

## **Monday Evening Bible Reading Group: 19<sup>th</sup> June Meeting: Some Notes**

**Melchizedek: This mysterious figure has always fascinated people: See also Psalm 110; and Hebrews 5: 1-10, 7:1-4 and 26-28. The passage here is obviously chosen for this Sunday because this is the week of Corpus Christi, and here is a priest (king/priest) celebrating with bread and wine. Abraham and Melchizedek recognise the same God.**

**The bread and wine in worship is interesting: a different level from sacrificial animals. Something similar is found in many religions. But bread and wine can be divisive. At last night's Requiem at St George's, Barry had prepared bread and wine. Two didn't come forward to receive. I never take the wine. On this occasion, nobody else did either; and Barry had to drink it all. Some denominations have non-alcoholic wine. The Bishop wouldn't allow St George's to continue this option. Some of us have qualms about giving alcohol to very young Communicants. At Parade Services, although St George's is highly inclusive compared with many churches, a lot don't receive. The Roma Church is highly exclusive in this respect,**

**So bread and wine can be exclusive. What is the right balance between Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic services? Some Church of England churches have little else. Others have Communion as an optional add-on to a non-Eucharistic service. St George's in times past had Morning and Evening Prayer as its most popular services.**

**We are used to the concept of eating the Body of Christ and drinking the Blood of Christ. We need to recall just how shocking this was to the Jews: who attached a very special place to human blood, who were revolted by the human sacrifices of some of their neighbours, and who felt horror at the thought of cannibalism. It is perhaps surprising that so few children or adults take in their stride language that shocked the first hearers... and indeed caused many of them to walk away.**

**Are non-Communicants excluded from heaven?**

**There are many memorable lines in these readings. Which one(s) stay with you?**