

Are You Robbing God of His Glory Without Even Realizing It?

I will never forget the night the Lord gave me the revelation of Melchizedek.

I was traveling to Naples, Florida, to speak at a conference on intimacy in marriage. On the flight, I took a nap, had time to pray and finally arrived close to midnight. I was still wide-awake because of my rest, so I asked the Lord what He would have me read. He told me Genesis 14. I thought, OK, great, a good bedtime story from God.

What happened next changed my life forever.

What God was going to show me in His Word while alone in that hotel room was something I have never seen or heard in more than 20 years with Him, including four years of Bible college and over five years of seminary.

The subject? The ministry of kings, a topic on which I've specifically sought God's insight.

Go with me to Genesis 14 for just a little background information. There was a great war where five kings fought against four kings, back in the days of Abram (before he was renamed by God). Custom dictated that when an army overcame an enemy, they would take the spoils and plunder from those who lost the battle. Among the silver, gold, clothes and horses were also people, commonly captured by the victors.

In this particular account, herded in with the captured was one who was dear to Abram's heart, his nephew Lot. Lot lived in Sodom and was part of the bounty of Kedorlaomer, the king who had won the battle.

When Abram heard that Lot was a captive, he did what any king would do who saw a social injustice: He had a committee meeting!

Actually, Abram was a king and kings don't need committees. He rounded up his employees of "trained men," which totaled 300. These men overcame Kedorlaomer and Abram rescued his nephew. These were great men who assisted Abram and helped him change the injustice done to Lot.

Here is where the story gets interesting. Abram and his employees were on their way back in the valley of Shaveh, known as "the valley of kings." The king of Sodom, who was defeated by Kedorlaomer just a few sentences earlier, meets Abram, and soon Melchizedek, king of Salem, shows up as well.

Melchizedek brought out bread and wine. During the meal, this king of Salem, who was also a priest of the God Most High, blessed Abram.

Abram responded by giving a tithe to Melchizedek. Abram also gave the rest of the spoils back to the king of Sodom, minus his employees' share for their efforts. As a side note here about Abram's giving, he gave tithes to two other kings, the king/priest Melchizedek and another king. Secondly, Abram acts as only an emotionally and financially secure king would.

Keeping the Glory for God

He fought a battle and won, but he gave the bounty away so that a secular king could not boast about how he made Abram wealthy. Abram wanted God to get the glory for his wealth.

As I observe today's kings, I notice the similarities in that they fight social injustice here and abroad without compensation. I love the way kings think. I love how Abram did not allow a worldly king to steal the glory from God. This is a very important lesson as we navigate the successes that come our way in life.

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