

Hebrews 7:1-3 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

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The Epistle to the Hebrews

| INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18 | | | | | EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25 |
|--|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13 | Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18 | | | | Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25 |
| BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13 | BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28 | BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13 | BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18 | | BETTER LIFE |
| MAJESTY OF CHRIST | MINISTRY OF CHRIST | | | | MINISTERS FOR CHRIST |

| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| DOCTRINE | DUTY |
| DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD | |

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

Borrow [Ryrie Study Bible](#)

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, ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [Houtos gar o Melchisedek, basileus Salem, hiereus tou theou tou hupsistou, o sunantesas](#) ([AAPMSN](#)) [Abraam hupostrephonti](#) ([PAPMSD](#)) [apo tes kopes ton basileon kai eulogesas](#) ([AAPMSN](#)) [auton](#).

Amplified: FOR THIS Melchizedek, king of Salem [and] priest of the Most High God, met Abraham as he returned from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

NLT: This Melchizedek was king of the city of Salem and also a priest of God Most High. When Abraham was returning home after winning a great battle against many kings, Melchizedek met him and blessed him. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Young's Literal: For this Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who did meet Abraham turning back from the smiting of the kings, and did bless him,

| THE WORK OF OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST THE LORD JESUS CHRIST | | |
|---|---|---|
| PAST | PRESENT | FUTURE |
| He has appeared at the Cross for Propitiation | He now appears at the right hand of the throne for Intercession | He shall appear a Second time for the elect's final Deliverance |
| He appeared for our Redemption | He now appears for our Representation | He shall appear for our Rewards |
| He has appeared in Humiliation | He does appear in Exaltation | He shall appear in Universal Manifestation |
| He has appeared for our Justification | He does appear for our Sanctification | He shall appear for our Glorification |

Chapter 7 is a critical section because it concerns the introduction of **abetter priesthood**. No sacrifices were possible without a priest (therefore no "forgiveness") and therefore the priesthood was greatly revered by Jews.

Remember that in Hebrews 5:5-10 the writer began to speak of the Melchizedek but then began a lengthy parenthetical section from Hebrews 5:11 through Hebrews 6:20. This parenthesis was to prepare his "dull of hearing" readers so that they might better understand of this important chapter. **There is a point of application we in the modern church need to consider and it is this -- the solid food and sound doctrine of Scripture is not revealed by the Spirit to those who are spiritually lazy or apathetic. In Hebrews 7:4 we encounter the only command in this entire chapter (see note) and it is to give careful consideration (as contrasted with a superficial reading) to this teaching on Melchizedek because he is a type of Jesus Christ, the One Whose beauty and glory we desire to see.**

The background of course is Jewish readers who had professed belief in Christ and were being tempted to abandon their faith in the Messiah and return to Judaism under threat of persecution as described in chapter 10...

But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, 33

partly, by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. 34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one. (see notes Hebrews 10:30; 31; 32)

And so the writer is writing to convince them to break with the familiar system and rituals that their forefathers had followed for centuries. He is saying that the religious system of sacrifices, rituals, and rules that had been practice for some 1,400 years had now been replaced by a **better way**. And so he focuses on the supremacy of Christ Jesus the great High Priest, Who is the fulfillment of all that was written by Moses and the prophets. And so he picks up his thoughts on Melchizedek from Hebrews 5 because he wants to explain that Jesus is not a priest like the familiar Levitical priests, but is of a different order of Melchizedek and because of that, He is a better priest than any of the priests in the old system. Ironically the old system was never intended to be the end but the means, a means which was always and in all ways intended to point to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Ray Stedman points out that "The unfolding of the meaning of the Melchizedek priesthood of Jesus is the goal toward which the author has been aiming ever since Hebrews 2:17 (note), where he first uses the term high priest with reference to Jesus... **These themes are little noted or understood in the average church today but desperately needed if the church (or the individual Christian) is to confront the world with power and grace.** ([Hebrews Commentary](#)) (Bolding added for emphasis)

As **Matthew Henry** says "Nothing made the Jews so fond of the Levitical dispensation as the high esteem they had of their priesthood, and it was doubtless a sacred and most excellent institution; it was a very severe threatening denounced against the Jews (Hos. 3:4), that the children of Israel should abide many days without a prince or priest, and without a sacrifice, and with an ephod, and without teraphim. Now the apostle assures them that by receiving the Lord Jesus they would have a much better high priest, a priesthood of a higher order, and consequently a better dispensation or covenant, a better law and testament...(and now the writer) sets before them some of the strong meat he had spoken of before, hoping they would by greater diligence be better prepared to digest it."

Expositor's Greek Testament ([Hebrews 7 Commentary - Marcus Dods](#)) writes that "The subject of Christ's priesthood is resumed; the interpolated admonition (Hebrews 5:11-6:20) having been skillfully brought round to a second mention (actually strictly speaking the 4th mention) of Melchizedek. The chief reason for introducing the priesthood of Melchizedek as the type of Christ's priesthood was that it was "for ever". The Aaronic priesthood was successional, this single; and in this sense "for ever". There were, however, other reasons. The first question with a Jew who was enjoined to trust Christ's priestly mediation, would be "What are His orders?" He belonged to a tribe of which Moses had spoken nothing concerning priesthood. He might or might not be the true heir to David's throne; but if He was, did not this very circumstance exclude Him from the priestly office? Was it credible that the nation had been encouraged rigorously to exclude from the priesthood every interloper, only in order that at last this rigidly preserved order should be entirely disregarded? This writer seizes upon the fact that there was a greater priest than Aaron mentioned in Scripture -- a priest more worthy to be the type of the Messianic priesthood, because He was Himself a King, and especially because He belonged to no successional priestly order but was Himself the entire order. (!) This idea of a priesthood superseding that of Levi's sons found its way into Scripture through the hymn (Psalm 110:4-[note](#))... The chapter may be divided thus

I. Characteristics of Melchizedek, vv1-10

1. In himself as depicted in Scripture, vv1-3
2. In his relation to Levi and his line, vv4-10

II. Inadequacy of Levitical priesthood in comparison with the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ, vv11-25

1. Levi, being provisional, Melchizedek being permanent, vv11-14
2. Official and hereditary : personal and eternal, vv15-19
3. Without oath: with oath, therefore final, vv20-22
4. Plural and successional : singular and enduring, vv23-25

III. Summary of the merits of the new Melchizedek Priest, Jesus

(from Nicoll, W Robertson, Editor: Expositors Greek Testament: 5 Volumes. Out of print. Search Google)

John Piper helps us understand why all of this focus on Melchizedek and the priesthood, things which seem so foreign and even may seem unnecessary to us in the modern western culture. The writer is saying we are in desperate need of a High Priest for as Piper explains...

the reason for all this talk about Christ's relation to Melchizedek in verses 1–24 is because the eternal, superior priesthood of Jesus is our only hope of eternal salvation. God's wrath never changes. There is only one hope for sinners like us. We must have a faithful High Priest, Who will intercede for us forever. We need a King of righteousness (He 7:2-note). We need a King of peace (He 7:2-note). We need Someone without beginning and ending (He 7:3-note). Someone Who has an indestructible life (verse 16) and will never die and need to be replaced (He 7:23,24-notes). We need Someone greater than Abraham and greater than Levi—something like Melchizedek, who blessed Abraham, (He 7:6,7-notes) and who received tithes from Abraham and, in a sense, from Levi in Abraham (He 7:5-note, He 7:6-note, He 7:8, 9, 10-notes). We need a new and greater Priest—so much greater that verse 11 says there was no perfection through the Levitical priesthood. All the Old Testament priesthood could do was point toward the One superior Priest (after the order of Melchizedek, Psalm 110:4-note), Whose sacrifice of Himself and Whose eternal intercession would guarantee eternal salvation for all God's people.

