The God Most High

Genesis 14:1-24
Key Verse: Genesis 14:20
“And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.” Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

How do you feel about someone that only seeks to please, and look out for, themselves without any regard for you? That was kind of the relationship Abram and Lot had. Ever since Lot’s father died, Abram took him in and helped him through life. They were more than uncle and nephew, Abram considered Lot his brother. Have you ever heard of guilty by association? Well, how about, blessed by association? This was the case with Lot, he had been blessed because of his relationship with Abram. Everything that Lot had was because of Abram. But the problem was, Lot only thought about himself. When their possessions grew so large, their herdsman started to fight, Abram offered Lot the choice of the land. And to his surprise, Lot chose the best land for himself, without any regard for Abram, and took off. Now in today’s passage, Lot finds himself in trouble being caught in the middle of a war. What is Abram’s response when he hears the news, we’ll find out right after we pray.

Let’s take a look at verses1-4. “At the time when Amraphel was king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goyim, [2] 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). [3] All these latter kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea Valley). [4] For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.” There are a lot of names in these few verses, so let’s start with the four kings; Amraphel, Arioch, Kedorlaomer and Tidal. These guyswere from the east, near where Abram had once lived a place called Ur. Elam, was the first-born son of Shem (Ge 10:22), and as his descendants grew in number, they occupied a region in ancient Persia (which is modern southwestIran) which became known as Elam and their capital city was Susa. Kedorlaomer was the big fish in the area and the other three kings were subject to him or at the very least his allies or trade partners. They formed an alliance, which I will call the Eastern Alliance and they were so powerful they made other kings pay tribute to them. In addition to the eastern alliance, we also learn about a western alliance of five kings; Bera, Birsha, Shinab, Shemeber, and one unnamed person, the king of Bela. All these kings lived within about a hundred miles of each other.

The western allianceof five kings were under the rule of the eastern alliance of four kings for twelve long years. All that time they had to pay a tribute to Kedorlaomer, which essentially amounts to mafia protection money. [they had to pay Ked to protect themselves from him] However, at the end of the twelfth year they had finally had enough. The western alliance of kings felt strong enough together that with the five of them united they would be able to defeat the eastern four kings. (They had the numbers, 4 against 5.) And besides that, there was about 900 miles, and many other kingdoms, between them. So, they stopped sending their payments in.

©2026 IIT UBF. All rights reserved.
http://www.iitubf.org

For a year, nothing happened. Maybe the western alliance of kings celebrated with their extra money they didn't send. But back in those days it takes time for a country to get their army ready for travel. And sure enough, in the fourteenth year, Kedorloamer was leading a powerful four-king army. Take a look at verses 5-7."[5] 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 Emites in Shaveh Kiriathaim [6] and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran near the desert. [7] 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 Hazezon Tamar."

The eastern kings, gathered up all their infantry, cavalry, and siege weapons, and started a road trip east. They took the standard trade route along the Euphrates River and the first group that these four kings meet up with were the Rephaites. I read that The Rephaites were "A tribe of giants of great stature, spread throughout Peræa; also found westward from Jerusalem, upon Mount Ephraim, and in Philistia." The Philistines came from this group. You may have heard of the most famous Philistine Goliath. Ashteroth Karnaim, was the capital city of Bashan, where their king, Og, lived (Dt 1:4). We've heard about Og king of Bashan (Dt 3:11) before, (when we studied Gen 6) The Bible says that his bed was more than 14 feet long and 6 feet wide. That's still taller than if Sam stood on Dan's head and sat Lucas on top of his. The eastern kings crushed the city of giants, not even their home field advantage could help them. They didn't even slow the four kings down. In fact, none of the people there could slow down the eastern alliance. They continue south defeating the Zuzitesin Ham, then the Emites, then the Horites in the hill country going all the way down to the Red Sea.Then they turned Northwest and conquered the Amalekites before heading back east and wiped out the Amorites and finally the head for their original destination to meet up with the people who stopped paying them. The eastern alliance wiped out six armies that didn't even doing anything to them, can you imagine what they were going to do to the people that rebelled against them? The eastern kings were pretty smart, if you notice they basically encircled the western group of kings all the while knocking out anyone that would have been able to help their enemies.

