

After the Order of Melchizedek Hebrews 7:1-10

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. ³ He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever. ⁴ See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils! ⁵ And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham. ⁶ But this man who does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. ⁷ It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. ⁸ In the one case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. ⁹ One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, ¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

First: Identifying Melchizedek

Genesis 17:14-20 - *After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸ And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.*

Psalms 110:4 -The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

- Melchizedek = melek = King of *sedeq* = Righteousness
- King of Salem = Jerusalem
- Priest of *El Elyon* = most high God

Second: Seeing Jesus

Chapter 7 is a critical section, perhaps the most important section of the book, because it concerns the introduction of a better priesthood. No sacrifices were possible without a priest (therefore no "forgiveness") and therefore the priesthood was essential to the Jewish mind and greatly revered by Jews.

In the book of Hebrews, the writer wants to prove to us that there's a greater high priest than any Jewish one, that there's a greater priest than any Hebrew priest

- Jewish priests had to sacrifice for their own sins
- Jewish priests died and had to be replaced

- What a Jewish priest did today had no effect tomorrow
- one who doesn't need to make atonement for His own sins.

7:4 = Only command in passage - *See how great this man (Melchizedek) was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!*

See = to view attentively, to take a view of, to survey, to enjoy the presence of

The author's point it is to give careful consideration (as contrasted with a superficial reading) to this teaching on Melchizedek because he is a type of Jesus Christ, the One Whose beauty and glory we desire to see.

He wants them to do this because they are suffering –

Hebrews 10:32-36 - *But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. ³⁴ For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. ³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.*

Hebrews 12:2-3 - *looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.*

Third: Christ is after the order of Melchizedek

Remember that in Hebrews 5:5-10 the writer began to speak of the Melchizedek...

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; ⁶ as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." ⁷ In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. ⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. ⁹ And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, ¹⁰ being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

11 - *About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.*

He then began a lengthy parenthetical section from Hebrews 5:11 through Hebrews 6:20 where he returns to Melchizedek. This parenthesis was to prepare his "dull of hearing" readers so that they might better understand of this important chapter

This means the unfolding of the meaning of the Melchizedek priesthood of Jesus is the goal toward which the author has been aiming ever since Hebrews 2:17, where he first uses the term high priest with reference to Jesus...

The reason the author is talking about Christ's relation to Melchizedek is because the eternal, superior priesthood of Jesus is our only hope of eternal salvation. God's wrath never changes. There is only one hope for sinners like us. We must have a faithful High Priest, Who will intercede for us forever.

- 7:2 - We need a King of righteousness (He 7:2).
- 7:2 - We need a King of peace (He 7:2).
- 7:3 - We need Someone without beginning and ending
- 7:6-10 – We need Someone greater than Abraham and greater than Levi
- 7:11 – We need Someone who is perfect
- 7:12-14 – We need Someone who is greater than the law
- 7:16-17 – We need Someone Who has an indestructible life
- 7:18-19 – We need Someone who is perfect and without potential fault
- 7:20-21 – We need Someone God swears by
- 7:22 – We need Someone who is a guarantor of a better covenant
- 7:23-24 – We need Someone who will never die and need to be replaced
- 7:25 – We need Someone who can save us to the uttermost because of his forever life and intercession
- 7:26 – We need Someone who is holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.
- 7:27 – We need Someone who doesn't have to sacrifice for his own sins
- 7:28 – We need Someone who is appointed directly by God, is assured by God's oath and is perfect forever

We need a new and greater Priest because the Levitical priesthood is imperfect in many ways (v 11)

All those priests could do was point toward the One superior Priest, after the order of Melchizedek, (Psalm 110:4), Whose sacrifice of Himself and Whose eternal intercession guarantees eternal salvation for all God's people.

Fourth: Jesus as Melchizedek

Jesus Christ is identified as "High priest forever in the order of Melchizedek", and so Jesus assumes the role of High Priest. Since he never dies, he becomes the High Priest once and for all.

But who was Melchizedek?

Martin Luther identified Melchizedek as a preincarnate, Jesus. Thus, he would have been like the Old Testament “angel of the LORD” (e.g., Ge 16:7-11 Ex. 3:2; Jdg 13:3-21).

- a) The names, *the king of righteousness and king of peace* are very similar to names attributed to Christ (He 7:2)
- b) He is *“without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life”* (He 7:3)
- c) He also *“...resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever”* (7:3)

Proponents of this view point to the language of Hebrews 7:3: *“Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of day nor end of life.”*

But, six times the writer of Hebrews cited Psalm 110:4-note when stating that Jesus is a priest “after the order of Melchizedek” (He 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17, 21). If Jesus actually was Melchizedek, He would not be said to be “after the order of Melchizedek.” He could not be after the order of himself.

Furthermore, the language of similarity, not identity, is used to describe the relationship between the two.

- Hebrews 7:3 states that Melchizedek was “made like unto the Son of God,” not that he actually was the Son of God.
- Hebrews 7:15 states that Jesus is a priest “after the similitude [likeness] of Melchizedek,” not that he actually was Melchizedek. These verses indicate that Melchizedek was an individual who was a type of Christ, not that he actually was the preincarnate Christ.

The point of the chapter is not to see Jesus as Melchizedek. The point of the chapter is to see Jesus in Melchizedek. The point of the chapter is to see Jesus.

Conclusion:

1 – There is a hint of Gentile inclusiveness here

Jehovah – “*I am*” is the name by which he revealed himself to Moses.

Genesis 3:14 - “*I AM WHO I AM.*”

It is God’s covenantal name for his relationship to Israel.

But, according to Genesis 17:18 – Melchizedek “*was priest of God Most High*” (*El Elyon*)

El-Elyon, on the other hand, means ‘God of everything.’”

Deuteronomy 32:8-9 - *When the Most High (El Elyon) gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. ⁹ But the LORD's (Jehovah) portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.*

Daniel 4:34-35 – (Nebuchadnezzar, a Gentile king said) *...I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; ³⁵ all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth;*

El-Elyon implies that both Melchizedek and Jesus are priests of both Jews and Gentiles.

The Messiah, who is a priest after the order of Melchizedek and not Levi, is not just the priest, intercessor or savior of Jews but also Gentiles.

1 John 2:2 - *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

John 1:29 - *Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*

John 4:42 – (spoken by Samaritans) *...we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”*

John 3:16 – *For God so loved the world...*

2 - Types are frail illustrations at best. They are analogies, and, like all analogies, they correspond to the person or thing to which they are compared only in certain ways—perhaps only in one way.

- The bronze serpent typified Christ in that it was lifted up for all the people to see and be saved.
- The sacrificial lamb typifies Christ in that it is very meek (innocent) and that it was sacrificed on behalf of the sins of another.
- Similarly, Melchizedek typifies Jesus and His work in a number of significant ways.

V 4 - *See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!*

- Melchizedek was before Abraham
- Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek
- Levi was in the loins of Abraham
- Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek
- Melchizedek is greater than Levi
- Any priest after the order of Melchizedek is greater than a priest after the order of Levi

In addition, (Gen 17:19); Hb 7:1), Melchizedek blessed Abraham.

7:7 - It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.

Someone after the order of Melchizedek is naturally greater than anyone after the order of Levi.

The point is – 8:1 - *Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,² a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.*

And that man is Jesus!