So the first implication of He 7:25-note is that all this truth about priesthood is because what we need saving from is the wrath of God. God's way of solving that problem is priesthood. This is not ours to figure out or solve. God has to do it for us. And He has done it. He ordains a Priest, His Son.

And don't make a mistake here. It's not as though Jesus the Priest loves us and God the Father doesn't. God the Father ordains the priesthood for our salvation. It is His idea. He sends the Priest. It is His own Son Whom He sends. And He loves Him infinitely. All this is the love of God rescuing us from the wrath of God, in such a way that the justice of God is vindicated and the glory of God is exalted. (Read his entire excellent message on [Hebrews 7:1-25 Jesus: from Melchizedek to eternal Saviour](#))

FOR THIS MELCHIZEDEK: houtos gar ho Melchisedek:

- Heb 6:20; Genesis 14:18, 19, 20
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

For - He is explaining the end of the previous verse - Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to **the order of Melchizedek** (He 6:20-note)

For (gar) is a strategic term of explanation which should always prompt a pause to prayerfully ponder what the author is saying in a given section. This pause that refreshes will give your Teacher, the Spirit, an opportunity to speak to your heart (so that what you read is more than just head knowledge), not only illuminating the text (see [The Bible and Illumination](#)) but applying the text practically to your personal life (**Application**). Therefore, energized by the Spirit, let us **discipline** ourselves for godliness and frequently "P & P" (pause and ponder) the Word -- we are sure to be richly rewarded by our Father in Heaven, for "godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come!" (1Ti 4:7-8-note, 1Ti 4:9-10-note)

Expositor's Greek Testament feels that "it is the "for-everness" of the priesthood which he means especially to insist upon. The whole order is occupied by himself. This one man constitutes the order. He succeeds no one in office and no one succeeds him. In this sense he abides a priest for ever. Between the subject Melchizedek and the verb "remains" there are inserted five historical facts taken from Genesis 14, with their interpretation. ([Hebrews 7 Commentary - Marcus Dods](#))

Spurgeon on Melchizedek - There is something majestic about every movement of that dimly revealed figure. His one and only appearance is thus fitly described in the book of Genesis: "And Melchizedek, the king of Salem, brought out bread and wine (He was the priest of God Most High). And he blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Maker of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High who delivered your enemies into your hand.' And he gave to him a tenth of everything" (Gen 14:18–20). We see but little of him, yet we see nothing little in him. He is here and gone, as far as the historic page is concerned, yet he is "a priest forever," (Ps 110:4) and "it is testified that he lives" (Heb 7:8). Everything about him is on a scale majestic and sublime. Melchizedek seems to have been, first by name, and then by place of office, doubly designated a king. First, his name is Melchizedek, which signifies by interpretation, "king of righteousness." His personal name is "king of righteousness." As a matter of fact, he was also the monarch of some town called Salem. It is not at all likely to have been Jerusalem, although that may have been the case. The interpretation of his official name is "king of peace." He was one who worshiped God after the primitive fashion, a believer in God such as Job was in the land of Uz, one of the world's gray fathers who had kept faithful to the Most High God. He combined in his own person the kingship and the priesthood; a conjunction by no means unusual in the first ages.

Melchizedek - This is the writer's fourth mention of **Melchizedek** (Heb 5:6,10 6:20 7:1, 10, 11, 15, 17, 21). In the 28 verses in Hebrews 7 the writer gives us what amounts to an exposition of the OT Scriptures on Melchizedek because there were only 3 verses in Genesis 14 and only one notation some 500 years later by David in Psalm 110:4.

Genesis 14:17 (Moses writes) 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** (means "king of righteousness") **king** of Salem (means "peace", thus Melchizedek was "king of peace". Salem in this context is another name for Jerusalem and the first mention of the "city of God" in the Bible) brought out bread and wine; now he was a **priest** (the first mention of a priest in Scripture) of God Most High (El Elyon).

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 (Abraham) gave him (Melchizedek) a tenth of all.

21 And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself."

22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth,

23 that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.'

24 "I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share."

Psalms 110:4 (David writes that) The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, **"Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."**

At the time of the writing of this epistle to the Hebrews another 1000 years had passed since David's declaration in **Psalms 110:4** [note](#). And so the writer of Hebrews begins to give more detail regarding Melchizedek and how this historical OT individual validates the priesthood of Jesus.

Dwight Pentecost has the following application writing that "If a writer of the New Testament considered Old Testament episodes—even something so brief as this encounter with Melchizedek—so important, we would do well to become as familiar as possible with the wealth of information God has revealed in the Old Testament! (Pentecost, J. D., & Durham, K. . Faith that Endures. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications)

H A Ironside - Abraham recognized Melchisedec's spiritual authority by giving him tithes of all the spoils. Strengthened by the bread and wine administered by Salem's king-priest, Abraham was prepared to refuse the blandishments of the King of Sodom, representative of the world in all its impurity and debasement. ([Hebrews 7 Commentary](#))

Guzik comments on the subtle juxtaposition of Melchizedek, the king of righteousness followed by peace (the king of Salem or peace) - As always, righteousness comes before peace. Righteousness is the only true path to peace. People look for that peace in escape, in evasion, or in compromise; but they will only find it in righteousness. ([Hebrews 7](#))

[Operation Entebbe](#) is a fascinating modern day "equivalent" of the Genesis 14 account of Abraham's daring exploit. The following account of Operation Entebbe is taken from Wikipedia "On June 27, 1976, Air France Flight 139, an Airbus A300 originating from Tel Aviv, carrying 248 passengers and a crew of twelve, took off from Athens, heading for Paris. Soon after the 12:30 p.m. takeoff, the flight was hijacked by two Palestinians from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - External Operations (PFLP-EO) and two Germans from the German "Revolutionary Cells (RZ)" (Wilfried Böse and Brigitte Kuhlmann), who commandeered the flight, diverting it to Benghazi, Libya. There it was held on the ground for seven hours for refueling, during which time a female hostage who pretended she was pregnant was released. The plane left Benghazi, and at 3:15 it arrived at [Entebbe Airport](#) in Uganda." (Read the [full account](#))

Uganda at that time was ruled by the dictator Idi Amin who welcomed the hijacked airliner which remained at Entebbe Airport the next 7 days as the PLO hijackers prepared for their next move. Like the raiders who had taken Lot captive in Genesis 14, the PLO hijackers certainly appeared to be in total control of their Israeli captives who were on this flight. But unbeknownst to the hijackers, three Israeli C-130 Hercules transports were on their way from Tel Aviv to Entebbe with a Israeli commandos, who within hours attacked the airport under the cover of darkness. In less than one hour the commandos rushed the old terminal, gunned down the hijackers, and rescued 110 of the 113 hostages. The next day Israel's Premier Yitzhak Rabin declared "This operation will certainly be inscribed in the annals of military history, in legend and in national tradition" and indeed it has been so honored, even as was Abraham's daring raid some 4000 years earlier! Abraham with only "318 trained men" from his own household took off in hot pursuit of Lot and his kidnappers and under the cover of night deployed his relatively small force in a surprise attack which put the four kidnapper kings to flight.

