

The Book of Hebrews

7. After the order of Melchizedek



Ruebens (1577 – 1640) rendition of Abraham offering a tithe to Melchizedek

The writer of Hebrews continues his discussion of Melchizedek started in chapter 5 (Hebrews 5:1-10). Hebrews 5:11 to 6:19, was both critical and encouraging, he wanted his Jewish audience to know they should be further along in their understanding of spiritual issues. They should be teaching, but are in danger of having a sluggish Christian walk. The issues covered in Hebrews 7 to 13 require spiritual maturity and growth, which the Hebrew Christians lacked. He was urging them to grow and move beyond their stagnant spiritual state.

The writer wants his audience both the believing and non-believing Jews to understand the priesthood of Christ is greater than the priesthood of Aaron, which was still in effect at the Temple. He is urging them to move beyond Aaron to Christ, from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant, from a temporary priesthood to an eternal priesthood.

The Holy Spirit demonstrates Melchizedek was a type (picture) of the Messiah, who would prepare the hearts of the people for Jesus Christ. Melchizedek modeled the dual role of "King" and "Priest" which the Messiah would fulfill. Jesus Christ fulfills this role, as king and priest. His priesthood is superior to Aarons, Aaron's was temporary Christ's is eternal. Melchizedek modeled the point to the Hebrew nation two thousand years before Jesus Christ was born, that a greater priesthood would be fulfilled in Messiah.

Melchizedek A Type of Christ

7:1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,

7:2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace,"

7:3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

7:4 Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.

7:5 And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham;

7:6 but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.

7:7 Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.

7:8 Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives.

7:9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak,

7:10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Melchizedek King of Peace and Righteousness

Verses 1-3

Melchizedek: He was the king and priest who ruled over Salem (Jerusalem). His name is a combination of the words king and righteousness. King (מֶלֶךְ *Melek*) and Righteous (צַדִּיק *Tsaddiyq* (tsad-deek'); His identity has caused a great deal of speculation, both by Jews and Christians, some theories put forward are;

The Qumran identification of Melchizedek¹



In 1956 thirteen fragments of a first-century manuscript were found in Qumran Cave 11 (11QMelch). The text is an eschatological midrash built on the concept of the Jubilee Year (Lev. 25) and weaving in a number of eschatological passages (Dt. 15:2; Isa. 61:1; Ps. 82:1; 7:8f. [MT 9f.]; Isa 52:7). A. S. van der Woude, the original publisher of the "11QMelch", saw Melchizedek playing a significant role, standing in the assembly of God among the angelic beings. There he is depicted as executing diving judgment, which is somehow related to the Jubilee Year. He also seems to be involved either as the one who atones for the sins of the people or as the priest who mediates atonement to them.

A few students of Qumran literature identify the Melchizedek of 11QMelch as an earthly person who met Abraham (Gen. 14) and whose likeness will be reproduced in the coming Messiah. Most Qumran scholars, however, view the Qumran Melchizedek as a high angelic being who was thought to have appeared to Abraham.

- He is an angelic being
- He is the pre-incarnate Christ
- He is Shem (Noah's third son)

He is only mentioned three times in scripture; Genesis 14:18-20, Psalm 110:4, and Hebrews Chapter 5 to 7.

King of Salem: The word Salem means peace (Hebrew שָׁלוֹם *Shalown* (shaw-lome'); Salem, was the earlier name for Jerusalem. Melchizedek was the king and priest of the city. We can speculate the city of Salem was founded by Melchizedek after the language of man was confused at the tower of Babel. (Genesis 11:1-9).

Priest of the Most High: The God of the Bible is identified as "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". However, before Abraham, the God of the Bible, could have been called the God of Noah, Shem and Melchizedek. The worship of the "True" God did not begin with Abraham, but he continued to worship the true God.

