

ReGroup 8/14/22

Something Needs to Change:

Jesus Messiah - Luke 18:31-43

Tonight we will wrap up Luke 18 by paying special attention to a couple of short passages. The first, verses 31-34 will lead us on a journey through the Old Testament seeking to understanding the many prophecies which predicted Jesus and the nature of His ministry. The second passage, verses 35-43 spotlights an amazing display of God's healing and saving power.

We are going to break down the first passage very thoroughly, so as to show just how much of what Jesus came to do was previewed throughout history and recorded by the prophets thousands of years before. Read **Luke 18:31-34** and we'll start unpacking it all.

The Holy City

In verse 31, Jesus signals that things are beginning to wind down for His earthly ministry. He had taken His disciples into Judea many times before, but this time would be the *last* time. Jerusalem was the capital city of Israel, but its significance to the redemption story goes back all the way to the days of Abraham. As far back as 2000 BC, Jerusalem was being established as the place where God would change the world one day. Have your Bibles opened to Genesis for quick access as we begin our walk through history...

Before there was a nation of Israel and before there was a fully developed city, this region was featured in two passages of Scripture, both involving Abraham. **Why do you think it's significant that Jerusalem is first mentioned with regards to Abraham?**

You probably recall that Abraham (originally called, *Abram*) was the man God chose to begin the Redemption story with. Although God had remained in communication with those who feared and worshipped Him, from Adam to Enoch to Noah, there wasn't a clear picture of how God planned to restore creation as promised in **Genesis 3:15**. God promised to send a Savior to the Human Race, *through* the lineage of Adam and Eve.

However, as the earth became more and more populated, it was much more difficult to identify which line of descendants this Savior would come through. So God came to a man named Abram, a descendent of Noah's son, Shem. In **Genesis 12:1-3**, God tells him that He would fulfill His promise in Eden and save the world through Abram's family. The world had drifted far from God, and become confounded by different languages and religions. God would use Abram's family to re-reveal Himself to the whole world. By this, the world would receive God's greatest blessing, *salvation*.

An early example of Abram leading pagan nations into the knowledge of the one, true God is found in Genesis 14. Abram gets involved in a scuffle between several tribes and territories in an attempt to save his nephew Lot from captivity. Abram ends up rallying several tribes and bands of warriors to save Lot and other slaves, and in turn deescalates the conflict. In the aftermath of the war, as the different tribes and people meet for a truce, they all encounter another king, who leads them all in a peace-making ceremony.

This king isn't mentioned before Abram gathers everyone in peace, and greater details are not included in the story, however we do receive his name and His city. Read **Genesis 14:17-20** to be introduced to this king.

A conversation around Melchizedek could be a study in and of itself, but in short, he is *a picture of Jesus*. In fact, **Hebrews 7:17** tells us that he was a special *preview* of Jesus. There is little to no backstory about Melchizedek, but his inclusion in Abraham's story isn't to make us wonder *where he came from* as much as it to point us to *where Abraham's story was headed*.

Abraham had just recently trusted and followed the Lord, and while most of the world didn't know God, there was a priestly-king living a life of devotion to the God of Adam, Enoch and Noah, believing in the redemption to come. When the tribes and kings of Canaan meet for peace, Melchizedek is welcomed to lead the nations in this treaty. No doubt, he was respected for his small kingdom that operated by different terms than his surrounding world. While it's clear that Salem was an ancient version of Jerusalem, we don't know much else about this ancient kingdom.

Aside from being a peacemaker, and both a king and priest, perhaps the ultimate picture of Jesus seen in Melchizedek is how he leads Abraham and the other leaders in a ceremony with a *strong resemblance* of Communion. He brings out bread and wine, with no other context offered. However, as Christians, we read this and *immediately* think of Jesus' body and bread.

So here we have it, as far back as Genesis 14, we see **a preview of the saving work that Jesus would accomplish in Jerusalem in His death.**

In summary, consider these connections:

- The war of Genesis 14 comes to an end at Salem because of the work of a priestly king -> **Our striving against and conflict with God and sin came to an end at Jerusalem because of the work of a greater, Priestly King.**
- Melchizedek's name means *Righteous King* -> **Jesus is the one true and ultimate righteous king**
- Melchizedek is called a priest to God Most High -> **Jesus is called the Great High Priest, of the order of Melchizedek.**
- Melchizedek brought out bread and wine to symbolize the peace between nations -> **Jesus' body was broken and His blood poured out to secure peace with God for people of every nation.**
- Abraham gave him a tenth of the spoils of war, to denote that his victory belonged to God -> **We give to Jesus and His Kingdom because we know that our salvation belongs to Him.**

Feel free to share and discuss any further responses or comments to this analogy before moving on.

God Will Provide

There's one more preview of Jesus' redeeming work in Jerusalem found in the story of Abraham, found in **Genesis 22:1-8**. *Moriah* was an ancient name for land of Judea. Until the tribe of Judah later settled here under King David, it would still be referred to as Moriah.

God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on Mt. Moriah, but this was all so that God could give him a glimpse of the saving work He would one day do on that very mountain. For the rest of that story read **Genesis 22:9-14**. We can see the picture here, of how God would one day give His only begotten Son, Jesus. Jesus *is* the Lamb which Abraham prophesied would be provided.

Years later, David sought to make the ancient city of Salem the capital of Israel, calling it *Jerusalem* (**see 1 Chronicles 11:4-5**). Jerusalem means “*foundation of peace*”, as he was believing that God would fulfill the promise made to Abraham. He would select Mt. Moriah as the spot for the Temple project, because of Abraham’s encounter and prophesy (**see 2 Chronicles 3:1**).

*Well now we know how Jesus and His work in Jerusalem was previewed before He ever came. **What are your thoughts about how God laid the ground work for His redeeming work so long ago, and how the Old Testament builds up to the time when Jesus would come?***

The Disciples may have not understood what Jesus meant, but as for us, there is no question. **God’s Word is a timeless resource - if everything connects so perfectly when it comes to prophesy and fulfillment, how much more should we take serious every word given to us about following Jesus and obeying His commands? What more convincing should we require?**

The Blind See

Read **Luke 18:35-43** for another miracle wrought by Jesus. It’s fitting that He heals a blind man, after we just discussed how clarifying and revelatory God’s Word is to *us*. Notice how in verse 34, we’re told that the Disciples couldn’t see how all things were coming together, yet right after an actual blind man is given sight. ***Don’t you see the picture?*** God is able to open the eyes of our hearts and show us what He’s up to.

The blind man must have received special revelation about Jesus, as when He’s told that “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by”, he calls out for, “Jesus, Son of *David*”. Somehow, he knew that Jesus was more than just a teacher from Galilee - He was the long awaited, Messiah promised to their forefathers. He gained more than just sight, he had *saving faith* in Christ.

More than anything, this man wanted to be able to see. More than anything, we ought to desire the ability to see and know where God wants to take our lives. We have proof of God’s track record, and should be more confident than ever.