

The Lordship of the Priesthood of Christ

Part 2

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

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. As mentioned last time, the name of Israel's God was YHWH—Yahweh

a. It was a covenant name—that continually identified Israel with the deliverance which God gave to them from Egypt

- i. God, with a strong hand, spoiled the Egyptians, and delivered His people out from their grasp
- ii. They were the people of the great God Yahweh

b. As mentioned last time, only Israel, could be identified with that name

i. They were YHWH's peculiar treasure above all the people of the earth

ii. They were set apart above all the other people of the world

c. Everything that was identified with Israel, belonged to YHWH

i. That specifically included the priesthood

- The Aaronic priesthood

ii. The only way the Aaronic priesthood could have been of any worth to someone—was that they had to belong to Israel

iii. As mentioned last time, if Jesus was after the order of Aaron—then the only people who could be saved were Jews

- Either by birth
- Or by conversion to Judaism
- That was a struggle that many of the Jews had with Gentiles being saved
 - They thought that before they could be saved—they had to convert to Judaism

- And remain in it all their lives

- But Jesus was not after that order—He was after the order of Melchizedek

B. The Name of Melchizedek's God—“*The Most High God*”

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.*”

1. “The Most High God”

a. The meaning of the name

i. El Elyon

ii. It is the universal name of God

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

b. It was a name for God that showed that He was not bound to one group of people

i. He is the God of all people

2. Melchizedek—“The priest of the Most High God”

- a. Melchizedek was not a Jewish priest
- b. He was a priest for all people

3. Jesus was prophesied to be a priest—not after Aaron—but after Melchizedek

- a. So Jesus’ priesthood extends to all men
- b. He is the Priest after the Most High God

NOTE: If you are saved in this room—it’s not because you went to Jerusalem and found a priest—who made sacrifice for you. No it was because you came to the ONE priest that all men can come to—Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:11-13—“*For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”

1. It is a Universal Priesthood

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”*

NOTE: You see mentioned 4 times in the passage that Melchizedek was not only a priest but a KING.

A. The Impossibility of a Royal Priest

1. Israel’s priesthood could never cross the line of the King—as well vice versa
2. The Jews were bound by the law to be of the tribe of Levi—and specifically connected to the family of Aaron
3. The Kings were to be bound to the family of David
4. I showed us last time, how that God dealt with those who tried to cross the line

- a. I mentioned specifically, Uzziah the King—who became very proud—and was bound and determined to offer incense upon the altar in the holy place

- i. God’s response to Him was to strike him with leprosy
- ii. That leprosy never left him—throughout the rest of his life
- iii. Uzziah, because of his disobedience, would never be allowed to come close to the Temple—because of his leprosy

B. The Kingship of Melchizedek

1. Melchizedek was a King—4 times called King

- a. He was the king of the ancient city of Jerusalem—King of Salem
- b. And he was a priest

2. Jesus claimed to be both a king and a priest

- a. If He was a priest after the order of Aaron—that would be an impossibility
- b. But He was not a priest after the order of Aaron—He was a priest after the order of Melchizedek
- c. So He stands as a greater priest than the Levitical priesthood

NOTE: As I mentioned last time, the idea of the Messiah being both a priest and a king, was not a new concept. It was foretold in the OT.

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*”

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

1. Paul translates both the name of “Melchizedek” and name of the city that he was King over “Salem”

a. Melchizedek’s name means “King of Righteousness” and Salem means Peace

i. So Melchizedek, by the interpretation of both these names stands out as being a king of righteousness, and king of peace

ii. These names point to the character and work that Jesus would do as priest

- Jesus was both a righteous priest and a peaceful priest
- He had a perfect standing with God (righteous)
- He was at peace with God

NOTE: Jesus was the only man who ever lived that that could be said about—that He was righteous and at peace with God.

- He also is the only priest who could ever make those who come to Him, righteous and at peace with God
 - That is because they receive His righteousness and peace

2 Corinthians 5:21—“*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*”

- Apart from Jesus Christ they are not right with God—and are considered enemies to God

2. These 2 names—Righteousness and Peace—perfectly typify the Lord Jesus Christ

B. The Insufficiency of the Priesthood of Israel

1. Israel’s priesthood was never able to make a person righteous before God—let alone a peace with God

- a. It could never make them righteous—and it could never keep them righteous

b. They continually offered sacrifice after sacrifice—never able to make those who came to them right with God

2. After Jesus made His sacrifice—it says that He sat down at the right hand of God

- a. Declaring everything to be over—once and for all
- b. No longer was there a need for a sacrifice to be offered

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. There were 3 reasons why the Jews were so meticulous when it came to Genealogical records

- a. First—They recorded histories
- b. Second—They determined land boundaries
- c. Third—most important (Paul is referring to)—it declared the roles of the people

- i.** Specifically, the priesthood roles
- ii.** There was a time in the history of Israel—that they were not completely for sure who could be priest

- This happened after the Babylonian captivity
- So the people referred to the genealogical lists to determine who belonged to what families
- And those whom they could determine that belonged to certain priestly families were allowed to take up the role as priest
- Those whom they could not determine this—were not allowed

