

## **Hebrews 7:1-10**

### *Melchizedek's Significance as a Type of Christ*

**Jordan Emswiler**

10 November 2019

#### **I. Review:**

- a. The author urges his readership to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (6:12).
  
- b. The author uses Abraham as an example of one who through perseverance inherited the promises (6:15).
  
- c. The author states that God swore to reward His servant Abraham for His faithfulness as well as the faithful heirs of promise (6:17).
  
- d. The readership must look to Christ as their High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek in order to lay hold of this hope set before them (6:18-20)

#### **II. 7:1-10 Melchizedek's Significance as a Type of Christ is Proven Through:**

- a. **7:1-3 His Continual Priesthood**
  - i. Who is this Melchizedek?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - ii. What province is Salem?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - iii. In what sense was Melchizedek a priest of God?

1. He blessed Abraham (7:1)
  
2. He received a tithe from Abraham (7:2)

iv. What is the significance of Melchizedek meaning “king of righteousness” and king of Salem meaning “king of peace”?

b. **7:4-10** And His Superior Priesthood

- i. The author’s argumentation of the superiority of Melchizedek’s priesthood as over the Levitical priesthood is as follows:
  1. The ancestor is greater than the descendant (cf. John 8:56-59)
  2. Abraham is the original ancestor of the Jews and the Levites are his descendants
  3. The Levites under the law receive tithes from their brethren (7:5)
  4. Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek, one who does not come from the line of Aaron (7:6)
  5. Melchizedek further shows his superiority to Abraham by blessing him (7:7)
  6. The Levites who receive tithes, paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham (7:9-10)
  7. Therefore, the Levitical priesthood paid a tithe to the Melchizedekian priesthood proving that the former is inferior to the latter

III. **Application:**

## Teacher's Notes on Hebrews 7:1-10

### *Melchizedek's Significance as a Type of Christ*

**Jordan Emswiler**

10 November 2019

#### IV. Review:

- a. The author urges his readership to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (6:12).
- b. The author uses Abraham as an example of one who through perseverance inherited the promises (6:15).
  - i. The “promises” mentioned here do **not** refer to “going to heaven when you die.” The author in 6:14 is quoting from Genesis 22:17 which is after Abraham’s justification in Genesis 15:6. Paul makes it crystal clear that Abraham was saved spiritually from eternal hell in Romans 4:1-5. Abraham obtained this promise only *after* he had obeyed God in offering up his son Isaac.
    1. According to Genesis 22:16-18 the promise was that Abraham would receive a blessing which included:
      - a. The innumerable multiplication of his descendants
      - b. All the nations would be blessed through him
      - c. His descendants would inherit the cities of their enemies
    2. However, the author will later say that Abraham has not yet received this promise because he awaits the world to come where the Messiah will set up His kingdom (Heb. 11:9-13). In the meantime, all heirs according to this promise i.e. all believers in Christ (cf. Rom. 4:11-18; Gal 3:29) have the opportunity to inherit the promises like Abraham if they persevere to the end in faithfulness to God in the midst of suffering (Heb. 11:39).
  - c. The author states that God swore to reward His servant Abraham for His faithfulness as well as the faithful heirs of promise (6:17).

- d. The readership must look to Christ as their High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek in order to lay hold of this hope set before them (6:18-20)

V. **7:1-10** Melchizedek's Significance as a Type of Christ is Proven Through:

a. **7:1-3** His Continual Priesthood

i. Who is this Melchizedek?

1. The Pre-Incarnate Christ?

- a. Probably not. Melchizedek is **like** the Son of God, not God himself.

2. An Angelic Being?

- a. Maybe. This would explain why he has no father or mother. However, angels are not eternal in the sense of never having a beginning which "having no beginning of days" would indicate. But this apparent contradiction could be resolved by taking this phrase to mean he had a pre-temporal origin outside of the creation of the physical world. A major problem with this view is answering the question of how an angelic being could remain a priest of God forever alongside Christ who is declared a High Priest forever. Furthermore, angels are not suited to be a priest for human kind because every high priest appointed for men is taken from among men (cf. 5:1).

3. A Human Priest-King Who Serves as a Type of Christ?

- a. Most likely. If Melchizedek is taken as a type of Christ, then all these apparent contradictions melt away. Since there is no genealogical record concerning this mysterious figure, it would appear that he has no father or mother and therefore no documented birth date or death date. He remains a priest continually as far as human memory is concerned. These characteristics of Melchizedek prefigure that of the Christ i.e. His eternity and His perpetual priesthood.

ii. What province is Salem?

