

Who is Melchizedek?

Reading: Genesis 14:8-24

A bit of background

- This is the first war in recorded history
- Kings rebel from under rule (King of Sodom ringleader)
- The rebellion is put down
- King of Sodom and others perish in slime pits (like the notorious Grimpen Marsh)
- All the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah are taken including people
- This included Lot, Abraham's nephew, who had gone to live there. He should have been with Abram

Abraham goes to win him back

- gathers trained men (expert soldiers born in his house, 318 only a few but a deadly foe)
 - Pursued unto Dan (which means judgement)
 - Divided into two armies (pincer movement), smote them by night, under cover of darkness
- Brought back goods, Lot and people
- The new King of Sodom comes to meet him (pay his slimy respects to the victor)
 - Verse 18, mystery man Melchizedek
 - Who is he?
 1. Some say descendent of Noah or his son Shem? By why the different name?
 2. Some say a real king of Canaan?
 3. Others not a man at all!

The truth is we do not know. He has no father/mother, no birth/death recorded
 - All we know is here-

He was King of Salem (that is later Jerusalem) and also a priest (of the Most High God)
 - We hear no more of him so he is destined to be a king and a priest forever
 - He blesses Abram, acknowledges the victory over enemies, gives glory to God
 - Abram pays him tribute, gives tithes of all
 - King of Sodom offers a dodgy deal "Give me the people, but you can have the goods (spoils of victory) to thyself"
 - Abram's reply verse 22-23 "I am the Lord's"
 - I have lift up my hands unto the Lord the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth that I will not take a thread even to a shoe latchet, and I will not take anything that is thine lest thou shouldest say I have made Abram rich-save that which the men have eaten*
 - He won't even take a shoe lace from the king of Sodom, only takes what is needful

Application

- So what is this? What do we have here?

- There was rebellion in heaven like King of Sodom's rebellion
Jesus said " I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven "
Luke 10:18
 - The king perished in the slime pits like Lucifer's hellish grave
 - Now Satan is captive like a dog on a leash and like all who are bound unto him (that is the world and all that are in it, for he is the prince of this world- all that are unsaved)
 - Lot is with them; Lot is said to be a righteous man, a believer, but for the purposes of the application will serve as a picture of a lost worldling, for he lived in Sodom (first pitched near Sodom but should have been with Uncle Abram who is picture of the church, God's people)
You are a captive with all your goods if you do not know the salvation of God. All your abilities, talents are subject to a tyrant's rule. They are largely unused and unfulfilled, you are not what you should be. In the end they will be taken all together. You will have unfulfilled hopes and corrupted character. Your soul has been stolen from you and is being ruined.
 - Abram comes out with trained men, what do we make of this? They are trained in his house. Remember he pictures God's people (if you know the Lord today, you are not to see yourself as Lot in the application but in Abram and his men) You are taught in God's house how to win back souls, to fight the good fight against the enemy, to bring back your brothers. You attend morning services, you hear sermons, this is like your training. May you become trained men, able to win souls in Sunday School, in youth meetings, as teachers, leaders, soldiers in God's army.
 - The battle. The army is divided. This can be seen as repentance and faith (the two wings with which a man flies to heaven) or this can be seen as the law and the Gospel.
 - They came by night. This is like battling through the dark night of the soul. The soul is saved through wrestling in prayer, knowing that if God doesn't receive you all is lost.
The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.
Matthew 11:12
- In this the soul is won back just like Lot
- The king of Sodom doesn't waste much time returning (a new king of Sodom). Lucifer no more, Satan alive.) He comes even before Melchizedek to trouble the newly enlivened soul (assurance trouble)
 - Melchizedek comes with bread and wine, what does this remind us of? Who is he? This is Christ, the bread and wine like the body and blood of Christ
 - His name means
 1. King of righteousness (Christ our righteousness)
 2. King of Salem (King of peace between God and men)
 - Consider how great he was. Abram pays him tribute (therefore all God's people, his descendants including the Levite priests to come)
He gives 'tithes of all'. We should give our lives, our time, our portion of earning

He was priest of the most high God, the greatest priest. We hear not of his death (all the other future priests died)

Melchizedek lives forever, in a sense like Christ interceding for us in heaven on our behalf

Melchizedek has no recorded birth, just as the eternal Son

- Note finally the King of Sodom's dodgy deal. You can have the spoils, “I acknowledge your victory that you conquered”, but give me the people “you deserve to inherit the world- I'll give it to you with conditions!”
- The world is not even Satan's to give, he foolishly tried to tempt the Lord like this.
- Like the Lord, Abram wouldn't even take a shoe lace from this king! Don't love the world or the sinful things in it. A carnal Christian is an unfit soldier, fat from gorging himself on the world's poisons, ruining his spiritual health. Take nothing from this world, its sinful entertainments, showy fashions, love of money and possessions, only take that which you need like Abram.

ILLUSTRATION WOMAN WHO DIED UNDER HER POSSESSIONS

Some live as if the point of life is amassing material wealth, don't be deceived, the more you have the more you will want. Never be tempted past what you need. Don't be like Alexander the great who wept after he had conquered the world for there was no more to conquer! Love the Lord your God. Thou shalt not covet.

- Pray that the blindfold be taken away that you may see sin for what it is. Satan will try to convince you otherwise.
- For the Christian this temptation is like Satan trying to come back and convince you that you saved yourself (or at least that you turned to God on your own), you deserve the credit. Take no credit Christian! The glory is the Lord's! If you do take some credit Satan will take away your assurance. He always says one thing is another for example he will tell you stubbornness is fortitude, or revenge is strength and courage. Don't fall for this.
- Finally note again Mechizedek's blessing verse 20. He gave glory to God. Like the Jews as Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey like a king Hosana! They cried. Or like all the people of God in Revelation 19 Hallelujah! They sang. What do these words mean? Hallelujah-Praise the Lord (the cry of a Christian) Hosanna- please save we pray (the cry of a non Christian)