

Lesson 6

The Better Hope

Hebrews 7:1-28

We saw in Lesson Five that it is the Lord who causes our faith to grow in Him. Take time to pray and invite the Holy Spirit into your study of God's Word, asking Him to continue to mature you in your faith.

Melchizedek: A Priest of God Most High

In Hebrews 7, the author resumes his discussion of Melchizedek after completing his warning in chapter 6. You can reread Hebrews 5:1-10 to remember what we've already seen of Jesus' priesthood.

Read Hebrews 7:1-28.

A **type of Christ** is a historical character, event or institution, which is symbolic to some degree of Christ (MacArthur, 172). Often the character of Joseph in Genesis 37-50 is seen as a type of Christ. Joseph was not Jesus, but some of his actions remind us of Jesus' later actions. A **Christophany**, in contrast, is an appearance by Christ Himself before His incarnation as Jesus of Nazareth (MacArthur, 173). The appearance of the man who identified himself as the "captain of the host of the LORD" (Joshua 5:13-15) is one occurrence that is often understood to be a Christophany. Melchizedek, who is introduced in the story of Abraham in Genesis 14:18-20, is understood by some to be a type of Christ and by others to be a Christophany.

1. Compare Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20) to Joshua's encounter with the "captain of the host of the LORD" (Joshua 5:13-15). Does this suggest to you that Melchizedek is a type of Christ or a Christophany?

Whether Melchizedek was a Christophany or a type, we can gain greater understanding of Jesus' priesthood by looking at him as the author of Hebrews suggests. One thing is certain: as we learned in lesson 4, all priests are called by God, and Melchizedek was no exception. The historical account of Melchizedek's interaction with Abraham is recorded in Genesis 14:17-20.

2. Read all of Genesis 14. Briefly record the context of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek. What has just happened?

"[Jesus] is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

Hebrews 7:25

Now focus on Genesis 14:17-20 and Hebrews 7:1-10.

3. What are Melchizedek's two titles given in Hebrews 7:1 and Genesis 14:18?

4. From Hebrews 7:2, what are the meanings of Melchizedek's names?

5. What did Melchizedek do for Abraham in Genesis 14:18-20?

6. How did Abraham respond? Was he under any requirement to do so?

7. How is Melchizedek portrayed as like Christ? (See Hebrews 7:3)

Read Hebrews 7:4-10.

8. How is Melchizedek portrayed as greater than Abraham in Hebrews 7:6-7?

9. How is Melchizedek's priesthood shown to be greater than the Levitical priesthood in Hebrews 7:8-10? Pay particular attention to the tithes that the Levites paid.

10. Write the words of Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham from Genesis 14:19-20:

The Bringing of a Better Hope

Read Hebrews 7:11-22.

11. According to Hebrews 7:11, what do we see that the Levitical priesthood was unable to do? What was needed as a result?

12. From Hebrews 7:12, what did a change of priesthood necessitate?

13. Of the twelve tribes of Israel, the Levites were appointed priests. From what line did Jesus come (Hebrews 7:14)?
 - ❖ How do you see Jesus prophetically spoken of by Jacob/Israel in his blessing of Judah in Genesis 49:8-12?

14. According to what did the Levitical priests become priests (Hebrews 7:5a and 16a)? According to what did Jesus and Melchizedek become priests (Hebrews 7:16b)?

As we also saw in Hebrews 5, the Levitical priesthood was a part of the Mosaic Law.

15. What does the author of Hebrews mean by calling the Law “weak and useless” in Hebrews 7:18? See Hebrews 7:19.

16. Why did God institute the Law? See Galatians 3:19 and 24.

17. Who do you think is the “better hope” of Hebrews 7:19? What are we able to do through Him?

Prepare for Life Question:

“[Jesus] is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him” (Hebrews 7:25). His sacrifice is enough. His salvation is sure. He lives to intercede for you.

“God is not a man, that He should lie, not a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” Numbers 23:19

25. When has God been faithful to His Word in your life? How do you need to remember and rely on His faithfulness in your life today?

Lecture Notes:
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