So when Abraham returned to his home after the slaughter of the kings he was a hero, at the pinnacle of martial success. Can you see him proudly astride his lumbering camel, smeared with the dirt and blood of battle, leading his 318 proud men plus Lot and all the captives and all the plunder through Jerusalem? If so, you have the "feel" necessary to begin to appreciate Abraham's strange, mystic encounter with a shadowy figure of immense grandeur — Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem.

In this background and a sense of Abraham's incredible victory against all odds we read these words in Hebrews 7 - 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

Imagine the joy and victory that was in the air. It would have been enough to go to any man's head, but not Abraham, for he recognized that the victory was not his, but ultimately that they victory was the Lord's. And so he chose to honor King Melchizedek who was also the priest of the Most High God Who had given him the victory. Our victories from day to day may not be as dramatic but they are no less always a reflection of the fact that the victory belongs to the Lord. Are we quick to acknowledge this eternal truth when accolades and adulation come our way? Let us seek to have an "Abraham attitude" as we bask in the victory, whether it be over our flesh, the world or the devil. As David said some 500 years later

Thine, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and **the victory** and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, O LORD, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all. (1 Chronicles 29:11)

As an aside, the reader will undoubtedly encounter a wide variety of interpretations on the identity of Melchizedek, some of the more fanciful interpretations including the following...

- (1). Angel = Origen, Didymus
- (2). Enoch = Husius, Calmet
- (3). Shem = the rabbis of the first century sought to identify him with Shem, the oldest son of Noah, to counter the Christian view of him as a type of Christ. The early Christian writers for the most part objected to this as invalidating the claim of Hebrews that Melchizedek was "without genealogy," since the genealogy of Shem was well known.
- (4) Some Gnostic cults ([Gnosticism](#)) taught that Melchizedek was a theophany (visible manifestation) of the Holy Spirit, while a later sect saw him as a preincarnate appearance of the Son of God.
- (5) The Dead Sea Scrolls (Cave 11 at Qumran) spoke of Melchizedek as the coming great Deliverer of the Jewish remnant and equated him with the archangel Michael.
- (6) [Jerome](#) (340-420 AD), author of the [Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible](#), stated that early church authorities such as Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Eusebius of Caesarea and Apollinaris all viewed Melchizedek as a man and the majority of the Reformers followed this view.

A number of writers interpret Melchizedek as a preincarnate appearance of Christ and base this interpretation on facts from the OT and Hebrews...

- (1). The names, the king of righteousness and king of peace are very similar to names attributed to Christ (He 7:2-note)
- (2). His lack of a recorded genealogy - "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (He 7:3-note)
- (3). "He abides a priest perpetually" (He 7:3-note)
- (4). Contrasted with mortal men - "mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one (Melchizedek) receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on" (Heb 7:8-note)

One of the strongest arguments against that interpretation is the writer's clear statement that he was "made like the Son of God" (He 7:3-note). [See below](#) for a synopsis of how many conservative (and one cult) sources interpret the identity of Melchizedek.

The [Targum](#), which reflects rabbinic interpretation, Melchizedek is identified as Shem, Noah's son (Targum Ps.-J. Gen 14:18; see esp Carmona, Est Bib 37 [1978] 79-102). The rabbis made the totally unsubstantiated remark that the priesthood was transferred to Abraham and his posterity at the meeting recorded in Genesis 14:18, 19, 20 because Melchizedek proved to be unworthy of his office! The implications of this specious rabbinic interpretation would negate the writer's argument in Hebrews 7 in view of the fact that Levi eventually came from the line of Abraham and thus the Levitical priesthood is the legitimate successor to the priesthood forfeited by Melchizedek. The rabbinic literature goes on to apply the description of Psalm 110:4-[note](#) to Abraham (cp, R. Ishmael as

early as 135 AD) .

Gerald Hawthorne writes that Melchizedek's "greatness is seen from the fact that he blessed Abraham the patriarch (i.e., the father of us all) at a time when Abraham was second to none in the land—victor over Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, and from the fact that Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. (New International Bible Commentary)

KING OF SALEM, PRIEST OF THE MOST HIGH GOD: *basileus Salem hiereus tou Theou tou hupsistou*

- Ps 76:2
- Ps 57:2; 78:35,56; Daniel 4:2; 5:18,21; Micah 6:6; Mark 5:7; Acts 16:17
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

King of Salem - In the next verse the writer tells us this equates with **king of peace**.

Salem is also another name for **Jerusalem**, as deduced from **Psalm 76** "God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel. And His tabernacle is in Salem; His dwelling place also is in Zion. (Ps 76:1,2)

The Hebrew word for **'Salem'** is **shalem** ([08004](#)) which is in turn derived from the same Hebrew root as shalom "peace". Genesis 14:18 and Psalm 76:2 are the only occurrences of Salem in the OT.

Priest ([2409](#)) (**hiereus** from **hieros** = sacred, holy, consecrated to God, used as a noun to mean a sacred place or temple, cp Mark 11:11) is a sacred or consecrated person who serves God (or the false gods in the pagan religions). **Hiereus** describes the specific position and not necessarily a priest's character.

W. G. Moorehead defines a priest as "One who is duly qualified to minister in sacred things, particularly to offer sacrifices at the altar, and to act as mediator between men and God. (ISBE)

Priest in Latin is **pontifex** (from **pont-**, **pons** = bridge + **facere** = to make) which literally means a bridge maker, and is word used even today to describe the Pope as "**Pontifex Maximus**" (maximus = greatest, highest), which literally means the "greatest bridge builder" and in modern parlance "the Highest Priest".

Wuest - The Roman emperor was Pontifex Maximus, a high priest upon the throne of the Caesars. But our Lord Jesus is a high priest who, now seated upon a throne of grace, will some day as High Priest in the Messianic Kingdom occupy the throne of David in Jerusalem, as Zechariah says, "He shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zech. 6:13). ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

The Most High God - (See all NT uses of phrase "**Most High**") In Hebrew "Most High God" is **El Elyon** (note) one of the great names of God (they are all great of course!) which is expressive of God's sovereignty over all things.

In the Old Testament, the throne (KING) and the altar (PRIESTS) were separated and any person who was not of the Levitical priesthood who attempted to act as priest was judged by God.

But Uzziah (a king who was attempting to function as a priest), with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense. (2 Chronicles 26:19)

Melchizedek is thus a unique man with a unique designation as both king and priest! Melchizedek's specific identity does not detract from the powerful logic of the writer of Hebrews, who is appealing to his Hebrew Scriptures to substantiate his argument. He is saying in essence that even the Hebrew Scriptures recognize a priesthood that is distinct from that of Aaron, and that furthermore, this priesthood antedates Aaron's priesthood by literally hundreds of years.

