

Lesson Twelve — Melchizedek, King/Priest

Day One — A Glimpse Ahead

Day Two — The Man Melchizedek

Day Three — Levitical Priesthood vs. the Priesthood of Melchizedek

Day Four — A Recap

Day Five — Review

Last week we learned some detail concerning *our hope* through studying the promises made to Abraham. In the next three days we will see how these things are connected to Christ when He comes as King/Priest after the order of Melchizedek. We are coming upon a tough section of Scripture, and apart from seeking God through prayer, we will not come to an understanding of what is taught in these next three and a half chapters. Please be sure to pray as you begin. Pray for your own understanding, and the understanding of the others in your group. Also pray for your discussion leader. Seeking the Lord will be key in these next days of study.

Day One — A Glimpse Ahead

Today's study is going to take discipline. I want you to spend your time reading the next three and a half chapters of Hebrews from your sheets in the Appendix (7:1-10:25). You will need to read through this portion of Hebrews **three complete times**, making notes of what you see each time you read through it. Like I have said before, the more familiar you are with the text, the more the Holy Spirit will be able to teach you. (Please don't shirk this reading, as you will be tempted to do! It will prove very beneficial.)

Be sure to pray first.

Grab the sheets in the Appendix, and read Hebrews 7:1-10:25. Every time you read through the chapters, you may want to make very brief notes of what you learn. But concentrate more on the reading than on the note taking. (I realize I could have consolidated the chart, but decided to lay it out this way in the hopes of you reading the text three complete times.)

Understanding Hebrews — Pressing Toward Maturity

Lesson Twelve Melchizedek, King/Priest

First time:

Hebrews 7 —

Hebrews 8 —

Hebrews 9 —

Hebrews 10:1-25 —

Second time:

Hebrews 7 —

Hebrews 8 —

Hebrews 9 —

Hebrews 10:1-25 —

Third time:

Hebrews 7—

Hebrews 8 —

Hebrews 9 —

Hebrews 10:1-25 —

Today was a lot of work. You did a great job! I know this day's work will go a long way in helping you come to understand what these chapters are dealing with.

See you tomorrow.

Day Two — This Man Melchizedek

Today and tomorrow we will cover Hebrews chapter seven in detail. With the background you received yesterday, you should soon be able to see how easily these things fit together. After you pray for your study time today, read chapter seven carefully.

It is interesting that the author of Hebrews had such a highly inspired regard for Melchizedek. His regard for this man was so great that he desired to tell his readers *much* about him (5:11), in spite of the fact that there are only five verses in the entire Bible on Melchizedek outside of Hebrews! The first four are found toward the end of Genesis chapter fourteen, and one verse is found in Psalm 110. So what is so important about Melchizedek that the author wants to say?

It is in the type/antitype picture which brings the scope of the importance of Melchizedek into proper perspective. And this must be understood if we are to gain a clear understanding of the importance of this portion of Hebrews.

Within the lines of Hebrews chapter seven, we get a more extensive description of Melchizedek than we can find any other place in Scripture. But the details in chapter seven rest upon that which the Bible has previously revealed. So before we run through chapter seven again, let's see what we can learn about Melchizedek from

the Old Testament. (I know that some of this has been previously covered in the lectures, but remember, review is a good thing!)

Genesis 14

17 Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tenth of all.

Make a list of the facts you see about Melchizedek. More will be added to this list, so I have left adequate space.

The only other place in all of Scripture that deals with Melchizedek, besides here in Genesis chapter fourteen and these several places in the Book of Hebrews is in Psalm 110. We have already looked at that Psalm in your Appendix, but let's look at it again. Pull Psalm 110 out of your Appendix and study through it again. Add to your list any new information you may see.

One thing which must be dealt with if we are going to correctly understand the type/antitype picture of Melchizedek is the word *forever* found in verse four of Psalm 110. The author of Hebrews quotes this verse several times, "*Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*" The English translation *forever* is not a good one here. It would be correct to understand the thought as not having so much to do with eternity as it is having to do with the coming age. *Forever* would be better translated *with respect to the age*. The Greek word used in this passage is *singular*, not plural. Christ will reign as King and Priest in the order of Melchizedek *for the coming age*. At the end of *that* age, He will offer up His kingdom to the Father, joining His Throne with the Father's, that God may be all in all (*cf.* 1 Cor. 15:25-28; Rev. 22:1-5).

It is interesting to see that so little information concerning Melchizedek is given to us in Scripture prior to the Book of Hebrews, yet the author, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, makes this statement in Hebrews 5:11, "...concerning him we have much to tell." Yet the recipients would not/could not hear it. What would be the *so much to say*, when we literally only have four verses which tell about him (Gen. 14:18-20, Ps. 110:4)?