Let's take a look at verses 8-12."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 [9] against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. [10] Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tarpits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills. [11] The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away.[12] They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom."

In the Valley of Siddimthe western alliance decides to make their stand. They don't call it the Dead Sea Valley for nothing. The five draw up their battles plans as best as they can and prepare to face the eastern alliance. In the end, the five feeble western kings of the pentapolis were no match for the powerful eastern kings and they fell there. The valley, we are told, was full of tar pits, like

©2026 IIT UBF. All rights reserved.
http://www.iitubf.org

asphalt. This account doesn't explain how the five kings were defeated, but it does tell us that they were so soundly defeated that when they fled, they were so frantic that their retreat was hindered by the tar pits, as some of the soldiers fell into them. Those that weren't killed in battle or fall into the pits, fled south into the hill country. The eastern alliance cleaned out the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah taking everything (even the paint on the wall). I imagine they wanted to send a message to anyone that even thought about rebelling against them in the future. Then they headed up north on the east side of the Jordan returning the way they came. They came, they saw, they conquered. The eastern alliance of kings was unstoppable. Who could stand against them? And caught up in all of this was Abram's nephew Lot. He was once a free man, but now he was a captive.

However, thankfully the story does not end here. Let's take a look at verses 13-16. "[13] 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. [14] 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.[15] During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. [16] He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people." Not everyone was wiped out in the war, one person escaped and went to tell Abram what had happened. When Abram heard, he could have said, "Oh well, Lot made his bed, now he's got to sleep in it," and who could blame him. After all Lot did give Abram the short end of the deal when he took the best land. But Abram didn't think like that. He and Lot were both from the same physical family, but they were also from the same spiritual family as Lot followed Abram on his journey of faith. One thing we can learn here is even though Abram fought with his family, he was also willing to fight for his family. He didn't let any squabble come between them. Abram takes this opportunity to give real proof of his true friendship with Lot. Likewise, we ought to be ready to help those in need, especially our family and friends. And though others may not display their friendship to us as we want, yet we must not neglect to show ours to them. Just as Abram rescued Lot, whenever we have the opportunity, we must do good to all. This reminds me of what Jesus told his disciples, "[34]A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. [35]By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (Jn 13)

The is something to be said about being prepared. Abram was well prepared. At a moment's notice, he had 318 trained men that were ready to fight. These were men that were born in his house, men he trusted and trained. Abram had a couple of allies for himself, three brothers, Mamre, Eshkol and Aner. So, these two families, Abram and Mamre teamed up and headed north on the west side of the Jordan to try and rescue Lot. They traveled about two hundred, or so, miles until they met up with the eastern alliance of kings at the city of Dan. And it's here we get to see a side of Abram that we've never seen before; Abram the warrior. He divided his men into two groups and attacks his enemy's flanks in the middle of the night. Abram has the element of surprise because Kedorlaomer and the other kings never expected it. Their camp was thrown into panic and they were completely routed as Abram chased them about another 50 files back toward

©2026 IIT UBF. All rights reserved.
http://www.iitubf.org

Damascus. This was just as complete a victory for Abram as the Valley of Siddim was for the eastern alliance.

After Abram kicked some royal butt, he packed up and headed home the same way he came but along the way two kings came out to greet him. Let's take a look at verses 17-20. "[17] 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). [18] Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, [19] and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. [20] And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything."Taking a closer look at these two kings we notice some interesting things about them. First, let's look at their names. Melchizedek's name meant righteousness and Salem meant peace, putting them together we infer that Melchizedek is the king of peace & righteousness. In contrast, Sodom had long been associated with wickedness, therefore we infer that Bera was the king of wickedness. And when we look at how these kings approach Abram, they cannot be more different and they kind of reveal who they are by their actions. When Melchizedek greeted Abram, he brought with him bread and wine. This may have not been very much of a meal but at least it was more than what Bera brought which was nothing. And what does bread and wine remind you of….. the Lord's table (communion), the same thing Jesus shared with his disciples on the night he was betrayed. Melchizedek is a very mysterious figure in the Bible. We don't know much about him, in fact everything we know about him is here in Genesis. Melchizedek, was both a priest and a king which was very unusual. So, he had a spiritual side to him and he wanted to help Abram have some insight about who God is. For Abram just did something amazing, something that eleven other kings could not do and that was to defeat the eastern group of kings. Melchizedek taught Abram where his victory came from. It came from the most high God. The glory belongs to God, alone. Not only is he the Creator of all things, but he owns all things and can give them to whomever he wants. Melchizedek blessed Abram with knowledge of God.