John Calvin points out that it is remarkable that Melchizedek lived with Sodom on one side and the Canaanites on the other, and yet he was a righteous king and priest. This shows that God can raise up a godly witness for Himself when and where He pleases. Here are Calvin's comments...

It was doubtless no common thing that in a country abounding in the corruptions of so many superstitions, a man was found who preserved the pure worship of God; for on one side he was nigh to Sodom and Gomorrah, and on the other to the Canaanites, so that he was on every side encompassed by ungodly men. Besides, the whole world was so fallen into impiety, that it is very probable that God was nowhere faithfully worshipped except in the family of Abraham; for his father and his grandfather, who ought to have retained true religion, had long before degenerated into idolatry. It was therefore a memorable fact, that there was still a king who not only retained true religion, but also performed himself the office of a priest. And it was doubtless

necessary that in him who was to be a type of the Son of God all things excellent should be found: and that Christ was shadowed forth by this type is evident from the Psalm referred to; for David did not say without reason, "Thou art a priest forever after the order Melchisedec;" no, but on the contrary, by these words a sublime mystery was recommended to the Church.

WHO MET ABRAHAM AS HE WAS RETURNING FROM THE SLAUGHTER OF THE KINGS AND BLESSED HIM: ho sunantêsas hupostrephonti (PAPMSD) apo tes kopes ton basileon kai eulogesas (AAPMSN) auton:

- Genesis 16:14-16; Isaiah 41:2,3
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

This description is taken from the Genesis account

Genesis 14:17 (Moses writes) Then after his (Abraham's) 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).

The writer of Hebrews substitutes **Melchizedek** in place of the **King of Sodom** as the one who met Abraham at the [Valley of Shaveh](#) (which is probably the modern day [Kidron Valley](#) [or see [here](#)])

Hebrews 7 is an important chapter for in it the writer establishes the following points...

- 1). Melchizedek's historic identity
- 2). Melchizedek's precedence and superiority to Levitical priesthood
 - a). Abraham paid him tithes (so then did Levi)
 - b). Melchizedek blessed Abraham
- 3). The need for a replacement of the Law because it...
 - a). Could not make perfect
 - b). Jesus was from another tribe not specified in Mosaic Law
- 4). The advantages of the Melchizedekian order...
 - a). A better hope = access to God (draw near)
 - b) A guarantee of a better covenant
 - c). A permanent priesthood
 - d). Salvation forever... and a priest Who ever intercedes
- 5). A dramatic contrast between Jesus' priesthood and the Levitical priesthood
 - a) Jesus is holy, innocent, undefiled, separated, exalted
 - b). Jesus offered up one sacrifice of himself for all time.

MELCHIZEDEK

Various Interpretations of His Identity

John Calvin - And it was doubtless necessary that in him who was to be a type of the Son of God (see discussion of Typology) all things excellent should be found: and that Christ was shadowed forth by this type is evident from the Ps 110

Steven Cole (his sermons are highly recommended) - Melchizedek is a type of Christ in the dignity of his person. Everything we know about Melchizedek comes from Genesis 14:18-20, Psalm 110:4-[note](#), and Hebrews 7. The first text is historical, the second is prophetic, and the third is theological. (See sermon [Why You Need to Know About Melchizedek](#))

Alfred Edersheim - That Melchizedek was not Christ Himself is evident from the statement that he was "made like unto the Son of God" (or "likened unto" Him, Heb. vii. 3); while it equally appears from these words, and from the whole tenor of Scripture, that he was a type of Christ.

Matthew Henry - The most general opinion is that he was a Canaanite king, who reigned in Salem, and kept up religion and the

worship of the true God; that he was raised to be a type of Christ (see discussion of Typology), and was honoured by Abraham as such.

Kent Hughes - In the writer's opening statement he concisely states the significance of the historical Melchizedek as a type of the ultimate priesthood of Christ: Melchizedek was "without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, [and] like the Son of God he remains a priest forever" (v. 3). Some have inferred from these words that Melchizedek must have been an angel who took on human form for Abraham, or even a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Himself. But such interpretations are unnecessary, because the writer is simply using a rabbinical method of interpretation from silence. His point is that the Genesis account does not mention Melchizedek's parents or genealogy or when he was born or died, thereby providing a fitting type of what would be fleshed out in the qualifications of Christ (see discussion of Typology). ([Hughes, R. K. Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul. Volume 1. Crossway Books; Volume 2](#))

H A Ironside - There is no reason to think of Melchisedec as a mysterious person, possibly supernatural, or even as some have supposed a preincarnate appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. If any ask, "Who is Melchisedec?" the only proper answer is "Melchisedec." He was not Shem the son of Noah, nor Job of the land of Uz, nor Cheops the builder of the great pyramid, as some have endeavored to prove. He was, as is distinctly stated, Melchisedec, King of Salem. ([Hebrews 7 Commentary](#))

KJV Commentary - What is true of Melchizedek (the type) only because of silence is intrinsically true of Christ (the reality). Melchizedek is without parents only in that they are unknown. ([Dobson, E G, Charles Feinberg, E Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson](#))

John MacArthur - But Melchizedek is described as made like the Son of God (7:3), not as being the Son of God. I believe that Melchizedek was a historical human being, whose priestly ministry typifies that of Christ (see discussion of Typology), a man whom God designed to use as a picture of Jesus Christ. But we cannot be sure of the details of his identity. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

William MacDonald - We should not conclude that Melchizedek had no parents, that he was never born, and that he never died. That is not the point. The thought is that as far as his priesthood was concerned, there is no record of these vital statistics because his ministry as priest was not dependent on them. ([MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

J Vernon McGee - Melchizedek is a type of Christ. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

Henry Morris - The usual interpretation ... is that he (Melchizedek) was made into a type of Christ since as a "King of Righteousness" (meaning of Melchizedek) and "King of Peace" (meaning of Salem), he appears and leaves the record suddenly, with no mention of either ancestry or death. It seems better to take the words literally, in which case they could be applicable to Christ Himself, appearing here to Abram in a theophany. This would also solve the problem of how such a godly king and priest as Melchizedek could be ruling a city in such an ungodly land as Canaan and, why, if he did, Abram would have had no other contact with him. The fact that he was "like unto the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3) accords with one of Christ's pre-incarnate appearances; at His human birth, he became the incarnate Son of God forever. Melchizedek was also said to be a man (Hebrews 7:4), but the same is true in the case of other theophanies, one of which was likewise manifested to Abram (Genesis 18:2,22; 19:1-24). ([Morris, Henry: Defenders Study Bible. World Publishing](#))

Dwight Pentecost - The question is often raised about whether what is recorded in Genesis 14 is a theophany; that is, a preincarnate appearance of the eternal Son of God. While many say it is, the context of Genesis 14 seems to argue against it. Every verifiable theophany in the Old Testament fulfills the purpose of bringing a message from God to men. But that is not the case here. Further, the details of the account—giving names and places—argue against it. Melchizedek could hardly be called the "king of Salem" unless he exercised legal authority there over an extended period of time. When the writer says he was "made like the Son of God," he seems to imply that only those things had been recorded that could be used later by the writer of the Hebrews to reveal truth concerning Christ's priestly office. Thus, in the historical context, Melchizedek is an individual, universal, timeless, unique priest whose ministry resulted in spiritual and material benefits; and he is never known outside of that picture. In this, as the writer of the Hebrews will show, he represents a perpetual foreshadowing of the priestly order Christ will fill. (Pentecost, J. D., & Durham, K. Faith that Endures: A Practical Commentary on the Book of Hebrews. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications)

Charles Ryrie - Melchizedek is clearly a type of Christ (see discussion of Typology). Everything known about him from the OT is found in Ge14:17-20 and Ps. 110:4-[note](#). He was a great king-priest, and it is to his order of priesthood that Christ belongs. ([The Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard Translation: 1995. Moody Publishers](#))

C I Scofield - Melchizedek, a type of Christ the King-Priest.

