

The Lordship of the Priesthood of Christ

Part 1

Hebrews 7:1-10

“For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; 3 without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. 5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: 6 but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. 7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. 8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. 9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.”

INTRODUCTION:

- The high view of the Jewish priesthood
- The story of Abraham and Melchizedek

CIT: Why Is Melchisedec’s Priesthood Greater Than Aaron’s?

HI: Why Should These Hebrews Cling Tight to the Priesthood of Christ?

I. It Was a Universal Priesthood (vs. 1a)—*“For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God”*

A. The Covenant Name of Israel’s God

1. God’s Covenant Name with Israel

- a. Moses, when called by God to deliver the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt, asked God His name

Exodus 3:13-15—*“And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?”*

*14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. 15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: **this is***

my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”

b. The tetragrammaton

- i.** It had no vowels in it
- ii.** If we were to write it in English it would be YHWH
- iii.** It is not for sure how it was pronounced by the Jews—it was thought “Yahweh” to be the correct pronunciation

- Some have actually pronounced the name as “Jehovah”
- And so you will occasionally see that rendering in the Bible
- But the Hebrews never pronounced it as such

iv. Though YAHWEH may have been the proper pronunciation—there is considerable proof that the Jews very rarely said the name of God at all—for fear of speaking that name in vain

Exodus 20:7—“*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*”

c. The name “I AM” as it is given in Exodus actually means—“*to be*”

- i.** It is a name that says that God has no limits at all
- ii.** He was not one of the many man-made gods that had limited power
- iii.** Yahweh has no limits—He has no weaknesses
- iv.** And He would prove that to Israel

d. Up until this point Israel had never known their God by His unlimited power

- i.** And specifically, they had never known His unlimited power manifested on their behalf
- ii.** They were just one group of people among the many
- iii.** Even when Moses came to them—proclaiming that they would be delivered from Egypt’s bondage—they did not believe

Exodus 6:1-8—“*Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.*

2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: 3 and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name

JEHOVAH was I not known to them. 4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. 5 And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. 6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: 7 and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord”

iv. And we see the famous story of Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage—where God pours out His plagues upon the Egyptians (10 in all)

e. After He delivered them out of the bondage of Egypt—God brought them to Mt. Sinai—where He established His covenant with them

Exodus 19:4-6—“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, **then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people:** for all the earth

is mine: 6 and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

- i. They were YAHWEH’s peculiar treasure
- ii. From this point on they would be known as the people of YAHWEH

NOTE: If you take some time to look through your Bible, you will see that the name of YAHWEH is used all the way through the OT. Most of the times it is translated into the word “LORD.” It was written that way to honor the name of God and also to distinguish it from the other English word “Lord.”

2. So we see that the name “YAHWEH” was the covenant name of Israel

- a. It DID NOT belong to any other group of people
- b. It was connected to everything that Israel was
- c. It was the highest name that Israel had for God

- i. It continually reminded them of what God did for them—by delivering them out of bondage
- ii. And how that God uniquely called them apart for Himself

- They were YAHWEH's unique people

B. Melchizedek—Priest of the Most High God

1. Paul makes the point that Melchizedek was NOT a priest of YAHWEH—but of the MOST HIGH GOD

a. If we go back to Genesis 14—three times the phrase “*most High God*” is used

Genesis 14:18-20—“*And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was **the priest of the most high God**. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of **the most high God**, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 and blessed be **the most high God**, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.*”

b. It is another name for God

i. The word in Hebrew is **El Elyon**

ii. It is the universal name of God

iii. It means “God who is possessor of heaven and earth”

- He is the God of ALL NATIONS
- He is the God of ALL DISTINCTIONS

- He is the God of both JEWS and GENTILES

c. In other words—Melchizedek was a priest for all men—not just the Jews

2. Melchizedek's priesthood was greater than the priesthood of Aaron—because it extended further than the priesthood of Aaron

- a. The only people that Aaron's priesthood could help—were Jews
- b. Melchizedek's priesthood was to all men

3. Christ is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek

- a. His priesthood is not bound to the Jews
- b. It is for all men
- c. Jesus is a UNIVERSAL PRIEST

II. It Was a Royal Priesthood (vs. 1-2)—“*For this Melchisedec, **king** of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation **King** of righteousness, and after that also **King** of Salem, which is, **King** of peace*”

A. Continually it Mentions that Melchizedek was a KING (4 times)

1. Israel never had both a King and Priest who were one in the same person

- a. There was a priest—whose office revolved around the Temple
- b. There was a king—who ruled the people from his throne
- c. By the time of David—God established that all the true kings of Israel would come through the line of David

- i. And any time someone tried to usurp the authority of the King—God dealt with them
- ii. God swore to David that his Kingdom (line of authority) would last FOREVER

d. Also, when God established His covenant with Israel—He set apart the priesthood of Israel to be reserved to the tribe of Levi

- i. Only Levites could be priests
- ii. And only Levites who were of Aaron's line could take the office of High priest

2. These 2 offices (Priest and King) were eternally distinct one from the other

a. In the Scriptures we see an illustration when once a king tried to cross the line

