

Abounding Grace Christian Church

Seeing Christ in the Old Testament: A Study of the Types of Christ – Part 3

I. Seeing Christ in the Book of Genesis (continued).

A. Melchizedek – Genesis 14:18-20.

1. Background to this narrative – A powerful alliance of kings from Mesopotamia invaded Canaan and, in the process, took Lot, Abram's nephew, captive. Abram hears about it and goes after them with a surprise attack at night and recovers Lot and the stolen possessions. Upon his return to his home Abram received a blessing from a, somewhat mysterious individual called Melchizedek, who was the king of the city of Salem. After he met Melchizedek, the king of Sodom, Bera (v. 2, 21-24) attempted to make a deal with Abram, but he rejected it. Abram's realization that victory and possessions come from God alone enabled him to avoid the danger of accepting gifts from the wicked and to wait for God to provide what He had promised.

2. Who was Melchizedek?

- a. Some believe that this could be a title rather than a name. In the context, however, it seems more likely to be a name. The name, “**Melchizedek**” means; “**King of righteousness; King of justice**”¹
- b. He was the King of Salem. The word “**Salem**” means; “**to be complete; make complete. The state of being whole or action of making whole.** This verb is related

to **שָׁלֹם** (*šālōm*, “**soundness, peace**”)² So, to say that he is the King of Salem, is to say he is the King of Peace (cf. **Hebrews 7:2**). The Lexham Bible Dictionary states concerning Salem:

“...probably another name for Jerusalem (Gen 14:18; Heb 7:1–2; compare Psa 76:2... According to Josephus, the Jews believed Salem to be the same as Jerusalem (*Antiquities* 1.10.2). This identification of Salem with Jerusalem was accepted by the Targums and the early Christians.”³

- c. He was “...the **Priest of God Most High**” (verse 18). (First priest mentioned in the Bible). The phrase “**Most High God**” is found here for the first time in the Bible.
- d. He celebrated Abram's victory by bringing “**bread and wine.**” (verse 18). Dr. James Hamilton writes:

“**Abram defeats the kings who abducted Lot, taking captivity captive..., and then in Genesis 14:18 Melchizedek brings out bread and wine.** This sequence of events matches the way that Yahweh's defeat of the gods of Egypt (Exod 12:12 comes on the night of the Passover Feast, which includes unleavened bread (12:8) and probably also wine. That Passover Feast is to be celebrated yearly to commemorate what Yahweh did for his people (12:1-27) and fulfilled in the Lord's Supper, instituted on the night Jesus was betrayed. We seem to have a pattern, then, of the heroic defeat of enemies whereby captives are liberated, followed by a priestly celebration of victory with bread and wine.”⁴

- e. He pronounced blessing upon Abram. (vv.19-20). Concerning this, Dr. Lester Sumrall writes:

“**This name Elyon literally means ‘supreme God’ or ‘most loved God.’ Notice why Melchizedek believes God is the ‘most high’ and the ‘possessor of heaven and earth.’ He points out to Abram in verse 20 that God ‘hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.’ And when you consider the frightful odds that Abram**

¹ Stelman Smith and Judson Cornwall, *The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible Names* (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos, 1998), 170.

² Jonathon Lookadoo, “Peace,” in *Lexham Theological Wordbook*, ed. Douglas Mangum et al., Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

³ John D. Barry et al., eds., “Salem,” in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

⁴ James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2022), 69.

was up against—three hundred and eighteen household servants to fight the armies of the mightiest nations of that day (verses 1, 14)—you realize how great Abram’s God had to be! Pagan kings believed their gods helped them in battle. If they were defeated, they believed it was because their enemy’s god was stronger than their own. So Melchizedek knew he spoke on good authority when he said Abram served ‘the Most High God,’ *Elyon*.⁵

e. Abram’s response was, “And he gave him a tithe of all” (verse 20).

f. Abram confirms his devotion to God Most High – “But Abram said to the king of Sodom, ‘I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth...’” (verse 22).

3. Jesus is our Melchizedek – Hebrews 7:1-10.

a. Jesus is our King of Righteousness – The word “righteousness” means; “to cause someone to be in a proper or right relation with someone else”⁶ – Romans 3:19-26; Romans 4:1-12; Romans 14:17; I Corinthians 1:30; II Corinthians 5:21

b. Jesus is our King of Peace – He’s called the “Prince of Peace” in Isaiah 9:6. The word “peace” means; “set of favorable circumstances involving peace and tranquility”⁷

1) Peace with God – **Romans 5:1**

2) Peace of God – **John 14:27; 16:33; Philippians 4:6-8.**

c. Jesus is our Great High Priest – **Hebrews 3:1; 7:11-28; 8:1-6.**

d. Jesus brought us Victory, celebrated every time we partake of the Lord’s Table – **I Corinthians 11:23-26; II Corinthians 2:14; Colossians 2:14-15.**

e. Abram (Abraham) becomes a Type of every believer. We are to give our devotion and tithe to our “Melchizedek” – Jesus Christ. – **Hebrews 7:1-10.**

⁵ Lester Sumrall, *The Names of God* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), 65-66.

⁶ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 451.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 246.