C H Spurgeon - WE will not enlarge upon the story of Melchisedec, nor discuss the question as to who he was. It is near enough for us to believe that he was one who worshipped God after the primitive fashion, a believer in God such as Job was in the land of Uz,

one of the world's grey fathers who had kept faithful to the Most High God. He combined in his own person the kingship and the priesthood; a conjunction by no means unusual in the first ages. Of this man we know very little; and it is partly because we know so little of him that he is all the better type of our Lord, of whom we may enquire, "Who shall declare his generation?" The very mystery which hangs about Melchisedec serves to set forth the mystery of the person of our divine Lord.

Ray Stedman - Though some commentators have viewed Melchizedek as a preincarnate appearance of Christ, the phrase *like the Son of God* seems to militate against that. "Melchizedek thus was the facsimile of which Christ is the reality" (Howley 1969:552). To a modern congregation, this passage should be presented as a vivid picture of the help which is available for believers today from our great high priest who can give us righteousness and peace from within if we "come to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." ([Hebrews Commentary](#))

Will Varner - A more popular interpretation is that Melchizedek was Christ Himself in some preincarnate form. Thus, he would have been like the Old Testament "angel of the LORD" (e.g., Ge 16:7, 8, 9, 10, 11; Ex. 3:2; Jdg 13:3-21). Proponents of this view point to the language of Hebrews 7:3: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of day nor end of life." There are some serious problems, however, with this idea. Six times the writer of Hebrews cited Psalm 110:4-[note](#) when stating that Jesus is a priest "after the order of Melchizedek" (He 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17, 21). If Jesus actually was Melchizedek, He would not be said to be "after the order of Melchizedek." Furthermore, language of similarity, not identity, is used to describe the relationship between the two. Hebrews 7:3 states that Melchizedek was "made like unto the Son of God," not that he actually was the Son of God. Finally, Hebrews 7:15 states that Jesus is a priest "after the similitude [likeness] of Melchizedek," not that he actually was Melchizedek. These verses indicate that Melchizedek was an individual who was a type of Christ, not that he actually was the preincarnate Christ. (Israel My Glory : Volume 51 Issue 6. 1999)

John Walvoord - Although some have thought that Melchizedek was actually a theophany, that is, an appearance of Christ in the form of Melchizedek to Abraham, the more probable view is that Hebrews means only that Melchizedek, unlike Aaronic priests, had no recorded genealogy. He was a priest independent of his father or his successor. In other words, he was not dependent on his genealogy, in sharp contrast to the Aaronic priesthood which depended upon it completely. The predecessors and successors of Melchizedek are not mentioned in the Bible, and the validity of the Melchizedek priesthood does not rest upon this background.

Warren Wiersbe - Melchizedek was a man (see Hebrews 7:4), so he had to have had a mother and a father. But there is no record of his genealogy ("descent") in the Old Testament; and this is significant because most great persons in the Old Testament have their ancestry identified. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

Mormons (which I consider a non-Christian cult! [\[see critique of Mormonism\]](#) This note is only for completeness) - Claim that their male members are priests of the order of Melchizedek and that their prophet, Joseph Smith, held both the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods. But this is a wholly gratuitous claim since it rests on no objective appointment by God but only on a subjective assertion in which they take this honor upon themselves.

In "The Way into the Holiest" **F B Meyer** writes that...

History gives its unanimous judgment against the temporal and the spiritual power being vested in the same man. In Israel the two offices were kept rigorously separate; and when, on one occasion, a king passed the sacred barrier, and, snatching up a censer, strode into the inner court, he was at once followed by the remonstrances of the priestly band, whilst the white brand of leprosy wrote his doom upon his brow; "and he himself hastened to go out, because the Lord had smitten him." But the simple monarch of whom we write, living before gathering abuses forbade the union, combined in his person the royal scepter and the sacerdotal censer. And herein he foreshadowed the Christ.

Jesus is King and Priest. He is King because He is a priest. He is highly exalted, demanding homage from every knee, and confession from every lip, because He became obedient to the death of the cross. He bases His royal claims, not on hereditary descent, though the blood of David flowed in His veins; not on conquest or superior force; not on the legislation that underpins the kingdom of heaven among men: but on this, that He redeemed us to God by His blood. He is the King of glory, because He is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The cross was the stepping-stone to His throne.

And He cannot fulfill his office as Priest unless he be first recognized as King. Many fail to derive all the blessing offered to men through the Priesthood of Christ, because they are not willing to admit His claims as King. They do not reverence and obey Him. They do not open the whole of the inner realm to His scepter. They endeavor to serve two masters; and to stand well with empires as different as light and darkness, heaven and hell, God and Satan.

There must be consecration before there can be perfect faith; coronation before deliverance; the King before

the Priest.

The order is invariable **first King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Peace** (Heb. 7:2).

"Peace, give us peace!" is the importunate demand of men; peace at any price; by all means peace. But God, in the deep waters, lays the foundation of righteousness; "and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." It is of no use to heal the wound slightly, saying, "Peace, peace," when there is none. Infinitely better is it to probe to the bottom, and to build up from a sound and healthy foundation to the surface of the flesh.

And the King of Peace will never enter your soul until you have first acknowledged him as King of Righteousness, submitting yourself to his righteous claims, and renouncing the righteousness which is of the law for that which is by faith. It is lamentable to find how few Christians, comparatively, are realizing the full meaning or power of Christianity. Joyless, fruitless, powerless, they are a stumbling block to the world, and a mockery to devils. And is not the reason here? They are not right. They are harboring traitors and aliens in their souls. They constantly condemn themselves in things that they allow. No doubt they excuse themselves, and invent special reasons to palliate their faults, so that what would be inadmissible with others is pardonable in them. What special pleading! What ingenious arguments! What gymnastic feats are theirs! But all in vain. Let any such who read these lines learn that it is peremptory to make Christ King, and King of Righteousness, before ever they can appreciate the peace which accrues from his Priesthood on our behalf.

QUESTION - [What is the order of Melchizedek \(Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:17\)?](#)

ANSWER The priest [Melchizedek](#) appears in three sections of Scripture. He is briefly introduced in Genesis 14:18–20. In a messianic psalm (Psalm 110:4), David addresses the "order of Melchizedek" specifically: after describing the victory and glory of the Messiah, David says,

"The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind:
'You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek'" (Psalm 110:4).

