

Person (1-3)

Melchizedek

Malchi = king

Tzedek

= righteousness

Salem

-From the same root as *šālôm*, the Hebrew word for "peace"

-Could be Jerusalem

*Ps 76:2

-Could be Shechem

*Gen 33:18

Preeminence (4-10)

Tithes

-Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth (tithe) of the spoils of victory

-Since Levi was a descendent of Abraham, it can be said that he also paid through Abraham

Blessing

-Inferior (Abraham) is blessed by the superior (Melchizedek)

-Also shows that Melchizedek is superior to Levi, since he is a descendent of Abraham.

Perfection (11-14)

-The priesthood and the law are inseparable.

-The law was not capable of making man acceptable before God (2:2)

-The psalmist declared that another priest would come after a different order (110:4)

⁽¹⁾For this **Melchizedek**, ⁽²⁾**king of Salem**, ⁽³⁾**priest** of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and ⁽⁴⁾**blessed him**, ⁽⁵⁾and to him Abraham apportioned a **tenth part of everything**. He is first, by translation of his name, ⁽¹⁾**king of righteousness**, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, ⁽²⁾**king of peace**. ⁽⁶⁾He is **without father or mother or genealogy**, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but **resembling** the Son of God **he continues a priest forever**.

Melchizedek's priesthood only gives an impression of being endless whereas that of Jesus is actually so.

⁴See **how great this man was** to whom Abraham the patriarch **gave a tenth of the spoils**! ⁵And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a **commandment in the law to take tithes from the people**, that is, from their brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham. ⁶But **this man** who **does not have his descent** from them **received tithes from Abraham** and **blessed him** who had the promises. ⁷It is beyond dispute that **the inferior is blessed by the superior**. ⁸In the one case tithes are received by **mortal men**, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that **he lives**. ⁹One might even say that **Levi himself**, who **receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham**, ¹⁰for he was **still in the loins** of his ancestor when **Melchizedek** met him.

¹¹Now if **perfection** had been **attainable through the Levitical priesthood** (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for **another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek**, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? ¹²For when there is a **change in the priesthood**, there is necessarily a **change in the law** as well. ¹³**For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe**, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴For it is evident that **our Lord was descended from Judah**, and in connection with that tribe Moses said **nothing about priests**.

Melchizedek

-Gen 14:17-20

-Ps 110:4

(1) Name means "King of righteousness"

(2) "King of Salem" means "King of peace"

- Isa 9:6ff

- Ps 72:7

(3) He was both king and priest

(4) He blessed Abraham

(5) He received tithes of Abraham

(6) No father or mother or genealogy

- Only as an absence of record

Num 18:21-32

The people were to pay tithes to the Levites, and the Levites paid tithes to the priests.

His death is not recorded (3)

Gen 25:23

Two nations are in your womb.

Ps 110:4

What was the weakness in the priesthood / law? Why could it not bring perfection? -Rom 3:19-20; 7

Hebrews Chapter 7 - Questions for Discussion

Where was Melchizedek king? What is this place now called?
(vv. Gen 14:18; Psalm 76:2)

When did Melchizedek meet Abraham? (vv. Gen 14:1-17)

What did Abraham give Melchizedek? (v. 2, 4-10; Gen 14:20)

- What is the significance of this to the Jewish reader? How does this further the argument of the author?
- What does this show about the relationship of Abraham to Melchizedek? (vv. 6-7)
- In what sense did Levi pay a tithe to Melchizedek? (v. 8-10)

How was Melchizedek “without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life?” (v. 3, 8)

- What is the significance of this to the Jewish reader?
- How does this further the argument of the author?

What was lacking in the Levitical priesthood? (v. 11)

What must happen after a change of the priesthood? (v. 12)

Was Christ qualified to be a Levitical priest? Explain your answer. (vv. 13-14)

Teacher's Notes

Melchizedek

Genesis 14:17–20 (ESV)

¹⁷ 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. (He was priest of God Most High.) ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Possessor of heaven and earth;
²⁰ and blessed be God Most High,
who has delivered your enemies into your hand!”