2. As I mentioned last time, just because a person fit the lineage, didn't necessarily make them a good person for the position

a. During the day of Samuel, Eli's sons, who were priests in the temple, profaned the house of God

i. They took more than they were allotted in the sacrifice

- ii.** They didn't cook their portions of the sacrifices properly (as the Law said to do)
- iii.** They committed whoredoms with the women in the temple
- iv.** Eli and his sons were so bad—that God had them killed in one day

b. They were of the right genealogy—but were completely wicked

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

- 1.** That doesn't mean that he just appeared
- 2.** It was a reference to the fact that God did not record his genealogical list

a. The reason for that—was so that his priesthood could not be traced to a certain lineage

b. Melchizedek's priesthood was a priesthood that God ordered

- i.** He wasn't automatically a priesthood, because His dad was a priest
- ii.** He was a priest, because God chose him to be one

3. Christ is a priest after that order

- a. Not in the sense that He fits a genealogical line—but that He is called of God to be a priest

Psalm 110:4—“*The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*”

1. It is a Universal Priesthood
2. It is a Royal Priesthood
3. It is a Righteous and Peaceful Priesthood
4. It is a Personal Priesthood

V. It Was an Eternal Priesthood (vs. 3b)—“*having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.*”

A. The Temporal Priesthood of Israel

1. It was not a priesthood that would last forever
 - a. It had both a beginning, and an ending
 - i. It began in the wilderness—where God met with the children of Israel and designed out the entire priesthood (**Exodus 25-31; Leviticus**)
 - He laid out the design of the Temple, the furniture in and

- around the Temple, the priests’ garments
- It talks about all the materials that they would need—and where they would get that material
- It talks about the kind of sacrifices they would offer
- It talks about the different requirements of the people

NOTE: Because there is so much, it can get hard to read.

- ii. But it also had an ending
 - The priesthood was never meant to last forever
 - It would have a cessation—when the final priest (Jesus Christ) would come

NOTE: Daniel said that he would cause the “**sacrifice and oblation to cease.**” In other words, His death on the cross would satisfy all the demands of God.

Now that the Messiah had come, there would no longer be a need for the Levitical priesthood—which were nothing more than pictures.

- b. How did the Levitical priesthood end?
 - i. At the time of this letter to the Hebrews it was still going on

- The very fact that Paul is writing this letter to Hebrews who are contemplating going back to the OT sacrifices—tells us that it was still going on

ii. But Jesus had prophesied to His disciples that one day—there would be no more sacrificial system in Israel

Matthew 24:1-2—“*And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*”

- For a good majority of that chapter, Jesus proceeds to tell His disciples of how this would come to pass
- In Luke’s account it describes a military invasion coming and destroying the temple

Luke 19:43-44—“*For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, 44 and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and*

they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

- This is a parallel account to Matthew’s account
- What military was this?
 - In AD 70 Titus Vespasian came against the city of Jerusalem to destroy it
 - The siege lasted over 3 years
 - It could have ended earlier, had the Jews surrendered
 - But because they fought to the bitter end—over 3 million were killed—and the Temple was torn down brick by brick
 - That destruction of the Temple was final blow to the Jewish priesthood—once and for all
 - Jesus said that this happened—because they DID NOT recognize their Messiah

iii. The Jewish priesthood, had both a beginning and an ending

- God never intended for it to keep going on and on
- For these Hebrews to continue to go back to it was tantamount to—
“trodden[ing] under foot the Son of God, and ...count[ing]the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and ...despi[sing] the Spirit of grace?”

B. (Unlike Israel’s Priesthood) Melchizedek’s Priesthood was Eternal (vs. 3b)—*“having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.”*

1. Paul—again pointing to the absence of genealogy—says that Melchizedek is eternal

a. Not literally eternal—but GENEALOGICALLY eternal

- i.** Melchizedek was just like any other man—he had a birth and he had a death
- ii.** But his genealogical list says the opposite

- He had no beginning (birth)
- And he had no ending (death)
- Because there is no record
- In vs. 8—Paul says that Melchizedek’s record states that he still lives (in type only)

vs. 8—*“And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that **he liveth**”*

iii. So the absence of both beginning and ending gives us another picture of priesthood of Christ—it is eternal

2. Jesus’ priesthood is a priesthood that is eternal

- a.** Jesus is eternal (**Micah 5:2**—says that Jesus is from everlasting—from eternity)
- b.** In the book of Revelation Jesus tells John that He is “alive for ever more”
- c.** Jesus has no beginning and He has no ending

Psalm 110:4—*“The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest **for ever** after the order of Melchizedek.”*

3. Since Jesus's priesthood is eternal—that means that those whom He saves—he saves forever

John 10:27-28—“*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*”

1. It is a Universal Priesthood
2. It is a Royal Priesthood
3. It is a Righteous and Peaceful Priesthood
4. It is a Personal Priesthood
5. It is an Eternal Priesthood

VI. It Was a Respected Priesthood (vs. 4-6a, 8-10)—

“*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 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.*”

A. The Levitical Right to the Tithe

1. When God brought the children of Israel into the land—He prescribed a law specifically for the Levites

a. It was the law of the tithe

- i. All the other tribes of Israel were given certain plots of land to live in throughout all their generations
- ii. But the Levites were not given land so that they could sustain themselves
- iii. God prescribed that the Levites would be taken care of through their service to God (sacrifices) and through the tithe

- Partaking of part of the sacrifices
- Partaking of the required tithes—Corn, wine, oil, and flocks

vs. 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*”

2. This was not an option for the people—but was a requirement

Malachi 3:8-10—“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?”