The author of Hebrews, in speaking of Christ, quotes this verse in Hebrews 7:17. So, Genesis provides background regarding the identity of Melchizedek, [Psalm 110](#) connects Melchizedek to [the Messiah](#), and Hebrews chapters 5, 6, and 7 describe the supremacy of Jesus as the Great High Priest, using Melchizedek's role as an illustration of Jesus' priesthood and kingship.

The Bible utilizes the phrase *the order of* to point to a lineage. An Aaronic priest would have been a priest according to "the order of" Aaron (Hebrews 7:11). These priests would have come from the lineage of Aaron, sharing a similar function and nature. So, another translation of Psalm 110:4 says that the Messiah will be a priest "after the pattern of Melchizedek" (NET) or "after the manner of Melchizedek" (ISV).

Genesis 14 describes Melchizedek as the king of Salem (which would later become Jerusalem) and a priest of God Most High. Abram recognized Melchizedek's priesthood through his tithing of the possessions he had taken in battle (Genesis 14:16). Interestingly, this incident took place before the institution of the Aaronic line (part of the Levitical priesthood), which was to mediate between God and man under the Mosaic Law. Melchizedek was not a priest of Israel, as that nation did not exist—Abraham had no children yet. The Levites would not become a priestly tribe for another four centuries.

Psalm 110 describes the messianic nature of Jesus' future rule, with an emphasis on Jesus' eternity. It is in the context of Jesus' kingship (cf. Psalm 110:2) that David writes about the Messiah's being "a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4). Priests according to the order of Aaron were not kings but priests alone. However, as the author of Hebrews says, Melchizedek was both a priest and a king (Hebrews 7:1). In the same way, Jesus holds the dual role of king and priest.

The eternal nature of the order of Melchizedek is presented in Hebrews 7:3: "Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever." In other words, Melchizedek appears in history with no record of a genealogy or ancestral line, no record of his birth, and no record of his death. The point is, Melchizedek *appears* to transcend earthly existence; this makes him a type of Christ, who truly *does* transcend earthly existence as the eternal King-Priest who has no predecessor and no successor in His high office.

One implication of Jesus' priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek is that the Mosaic Law was insufficient to save: "If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood—and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood—why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? For

when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also” (Hebrews 7:11–12). We needed a better priesthood—an eternal priesthood—to save us from our sins for eternity. We needed Jesus, “one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life” (Hebrews 7:16).

A priest is a mediator between God and man. Within the Old Testament, the Aaronic or Levitical priests would make sacrifices on behalf of the nation of Israel (Leviticus 16:1–28). Those sacrifices had to be repeated over and over. Eventually the priest would die, and his work as mediator would cease. Jesus, our High Priest “in the order of Melchizedek,” is not only our [mediator](#) but also our sacrifice (see 1 John 2:1–2). Because of His resurrection, death does not interrupt His work; Jesus remains our eternal High Priest.

Not only is Jesus the sympathetic High Priest (Hebrews 4:14–16), but He is the King as well (Revelation 19:16). Jesus will physically reign as king in Jerusalem (Psalm 110:2), and His kingship will be everlasting (2 Samuel 7:13). Much like Melchizedek was both priest and king, Jesus is also both priest and king. He is the eternal mediator between God and man and the final authority as reigning king, soon to return and establish His physical kingdom in the same city where Melchizedek was from, Jerusalem. [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [Who was Melchizedek?](#)

ANSWER - Melchizedek, whose name means “king of righteousness,” was a king of Salem (Jerusalem) and priest of the Most High God (Genesis 14:18–20; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6–11; 6:20—7:28). Melchizedek’s sudden appearance and disappearance in the book of Genesis is somewhat mysterious. Melchizedek and Abraham first met after Abraham’s defeat of Chedorlaomer and his three allies. Melchizedek presented bread and wine to Abraham and his weary men, demonstrating friendship. He bestowed a blessing on Abraham in the name of *El Elyon* (“God Most High”) and praised God for giving Abraham a victory in battle (Genesis 14:18–20).

Abraham presented Melchizedek with a tithe (a tenth) of all the items he had gathered. By this act Abraham indicated that he recognized Melchizedek as a priest who ranked higher spiritually than he.

In Psalm 110, a messianic psalm written by David (Matthew 22:43), **Melchizedek is presented as a type of Christ.** This theme is repeated in the book of Hebrews, where both Melchizedek and Christ are considered kings of righteousness and peace. By citing Melchizedek and his unique priesthood as a type, the writer shows that Christ’s new priesthood is superior to the old levitical order and the priesthood of Aaron (Hebrews 7:1–10).

Some propose that Melchizedek was actually a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ, or a [Christophany](#). This is a possible theory, especially given that Abraham received such a visit later, in Genesis 17–18, when Abraham saw and spoke with the Lord (*Yahweh*) in the form of a man.

Hebrews 6:20 says, “[Jesus] has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” This term *order* would ordinarily indicate a succession of priests holding the office. None are ever mentioned, however, in the long interval from Melchizedek to Christ, an anomaly that can be solved by assuming that Melchizedek and Christ are really the same person. Thus the “order” is eternally vested in Him and Him alone.

Hebrews 7:3 says that Melchizedek was “without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.” The question is whether the author of Hebrews means this *actually* or *figuratively*.

If the description in Hebrews is literal, then it is indeed difficult to see how it could be properly applied to anyone but the Lord Jesus Christ. No mere earthly king “**remains a priest forever**,” and no mere human is “**without father or mother**.” If Genesis 14 describes a theophany, then God the Son came to give Abraham His blessing (Genesis 14:17–19), appearing as the King of Righteousness (Revelation 19:11,16), the King of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), and the Mediator between God and Man (1 Timothy 2:5).

If the description of Melchizedek is figurative, then the details of having no genealogy, no beginning or ending, and a ceaseless ministry are simply statements accentuating the mysterious nature of the person who met Abraham. In this case, the silence in the Genesis account concerning these details is purposeful and better serves to link Melchizedek with Christ.

Are Melchizedek and Jesus the same person? A case can be made either way. At the very least, Melchizedek is a type of Christ, prefiguring the Lord’s ministry. But it is also possible that Abraham, after his weary battle, met and gave honor to the Lord Jesus Himself. [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [What is the Melchizedek priesthood?](#)

ANSWER - In biblical Christianity, the Melchizedek priesthood is an office that applies only to Christ. [Melchizedek](#) is introduced in [Genesis 14:18](#) and is described as the king of Salem and “priest of God.” Abram (later Abraham) offers Melchizedek a tithe and is blessed. The name *Melchizedek* is the combination of the Hebrew words for “king” and “righteous,” making Melchizedek a righteous, kingly priest.

In Matthew 22 Jesus debates the Pharisees. In verse 44 Jesus cites Psalm 110:1, stating that the Messiah is David’s “lord” in that verse. Melchizedek is mentioned in the same psalm: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek’” (Psalm 110:4). So the Messiah, David’s lord, was given Melchizedek’s priesthood. Melchizedek is therefore a type of Christ—some commentators say Melchizedek’s appearance to Abraham was actually a [Christophany](#), an early revelation of Jesus Christ.