Before Abraham, individuals such as Abel, Seth, Enoch, all knew and had a relationship with the "True" God. Noah in fact served as a priest to God, offering a sacrifice after the Arc had landed. (Genesis 8:20-22). Noah represented his offspring before God after the flood. Both Noah and Melchizedek, were of the righteous seed, who were modeled after Abel and Seth, the two righteous sons of Adam. Melchizedek would later serve as "Priest" model for the Christ, who would come to redeem all mankind.

The name of God most often used in the Old Testament is *Yahweh* (Jehovah). The word LORD in the scriptures is written as (יהוה) or *Yahweh* in the Old Testament Hebrew, but seen as LORD in the translation, to prevent the reader from taking God's name in vain. God is also known by the name of "*El Elyon*" or Most High God, this represents the more universal name for God as opposed to *Yahweh* (I am that I am) which was revealed to Moses at Mt. Sinai.

Melchizedek has a universal priesthood, compared to Aaron, whose priesthood was limited to the house of Israel.

¹ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, G.W. Bromiley, General Editor, 1986, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Volume III, pg. 313

Slaughter of the kings: Abraham defeats the kings of Babylon, (Elam, Shinar, Ellasar,) who had earlier defeated the kings of (Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim and Zoar). Kedorlaomer took Abraham's nephew Lot and his possessions, Abraham and his 318 servants pursued and defeated the victorious eastern (Babylonian) Kings. Abraham recovered Lot and his family, and all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah. Both the king of Salem, and the king of Sodom meet Abraham at his return. Sodom's king offered to let Abraham keep all the possessions but to only return the people. Abraham refused his offer, lest Sodom take away from God's Glory.

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself."

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth,

23 "that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'

Genesis 14:21-23

Abraham refused to allow Sodom, to bless him. He knew God's glory was at stake.

Blessed him:... Abraham, after the slaughter of these four kings, returned to Moriah, (Jerusalem) to offer a tithe of all the possession to Melchizedek, king of Salem. Salem was neighboring city-state to Sodom, a contrast between righteousness and wickedness, was the difference between Salem and Sodom. Melchizedek blessed Abraham, who offered him a tithe (Tenth) of the recovered goods.

King of righteousness: Melchizedek translated means king of righteousness. The Hebrew word for righteousness (צַדִּיק *Tsaddiyq* (tsad-deek') comes from the root word meaning to cleanse, or clear one self. Righteousness, is a characteristic of Messiah, He is the king, according to scripture, who will bring righteousness to the earth, the Messiah is known as King of Righteousness.

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

Psalm 45:6

4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.

5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

Isaiah 11:4-5

16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

17 For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with zeal as a cloak.

Isaiah 59:16-17

5 "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.

6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Jeremiah 23:5-6

King of peace: Melchizedek also typified another aspect of the Messiah, in his being "King of Salem". The name of the city Salem, means "Peace", since He was king of Peace (Salem) he typifies the other aspect of Messiah.

6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:6-7

Like the Son of God: He was a type or a picture of Messiah, the Greek word for "Like" is , ἀφ'ομοίωσιν *Aphomoioo* (af-om-oy-o'-o); meaning; to cause a model to pass off into an image or shape like it; to express itself in it, to copy.

Without genealogy: The mysterious genealogy of Melchizedek, typifies the genealogy of Messiah as it relates to his priesthood. Only a Levite, a descendent of Aaron could be a member of the priesthood. Melchizedek typified a priesthood outside and superior to the Levi's priesthood. This does not mean that Melchizedek came from nothing, but only that his genealogy is not in scripture. The lack of record typifies the non-levitical genealogy of the Messiah who would be both priest and king.

