

THE KING OF SALEM – Part 1
THE KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, THE KING OF PEACE
Genesis 14:18-20

INTRODUCTION

How can there be peace between sinful man and a Holy God?
How can there be peace between man?

Recall from last week:

The King of Sodom came out to meet Abram.

14:17 - They are joined/interrupted by a local king/chieftain

The contrast between the Kings:

Sodom and Salem

- All things material vs. all things spiritual
- perversion and peace
- rebellion and righteousness
- true wickedness and true worship
- unbelievers and believers
- darkness and light
- belial and Christ

Two Kings, two Kingdoms, two totally different types of men representing two distinct ways of life.

Both of these men are Canaanites.

One serves God and the other serves the flesh.

The book of beginnings –

- this is our first introduction to Salem/Jerusalem
- first combination of “bread and wine,”
- first mention of “priest” in Bible,
- first introduction to the name of God Most High - *El Elyon*

- first time man (God’s man on earth) blesses man
- first mention of tithe/offering
- first time we see the marriage of King and Priest
- through explicit statement, the first marriage or harmonious coupling of righteousness and peace. And it is brought together by a man named Melchizedek.

We are unpacking this in a Hebrew fashion - we studied vv. 17, 21-24 last week

Today we will look at the middle of this passage - vv. 18-20

READ Gen 14:18-20 – “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said, ‘Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.’ And he gave him a tenth of all.”

Proposition:

I. Righteousness

II. Peace

I. Righteousness

Point – We have a sin problem. We miss the mark.

We fall short of God’s standard of perfect righteousness.

Rom 3:23 – “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

Gen 1-14 testifies to this this.

Proof – ^{“18a} **And Melchizedek**”

From this backdrop, Melchizedek comes out of nowhere. Even Abram’s ancestry at this point in time from the Flood to Abram is described as idol-worshipping. Canaan was a bestial, idol-worshipping place. And Melchizedek was living in Canaan!

Where in the world did he come from?

→ God deliberately does not answer ... for a marvelous reason.

A believing Canaanite already in the land before **Abram** ever arrived! God already had His remnant before **Abram** had ever entered the land.

Throughout Church history, there is always a remnant ... meet **Melchizedek**. This is a real man that was living at that time, whom God saved. He was living in Canaan and worshiping God even before **Abram** got there.

Application – Beloved, do not be discouraged in your stand against the world—there were 7,000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal. We are not alone in our warfare. There are plenty of God-centered worshippers and fellow warriors all around.

It may look like the Sodomites are taking over.
It may look bleak but God is in control.

So who is this **Melchizedek**?

In the Hebrew, the subject, **Melchizedek**, comes first in this text. In the Hebrew language, the normal grammatical order is verb-subject-object. Here the subject comes first. → He is important!

Melchizedek - his name is mentioned 10 times in Bible
Abraham - 230 times by name in Scripture
Moses - 833 times by name in Scripture
David - 1080 times by name in Scripture

Melchizedek – twice in the Old Testament – here in Gen 14 and in Psalm 110; then 8 times in the New Testament in three chapters of one book, the book of Hebrews

Timeline:

Abram met Melchizedek about 2000 years before Christ
Moses wrote Genesis 600 years later
David wrote Psalm 110 another 500 years later

Finally, 1000 years later, the author of Hebrews writes his book

We understand:

- Original meaning to original audience – clarity of Scripture
- Progressive Revelation - timeline above
- God's inspired commentary (in Hebrews)

Heb 7:1-2a – “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all *the spoils*, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness,”

- **King of Righteousness** -*melek* (king) + *tsedek* (righteousness)
 - he did not have a righteousness that was derived in and of itself but his righteousness came because of God's gracious work within his life
 - his obedience to his most High God worked itself out and he was the King of Righteousness by his name

Melchizedek is not the point. Christ is the point.
Melchizedek points people to Christ.

Rom 1:16-17 – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘But the righteous *man* shall live by faith.’”

Phil 3:8-9 – “I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, ⁹and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith,”

2 Cor 5:21 – “He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

This sin problem is dealt with by our Mediator, our Priest, Jesus.

Illustration – The story is told of a traveler who passed through a village and noticed some chickens with little red ribbons fastened to their backs between their wings. The traveler inquired about this. The people explained: “They protect the chickens from the hawks that otherwise would attack them. Hawks are afraid of red ribbons. No other color would work. Neither blue, nor green, nor any other color would provide protection from attack.”

Application – In the same way, we are eternally protected by the red ribbon of His atoning blood. We are clothed in His *righteousness* and not our own.

The order is important. Jesus is the King of Righteousness before he is the King of Peace. It is because He satisfies the righteousness of God that He brings peace.

We get all backwards because of sin.
Everyone wants peace without righteousness.

He must be the King of Righteousness before you may have peace. People want peace without righteousness. They want to do what they want to do without consequences. They want to be satisfied with themselves and at peace with themselves.

II. Peace

Point – Turn to: **Jer 23:16-20** – the false prophets are saying you will have peace but God says, no you won't. How can we have peace without righteousness?

Luke 19:27 (Parable of the minas) – “But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence.”