Much of chapters 6 and 7 of the book of Hebrews is given to explaining why Jesus’ Melchizedek priesthood is superior to that of Aaron. Hebrews 7:23–24 implies that Jesus holds His priestly office eternally, using a Greek word that suggests something that cannot be passed down or changed. Hebrews 7:26 calls this priest “exalted” and sinless. For all of these reasons, Christ alone can fulfill the office of the Melchizedek priesthood (Hebrews 6:20).

[Mormonism](#) holds a different, unbiblical view of the priesthood of Melchizedek. According to Mormon doctrine, the office the Melchizedek priesthood stopped until it was re-instituted through the ministry of Joseph Smith (*Doctrine and Covenants* 107:1–5). Mormonism teaches that men may be ordained into this priesthood, through offices such as Apostle, Patriarch, or Elder. The invoking of Melchizedek and, to a lesser extent, Aaron, is used by Mormonism to arrogate priestly authority for their offices. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Hebrews 7:2 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](#). (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [ho kai dekten apo panton emerisen](#) (3SAAI) [Abraam. proton men ermeneuomenos](#) (PPPMSN) [basileus dikaiosunes epeita de kai basileus Salem. o estin](#) (3SPAI) [basileus eirenes.](#)

Amplified: And Abraham gave to him a tenth portion of all [the spoil]. He is primarily, as his name when translated indicates, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, which means king of peace. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

NLT: Then Abraham took a tenth of all he had won in the battle and gave it to Melchizedek. His name means “king of justice.” He is also “king of peace” because Salem means “peace.” ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Young's Literal: to whom also a tenth of all did Abraham divide, (first, indeed, being interpreted, `King of righteousness,' and then also, King of Salem, which is, King of Peace,)

TO WHOM ALSO ABRAHAM APPORTIONED A TENTH OF ALL THE SPOILS: [ho kai dekten apo panton emerisen](#) (3SAAI) [abraam:](#)

- Genesis 28:22; Leviticus 27:32; Numbers 18:21; 1Samuel 8:15,17
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A tenth of all the spoils - This fact is introduced here and prepares his readers for a startling conclusion beginning in Heb 7:4-note through Heb 7:10-note.

In Genesis 14:20 **Moses** records "And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he (Abraham) gave him (Melchizedek) a tenth of all.

Pentecost comments that when Melchizedek "came out to meet Abraham, he pronounced a twofold blessing. First, he pronounced a blessing upon Abraham (Ge 14:19), evidently because he recognized that Abraham’s victory was a victory by faith. He also pronounced a blessing upon God Most High (Ge 14:20). Even though the conflict was waged in faith, the victory did not belong to Abraham. The victory was God’s—through Abraham—so that the honor and the glory for the victory must be given to God Most

High. Abraham's response was to give Melchizedek a tithe of all the spoils of the conquest (Ge 14:20). In giving the tithes, Abraham was declaring that the victory was not his, but God's. Therefore all of the spoils did not belong to Abraham, but they rightly belonged to God. In giving a tithe he recognized God's right to all he had taken in battle. (Ibid)

Keep in mind that there was no Mosaic law at the time of Abraham's tithe. More than 430 years later the Mosaic law required one tenth to be paid to the Lord from both produce and flocks...

'Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S; it is holy to the LORD. 31 'If, therefore, a man wishes to redeem part of his tithe, he shall add to it one-fifth of it. 32 'And for every tenth part of herd or flock, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD. (Lev 27:30-32).

Expositor's Greek Testament has an interesting note that "the offering of a tithe of the spoils to the gods was a custom of antiquity. See Wetstein for examples and especially Arnold's note on Thucydides iii.50. "Frequently the anathemata were of the nature of aparchai, or the divine share of what was won in peace or war...The colossal statue of Athena Promachos on the Athenian Acropolis hill was a votive offering from a tithe of the booty taken at Marathon." (Gardner and Jevon's Greek Ant., 181.) ([Hebrews 7 Commentary - Marcus Dods](#))

How can we apply this truth to our lives today? If Melchizedek is a type of Christ (which I believe he is) and Abraham paid a tithe of his choice spoils to this man, how much more should believers today acknowledge our Great High Priest Jesus as the One Who bought us with a price...

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, Whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore **glorify** (aorist imperative = Command to do this without any hesitation! Give a proper opinion of your Lord by how you think, what you say and how you act before both lost and saved - in context especially referring to abstaining from fleshly lusts and immorality - He wants our obedience before He wants our money or even our songs of praise, cp 1 Sa 15:22,23, Psalm 51:16, 17) God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

WAS FIRST OF ALL, BY THE TRANSLATION OF HIS NAME KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: proton men hermeneuomenos (PPPMN) basileus dikaiousnes:

- 2Samuel 8:15; 23:3; 1Kings 4:24,25; 1Chronicles 22:9; Psalms 45:4, 5, 6, 7; 72:1, 2, 3,7; 85:10,11; Isaiah 9:6,7; 32:1,2; 45:22, 23, 24, 25; Jeremiah 23:5,6; 33:15,16; Micah 5:5; Luke 2:14; Romans 3:26; 5:1,2; Ephesians 2:14, 15, 16, 17, 18
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Spurgeon - Note well the order of these two, and the dependence of the one upon the other; for there could be no true peace that was not grounded upon righteousness; and out of righteousness peace is sure to spring up. Righteousness is essential to peace; if it were not first, peace could not be second. If there could be a kind of peace apart from righteousness, it would be dank, dark, deadly, a horrible peace, ending in a worse misery than war itself could inflict. It is needful where an unrighteous peace exists that it should be broken up, that a better peace should be established upon a true foundation that will last forever. Herein (king) he is like our divine Lord, whose name and character can only come to us by interpretation. What he is and who he is and all his character, no angel's tongue could tell. No human language can ever describe to the full what Jesus is. He is King, but that is a poor word for such royalty as His. He reigns, but that word "reigns" is but a slender description of that supreme empire that He continually exercises. He is said to be King of righteousness, but that is by interpretation, by the toning down of His character to our comprehension. This Melchizedek, whom we exhibit as a type, is such a king as God is. He is according to divine model. He is priest of the Most High God, and he is like the Most High God, for the Lord Himself is, first, King of righteousness, and after that also King of peace. The great Creator entered the garden of Eden in that sorrowful hour when our parents had rebelled, and were hiding among the trees to escape His call; and He bade them answer for their fault. When they stood trembling before Him in the nakedness of their conscious guilt, they knew Him as their King and their Judge. At that moment he was not first the King of peace to them, but first the King of righteousness. All over the world, and everywhere, this is God's way of dealing with men. Do not imagine that God will ever lay aside His righteousness for the sake of saving a sinner—that He will ever deal with men unrighteously in order that they may escape the penalty due to their transgression. He has never done so, and He never will. Glorious in holiness is He forever and ever. That blazing throne must consume iniquity; transgression cannot stand before it; there can be no exception to this rule. The Judge of all the earth must do right. Whatever things may change, the law of God cannot alter, and the character of God cannot deteriorate. High as the great mountains, deep as the abyss, eternal as His being, is the righteousness of the Most High. Peace can never come to men from the Lord God Almighty except by righteousness. The two can never be separated without the most fearful consequences. Peace without righteousness is like the smooth surface of the stream before it takes its awful Niagara plunge. If there is to be peace