	Melchizedek Gen 14:18-20	Christ
Priest to Abraham	Abraham offered tithes to Melchizedek	Abraham saw Christ and rejoiced at his day. (John 8:54-59)
King and Priest in Jerusalem	Melchizedek was the King and Priest of Salem, (Jerusalem.)	Jesus will be both King and Priest of Jerusalem. Jesus was presented as King from birth to death. He prayed and interceded for the city. He will return as both King and Priest. Matthew 24:30, Matthew 27:37, Matthew 23:37-39,
Offers to Bread Abraham	Melchizedek offered bread, to Abraham after his victories of the	Jesus offered himself as the bread of life to Abraham's descendents. (John 6:33,53-58, Luke 22:19)
Offered Wine	Melchizedek offered wine to Abraham.	Jesus offered his blood as wine to Abraham's offspring (John 6:55, Luke 22:20-22)
Greater then Abraham	Melchizedek was greater then Abraham, because he received Abraham's offering for God.	Jesus was greater then Abraham (John 8:58) Aaron's priesthood was a picture of Messiah's greater priesthood.
Blessed Abraham	Melchizedek blessed Abraham	Abraham was blessed by Messiah (John 8:56)
King of Peace (Salem)	The name for Jerusalem is Peace (Salem). Melchizedek is King of Peace	One of the titles for Messiah is <i>Prince of Peace</i> . (Isaiah 9:6). Christ as King of Jerusalem fulfills the foreshadowing of Melchizedek. (Zechariah 14)
King of Righteousness	Melchizedek's name means "King of Righteousness"	Christ is the King of Righteousness
Priesthood	Not of the tribe of Levi	Of the Tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10)
Duration	No Beginning and End	Eternal (Psalm 110:4)
Tithes	Received Tithes from Levi in the person of Abraham	Received tithes from Levi as the "Glory of the Lord" in His pre-incarnate state.
Tribe	Outside of Levi	Outside of Levi

Melchizedek superior to Levi

Verses 4-10

How great this man was: The purpose Melchizedek served was to prepare for the coming of Messiah. Messiah would be both Priest and King not to Israel only but the world. Melchizedek was a foreshadowing, a preparation for the coming of a greater priesthood and promise. This is point being made in the book of Hebrews chapter 7, the Old Covenant was merely pointing the way to the New Covenant which would only be fulfilled in Messiah.

who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things

according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."
Hebrews 8:5

Tenth of the spoils: The greatness of Melchizedek is demonstrated by Abraham's submission to him, by tithing to his priesthood. By tithing to him, Abraham recognizes his intercession and priesthood before God. Although Abraham did not take spoils for himself, he did dedicate ten percent to Melchizedek.

Sons of Levi: The descendants of Levi were separated from the other tribes of Israel. There were dedicated to Temple service, they alone were to assemble and unassemble the Tabernacle. (Numbers 8:15) The sons of Levi, were chosen as the firstborn in Israel, instead of the firstborn from every tribe. (Numbers 8:18) The Levites were also not given any fixed territory in the promised land, because "The Lord is their portion" (Dt.10:9; 18:2)

Priesthood: The Levitical priesthood was also from the "Sons of Levi", except only from the family of Aaron. (Leviticus 8)

Tithes: The Tribe of Levi received the Tithe offering in Israel, as payment for their service to the Lord.

20 Then the Lord said to Aaron: "You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.

21 "Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting.

Numbers 18:20-21

Loins of Abraham: Levi was Abraham great grandson, through Jacob, Isaac's second born. (Genesis 29:34)

Genealogy: Melchizedek was outside of Levi's Genealogy and received **tithes from Abraham**. This signified the superiority over the Levitical system that would follow the birth of Abraham's great grandson, Levi. Since Abraham tithed to Melchizedek, then Levi also tithed to the Melchizedek's priesthood through Abraham.

Lesser is blessed by the better: Abraham being blessed by Melchizedek reinforces the picture of his greatness compared to Abraham. Not only did Abraham tithe to him, but Melchizedek also blessed him, indicating a spiritual superiority over Abraham.

This again, emphasizes the superiority of Christ to the Moses, as Melchizedek is superior to Levi, Christ is superior to Moses.

Jesus the Superior Priest

HEB 7:11 Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?

HEB 7:12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.

HEB 7:13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.

HEB 7:14 For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.

