

# MOVING TOWARD MATURITY

## What's the Deal with Melchizedek?

TEXT: Heb.6:20 - 7:10

INTRODUCTION: Do you like mysteries? Mysteries told either in book, film, or TV? I bring you a mystery from the book of Hebrews this morning. The mystery actually begins way back in Genesis during the days of Abraham.

Now when Abram came back with all the goods and people that he recaptured from the battle with the kings, he stopped by a city named Jebus. Like all the rest of the land of Canaan where God took Abram, it was a pagan city. But Abram stops there and someone comes out to see him. This man is both a king and a priest. He is called the King of Salem which is intriguing because the city name is Jebus. However, hundreds of years later, the city would be renamed. It would be called Jeru-salem, Jerusalem. This man was also a priest. You say, "So what? Why is that a big deal?" Because he is called a priest of "The God Most High." Remember, this is a pagan city in a pagan land. The only believers in the Most High God are Abram, his family, and perhaps a few individuals he has led to faith. Everybody else, including the Jebusites occupying this city, worship the idols of the land. So how do you have a priest to the Most High God?

But that is not all of the mystery. This King-Priest comes out to meet Abram, and he knows him. And he brings out bread and wine to serve to Abram. Again, so what? Bread and wine were common enough in that day as now. But did you know that in all the 39 books of the Old Testament, this is the only time that it records the serving of "bread and wine." Now to those of you who know your New Testament, this ought to send a tingle up your spine.

And then, this King-Priest blesses Abram and declares that Abram won the war with the five kings because The God Most High gave Abram the victory. And then another strange thing happened. Abram gave this King-Priest a tithe, 10%, of everything he had captured in the war with the kings.

The name of this King-Priest was Melchizedek.

Now here is another part of the mystery. In the next 500 pages of Holy Scripture, this mysterious Melchizedek is not even mentioned! And then all of a sudden, the Holy Spirit gives King David a Psalm about the Messiah and compares Him to Melchizedek. We have to go another 500 pages forward in the Scripture to find another mention of this mysterious King and Priest. And guess where that lands us. Right! Squarely in the middle of the book of Hebrews. Melchizedek is mentioned in Hebrews, chapters 5 & 6,

but not explained. Only in chapter 7 do we start to receive clues that will lead to the solving of this mystery, but only after the clues deepen our wonder even more.

For now the mystery is two fold.

1. **Who is this King-Priest named Melchizedek?**
2. **What has Melchizedek to do with believers moving toward maturity?**

That is why I have called this message “What’s the Deal with Melchizedek?”

We begin to read with the words we read last week.

Hebrews 6:19-7:10 <sup>19</sup> This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence *behind* the veil, <sup>20</sup> where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. <sup>1</sup> For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, <sup>2</sup> to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," <sup>3</sup> without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually. <sup>4</sup> Now consider how great this man *was*, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. <sup>5</sup> And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; <sup>6</sup> but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. <sup>7</sup> Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. <sup>8</sup> Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he *receives them*, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. <sup>9</sup> Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, <sup>10</sup> for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

## I. **WHAT DOES THE OLD TESTAMENT SAY ABOUT MELCHIZEDEK?**

Gen. 14:18-20 <sup>18</sup> Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God Most High. <sup>19</sup> And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; <sup>20</sup> And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

### A. **His offices**

1. King of Salem
2. Priest of God Most High

### B. **His name**

1. **King of Salem = King of Peace**
2. **Melek - king;**

3. Tzadik - righteousness
4. Melchizedek = King of Righteousness

#### C. His actions

1. Served bread and wine
2. Blessed Abram
3. First to call the Lord “God Most High”
4. First recorded to receive a tithe (10%)

#### D. His unusual characteristics

1. Melchizedek comes suddenly on the scene.
2. He is King-Priest in a Jebusite, pagan city, destined to become Jerusalem, the city of God.
3. Abraham recognizes Melchizedek as his spiritual superior.
4. Melchizedek acts with divine authority; He blesses Abram.
5. One thousand years later David said that the Messiah would be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Psalm 110:4 <sup>4</sup> The LORD has sworn And will not relent, “You *are* a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

## II. WHO IS THIS MELCHIZEDEK?

### A. Unique qualities

Heb. 7:3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

1. No father, mother, or genealogy – no human ancestry
2. No beginning of days
3. No end of life
4. Like the Son of God
5. Melchizedek continues to be a priest forever.

### B. Some say Melchizedek was just a man who was a type (an advance picture) of Christ.

### C. Some say that Melchizedek was Shem, one of the sons of Noah and the father of the godly line that would lead to Abram, Judah, and ultimately to Christ.

- D. In response to these two suggestions we ask, “How could Melchizedek be just a man?”**
1. How can a mere man not have father or mother?
  2. How can a mere man have no beginning of days or end of life?
  3. Who is like the Son of God?
  4. Who remains a priest forever?
- E. The only person in all the universe who meets these descriptions is Jesus.**
1. At the time Melchizedek appeared to Abraham, Christ had neither father nor mother, and no genealogy in that He was eternally pre-existent.
  2. For the same reason He had No beginning of days, no end of life.
  3. He alone is like the Son of God.
  4. He alone remains a priest forever.
- F. The appearance of Melchizedek is a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ.**  
This means that Christ appeared to Abraham as Melchizedek before Christ entered human flesh to come into this world as Jesus of Nazareth.

### **III. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MELCHIZEDEK’S RECEIVING TITHES FROM ABRAHAM?**

- A. It shows the superiority of the high priesthood of Christ over the high priesthood coming from Levi, which is the Old Testament priesthood.**
1. Levi was a descendant of Abraham.
  2. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek.
  3. Therefore Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek, because Levi was in the loins of Abraham. In modern terms, we would say that Levi was in Abraham genetically.
  4. The greater always receives tithes from the lesser.
  5. Therefore, the priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the priesthood of Levi.
  6. Therefore, the high priesthood of Jesus is superior to the high priesthood of Levi, because Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, not after the order of Levi.
- B. It shows the priority in time of Christ’s priesthood over the Old Testament priesthood.**
1. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek more than 400 years before the Levitical priesthood was established!

**C. It gives us the “big picture” of God’s plan. Christianity did not flow merely from Judaism, but from God’s eternal plan that predates Judaism and of which Judaism is but a part.**

**D. It shows us that Jesus, our anchor of the soul, is indeed sure and steadfast.**

We saw last week that this is God’s way of keeping us from drifting.

- Keeping our minds tuned into truth rather than the deceit of the evil one
- Keeping our feelings subject to faith, responding to truth, rather than being tossed about by every new idea blown in by the wind
- Keeping our decisions based on righteousness that leads to our good and God’s glory

How can we be certain that Jesus will always be that anchor to our soul and that modern times and a changing world will not keep the anchor holding in the currents of this century?

That is why chapter 7 began with that little word “For”

Hebrews 6:19-7:1 <sup>19</sup> This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence *behind* the veil, <sup>20</sup> where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. <sup>1</sup> **For** this Melchizedek ...

**Jesus, is before time and has no end.**

**Jesus is the King of Peace and the King of Righteousness.**

**Jesus is the forever High Priest who brings man into the presence of God.**

And this **Jesus is the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul for those who trust in Him.**

**CONCLUSION: Is Jesus the anchor of your soul? Have you trusted Him? Are you walking with Him?**