

HEBREWS 7:1-3 THE ULTIMATE MYSTERY MAN

¹ *This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, ² and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.”*
³ *Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever.*

With Melchizedek is the mystery in the man or the man in the mystery? This brief passage answers three questions: 1) Who is he? 2) What does he do? 3) What does it mean?

Who is Melchizedek? The author is rather straight forward about his identity. He is the king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He also has no recorded lineage or final disposition.

What does he do? Again, the author merely reports what is recorded in Genesis (14:8-20). Abraham encounters Melchizedek after his victory over the kings of Elam, Golin, Shinar and Ellasar. The former is blessed by Melchizedek and tithes Melchizedek.

What does it mean? As “king of righteousness” and “king of peace” he has the attributes of God. As a king-priest he has both the office of being just (king) and of justifying the people (priest). By blessing Abraham and receiving his tithe, he has greater authority than Abraham and his offspring. With no recorded lineage his authority comes from God and not genealogy. Likewise, his office does not die out with the last descendent in the family line. These are all attributes of Christ, so is Melchizedek an appearance of Christ in the Old Testament? No, at least not literally. Similar to a photograph through which the likeness of a person is revealed, Melchizedek allows us to recognize Jesus without actually being Jesus. Through the photograph we can learn important things about a person, but we cannot come to know the person.

Classically, a mystery is a hidden truth that can be known only by revelation. Melchizedek is not the mystery, but he is a part of the mystery; part of the revelation of the truth that Jesus Christ is our Messiah.

Each of us has been created in the image of God. Seek the Lord in order to find out how you might be part of the mystery for those around you.

Lord Jesus, you are my king and my high priest. Thank you for revealing yourself to me through those you have brought into my life, often unannounced. Help me to be such a blessing to those into whose lives you direct me. Amen.