

January 8

Scriptures: Read Genes 14 & 15

Key Verse: “And He believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to Him for righteousness.”(Genesis 15:6)

Overview

We discover here that not only is Abram a man of peace, but also, when necessary, a man of war who will courageously face the enemy. He loved his nephew Lot, so as soon as he heard of his captivity, he gathered his trained servant and planned the rescue mission. Amazingly, or shall we say, providentially, this risky mission was successful. He caught the enemy at night by surprise and recovered all the goods that had been taken, along with Lot and his household. On their return home, they were met by Melchizedek, king of Salem, the priest of the most high God, who blessed Abram and blessed God for giving Abram the victory. Abram gave him a tithe of all the goods recovered. Melchizedek is referred to by the writer of Hebrews who says Christ is “a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 7:17). Melchizedek was a picture or a type of Christ. We see this in his name, meaning “king of righteousness”; in his position as “king of Salem”, meaning “king of peace”; in his title of genealogy, “having neither beginning of days nor end of life: (Hebrews 7:3).

The king of Sodom also came out to meet Abram and offered him gifts, but Abram refused so that he would not be obliged to the king of Sodom, not let him say, “I have made him rich.” All the glory for Abraham’s riches and indeed all that we have as well, is to God. In chapter 15, we see the covenant of God with Abram. God once again promises Abram that he would have a son of his own. The Lord came to him in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid.” Abram must have been in fear that he would die without a son of his own, for he and his wife were getting old. In his culture, to be without a son was a disgrace and a shame. However, Abram believed God would do as He said and give him a son and numerous descendants. Because of such great faith, the Lord “accounted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:6).

It is wonderful to find these great doctrines of imputed righteousness and justification by faith alone in the beginning of the Bible. In fact, this very verse is quoted four times in the New Testament (Romans 4:3, 22; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23) to show that we can never, on our own merit or good works, attain salvation. It is only through faith and trust in God that we are justified, and only through the vicarious death of Jesus Christ on the cross are we declared righteous.

After Abram offered unto the Lord the prescribed sacrifice, God told him in a dream the reason for the delay in possessing the land – his descendants would be in servitude for about four hundred years in a strange land but would come out with great possessions (Genesis 15:13, 14), and that the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete (Genesis 15; 13). God does not destroy one nation to provide a home for another, even if the other nation be His chosen people. The reason for God’s judgment of destruction upon a nation is for punishment only when the iniquity and wickedness has reached an unbearable height (eg. Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 19:1-38).

Finally in chapter 15, God reassures Abram of the great Promised Land his descendants will inherit, the literal borders of which were fulfilled during the reign of Solomon. Amazingly, however, we see in Hebrews 11:10 and 16, that the ultimate Promised Land for the seed of Abram, which is now those who believe in Jesus Christ, is the “heavenly country” (Hebrews 11:16), “the city which has foundations whose builder and maker is god” (Hebrews 11:10). This promise of a heavenly inheritance is for us, as well, who look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Prayer

Thank You, Father, for Your Son Jesus. Today and forever we crown Him King of our lives. Reign in righteousness and peace, Lord Jesus.