

Hebrews Chapter 7

1 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;

Before we get into the text tonight there are some points of interest we want to see about this man Melchisedec. First of all there are 2 references in the Old Testament bearing his name. Genesis 14:18 and Psalm 110:4. We will look at both references in this chapter. His name appears in the New Testament 9 times and all in the book of Hebrews. Now let's look at the text. First he's described as king of Salem. Him being a king and a priest is quite unusual for a priest and especially a Levitical priest since there were no kingly priest under the Levitical priesthood. This king-priest role makes a perfect **type** of Christ who is both king and priest. He was king of Salem. Salem was the ancient name for Jerusalem which is clearly seen in Psalm 76:1-2.

Psalm 76:1-2

1 To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm [or] Song of Asaph. In Judah [is] God known: his name [is] great in Israel.

2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

He was also described as a priest of the most high God, meaning that God is the possessor of Heaven and Earth. Now we go into the 14 chapter of Genesis and examine the record that the writer of Hebrews is referring to in this chapter. He obviously skipped portions of the events of Melchisedec's life because he was trying to prove the point of the eternity of the priestly ministry of Christ Jesus.

Genesis 14:14-20

14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained [servants], born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued [them] unto Dan. {armed: or, led forth} {trained: or, instructed}

15 And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which [is] on the left hand of Damascus.

16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that [were] with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which [is] the king's dale.

18 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. And he gave him tithes of all.

That's it friends, he's gone. That's all we see of Melchisedec.

Back to Hebrews 7:2

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;

We saw the giving of the tenth part of all in Genesis 14:20. Abraham gave a tenth part of the spoils or the top of the heap to Melchisedec. We will see more of this in a moment. Second, the name, Melchisedec, means king of righteousness. He was called king of peace as well. So we see that Melchisedec was a king, he ruled righteously and peacefully. Keep this in mind that Melchisedec is only a type and as great as this man was, he was still inferior to the ministry of Christ.

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.

There was no written genealogy of this man. There is no record of his birth or death. He comes on the scene in scripture and he goes off the scene. Because of this, he is likened to Christ or resembled Christ, in that he had a continuous priesthood. The text does not say that he was Christ.

4 Now consider how great this man [was], unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

There are some interesting points that need to be brought out from this verse. First of all, The priesthood of Melchisedec was superior to that of Levi. Abraham gave Melchisedec a tenth of the spoils, the top of the heap, the best. This Abraham did as an expression of thanksgiving to God. It also shows that tithing existed before the Mosaic Law required it and it was voluntary.

Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, recognized the spiritual dignity that Melchisedec projected. There was something about the character of Melchisedec that Abraham recognized that caused him to give him the tenth of the spoils of war.

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:

The Levites received tithes from the people for their living. The Lord established it this way. In other words, the law required the descendants of Levi who became priests to collect a tenth from their brothers, even though their brothers are descended from Abraham.

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

Melchisedec was not a part of the Levitical priesthood which formation happened hundreds of years after Abraham. Melchisedec's priesthood was greater in that Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils to Melchisedec, who in turn blessed Abraham.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

Melchisedec revealed himself to be superior to Abraham by blessing him and to this there is no dispute. The one receiving the blessing is the lesser of the two. The one who does the blessing is greater than the one who is blessed.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he [receiveth them], of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

The Levitical order contained dying men. One order of priest followed after another. One died, another came to fulfill the role of priest. Melchisedec had a priesthood that was alive. In **type**, his priesthood is eternal and thus superior to the Levitical priesthood.

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.

The point of these verses is this, Abraham, the father of the Levites and the nation Israel, paid tithes to Melchisedec and because of that, through Abraham, Levi also paid tithes to Melchisedec, so to speak. In doing so, not only was Melchisedec greater than Abraham, but greater than Levi and the priesthood that bore his name.

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?

The writer, having established the superiority of the priestly ministry of Melchisedec over the Levitical priesthood, will now show the superiority of the priestly ministry of Christ Jesus over both. Perfection, as we have seen in this book, refers to salvation. Perfection is the New Testament sacrifice, it is salvation through the sacrifice of Christ, and the completeness of His entire work for the believer. If the Levitical priesthood and the Mosaic law could bring a person into salvation, reconciliation and access to God, then there was no need for another priest to come **after the order of Melchisedec**. But the fact that there was one who came after the order of Melchisedec proved the failure of the Levitical priesthood and the Mosaic law to provide a complete and comprehensive salvation that only Christ, our great High Priest, provides. This is why I said when we were in chapter 6, **“The act of abandoning Judaism was the pre-requisite to that of going on unto perfection.”** All dependence on O.T. sacrificial systems must go and then an embracing of the “perfection”, at that point began. This truth is clearly seen in chapter 10:1-14 (read).

Hebrews 10:1-14

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.

The law could not save because it was a shadow of the reality (Salvation through Christ) and not the reality itself. The word, perfect, refers to salvation.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

If the Old Testament Levitical system and the sacrifices been sufficient to bring a person to this so-great salvation and in access to God, then they would have stopped once salvation and access to God was accomplished. The fact that Jews to whom this writer refers to at that moment, were still offering up useless sacrifices which were unable to free a man from sin proved its inability, its failure. (7:11)

3 But in those [sacrifices there is] a remembrance again [made] of sins every year.

4 For [it is] not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and [sacrifices] for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and [offering] for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure [therein]; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

The first covenant was abolished so that the new covenant (New Testament) would stand. This is why these Jews needed to abandon The Old covenant because it was finished. The shadow was no longer needed since the reality (Christ) was already here.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all].

This word, sanctified, means to be set apart. In this verse it refers to being saved

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

Old Testament shadows that typified the final work of Christ, never removed the guilt, penalty or power of sin.

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

The text clearly states that the sacrifice of Christ Jesus saved forever, those who were separated to Him.

Go back to chapter 7:12

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

The word, changed, means to replace one thing with another or to transpose 2 things. For a Jewish reader of this epistle, and a Jew wanting Christianity in this age, this meant **the end of Judaism.**

Christianity is not an extension of Judaism, as some teach today.

Christianity is superior to Judaism.

The replacing of the old priesthood with the eternal priesthood of Christ also meant a replacement of the Old Covenant with the New Covenant which was required.