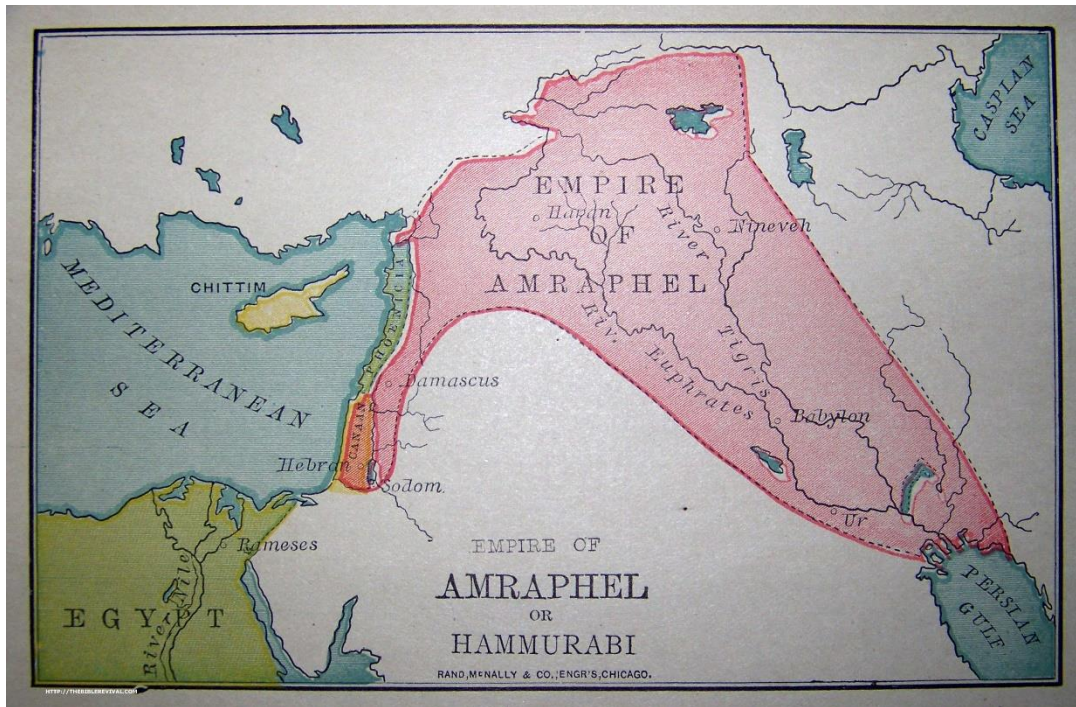


Abraham and Amraphel



As is true with many of the biblical Conflicts where the Resolution was a matter of battle, one nation against another, so it is with today's consideration: kings joining other kings for their own interest. Our consideration involves four kings of Mesopotamia and five kings Siddim, around the area of the Dead Sea.

In our last segment we were introduced to Lot, Abram's brother's son and the events of him being separated from Abram and pitching his tent toward Sodom. It is in this area that the four kings of Mesopotamia came calling. There were five kings in the valley of Siddim who had served the king of Elam for twelve years. In the thirteenth year they rebelled. In the fourteenth year he came, with three other kings to do war against those who had rebelled: thus the Conflict.

Before we consider the results of the battle, and the ensuing Resolution, we want to direct our attention to one of the four kings of Mesopotamia: "Amraphel king of Shinar," aka, Hammurabi. "Hammurabi is known for the Code of Hammurabi, one of the earliest codified systems of law. Some Jewish writers have said Amraphel was Nimrod himself, others, a grandson. Whatever the case, Amraphel, whether at this time in his life, or later in his reign, was responsible for what's generally known as the Hammurabi Code.

The Hammurabi Code is one of the oldest codified systems of law. It has been stated that the code was inscribed on a four-ton black stone stela and placed in a public place: the stela was discovered in 1901 in Iran, and is presently in a museum in Paris. The code contained 282 laws written in an if-then form, i.e., “if anyone is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death.” The oldest law code that has been found is the law code of Ur-Nammu, which preceded the Hammurabi Code by some three hundred years, give or take, and an even older code of Ur-u-ka-gin-na that predates the Ur-Nammu code by some two hundred years, but is known to have existed only due to known references. In either case, the existence of these codes make it evident, as the apostle Paul revealed, saying, “Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned: – for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam’s transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come” (Romans 5:12–14), verifying that though the law of Moses had not yet been given, mankind was universally subject to law, of which they violated. Although there are some similarities between the law of Moses, and those that preceded it, they simply confirm what the prophet Amos verified, saying, “Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secrets unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7), and the word of the Hebrew writer, saying, “God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners” (Hebrews 1:1), that Jehovah revealed His laws to mankind. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that Amraphel king of Shinar was none other than Hammurabi of Babylon.

Back to our Conflict: When the four kings of Mesopotamia made war with the five kings of Siddim, having defeated them, “they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed” (Genesis 14:11–12). Remember, the reason Lot was separated from Abram to

begin with was because “the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great” (Genesis 13:6). Thus, all the advantage that Lot perceived his choice would bring, brought him much sorrow.

“And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew” (Genesis 14:13). This is the first time the term Hebrew is used to describe Abram: either because he passed over, or came from beyond the River Euphrates, or because he was a descendant of Eber, your choice.

Nevertheless, “when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house three hundred and eighteen, and pursued as far as Dan. And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people” (Genesis 14:14–16). In this case, it was the only Resolution at hand. As renown as Amraphel became, in this instance he bit off more than he could chew.