

ABRAM AND MELCHIZEDEK

In school, have you ever talked about foreshadowing in stories or books? Foreshadowing is a hint of something to come. In books, you may have hints or clues to how the story will end or how a character will perform by the end of the story. In Genesis, Melchizedek foreshadowed Christ. He is important as “The priest of God Most high.” He shows up at a time to encourage Abram on his faith-journey. He is the source of the eternal priesthood of which Christ is “a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

Day One Melchizedek: The Historical Setting

Picture It

Abram (later changed to Abraham) left his home in Haran under God’s instructions and heads for “a land that God would show him.” That land was the land of Canaan. Later, Abram and his family continued on their journey, but because they had so many possessions, flocks, and herds with them, Abram and his nephew Lot needed to part ways. Abram let Lot choose which direction he wanted to go, and he chose the plain of Jordan in the east, so Abram went to the land of Canaan, the land God had promised.

After they parted ways, God renewed His promise to Abram (see Genesis 13:14-18). Have you ever needed that kind of encouragement? We can be thankful for God’s Word, his Spirit, and His church; He often uses one or all of these to provide that kind of encouragement for us. Abram didn’t have the Word of God like we do, but God spoke directly to him to keep him moving.

Read Genesis 14:1-17

Think about It Some More

In these verses, things took a turn for the worse for Lot and his family. Four kings attacked the people of the Jordan Valley and took Lot and his family captive. This may seem like a random historical account, but it is part of the plan of God to make Abram great and to bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him. Abram got word of the attack. He assembled 318 of his servants and hunted the attackers. He caught up with them, defeated them, and rescued Lot and his people to bring them back to Sodom.

Obviously, the Lord was with Abram. He was able, by the Lord’s strength, to defeat the attackers and rescue Lot. After this, Abram has a very interesting encounter with a very interesting and unusual person. (We will look at that later this week and how it is important.) Think about God’s hand in your life. Be careful not to call events random when God is involved in them. He is faithful to bless us as we follow Him and abide in His will.

Talk about It

- What happened to Lot and his people? *(They were captured by the four kings who were attacking the Jordan Valley.)*
- What did Abram do when he heard about Lot? *(He assembled 318 of his people to find Lot and rescue him and his people.)*
- How can we see ways that God blessed Abram in what we looked at today? *(Ex-Lot chose the land of Jordan to travel, which left the land of Canaan for Abram, which is what God had promised; Abram’s small group of men was able to attack and rescue Lot; God renewed His promise to Abram.)*

Pray about It

Thank God for blessing us when we are faithful to Him.

Day Two Abram, Melchizedek, and the God-Journey

Picture It

Sometimes things happen to us or around us that we don't understand. We may wonder why these things are happening. Do you ever think that God has planned these things? Maybe he wanted you to meet a certain person or be in a certain place at a certain time. These things may seem random, but God may be using them for a special purpose in your life.

Read Genesis 14:18-20

Think about It Some More

This is a very unusual event! It appears like a random addition that seems to interrupt the historical account that's being written in the verses before and after it. This is just the introduction to Melchizedek. He appears again in Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews chapters 5-7.

At this point in Genesis, we have traced the family line of all of the biblical characters who have appeared, except for Adam because he was the first. In these verses, we see this Priest and King who suddenly appears on the scene without any connection to a family or lineage. The writer of Hebrews says that he was, "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life."

So, what do we know about Melchizedek? First, we know that his name means "king of righteousness." He is called "king of Salem," which means "king of peace," and as the "priest of God most high." This was clearly no ordinary man! Melchizedek came to bless Abram on his victory when he rescued Lot. He connected this victory with the blessings on God. He acknowledged that it was "God Most High Who delivered your enemies into your hand." Abram received the blessing, and, in response to Melchizedek, he gave him a tithe of all he possessed. Abram humbled himself recognizing Melchizedek as greater than himself.

This must have been an encouraging time on Abram's journey with God. It's important to have special time of worship and hear special messages from God as we are walking with Him.

