

After defeating Chedorlaomer with his 318 trained men, Abram encounters two kings. One of them is the King of Sodom and the other a mysterious fellow of which we see very little information revealed. Who is this king? What is his purpose? What exactly are we to make of him and why?

Genesis 14:17-24

Abram

Meets

Melchizedek

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

God's word is full of details, all of which are there for a reason. All of His Word is useful for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). However, there are times when we are left with questions. It's when particular passages or lessons aren't fully understood that we ought to first turn to God's word in an effort to interpret and understand the things we seek to know, rather than our own reasoning, agenda, or understanding.

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

ARE there passages in Scripture you struggle to understand?

HOW do you tend to find meaning in those specific places of God's Word you find complex, or confusing?

WHY is it important to use Scripture to interpret Scripture?

HOW does the Bible "work" to explain itself, giving an interpretation of events, people, or doctrine more fully, as opposed to simply looking at one specific passage?

SHARE an example of how you've used the Bible to help you interpret itself.

Genesis 14:17-24

Abram

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Read Genesis 14:17-24

OBSERVATION

According to vs. 17, from where does Abram return?

Who are the two kings Abram meets?

In vs. 18-20, list all the details you observe about Melchizedek's description *and* from his interaction with Abram.

What does the king of Sodom request of Abram in vs. 21?

How does Abram respond to the King of Sodom in vs. 22-24?

INTERPRETATION

Melchizedek is not mentioned again in Scripture until Psalm 110 (about 1000 years later). Read this Psalm and consider:

Who is the author?

In vs. 1-3, *who* is speaking and to *whom*?

In vs. 2-3, what (or who) exactly is the focus of the oracle?

In vs. 4, who is making an oath? About whom, and how is he described?

Jesus quotes this same Psalm in a conversation with the Pharisees (Matthew 22:41-42). In this passage, what is at the center of Jesus' dialogue with those challenging him, and why do you think he chooses to quote this particular Psalm in responding to them?

The author of Hebrews (writing 1000 years after David) explains the purpose of Melchizedek in greater detail. Read Hebrews 6:19-7:22.

What insight/explanation does Hebrews shed on the identity of Melchizedek?

What does he accomplish on our behalf? 6:19

is the duration of his priesthood? 6:20

What is the meaning of his name and hometown? 7:1-2 (Consider also Ephesians 2:14)

Why is his genealogy and his beginning/ending important? 7:3

According to 7:4-6, explain why Melchizedek and his priestly office is contrasted to that of the Levites, especially that of lineage.

What is the purpose of the tithe and the order in which it's given? How does Melchizedek receiving a tithe from Abraham help in understanding the position he holds?

In 7:7-17, why was perfection not attainable through the Levitical priesthood, and how is it now through Melchizedek?

Explain the *power* of how Melchizedek has become a priest in 7:16 and 21. By whom does his power come (vs. 21) and why do these things matter?

APPLICATION

Who does Melchizedek point to and why does it matter to us today? (See Hebrews 7:22)