HEB 7:15 And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest

HEB 7:16 who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life.

HEB 7:17 For He testifies: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

HEB 7:18 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness,

HEB 7:19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

Perfection...through the Levitical priesthood: The writer of Hebrews is using the logic of scripture to demonstrate the superiority of Christ's priesthood. David, under the Levitical Priesthood, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote Psalm 110:4.

The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."
Psalm 110:4

He asks the question, if the Levitical Priesthood was perfect, why would David speak of a better priesthood, "The order of Melchizedek"?

Being changed: Since the Law proceeded from the Levitical Priesthood, and that priesthood changed, then there must be a "**Change of law**". This change was foretold in the book of Jeremiah.

31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah

32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, F23 says the Lord.

33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jeremiah 31:31-33

The Mosaic Covenant would be replaced by a New Covenant, this coming Covenant would be under a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. (Psalm 110:4)

Another tribe: Jesus is of the tribe of Judah, which is not mentioned as a tribe of the priesthood, but is mentioned as the tribe through whom the Messiah will come. (Genesis 49:10) Though Moses did not speak of the priesthood other than Levi, scripture declares a greater priesthood, superior to that of Levi. (Psalm 110:4)

Fleshly commandment: The priesthood and law of Israel were imperfect. The High Priest was required to offer sacrifices for himself and the people. Again, the writer is contrasting the better covenant with the imperfect covenant.

Endless life: The Greek word used here, (*ἀκατάλυτος Akatalutos*) means not subject to destruction. This is in contrast to the flesh or carnal, which is subject to destruction, the point being this covenant is eternal and perfect versus the Mosaic covenant which is carnal and imperfect.

The law made nothing perfect: The law of Moses was a temporary fix, which looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, who make the imperfect perfect.

This coming Covenant would replace the Mosaic Covenant, it would be an everlasting covenant, like the priesthood which would officiate its arrival.

'And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.
Jeremiah 32:40

"Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore.
Ezekiel 37:26

"For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, And will make with them an everlasting covenant.
Isaiah 61:8

This everlasting covenant is the "Better Covenant" involving eternal forgiveness from sins, not the temporary forgiveness that results from the Levitical system.

"No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."
Jeremiah 31:34

Jesus the Superior Priest

HEB 7:20 And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath

HEB 7:21 (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek' "),

HEB 7:22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

HEB 7:23 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing.

HEB 7:24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

HEB 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

HEB 7:26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

HEB 7:27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

HEB 7:28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

Guarantee of a Better Covenant

Verses 20-22

Oath: God guarantees the Messiah's eternal priesthood, after the "Order of Melchizedek". God council is immutable and cannot be changed, Messiah (Christ's) priesthood was the result of an oath, compared to the Levitical priest who came to their position as a result of their birth. (Hebrews 6:18)

Surety of a better covenant: Jesus is the guarantee of the "Better Covenant". This picture of a surety is when Judah, placed himself as surety or bond for the safe return of Benjamin, when Joseph requested they bring him (Benjamin) to see Joseph.

"I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.
Genesis 43:9

Jesus, the descendent of Judah, is our surety (Bond) of the greater and perfect covenant.

Eternal Savior

Verses 23-25

Many priests: The many priests of the Mosaic Covenant are imperfect and die, this is a stark contrast to Christ's priesthood, an eternal verses temporary priesthood.

He always ...makes intercession: Christ is our advocate before the Father, who intercedes on our behalf. (Isaiah 59:16).

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world
1 John 2:1,2

Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us
Romans 8:34

Holy and Sinless

Verses 26-28

first for His own sins: When the Levitical High-Priest sinned, he was required to offer sacrifices for himself (Lev. 4:3). When the people sinned who would offer sacrifices for them (Lev. 4:13). This would be both daily and annually on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:6,11,15). Christ had no sin needed no sacrifice for Himself.

Once for all: He was the only sacrifice that was needed, one time only, for all men, for all time.