Again, it is in the fact that **Melchizedek is a type of Christ in Christ's future ministry**. And Christ's future ministry is alluded to time and time and time again throughout Scriptures in a variety of ways. Who

Melchizedek was, and what he did, represents Who Christ is and what He will do in the Messianic Era. And the author had much to teach them about these things, but they had chosen to become sluggish in their hearing, and until they accept the challenge to go on to maturity (the third warning), they could not yet be taught these things.

Let's take a closer look at the detail given to us about Melchizedek in Hebrews chapter seven.

Hebrews 7

1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. 3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually. 4 Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. 5 And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. 6 But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham, and blessed the one who had the promises. 7 But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. 8 And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. 9 And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, 10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Add new information to your list on Melchizedek on the previous page.

Melchizedek is called king of Salem (King of Jerusalem, the City of Peace) and King of Righteousness. He is not only a king, he is also the priest of the Most High God. And remember that Melchizedek is a type of Christ in His coming kingdom. There are two facets mentioned as characteristics in the reign of Melchizedek — righteousness and peace. Scriptures prophecy that these same two characteristics will be together in the reign of Christ. Righteousness and peace are inseparably linked together in Scripture when characterizing the reign of Christ. Righteousness and peace will be the presiding characteristics in the Messianic Era, when Christ comes as King/Priest after the order of Melchizedek, who was the king of peace, king of righteousness. Let's look at a couple places in Scripture where righteousness and peace are placed together. Be sure to pay attention to the context and the setting.

King David mentions peace and righteousness together in Psalm 72:2, 3. I have the entire Psalm printed in the Appendix. We'll read it now. Watch for the wonderful description it gives of the Messianic Era, when Christ will be the King of Peace, King of Righteousness.

NOTES from Psalm 72:

Another Psalm which speaks of righteousness and peace being together is Psalm 85 (also found in the Appendix). This Psalm speaks of righteousness and peace as having *kissed each other* in v. 10. Grasp the flavor of the whole scene. This Psalm depicts the time of Jacob's trouble, and then the subsequent peace brought in with the coming kingdom.

NOTES from Psalm 85:

Below are few more passages where righteousness and peace are characteristics placed side by side. And they are seen together during the coming age.

Isaiah 32:17 And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever. **18** Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation, And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;

Romans 14: 17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

2 Timothy 2: 22 Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

James 3:18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

NOTES from these passages:

Melchizedek, as the king of righteousness and king of peace, represents Christ in His future ministry, and the characteristics of Melchizedek's kingdom represents the characteristics of Christ's coming kingdom. Righteous-

ness and peace do not presently co-exist in this kingdom under Satan. But they will co-exist during the reign of Christ, when He comes as King/Priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Moving on to more detail describing Melchizedek, we see that the author of Hebrews, inspired by the Holy Spirit, picks up a few details. He was *without father and mother, genealogy, or beginning or end of life, and was made like the Son of God*. Is this to be taken literally or figuratively? Let's think it through.

The Author of Scripture masterfully chooses what to have the pen bearers of Scripture write. It was no mistake that Moses didn't write any more about Melchizedek than what he wrote in Genesis chapter fourteen. What the Holy Spirit *doesn't say* about Melchizedek is as important as what He *does say* about him. His silence on this subject must be with purpose.

While we must recognize that Melchizedek was a mere man, born to a father and mother, and that he did in fact have a beginning and an end to life (otherwise he would BE the Son of God), these facts are held in silence because of Whom Melchizedek represents. Melchizedek was *made like the Son of God*; he was **not** the Son of God. So when Moses saw fit (through Divine inspiration) to withhold these details, it left the author of Hebrews the ability to use this fact as a case in point. Melchizedek *was made like the son of God*. And it also points to the fact that since there is no record of his death, he continues as a priest forever. This is all to point to Christ's future ministry, as *a priest forever* [lit., *with respect to the age* (singular)] *according the order of Melchizedek*. The Holy Spirit has inspired all of Scripture with purpose.

Continuing to look at the description of Melchizedek found in the Book of Hebrews, we see that he was greater than Abraham, whose name God had promised to make great among the nations. Again we see Melchizedek's representation of Christ. The One coming is greater than all, even Abraham.

Melchizedek blessed Abraham, and the lesser was blessed by the greater. Why would this be the case? Why would the greater bless the lesser, even to the point of the greater one serving the lesser bread and wine?

The answer is found in prophecies given concerning Jesus in His second coming.

Isaiah 25:6 The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.

Can you even wait???

Matthew 22 (Pay particular attention to v. 29.)

26 While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. 29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

Mark 14:25 "Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Luke 22

16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

17 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves; **18** for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes.”

