

# The Oologah Informer

## Nov 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### Thoughts from the Preacher “Never Walk Alone”

With Christ You Never Walk Alone. (Hebrews 13:5)

### Weekly Article

Abraham – A Case of Old Testament Accuracy  
BY WAYNE JACKSON

The science of archaeology has been a rich benefactor to the Bible student. It has occasionally clarified obscure passages, and it has also frequently demonstrated that the biblical record bears the marks of genuine history.

After Abraham settled in the hill country of Hebron, and Lot, his nephew, pitched his tent in the vicinity of Sodom, a confederation of Mesopotamian kings invaded the region of Sodom and Gomorrah taking numerous captives, among whom was Lot.

The Genesis record reveals that when Abraham heard of the tragedy, he, along with 318 servants from his household, pursued the eastward-bound hostile armies. The patriarch attacked the pagan forces and rescued his nephew, taking considerable booty in the process (Genesis 14:1ff).

The accuracy of the scriptural account has been questioned in several particulars.

First, the historicity of the names of the opposing kings (Amraphel, Chedorlaomer, Arioch, and Tidal) has been disputed. It has been documented, however, from Mesopotamian inscriptions, that these names were common to the Tigrus-Euphrates region, and that they are not “fictional forms” (Vos 1963, 69). It has even been shown that the name Abraham was not novel in that ancient environment (Finegan 1946, 61). The Bible is a precise record.

Second, some critics have contended there was no eastward line of march at the time of Abraham; thus, they have alleged that the Mosaic narrative is erroneous in this descriptive. The famous archaeologist, W. F. Albright, admitted that he “formerly considered this extraordinary line of march as being the best proof of the essentially legendary character of the narrative” (1935, 142; emphasis added). But Albright’s discoveries in this region forced him to revise his opinion of the Genesis text.

Professor Stephen Caiger, who was not a strictly conservative scholar, nonetheless stated: “[T]here seems [to be] no reason to question a factual basis of Genesis 14” (1944, 34).

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### Service Times

#### Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.  
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

#### Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

### Preacher:

Russ Earl

### AM Sermon:

Old Testament Characters: Deborah  
(Judges 4:1-7)

### PM Sermon

What Sin does to the Soul

### Sunday AM Bible Class:

Old Testament characters – D. Jackson

### Wednesday Bible Class:

Acts – V. Smith

### In SEARCH of the Lord’s Way

On Channel 6-2 Sundays @ 7:30 am

### The Truth in Love

on Channel 19 Sundays @ 8am

### The Gospel of Christ TV Program

on Saturday @ 7:30am on Channel 53

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As Abraham returned from his victory over the eastern kings, he encountered the mysterious Melchizedek, “king of Salem” (Jerusalem), who was designated as both a king and priest. Abraham “paid tithes” to the monarch and was, in turn, blessed by him.

The New Testament makes Melchizedek a symbol of our king and priest, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:15). But the writer of the inspired book of Hebrews makes a curious statement regarding Melchizedek. He states that the ancient ruler was “without father, without mother, without genealogy” (7:3). What does this strange phraseology mean?

Numerous speculations have surrounded this allusion. Origen, an ancient writer (A.D. 185-253) imagined that Melchizedek was an angel. Hierakas, toward the end of the third century A.D., thought that he was a temporary incarnation of the Holy Spirit. Some have even suggested that he was the pre-incarnate Logos (Christ [John 1:1, 14])—a concept contradicted by Hebrews 7:3 (the king was merely “like unto” the Son of God).

Archaeology has shed light on the enigmatic expression “without father, without mother,” etc.

A. H. Sayce, who served as professor of Assyriology at Oxford, called attention to an inscription from the famous Tell el-Amarna tablets (discovered in 1887 in Egypt). These tablets describe the conditions of Syria and Palestine about 1400-1360 B.C.

Several of the Tell el-Amarna tablets are letters written to the Pharaoh by Ebed-tob . . . the king of Uru-Salim [Jerusalem], who begs for help against his enemies. He tells the Pharaoh that he was not like the other Egyptian governors in Palestine, nor had he received his crown by inheritance from his father or mother; it had been conferred on him by “the Mighty King” (1906, 335).

So, observing the similarity of language, we conclude that Melchizedek’s kingship-priesthood had not been genealogically derived. He had received his commission directly from God himself—indeed as the Scriptures affirm: he was an appointment “of God Most High” (Genesis 14:18).

Accordingly, by way of analogy, we are forced to affirm that the current reign-priesthood of our Lord is a direct and divinely authorized administration. We are grateful to archaeology for this bit of assistance in understanding what might be perceived as a puzzling reference.