

Then there came the fugitive and told Avram, the Ivri. (14:13)

The term *Ivri* (translated as Hebrew, or “to one side”) is applied only to Avraham *Avinu*. It is written concerning him only once in the Torah, with regard to the fugitive whom *Rashi* teaches was none other than Og, the future king of Bashan, enemy of the Jewish People. Og hoped (or assumed) that nothing would stand in the way of Avraham rescuing Lot, who had been taken captive. Thus, he would be killed in the war. Once Avraham was out of the picture, Og would be free to marry his widow, Sarah *Imeinu*. Two questions are glaring. Why does the Torah choose specifically the incident with the four kings battling the five kings to single out Avraham as Avraham *Halvri*? It seems as if *Ivri* was most appropriate for this instance. Second, Og came back to Avraham with malicious intentions. Why would he think that Avraham, being of right mind, would throw away his life to enter a fray from which he could not expect to emerge triumphant?

The *Satmar Rebbe, zl*, explains that actually one question answers the other. Indeed, anyone in his right mind who saw that the four kings had trounced the five kings would not take the initiative to stand up to them. Whether Avraham attacked with an army of one, or 318, he was out of his league. How could he have expected to win against such a strong army? There is only one answer, explains the *Rebbe*. Avraham was the *Ivri*, which, by its very definition, intimates “one against the world.” It did not bother him to be alone, to be in the minority. He did what was right, and he carried out his intended mission without regard to self-preservation. He lived a life of integrity, and, as such, acted with *emes*, truth. He was an *Ivri*, and he had work to do. His nephew’s life hung in the balance. He must come to his rescue. Nothing else mattered.