Abram just returned from the righteous slaughter of the four kings and their armies. And here comes Melchizedek....

Point – **Righteousness** and **Peace** come together in **Melchizedek**

Proof – “^{18b}**king of Salem**”

- the location
- the ramification

The Location:

Salem (Jerusalem)

- **tied together in** Ps 76:2
- first mentioned here
- hill country of Judah
- 2500’ elevation
- Kidron Valley on the East
- Hinnom Valley on the West and South (*gehenna*)
- centrally located, but not near a sea port nor a trade route.
- location of **Mount Moriah** – Abraham sacrifice of Isaac – Gen 22

Josh 10:1-5

Jgs 19:10 – “Jebus (that is, Jerusalem)” (1 Chr 11)

David built an altar “on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite”
– 1 Chr 21:18

David conquered the city of Zion – **2 Sam 5:6-10**

- David moved the **Ark** of the Covenant to Jerusalem from Kiriath-Jearim
- its glory began under David, reached zenith under Solomon, fell away after the division
- 9 acres - walled-in city

Solomon built his Temple – 2 Chr 3:1

Israel (10 Northern Tribes) captivity by Assyria in 722 B.C.

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, defeated it in 701 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, destroyed city and the Temple in 586 B.C. (70 yrs captivity)

Cyrus, king of Persia, issued a decree in 536 B.C. that the Jews could go back to Jerusalem and begin to rebuild their Temple (Isa 44:28; Ezra 1:1)

Zerubbabel (governor) and **Jeshua** (high priest) rebuilt the Temple – 516 B.C.

Nehemiah – rebuilt the walls – 445 B.C.

Greeks – **Alexander the Great** captured it again in 331 B.C.

Antiochus Epiphanes – 167 B.C. desecrated the Temple, banned circumcision, and slaughtered a pig on the altar (Dan 11)

Maccabees recaptured Jerusalem and restored the Temple

Romans conquered it after that.

Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 by Roman General **Titus** (Matt 24:2), there was a severe slaughter of Jews.

Bar Kochba Rebellion A.D. 132-135– Precipitated by visit of **Hadrian** (Roman Emperor) in 130AD who put into place:

- 1) a law against self-mutilation (circumcision)
- 2) a program to rebuild Jerusalem as Roman city with a Temple to Jupiter

Even more severe slaughter, Jews left & didn't come back for 1800 years.

324 – **Constantine**

363 – **Julian the Apostate** (Roman Emperor)

(from 363 onwards, essentially no Jews in Jerusalem, 100 here, 1000 there)

638 – Islam takes Jerusalem from Byzantine Rome

1099 – **Godfrey of Bouillon** – Godfrey of Bouillon was a medieval Frankish knight who was one of the leaders of the First Crusade from 1096 until his death in Jerusalem.

1189 – **Saladin**, first Sultan of Egypt and Syria and the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty captured from the Crusaders

1291 – **Mamlukes** (Egyptian) Islamic slave-soldiers

1500's – **Ottoman Turks** (more Muslims)

Suliman the Magnificent (Turk) – the tenth and longest-reigning Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, from 1520 to his death in 1566.

Middle 1800's Zionism movement ferments in England

Eliezer Ben Yahuda reintroduces Hebrew (modern Hebrew)

1899 – Kaiser Wilhelm (German) enters Jerusalem and declares himself Messiah

1918-1948 – era of British mandate in Israel

1948 – Jews get Israel on May 15

1967 – **Six Day War** – Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudia Arabia attack simultaneously – there were 766 Israeli casualties and 290,000 estimated Arab casualties

1973 – **Yom Kippur War**

There will be a New Jerusalem.

Rev 21:2 – “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.”

That was the location.....

The Ramification:

Heb 7:2b – “was first of all, by the translation of *his name*, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace.”

Point – **Righteousness** and **Peace** come together and kiss in **Melchizedek**

The author of Hebrews points to → **Prince of Peace**

Point – Augustine, a church father, said that all men, even the revolutionary and the warmonger, desire peace. They are always striving for what they imagine would be a more peaceful condition of life.

False Prophets in Jeremiah's time wanted peace – Jer 6:14; 8:11; 14:13-14.

Isa 57:21 – “‘There is no peace,’ says my God, ‘for the wicked.’”

There may be temporary freedom from distraction, anxiety, and strife. This is sometimes obtainable, enabling men to settle down for a short time to do what they want to do, live their lives in their own way with little interference. There is also the temporary peace of momentary flight from the unpleasant things of life sought in day-dreams, pleasure and amusement, and the “peace” of escapism.

Jesus leaves behind a peace which the world cannot give.

→ It is a peace that casts out fear. A peace in the storm.

Illustration – the story is told of a contest in which artists were to submit paintings and sculptures portraying their understanding of peace. Some showed beautiful sunsets, others scenes of a meadow. But the prize went to an artist who had painted a bird in its nest, attached to a branch protruding from the edge of a thundering waterfall.

Application – This is the legacy of our Savior, the Prince of Peace. Anyone can be at peace in times of outward bliss and harmony.

But it takes a supernatural inward peace to prevail in the midst of great outward trouble and distress.

CONCLUSION