Talk about It

- Why is the family history of Melchizedek interesting and unusual? (*We do not know his family line. He is said to not have one.*)
- Why was it important for he and Abram to meet? (*Melchizedek encouraged Abram on his journey with God.*)
- How can we be encouraged on our journey with God? (*Answers will vary.*)

Pray about It

God, thank you for using times in my life that seem random to encourage me. Please let me be an encouragement to others also.

Day Three Melchizedek: Connecting to Jesus

Picture It

What do you think about when you hear the word forever? (*Talk about this with your kids.*) Jesus is the priest forever. It's hard for us to imagine something lasting forever. Everything we know about here on earth is temporary, it has an ending. Jesus has no beginning or ending. He is the Alpha and Omega.

Read Hebrews 7:1-3

Think about It Some More

Even though Melchizedek has no beginning or end, he is different from Jesus. Jesus *is* the beginning and the end. He started it all, and He will end it all. God uses Melchizedek to give us a picture way back in Genesis of an eternal priesthood long before the priesthood is even started. In the New Testament, we see it all come together in Christ. He is our Great High Priest Forever.

Talk about It

- How was Melchizedek like Jesus? (*He was like Jesus in that he was a Great High Priest.*)
- How was Melchizedek different from Jesus? (*He was different from Jesus because Jesus will be our Great High Priest forever!*)

Pray about It

Thank God for sending Jesus to reign as our priest forever.

Day Four Melchizedek: Connecting to Jesus (2)

Picture It

The kind of priest Melchizedek was and the kind of priest we think about in different types of churches today are very different. Melchizedek represented the priesthood of Jesus that will last forever. The priests that we think about now (starting 500 years after Melchizedek with the priesthood of Aaron) are temporary. They are priests that we have here on earth.

Read Hebrews 7:23-28

Think about It Some More

Jesus' priesthood is not only everlasting, it is also perfect. Jesus, as our Great High Priest, did not offer up animal sacrifices for us. He is the perfect Lamb of God. His sacrifice was perfect. He Himself became our sacrifice: *"Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."* **Hebrews 9:12 (NKJV)**

Jesus our Great High Priest is able to "Save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him." He is not a high priest who makes annual sacrifices of animals to cover our sins. He is the sacrifice who once and for all covers all of our sins. He finished the work of the sacrifice for sin. This makes Him the perfect high Priest.

There had to be this kind of priesthood, and Melchizedek made it known. He first brought it to man through Abram. Jesus Christ is the real end-goal of the Melchizedek priesthood.

Talk about It

- What is the difference in priests that we hear about today and Jesus as our Priest? (*Jesus will last forever.*)
- How could Jesus be our one-time sacrifice? (*He was perfect and took on all of our sins.*)

Pray about It

Jesus, thank you for being our one-time sacrifice. Thank you for always interceding for us. (Think about it, this means He is always praying for us before our Heavenly Father!)

Day Five

Picture It

Did you know that Jesus quoted scripture? It's true! He often used passages from the Old Testament. This is one way that the Old and New Testaments are connected. Psalm 110 is one passage that was quoted several times in different verses in the New Testament; Jesus even quoted some of these verses. Listen for verse 4 in this Old Testament passage that Jesus quoted about Himself in the New Testament; it mentions Melchizedek.

Read Psalm 110

Think about It Some More

This chapter in Psalm is called a Messianic Psalm. This type of Psalm looks forward or prophecies about Jesus Christ. All seven verses that you read today are prophecy about the Messiah.

- Verse 1 anticipates the ascension of the Messiah and His place at the right hand of God.
- Verse 2 anticipates the rule of the Messiah.
- Verse 3 anticipates the large numbers coming to Christ.
- Verse 4 anticipates the eternal priesthood of the Messiah.
- Verses 5-6 anticipate the judgement of the Messiah.
- Verse 7 anticipates the Messiah's suffering, death, and resurrection.

These verses definitely connect the dots between the Old and New Testaments.

Talk about It

- What is a Messianic Psalm? *(A Psalm that is prophetic of Jesus Christ.)*
- How do these verses connect the Old and New Testaments? *(These Old Testament verses all talk about Jesus who comes in the New Testament.)*

Pray about It

Thank God for His Word. Thank Him for all we can learn when we look at the Old and New Testaments together.