Luke 22

29 and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you **30** that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And finally a verse in Revelation:

Revelation 7:17 (KJV) For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Jesus Christ will come again, and the Greater will serve the lesser bread and wine. Oh for that Glorious Day!

We have covered enough for the day. This is pretty heavy. Ask the Lord to help you to meditate upon these things throughout the day. You will be blessed for it. You’re doing a great job! Keep it up. Ask the Lord to make you more and more mindful of that coming day.

Day Three — The Levitical Priesthood vs. the Priesthood of Melchizedek

Our goal for the day is to complete Hebrews chapter seven. Pray that you will receive insight from the Holy Spirit as you continue studying the type and antitype of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7

11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? **12** For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. **13** For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. **14** For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. **15** And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of

Melchizedek, 16 who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is witnessed of Him, “THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.” 18 For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness 19 (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. 20 And inasmuch as it was not without an oath 21 (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, “THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, ‘THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER’”); 22 so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant. 23 And the former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers, because they were prevented by death from continuing, 24 but He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently. 25 Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. 26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.

Rephrase the different sections of this passage, as listed below. It may aide you in thinking these things through.

Rephrase vv. 11-14:

Rephrase vv. 15- 19:

Rephrase vv. 20- 24:

Rephrase vv. 25- 28:

There are a few things which might be helpful in understanding as we move forward. We have previously seen that the author of Hebrews frequently compares the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood of Melchizedek. And perhaps in many ways the priesthood of Aaron would have to do with *the elementary things of the Christ*, in the way of preparing us for His coming; while the priesthood of Melchizedek would have more to do with the meat of the Word, looking forward to His actual coming and setting up the kingdom. In that respect, we should see the progression from one priesthood to the other.

But notice that the priesthood of Melchizedek existed even before the priesthood of Aaron, and, as the author of Hebrews points out, the priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than that of Aaron's.

To bring this point home, the author shows that in a sense, even Levi (and subsequently the Levitical priests, of which Aaron was part) offered tithes to Melchizedek, although in their day, the Levitical priests were to receive tithes from the other tribes of Israel. In a sense, Levi and the entire order of this priesthood offered tithes through Abraham, when Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth of the spoil. It was through this offering, even through the loins of Abraham, the Levitical tribe offered tithes to Melchizedek. This is to bear witness that the priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the Levitical priesthood from which came Aaron.

Why is this? And what, then, was the purpose for the Levitical priesthood? We will answer these questions in detail next week, but for now, please understand something extremely important. To miss this, would be to miss very important features in our salvation. **Each priesthood serves as a type of Christ's ministries.** One came before the other, but then, the one which came before, also replaced the one which came after it. (That sounds like a riddle, doesn't it?) But it was all with purpose. (We'll see more on this next week.)

As we close for the day, go back through Hebrews 7:11-28, listing the differences you see between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Melchizedek.

Levitical Priesthood

The Priesthood of Melchizedek

Day Four — A Recap

Last week we detailed the promises God gave to Abraham, and saw how He used Melchizedek, King of Salem and priest of God Most High, in His overall scheme. This week we continued our study of these things and work our way through the three and a half chapters in the Book of Hebrews which have to do with these promises and the covenant God made with His people.

The promises God gave to Abraham have to do with three things. They have to do with 1) descendants, 2) a land, and 3) an inheritance in that land. God promised Abraham that he would have descendants as many as the

stars in the sky, and as many as the sand on seashore. And his descendants in both realms — heaven and earth — will possess the gate of their enemies.

Through Melchizedek (and then later on Mt. Moriah [Gen. 22]), God promised to bless Abraham in both realms, since God created and possesses both the heavens and earth. And while, in Genesis, we can see the specific promises God gave to Abraham in the earthly realm, we know through the Book of Hebrews that Abraham understood something specific about the blessing in the heavenly realm. The author of Hebrews, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, told of Abraham looking forward to the *heavenly* city, whose architect and builder is God (Heb. 11:10).

Abraham and his descendants were to inherit blessings in both realms of God's possession, and through his descendants possessing this inheritance all the nations of the earth will be blessed. The geographical position of the earthly land which his physical descendants were to inherit is spelled out for us in Genesis 15:18ff. It was the land of the Canaanites — a land which the descendants would not inherit until the time had come to fulfillment — and that, only after the descendants of Abraham had been enslaved in another land. God would redeem them and bring them into the promised land.

On the other hand, another portion of the inheritance lay in the heavenlies. Abraham and his descendants were also to have an inheritance in the heavenlies. And since his descendants according to the flesh rejected the offer of the heavenly portion of the inheritance when Christ came the first time, offering the kingdom of the heavens to the nation of Israel, it is now being offered to Abraham's spiritual descendants (descendants grafted into Abraham's family through their positional standing *in Christ*).