And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Psalm 110:4 (ESV)

⁴ The LORD has sworn
and will not change his mind,
“You are a priest forever
after the order of Melchizedek.”

Salem

COULD BE JERUSALEM

Psalm 76:2 (ESV)

² His abode has been established in Salem,
his dwelling place in Zion.

COULD BE SHECHEM

Genesis 33:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ And Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram, and he camped before the city.

Genesis 33:18 (LXX)

¹⁸ And Jacob came to Salem, a city of Secima, which is in the land of Chanaan, when he departed out of Mesopotamia of Syria, and took up a position in front of the city.

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King of Peace

Isaiah 9:6ff (ESV)

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.
⁸ The Lord has sent a word against Jacob,
and it will fall on Israel;
⁹ and all the people will know,
Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria,
who say in pride and in arrogance of heart:
¹⁰ “The bricks have fallen,
but we will build with dressed stones;
the sycamores have been cut down,
but we will put cedars in their place.”
¹¹ But the LORD raises the adversaries of Rezin against him,
and stirs up his enemies.
¹² The Syrians on the east and the Philistines on the west
devour Israel with open mouth.
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

¹³ The people did not turn to him who struck them,
nor inquire of the LORD of hosts.
¹⁴ So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail,
palm branch and reed in one day—
¹⁵ the elder and honored man is the head,
and the prophet who teaches lies is the tail;
¹⁶ for those who guide this people have been leading them astray,
and those who are guided by them are swallowed up.
¹⁷ Therefore the Lord does not rejoice over their young men,
and has no compassion on their fatherless and widows;
for everyone is godless and an evildoer,

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and every mouth speaks folly.
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

¹⁸ For wickedness burns like a fire;
it consumes briars and thorns;
it kindles the thickets of the forest,
and they roll upward in a column of smoke.

¹⁹ Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts
the land is scorched,
and the people are like fuel for the fire;
no one spares another.

²⁰ They slice meat on the right, but are still hungry,
and they devour on the left, but are not satisfied;
each devours the flesh of his own arm,

²¹ Manasseh devours Ephraim, and Ephraim devours Manasseh;
together they are against Judah.
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

Psalm 72:7 (ESV)

⁷ In his days may the righteous flourish,
and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

Tithes

Numbers 18:21–32 (ESV)

²¹ “To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do, their service in the tent of meeting, ²² so that the people of Israel do not come near the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. ²³ But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, and among the people of Israel they shall have no inheritance. ²⁴ For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as a contribution to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel.”

²⁵ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁶ “Moreover, you shall speak and say to the Levites, ‘When you take from the people of Israel the tithe that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present a contribution from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. ²⁷ And your contribution shall be counted to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the winepress. ²⁸ So you shall also present a contribution to the LORD from all your tithes, which you receive from the people of Israel. And from it you shall give the LORD’s contribution to Aaron the priest. ²⁹ Out of all the gifts to you, you shall present every contribution due to the LORD; from

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each its best part is to be dedicated.’³⁰ Therefore you shall say to them, ‘When you have offered from it the best of it, then the rest shall be counted to the Levites as produce of the threshing floor, and as produce of the winepress.’³¹ And you may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it is your reward in return for your service in the tent of meeting.³² And you shall bear no sin by reason of it, when you have contributed the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, lest you die.’ ”

Still in the Loins

Genesis 25:23 (ESV)

²³ And the LORD said to her,

“Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples from within you shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the older shall serve the younger.”

Perfection

Hebrews 2:2 (ESV)

² For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution,

Romans 3:19–20 (ESV)

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Romans 7 (ESV)

¹ Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? ² For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. ³ Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

⁴ Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. ⁵ For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

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⁷ What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. ⁹ I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰ The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹ For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

¹³ Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.