphel was king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goyim, <sup>2</sup> these kings went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). <sup>3</sup> All these latter kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea Valley). <sup>4</sup> For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. <sup>5</sup> In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaites in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emmites in Shaveh Kiriathaim <sup>6</sup> and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran near the desert. <sup>7</sup> Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar. <sup>8</sup> Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboyim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) marched out and drew up their battle lines in the Valley of Siddim <sup>9</sup> against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. <sup>10</sup> Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills. <sup>11</sup> The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. <sup>12</sup> They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.

**14:4-16** Who was Kedorlaomer, and why was he important? In Abram's time, most cities had their own kings. Wars and rivalries among kings were common. A conquered city paid tribute to the victorious king. Nothing is known about Kedorlaomer except what we read in the Bible, but apparently he was quite powerful. Five cities including Sodom had paid tribute to him for 12 years. The five cities formed an alliance and rebelled by withholding tribute. Kedorlaomer reacted swiftly and reconquered them all. When he defeated Sodom, he captured Lot, his family, and his possessions. Abram, with only 318 men, chased Kedorlaomer's army and attacked him near Damascus. With God's help, he defeated them and recovered Lot, his family, and their possessions.

**14:12** Lot's greedy desire for the best of everything led him into sinful surroundings. His burning desire for possessions and success cost him his freedom and enjoyment. As a captive to Kedorlaomer, he faced torture, slavery, or death. In much the same way, we can be enticed into doing things or going places we shouldn't. The prosperity we long for is captivating; it can both entice us and enslave us if our motives are not in line with God's desires.

##### **Abram Rescues Lot - Verses 13-24**

<sup>13</sup> A man who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshkol and Aner, all of whom

were allied with Abram.<sup>14</sup> When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan.<sup>15</sup> During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus.<sup>16</sup> He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.<sup>17</sup> After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).<sup>18</sup> Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High,<sup>19</sup> and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth."<sup>20</sup> And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.<sup>21</sup> The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself."<sup>22</sup> But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "With raised hand I have sworn an oath to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth,<sup>23</sup> that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the strap of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, 'I made Abram rich.'<sup>24</sup> I will accept nothing but what my men have eaten and the share that belongs to the men who went with me—to Aner, Eshkol and Mamre. Let them have their share."

**14:14-16** These incidents portray two of Abram's characteristics: (1) He had courage that came from God; facing a powerful foe, he attacked. (2) He was prepared; he had taken time to train his men for a potential conflict. We never know when we will be called upon to complete difficult tasks. Like Abram, we should prepare for those times and take courage from God when they come.

**14:14-16** When Abram learned that Lot was a prisoner, he immediately tried to rescue his nephew. It would have been easier and safer not to become involved. But with Lot in serious trouble, Abram acted at once. Sometimes we must get involved in a messy or painful situation in order to help others. We should be willing to act immediately when others need our help.

**14:18** Who was Melchizedek? He was obviously a God-fearing man, for his name means "king of righteousness," and king of Salem means "king of peace." He was a "priest of God Most High" (see also Hebrews 7:1-2). He recognized God as Creator of heaven and earth. What else is known about him? Four main theories have been suggested: (1) Melchizedek was a respected king of that region. Abram was simply showing him the respect he deserved. (2) The name Melchizedek may have been a standing title for all the kings of Salem. (3) Melchizedek was a type of Christ (Hebrews 7:3). A type is an Old Testament event or teaching that is so closely related to what Christ did that it illustrates a lesson about Christ. (4) Melchizedek was the appearance on earth of the preincarnate Christ in a temporary bodily form.

**14:20-24** Abram gave one-tenth of the booty to Melchizedek. Even in some pagan religions, it was traditional to give a tenth of one's earnings to the gods. Abram followed accepted tradition; however, he refused to take any booty from the king of Sodom. Even though this huge amount would significantly increase what he could have given to God, he chose to reject it for more important reasons—he didn't want the ungodly king of Sodom to say, "I made Abram rich." Instead, Abram wanted him to say, "God made Abram rich." In this case, accepting the gifts would have focused everyone's attention on Abram or the king of Sodom rather than on God, the giver of victory. When people look at us, they need to see what God has accomplished in our lives.