And God promised Abraham that his descendants would possess the gates of their enemies in both realms (Gen. 22:17).

Now, let's see what this has to do with the priesthood of Melchizedek and the priesthood of Aaron. We see in Scripture that the priesthood of Melchizedek came before the priesthood of Aaron, and that it will come after, as well, because it is a greater priesthood than that of Aaron. Then why the two different priesthoods?

Melchizedek came to Abraham as a type of Christ as He is to appear in the coming age. He foreshadowed the future work of Christ, who will come as the King of Righteousness, King of Peace and the High Priest of the coming age. And while Christ has already been appointed by God on oath as the King/Priest after the order of Melchizedek, He is not operating in that capacity yet, because the time for that ministry has not yet come.

So what is Christ doing now, and when will He assume His role as the King of Righteousness, King of Peace and High Priest in the order of Melchizedek?

Even though the priesthood of Melchizedek came first, there was a great need for the priesthood after the order of Aaron to appear — the Levitical priesthood. Aaron's ministry not only foreshadowed Christ's present work, but it also served a very distinct purpose for the time in which it existed.

In the process of God revealing His heavenly and earthly promises to Abraham, Melchizedek shows up as a type used by God to teach His people things about the coming era. But that coming era was some four thousand years beyond the time of Melchizedek. And as God promised Abraham, his descendants would be enslaved in a land not their own, He would lead them out, redeeming them from the bondage of slavery, thereafter having need for a constant cleansing from sins, while they made their journey from their point of redemption to the promised land.

On the night of Passover, God redeemed Abraham's descendants from bondage, and they became His people. He brought them to a place in the wilderness called Mt. Sinai where He cut a covenant with them and gave them the law by which they were to live (Exodus chapters 19-31). Though God, through the blood of the paschal

lambs, passed over the sins previously committed (Ro. 3:25), He had need to provide a way for His people to be cleansed from sins that they would continue to commit, being still in a fleshly body.

He told them that His plan for them was that they would be a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:4-6). And with the promises given to Abraham and his descendants for heavenly blessings as well as earthly, the thought should have been in their minds that this earthly kingdom was only part of the overall plan of God for them. They should have looked forward with their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to the heavenly city from which the descendants of Abraham would possess the gates of their enemies even in the heavenlies.

The covenant He cut with them on Mt. Sinai was only to be a temporary covenant, but one that served a particular purpose for the time between Egypt and the coming of Christ, when Christ would fulfill the law and enter into the next phase of God's overall plan for mankind, that of Christ ministering in the heavenly sanctuary for the people of God with His own blood being on the Mercy Seat, no longer requiring a daily or yearly sacrifice for sins.

In the wilderness, God provided a way for them to maintain fellowship with Him, being daily cleansed from sins through the daily sacrifices offered by the priests. Then, one day each year, the sins of the people would be completely atoned for (covered) by the blood of the slain animal, as the high priest entered into the Most Holy Place and poured the blood of the sacrificed animal on the mercy seat. This was the Day of Atonement.

Along with the blood of the sacrificial animal on the mercy seat, the scape goat was also provided as a means of *taking away sin* from the camp of Israel, the same sin which had just been covered over. Both had to be accomplished. The *blood of bulls and goats* could not take away the sin, only offer a covering for the sins of God's redeemed people. Still, a live goat had to *carry away* the sin from the camp, as a dead sacrificed animal could not take away the sins (*cf.* Heb. 10:4).

So the covenant God made with the Children of Israel was to be only for the time between Mt. Sinai to the time when Christ would come and Himself take away the sins of His people by His own death, shed blood, and subsequent life — one Sacrifice for all time, and a resurrected life thereafter.

One thing to note here is that the work of the priests and high priest was only on behalf of the people who were redeemed by the blood of the passover lamb — only on behalf of saved people. The priests of Israel never ministered on behalf of anyone but the people of God. The same is true of the work of Christ in heaven. He presently ministers on behalf of those who have already put faith in the blood of the Passover Lamb (Jesus Christ). In His death on the cross, Jesus fulfilled the entire law concerning sin. The sin of the people prior to their redemption, providing them a means of redemption, and their sin subsequent to redemption, providing them with a continual cleansing, as they confess.

Day Five — Review

With the things from yesterday's recap in mind, would you please read through Hebrews 7:1-10:25 one more time? Notice how much more you understand about these things. God will continue to teach you as you continue to seek. Keep praying for insight, and make notes on your observation worksheet of any new understanding you might have gleaned.

That's it for this week! Thanks for hanging in there.

No new assignment for commentary work. If necessary, continue with the previous weeks' assignment.