2 Chronicles 26:3-5, 16-21—“Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. 4 And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did. 5 And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper... **But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. 17 And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: 18 and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the Lord God.**

19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, **the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. 20 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him.**

21 And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord”

- b. Never were the priests to cross the line of the kings—nor the kings to cross the line of the priesthood
- c. But that Distinction was ONLY FOR ISRAEL’S kings and priests

2. God’s Prophecy of the Messiah

Zechariah 6:12-13—“*Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH (the Messiah); and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: 13 even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne*”

- a. The Messiah would be both a KING and a PRIEST

Psalm 110:1, 4—“*The Lord said unto my Lord (God said unto David’s Lord—the Messiah), Sit thou at my right hand (Sit in my throne, with my authority), until I make thine enemies thy footstool... The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*”

- b. The Messiah would be a King—ruling with all the authority of God, while at the same time he would be a priest
- c. And Jesus claimed to be both King and Priest

NOTE: If He was after the order of Aaron—His claim to be both king and priest could never be true. But He was not after the order of Aaron, but of Melchizedek.

3. Melchizedek the King

- a. Melchizedek is a King in 2 different ways

- i. He is a king in name (vs. 2a)—“*first being by interpretation King of righteousness*”

- The name Melchizedek means—“King of Righteousness”
- His very name points to the fact that he is a king

- ii. He is a king in power (vs. 2b)—“*and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace*”

- Salem was thought to be the ancient name of Jerusalem—the city of God
- Melchizedek was privileged to rule over God’s special city—in which he chose to put His name upon

Psalm 132:13-14—“*For the Lord hath chosen Zion (Jerusalem); he hath desired it for his habitation. 14 This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.*”

b. Melchizedek was both a King and a Priest

- i.** He was the King of Salem (ancient Jerusalem)
- ii.** And he was priest of the most High God (sets him apart from Israel)
- iii.** Paul’s main argument

- Melchizedek is the type of priesthood that Christ would fulfill
- He is “*a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*”

1. He is a Universal Priest

2. He is a Royal Priest

III. It Was a Righteous and Peaceful Priesthood (vs. 2)—“*to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of **righteousness**, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of **peace**”*

A. Paul Focuses on the Meaning of the Names Surrounding the Person of Melchizedek

NOTE: In the account in Genesis, Moses DOES NOT interpret the meaning of the words Melchizedek or Salem. However, Paul, who is demonstrating the typology of Melchizedek, does just that.

1. He points to the name MELCHIZEDEK

a. It means—as already interpreted—“King of **Righteousness**”

i. The very interpretation of the name means that **HE RULED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS** over the city of Salem

- That means that he was not like other wicked Kings who twisted judgment and used and abused his people for his own gain
- He ruled with righteousness
- He also was a priest of righteousness
 - He, not only ruled well, but he interceded for his people—to make them right with God
 - His priesthood was an acceptable priesthood before God

NOTE: There were in that time, many different priesthoods found throughout all the cultures of the world. All of them claimed to be the right priesthood to the right god(s). But though there were many—many of them were not right before the one true God.

Melchizedek was a righteous king and a righteous priest who helped make his people righteous before the **MOST HIGH GOD**.

2. Paul also points out that he ruled over Salem—and he interprets Salem as **PEACE**

a. Melchizedek is both a king of righteousness and a king over the city of **PEACE**

b. Because he ruled with righteousness—naturally Peace would follow

i. Salem—the Hebrew word Shalom—was named because it was the city of Peace

ii. The peace of this city must have been known by many throughout that region

c. Because Melchizedek was a priest who helped unite his people to God in righteousness—they were (in type) no longer classified as enemies with God

i. The city of Salem was a city of peace—because they were ultimately a city that was at peace with God

ii. In Genesis 14, there was a group of people in Salem that were God’s people—before Israel ever existed

NOTE: I want to stress this point clearly here.

MELCHIZEDEK WAS A TYPE—whose role pointed to Christ. He **DID NOT** have the ability to make people righteous, nor did he have the ability to make his people at peace with God. He was just a priest that was a greater type than the priesthood of Aaron.

The only One Who could ever give a person righteousness and peace with God is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1—“*Therefore being justified (made righteous before God) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*”

B. The Insufficiency of the Priesthood of Israel

1. It could **NEVER** make a person **RIGHTEOUS** before God—and it could **NEVER** bring **PEACE** between God and man

Hebrews 7:11—“*If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should*

rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”

Vs. 19—“*For the law made nothing perfect*”

Hebrews 10:1—“*For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.*”

Hebrews 10:4—“*For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*”

a. How long would a sacrifice last in Israel’s day?

i. It lasted only until a person sinned again

QUESTION: How Many in This Room Can Go Days Without Sinning?