1. "Salem" is an older name for Jerusalem (cf. Ps. 76:2, Gen. 14:18)
2. Therefore, Melchizedek was both a priest and king over Jerusalem.
3. This is significant because the Davidic kings later reigned over Jerusalem and it is promised that the Messiah will one day reign from Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6). However, unlike Melchizedek, the Messiah's rule will not be limited to Jerusalem only, but will extend to all the nations (Ps. 2:7-8 cf. Heb. 1:5).
4. Melchizedek makes for the perfect typological figure in order to demonstrate the duality of the Messiah as priest and king.

iii. In what sense was Melchizedek a priest of God?

1. He blessed Abraham (7:1)
  - a. Part of the priest's role in representing those under his ministry to God was to bless in the name of the Lord forever (1 Chron. 23:13; Num. 6:23, 27).
  - b. Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham invoked God's blessing upon the Jewish patriarch.
  - c. Furthermore, this blessing had a prophetic element inasmuch that it affirmed God's blessing of Abraham to give his posterity the land of Canaan which is significant because Melchizedek was currently presiding over the promised land as king. This blessing implied that Melchizedek devoutly acquiesced to God's divine will in giving the land to Abraham's descendants.
2. He received a tithe from Abraham (7:2)
  - a. Abraham saw it fit to give Melchizedek a tenth of all the spoils from his military victory due to him being a representative of God.

iv. What is the significance of Melchizedek meaning “king of righteousness” and king of Salem meaning “king of peace”?

a. Melchizedek was known as one who reigns as king and priest over his domain in righteousness and peace similar to that of Christ who will rule from Jerusalem in peace (Is. 9:6-7) and righteousness (Heb. 1:9).

b. **7:4-10** And His Superior Priesthood

i. The author’s argumentation of the superiority of Melchizedek’s priesthood as over the Levitical priesthood is as follows:

1. The ancestor is greater than the descendant (cf. John 8:56-59)
2. Abraham is the original ancestor of the Jews and the Levites are his descendants
3. The Levites under the law receive tithes from their brethren (7:5)
4. Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek, one who does not come from the line of Aaron (7:6)
5. Melchizedek further shows his superiority to Abraham by blessing him (7:7)
6. The Levites who receive tithes, paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham (7:9-10)
7. Therefore, the Levitical priesthood paid a tithe to the Melchizedekian priesthood proving that the former is inferior to the latter

## VI. **Application:**

a. The Jewish readership of the Book of Hebrews was experiencing persecution for worshipping Christ and were pressured to return to the old yet familiar way of relating to God through the Levitical priesthood and through the offering of the blood of lambs to cover their sins. The author informs his readers that Christ has become their High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. According to

Hebrews 7:1-10, this priestly order is far superior to the Aaronic priestly order and therefore the readership must hold fast to Christ as their High Priest for only He can provide what they need to inherit the promises and share in the Messiah's victory over their enemies.

- b. Before coming to faith in Christ, how did you relate to God?
  - i. Was it through legalism? Did you try to merit God's approval by good behavior so that He would make you His child?
  - ii. Was it through escapism? Did you try to shut the thought of God out completely by watching movies, playing video games, or pursuing a hobby?
  - iii. Was it through hedonism? Did you try to fill the void between you and God by indulging in the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life?
- c. After coming to faith in Christ, have there been times where you have experienced pressure to return to this old yet familiar way of relating to God?
  - i. Perhaps when you experienced a moral failure you set out to regain your justification before God all over again by increasing your ministry efforts instead of simply confessing your sins to the High Priest and having Him forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness.
  - ii. Perhaps when you had anxiety over that trying circumstance, you watched 5 hours of your favorite TV show on Netflix rather than making your request known to God through prayer.
  - iii. Maybe when you experienced the searing pain of a marital partner's infidelity, you turned to vice for comfort rather than turning to the High Priest who is able to empathize with your suffering because He too experienced the heart break of a friend's betrayal.

Whatever the circumstance, you can find consolation in Jesus Christ your Great High Priest. The comfort He provides, the help that He gives, the love that He demonstrates is greater than any other "priest" you may want to take refuge in. Jesus Christ's High Priestly ministry provides everything you need to finish the race set before you so that you by faith and endurance will inherit the promises just as Abraham did.