In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

B. The Respected Melchizedek Priesthood

1. When Abraham met this Melchizedek—after his surprise attack against the 3 kings who had taken 5 other kings and their people (including Lot)—it says that he gave Melchizedek tithes of all his spoils

- a. This was over 400 years before the Levitical law of the tithe
- b. Yet Abraham gave tithes to this Melchizedek

NOTE: Abraham DID NOT give these tithes out of obligation—but out of RECOGNIZED HONOR for who this priest really was.

Vs. 4—“Now consider *how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils*”

2. What did Abraham see in this man that made him want to give to Melchizedek his tithes from spoils of war?

- a. We’re not told
- b. All we can say is that Abraham recognized him to be priest of the **MOST HIGH GOD**

NOTE: As I mentioned before—it’s very possible that there were many priests in Abraham’s day. There were priests for every kind of god that men worshipped.

But there must have not been too many priests like Melchizedek. He was one of a kind. He was the priest of the One True God—and Abraham knew it.

3. Paul’s Comparison Between the 2 tithes

- a. The priests of Levi receive tithes **by commandments of the law**—while Melchizedek received tithes out of a **heart of honor and respect**
- b. The priests of Levi **who die** receive tithes of men—But Melchizedek (according to the absence of his genealogical list) **who still lives** received tithes from Abraham

C. The Priests of Levi Honor Melchizedek

NOTE: At this point one might think that Melchizedek and Levi stand at 2 polar ends (almost like enemies). And in

some ways that's true. But Paul wants to make clear that the Levitical priesthood honored Melchizedek's priesthood. They brought honor upon that priesthood in a very significant way.

(vs. 9-10)—“*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.*”

1. When Abraham (who is the Father of Israel) gave tithes to Melchizedek—all those who would come out of Abraham did so as well

a. In some sense—you could say that the whole nation of Israel was tithing to Melchizedek the day Abraham did

i. That included—LEVI

- Which included Aaron
- Which included all the priests throughout all of Israel's history
- All of them paid tithes of honor to the priest Melchizedek

2. So when Abraham was recognizing the greatness of Melchizedek (being greater than himself) the priesthood of Aaron was doing so as well

3. The Priesthood of Melchizedek was greater than the priesthood of Aaron

1. It is a Universal Priesthood
2. It is a Royal Priesthood
3. It is a Righteous and Peaceful Priesthood
4. It is a Personal Priesthood
5. It is an Eternal Priesthood
6. It is a Respected Priesthood

VII. It Was a Better Priesthood (vs. 6b-7)—“*and blessed him that had the promises. 7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.*”

A. Melchizedek Blessed Abraham

NOTE: We are not told what Abraham knew about Melchizedek and what Melchizedek knew of Abraham (and all the promises that God had for Abraham)

1. Because of the promises that God had made to Abraham—**it could be said that Abraham was the greatest man alive**

- a. There was no other person that had received such promises as Abraham did
- b. And since Abraham was the greatest man alive—all his people who would come from him would make up the greatest nation in the world

2. But when Abraham met Melchizedek—he tithed to him of all his spoils

a. Making a clear statement that Melchizedek was greater than he was

3. Melchizedek blessed Abraham—*“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”*

a. And one who blesses another—is considered greater than the one who received the blessing

b. Like a king blessing one of his subjects or a Father blessing his son

c. The one who does the blessing is the greater

d. Both Abraham’s tithe and Melchizedek’s blessing pointed to the greatness of Melchizedek over Abraham

B. Abraham the Less—Aaron the Less

1. Since Abraham is less—all those who came after him are less

2. The priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the priesthood of Aaron

3. And since Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek—then his priesthood is greater than Aaron’s

CONCLUSION:

- 1. It is a Universal Priesthood**
- 2. It is a Royal Priesthood**
- 3. It is a Righteous and Peaceful Priesthood**
- 4. It is a Personal Priesthood**
- 5. It is an Eternal Priesthood**
- 6. It is a Respected Priesthood**
- 7. It is a Better Priesthood**

APPLICATION:

To the believing Hebrews, their struggle was the OT priesthood found in the person of Aaron.

Those who are believers in here, our struggle may not be an old religion, but it definitely could be an OLD LIFE. Though we have been saved out of that old life, we from time to time continue to struggle with it. The answer to that struggle is no different than the answer to the Jews of Paul’s day. It is JESUS CHRIST.

He is superior to all. We need to look to Him for all we need.