Now in contrast what did the king of wickedness do for Abram. Let's take a look at verses 21-24. "[21] The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself." [22] 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, [23] 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.' [24] 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." From the moment they met the king of Sodom said, "Give me, give me, give me…". He wanted Abram to give him the people because he knew that without people to rule over, he would not be a king. The treasure wasn't so important to him, because if he had people he could get more treasure. But Abram didn't want any part with Bera, the king of Sodom.

Here we learn some principles from Abram. He worshipped God most high. He was thankful to God and gave an offering for it. He put his money where his heart was. He taught us to not be greedy

©2026 IIT UBF. All rights reserved.
http://www.iitubf.org

for gain from the world. Some might go after what the world has to offer rather than trusting in God to provide. The people of God must protect themselves by making sure that they don't do anything that looks cruel or as if they are doing it for money, because that tarnishes the image of God in us. Abraham can trust the Possessor of Heaven and earth to provide for him. God doesn't need our money, just like Abram didn't need anything from Sodom, God only wants our heart. It's funny, the kings of the west were FORCED to pay a tribute to the kings of the east, but Abram WILLINGLY paid a tribute to God.

When we take a step back and look at chapter 14, it gives us a small picture of the gospel. We can apply it to us in this context. Abram blessed Lot with the best of the land. The land was well watered and looked like the garden of Eden. That was as close to paradise as he was going to get. And over the course of time, Lot moved farther away from Abram and closer and closer to the wicked city of Sodom until he was actually inside the city. Eventually Sodom and everyone in it was swept away by the enemy. Then Abram mounts a one-sided rescue and saves Lot restoring all his possessions. Likewise, God blessed mankind with everything we needed. However, just like Lot, we too went away from God and sinned against him. All of us we're swept away by the enemy through sin and temptation. Left alone, we would perish. But God, with his one-sided grace, sent his Son Jesus, who swooped in and rescued us through his death and resurrection, to give bless us and bring us back with him to his heavenly kingdom.

In this chapter, Abram exhibited the character of God. While we exhibit the character of Lot. Lot's desire for the things of Sodom, led him away from God and got him into a difficult situation. If he had stayed with Abram, he wouldn't have been in this trouble.

This reminds us of just how much God loves us. While Abram RISKED his life to save Lot, Jesus GAVE his life to save us! God was faithful to Abram and kept his promise. God told Abram in Genesis 12:3, "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."" God kept his end of the promise up. God blessed Melchizedek through Abram's offering and God cursed the four kings when they took Lot.

Through Melchizedek, God wanted Abram to know that although he conquered the four eastern kings, he was much more than a conqueror, he was a servant of the MOST HIGH GOD. This reminds me of Romans 8, "37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Abram was more than a conqueror because he would have eternal life through Jesus Christ. Likewise, we too are more than conquers because Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God interceding for us.

The God most high is all powerful, God most high is above all other gods. Kedor meant servant and Loamar was the greatest Elamite god. Putting them together reveals that Kedorloamar was a servant of Elam's greatest god but the God of Abram wiped them out proving he was greater. The

©2026 IIT UBF. All rights reserved.
http://www.iitubf.org

God most high is compassionate, God most high loves and rescues his people. The God most high is our God. Therefore, God is worthy of our worship and adoration. “Praise be to God Most High, who delivered our enemies into our hand.”

©2026 IIT UBF. All rights reserved.
http://www.iitubf.org