None of us Can

ii. They were constantly having to come back to the priests to have their sins dealt with again

iii. It was a never-ending mess

b. The priesthood of Jesus Christ is a priesthood that makes the sinner **eternally righteous with God**—and **eternally at peace with God**

i. It’s not based upon our righteousness—but Christ’s

1. It is a Universal Priesthood

2. It is a Royal Priesthood

3. It is a Righteous and Peaceful Priesthood

IV. It Was a Personal Priesthood (vs. 3a)—“*without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life*”

A. The Necessity of Genealogical Records

1. Jews were notorious for keeping genealogical records of their people

a. The Reasons why

i. Record purposes

- They were diligent about keeping the records of people’s history
- The book of Genesis (which derives its name genealogy) is a book dedicated to giving the genealogical history of man

○ It shows the histories of man

- It shows how God singled out one group of people among all the people in the world—Israel
- It shows how God would begin to develop that group of people
- All the way through the OT—you will see that Israel kept such record of their people

ii. Land purposes

- God promised the land of Canaan unto the children of Israel
- Each of the 12 tribes would get certain portions of the land to develop and live in
- Those portions of that land were to REMAIN IN THE FAMILY LINES
 - The land was to be continually passed down to those in the family
 - If it was ever sold outside of the family

line—it would be retrieved in the year of jubilee—where all debts were cancelled and all property was restored to its proper owners

- Genealogies were a necessity in keeping the land within the family
- If there was ever a debate over who owned the land—all you had to do is look to the records to find it out

iii. Role purposes

- When God brought the Israelites into the land of Canaan, He did not give any land to the Levites
- They were to be the priests of God for the people—their inheritance was the Lord
- The people of Israel were responsible to take care of the priests through their tithes and offerings—while the priests were responsible for taking care of the spiritual needs of the people

- That was understood by all the Jews
- But the Genealogical records became important—when there was question about whether a person was of the tribe of Levi or of the family of Aaron
 - That list became real important after Israel had been in bondage to Babylon for 70 years
 - The line had gotten mottled
 - There was question of who was really a priest and who wasn't

2. As I already mentioned, to be a priest there was a necessity that you be of the **tribe of Levi**—and to be a high priest—you must be specifically of **Aaron's lineage**

- a. At times, it seemed that there was more importance stressed upon the lineage than the character of the person
- b. Often times—there were priests who fit into the line perfectly—but were wicked as could be

1 Samuel 2:12-17, 22-25 -- *“Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; **they knew not the Lord.** 13 And the priests' custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand; 14 and he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh, unto all the Israelites that came thither. 15 Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, **Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.** 16 And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, **Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force.** 17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord. ... Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how **they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.** 23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. 24 Nay, my sons; for **it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress.** 25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: **but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them.**”*

- i. These men fit the genealogical list

- ii. But they were unfit for the role
- iii. This was oftentimes the case all throughout Israel's history

B. Melchizedek Has No Genealogy (vs. 3a)—
“without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life”

1. Paul is NOT saying that Melchizedek had no one that he was connect to

- a. That he just appeared on the earth without a mother or a father
- b. That he has always existed—and will always exist
- c. That's not at all what Paul is saying

2. Paul is drawing on the fact that in a book of Genesis (**genealogies**), God just happened to NOT GIVE the geological records of this priest of the Most High God

a. Paul makes the point that the absence of His genealogical list was not an accident but was intentional

- i. God, Who is the author of all Scripture, CHOSE NOT to list out the genealogical connections that Melchizedek had
- ii. Why?

iii. Because it gave to the reader a perfect picture of the coming priesthood of Christ

- The Priesthood of Christ would NOT be bound to a genealogical list
- It would be based upon the choice of God
- It would be based upon His righteousness that He alone has with God

b. Melchizedek was a priest without any connections or pedigrees

- i. His priesthood was a totally different priesthood than that of the Levitical priesthood
- ii. So was Christ's

NOTE: The argument that the Jews continually brought before those who claimed Christ to be priest was that His genealogy did not fit. He was of the tribe of Judah not of the tribe of Levi. He had no right to the priesthood.

Well that would be true if Christ came to be a priest after the order of Aaron. But Christ DID NOT come to be a priest after Aaron's line He came to be a priest after the order of MELCHIZEDEK.

1. **That was a Universal Priesthood**—not limited to the Jews only

2. **That was Royal Priesthood**—not allowed in Israel’s priesthood
3. **That was a Priesthood that Provided Righteousness and Peace with God**—Which Israel’s priesthood could never do
4. **That was a Personal Priesthood**—that was not connected to Genealogical lists like Israel’s priesthood was

CONCLUSION:

- **This is not to merely educate or stimulate the Jews mind about the priesthood of Christ. It was encourage them and embolden them in their faith.**
- **The more and more they learn of the securities they have in the Priesthood of Christ, the more and more they can stand boldly in Him.**
- **Come what may—they have a great high priest that they can look to find strength for every trouble of life.**

Hebrews 4:14-16—“*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*”

- **And if they were still sitting on the edge—having not yet believed—they had a great High Priest—greater than any priest of Aaron—who could satisfy his lost soul with the righteousness and peace that He alone could provide**

APPLICATION:

Ephesians 2:11-15-- “*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ”*

- **The purpose for us to learn of these things—is that we grow more in love with the person of Christ**
- **That we grow in our understanding of the truth that we no longer are tossed about with every wind of doctrine**
- **That we learn how to minister to others the truths of Christ**

EXAMPLE: Talking with my next door neighbor Damon over the Bible and Christ.