

Abraham - Part Six

by Charles E. Wigg

The details of the early part of Gen. Chapter 14 throw important light on ancient Middle East history.

It would seem that the co-habitation between the fallen sons of God, and the daughters of men took place again after the flood. This unnatural combination produced races of giants, several races of whom lived together and are described in this chapter as the Rephaims, the Zuzims, the Emims, and the Horites. These giants were really great in size, Og king of Bashan was one of the last of them, and his bed was about 15 feet long, more than 5 feet 6 inches taller than Goliath, who was 9 feet 6 inches tall. The name Rephaim means "Invigorator: or life giver"; Zuzims means "Roving creatures"; Emims, "Terrors"; Horite, "cave dweller". It is presumed (by some), that these hybrids, (as with all hybrids), were not able to reproduce, and that upon their death, their disembodied spirits roam the earth as demons, seeking human bodies to inhabit.

However these races of giants were mostly destroyed by the four kings of Babylon etc. But God used these same four kings to execute judgment upon the cities of the plain, and their kings. This is the first mention of warfare in the Bible, and poor Lot became a prisoner of war. They looted the places that they conquered, and carried off many prisoners.

Perhaps Lot never dreamed that such a thing could happen, but here he was; taken prisoner, carried away by powers that he could not control or defeat.

Abraham to the rescue:

The news reached Abraham that "his brother" Lot had been taken prisoner, and was being carried back to the place from which God had called Abraham. He might well have said what many of us would say, "He made his own bed, let him lie in it!" "He made his own choice, this is the result!" "He got himself into trouble, let him get himself out of it!" But Abraham shines now, first in his compassion, then in his courage and his wisdom.

While dwelling at Mamre, Abraham had gained the respect and confidence of Mamre, Aner, and Eschol, three brothers, who were Amorites. He was able to enlist their help in the recovery of his erring brother, and the destruction of the four kings of the east.

But he also had maintained discipline in his own house, and though his servants were not trained in war, yet when armed, they followed and obeyed Abraham. Though they were a comparatively small company, and unused to war; yet under Abraham's leadership and control, and with the help of the Most High God, they were able to overtake, surround, and defeat that confederate army. The result was; that he was able to rescue Lot, and his family, along with many others, and to bring him back to the place from which he had been captured.

Here Abraham sets us a beautiful example. How many of our brothers and sisters have also been taken prisoner, by powers and sinful habits that they cannot defeat, yet we make no effort to restore such.

It is the real test of true spirituality, to be able to restore those who are taken in a fault. Read that beautiful verse one of Galatians chapter 6: here those who are spiritual are told to restore the fallen person. Likewise James in the last two verses of his epistle shows the desirability, and the nobility, of a brother or sister; bringing back a sinner from the error of their way. He tells us that they "save a soul from death, and cover a multitude of sins". Let us give ourselves to this noble ministry!

Abraham - Part Six

by Charles E. Wigg

The attack:

Abraham showed humility, skill, and wisdom, in the way that he attacked the confederate army: He therefore sets us an example in the way we are to confront and oppose evil powers.

His humility is shown in the fact; that though God was on his side, yet he did not boastfully presume to attack in broad daylight. He chose instead to attack under the cover of darkness, and to use the element of surprise. Neither did he make a frontal attack, but divide his disciplined, trained servants. This shows us that there must have been those in his household who possessed leadership qualities; who also had bravery such as would inspire the more timid. It also shows that he realized his weakness, it made him to rely the more on the power of the Most High God.

Victory:

Abraham's courage and humility were rewarded by a remarkable victory: these four kings, and their hitherto victorious army, were routed; put to flight, and destroyed. Let us learn these lessons because when it comes to confronting the powers of darkness, we will never achieve victory, without humility, and absolute dependence upon the mighty power of God.

I am sometimes shocked and saddened when I hear Christians speak proudly of their presumed authority over the Devil and his servants. Such only deceive themselves, and what they claim is victory; is usually, really defeat. In one place I saw written up on the blackboard; "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you". I had to warn those who were present, of the importance of the words that precede the quotation: "Submit yourselves therefore to God"; that unless we are totally submitted to God, if we try to resist the Devil, he will laugh at us.

Recovery:

Verse 16 is so important, Abraham did not merely destroy the conquerors, but he rescued the prisoners, and the goods that had been taken. It is not enough for us to meet and defeat the powers of darkness; we need to rescue the prisoners also. This is the real test of spirituality. Abraham brought back the goods, and his erring brother Lot.

Reward:

Abraham did not seek any reward, but he reaped a rich reward. He was met by that great and mysterious person; Melchisedek. This person appears from nowhere, and has no genealogy; Paul tells us that he is "assimilated to the Son of God." (Hebrews 7; 1-4). Melchisedek came with bread and wine; "bread to strengthen; wine to cheer"; so says the hymn. He is first king of righteousness, then king of peace; he is a most beautiful type of Christ. This kindness moved the heart of Abraham to tithe, and to give as a gift, a tenth of all he possessed. Again Abraham shines as an example, let us follow that example! First to experience the power of God in victory over evil; then to enjoy the sweetness of communion with our great Victor; finally to give liberally to Him of all that He has given us.

Abraham - Part Six

by Charles E. Wigg

Reward refused:

Abraham was offered a reward by the king of Sodom, but he refused that reward. The king of Sodom's name was Bera, which means "son of evil". He represents the "Ruler of this world", Satan. He too will offer rewards to us, so as to bring us under his bondage; to put us under an obligation to him: Let us see to it that we never covet, or receive his rewards.

The king of Sodom's main concern was to get back the persons, the souls of men, under his control. Abraham rejected his offer of reward, saying; "I have lifted up my hand unto Jehovah, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth. He had made a vow that he would not take any of the reward offered by Sodom's king: He would not give any basis for anyone to ever say that the king of Sodom had made Abraham rich. Others could take, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre, they were just worldly people, but not Abraham.