

When Abram Heard Lot Had Been Taken Captive, He Went in Pursuit as far as Dan

14: 13-16

DIG: In what way was Abram prepared? How were the women and the other people of the cities who had become prisoners of war given grace? The comparison of ADONAI to a warrior is one of the oldest in the Bible (Exodus 15 and Judges 5). How do you feel about that? Does it make you uncomfortable? Does it excite you? Why?

REFLECT: From what mess would you like to be rescued? What does Abram's rescue of Lot teach us about forgiveness? How is a tender warrior every man's purpose? Every woman's dream? And every child's hope? When has the LORD protected you?

The man of peace became the man of war to rescue Lot. One who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew (14:13a). For the first time, Abram is referred to as a Hebrew. This term will be used 33 times in the TANAKH and means *one who has crossed over* (31:21). Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshcol and Aner, all of whom were local alliances with Abram (14:13b). When the kings of the east left the area of Sodom and Gomorrah with their captives, they moved north along the west bank of the Dead Sea, which was not too far from Hebron and Mamre where Abram was living. You can stand where Abram stood in that day and see any movement that takes place down south toward the Dead Sea.²⁵¹

One who had escaped the armies of Kedorlaomer came and told Abram what had happened. When Abram heard that his relative, Lot, had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and evidently some Amorites (14:24). The rabbis teach it was Abram's chief servant, Eliezer of Damascus, alone in view here because the numerical values of the letters of his name when added together total 318! There was no hesitation or root of bitterness on Abram's part. He could have said, "It serves him right." But he didn't. This also shows how large his household was because the 318 trained men were only the ones of fighting age. This does not count the other men, the women or the children. They went in pursuit as far as the city of Dan (14:14). At that point in Jewish history there was no city of Dan, but the point is they went to what would later become Dan, which is the northern most territory of the nation of Israel. That is quite a long way. The rabbis teach that when Abram reached Dan his strength failed, because he prophetically foresaw that his descendants would set up an idolatrous golden calf as an idol there (First Kings 12:29).

Even though **Abram** had **318 trained men**, they were certainly no match for Kedorlaomer's invading armies. But **ADONAI** was with **Abram** just as **He** was with Gideon (**Judges 7:1-25**). Quite probably, the returning armies were relaxing and enjoying the spoils of war, and the idea of a sudden nighttime attack **at night** was absolutely the remotest thought from **their** minds at the time.²⁵² But **during the night Abram** divided his men to **attack them**. They soon became confused and demoralized. **And he routed them, pushing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus (14:15). There is no such place as Hobah. It refers to Dan, called Hobah that means guilt, because of the idolatrous worship of the gold calf that began there.** This is the only place in the Bible that **Abram** is seen as a warrior. **He** was a warrior when **he** had to be, *but he was a tender warrior*. In the spring of AD 54 the apostle Paul would write the church at Corinth and remind them of this concept of being a tender warrior when he said: **Be on the alert. Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love (First Corinthians 16:13-14 New American Standard Bible).**

Jesus is a tender warrior (**Numbers 21:14**; and also see my commentary on **Isaiah Hq - Sing to the LORD a New Song, His Praise from the Ends of the Earth**). Joshua was getting ready to attack the city of **Jericho** when he saw a theophany, *or a pre-incarnate appearance*, of **Yeshua Messiah**. Now when Joshua was near **Jericho**, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or our enemies?" "Neither," He replied but as **Commander of the army of the LORD** I have now come." Then Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?" The **Second Person of the Trinity**, or the **Commander of the LORD's army** replied. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so (**Joshua 5:13-15**). A warrior is one who possesses high moral standards, and holds to high principles. **He** is willing to *live* by them, *stand* for them *spend himself* in them, and if necessary *die* for them. No warrior ever made that more obvious than **Jesus of Nazareth**. **He is the Prince of Peace** (see my commentary on **Isaiah Cn - He Will Be Called Wonderful Counselor**) who will establish that **peace** riding a great white horse as the **Head** of the angelic armies of heaven (**Revelation 19:11-16**).²⁵³

Therefore, the heart of a warrior is a protective heart. The warrior shields, defends, stands between, and guards. So after **Abram** recovered all the goods, he brought back his relative **Lot** and his possessions, together with the women and the other people of the cities who had become prisoners of war (**14:16**). As a result, **Abram** and his fighting men liberated **Lot**. Unfortunately, **Lot** and the other people went right back to Sodom! They would not respond spiritually to **ADONAI** and turn away from **their** sins. They all knew about the **LORD** and even **Melchizedek** king of **Salem**, and they received grace for a time. But all these **people** would die in the destruction of **Sodom** and **Gomorrah** except for **Lot** and his two daughters (**19:23-29**).