between God and man, God must still be a righteous God, and by some means or other the transgression of man must be justly put away; for God cannot wink at it or permit it to go unpunished. Salvation must first of all provide for righteousness, or peace will never lodge within its chambers. The Lord of heaven is first King of righteousness, and then King of peace, so that Melchizedek was such a king as God is. Today our Lord and Master has gone His way up to the eternal hills where He reigns. But His kingdom, for which we daily pray, is coming; and, mark you, it will come by righteousness. I say no word against those who endeavor to bring peace to the nations by the extension of commerce, facilities for travel, and so forth; but it is not thus that the sword of war shall be broken. I never anticipate the reign of universal peace on earth till first the King of righteousness is acknowledged in every place. I do not think that we shall ever see the fruits without the tree, or the stream without the source, or peace without the enthronement of the principle of righteousness from which it springs. There shall come a day when the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the wolf shall lie down with the lamb—when they shall hang the useless helmet in the hall, and study war no more. But that reign of the joyous King, that era of plenty, love, and joy, can only commence as a reign of righteousness. It cannot be anything else. Until sin is dethroned, till iniquity is banished, we shall not see the divine fruit of peace upon the face of the earth. Wherever Jesus is King He must be first King of righteousness, and after that King of peace. So, then, Melchizedek is such a king as God is, and such a king as Jesus is. ([First, King of Righteousness and After That, King of Peace](#))

First ([4413](#)) (**protos**) refers to the former or first and here seems to refer to priority.

Protos - 155x in 148v - Matt 5:24; 6:33; 7:5; 8:21; 10:2; 12:29, 45; 13:30; 17:10, 27; 19:30; 20:8, 10, 16, 27; 21:28, 31, 36; 22:25, 38; 23:26; 26:17; 27:64; Mark 3:27; 4:28; 6:21; 7:27; 9:11f, 35; 10:31, 44; 12:20, 28f; 13:10; 14:12; 16:9; Luke 2:2; 6:42; 9:59, 61; 10:5; 11:26, 38; 12:1; 13:30; 14:18, 28, 31; 15:22; 16:5; 17:25; 19:16, 47; 20:29; 21:9; John 1:15, 30, 41; 2:10; 7:51; 8:7; 10:40; 12:16; 15:18; 18:13; 19:32, 39; 20:4, 8; Acts 1:1; 3:26; 7:12; 12:10; 13:46, 50; 15:14; 16:12; 17:4; 20:18; 25:2; 26:20, 23; 27:43; 28:7, 17; Rom 1:8, 16; 2:9f; 3:2; 10:19; 15:24; 1 Cor 11:18; 12:28; 14:30; 15:3, 45ff; 2 Cor 8:5; Eph 6:2; Phil 1:5; 1 Thess 4:16; 2 Thess 2:3; 1 Tim 1:15f; 2:1, 13; 3:10; 5:4, 12; 2 Tim 1:5; 2:6; 4:16; Heb 7:2; 8:7, 13; 9:1f, 6, 8, 15, 18; 10:9; Jas 3:17; 1 Pet 4:17; 2 Pet 1:20; 2:20; 3:3; 1 John 4:19; Rev 1:17; 2:4f, 8, 19; 4:1, 7; 8:7; 13:12; 16:2; 20:5f; 21:1, 4, 19; 22:13. NAS = before(3), best(1), first(128), first of all(2), first importance(1), first man(1), first one(1), first things(1), first time(1), foremost(5), leading(2), leading man(1), leading men(5), outer(3), previous(1).

Ironside makes an interesting observation on the the order of the names of Melchizedek writing "how remarkably the Spirit of God sets His seal on the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament. Our attention is drawn to the fact that this royal hierarch is first "by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace" (Hebrews 7:2). If the order of the names had been reversed, God's beautiful type would have been spoiled. But standing just as they do, the names righteousness and Salem are in perfect agreement with truth revealed elsewhere. Righteousness must come before peace. We are told in Isaiah 32:17, "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." And in the great gospel Epistle to the Romans we first learn how the righteousness of God has been maintained in the cross before we are told of peace with God, which is ours by faith. So exact is Scripture that the changing of the order of the original words would throw all into confusion. ([Hebrews 7 Commentary](#))

Translation ([2059](#)) (the verb **hermeneuo** [noun = hermeneia] which some say is from [Hermes](#) the pagan god of language - our English [Hermeneutics - study or science of interpretation of Scripture](#)) (see [ISBE Article](#)) means to interpret, to explain in words (expound) or to translate what has been spoken or written in a foreign language. The idea in some contexts is to help someone understand a subject or matter by making it plain. In the present context the idea is the rendering of words in a different language (which also makes them understandable).

Here are the other cognates in this word group - **hermeneía** ([2058 see the 2 uses](#)) = interpretation (e.g., interpretation of tongues); **dihermeneúo** ([1329 see the 6 uses](#)) = to interpret; **dihermeneutes** ([1328 see the one use](#)) = an interpreter (1Cor 14:28 "there is no interpreter"); **methhermeneúo** ([3177 see the 8 uses](#)) translate from one language to another.

In sum **hermeneuo** means "to interpret" in either the sense of explaining or in the sense of translating. Thus interpretation involves making something that is unclear or unknown into something that is clear and intelligible. In Classical Greek the verb also at times meant "to say" or "to express ones' thoughts in words," but this is close to the meaning "to explain."

In modern parlance especially as it relates to the church **hermeneutics** is "The discipline of interpreting texts, with special reference to the principles and procedures involved" (DeMoss, M. S. Pocket Dictionary for the Study of New Testament Greek. IVP)

Dr Stephen Lewis writes that **hermeneutics** is

The science (principles) and art (task) by which the meaning of the biblical text is determined [It is a science because it is guided by rules within a system; and it is an art because the application of the rules is by skill, and not by mechanical imitation].

- A. Hermeneutics is a SUPPORTING discipline. By delineating how a student should reach his/her conclusion.
- B. Hermeneutics is a REFLECTIVE discipline. By exposing how a student is reaching his/her conclusions.
- C. Hermeneutics is a CLARIFYING discipline. By enabling a student to gain self-awareness.

But being aware of how you reach your interpretation you are in a better position to weigh the merits of your interpretation. ([Hermeneutics](#))

As noted above some feel the etymology of **hermeneuo** is related to **Hermes** the pagan Greek god who functioned primarily as the attendant, herald, and interpreter of the gods to mortals. Hermes was responsible for communicating what was beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence could grasp. He was also known as the god of science, inventions, speech, writing, literature and eloquence. He was the messenger or interpreter of the gods, and particularly of his father Zeus. It follows that the verb **hermeneuo** came to refer to Thus the verb came to refer to bringing someone to understanding of something in his language (explanation, interpretation) or in another language (translation). In a similar way our English word **interpret** is used at times to mean **explain** and at other times **translate**. In its nineteen usages (both nouns and verbs) in the New Testament, it is more frequently used in the latter sense, as the following illustrates.

English dictionaries define **hermeneutics** (from hermēneuein = to interpret, from hermēneus = interpreter) as the study of the methodological principles of interpretation as of the Bible. They go on to state that it is the branch of theology that deals with the principles and methodology of exegesis (means critical exposition or explanation of the meaning of a scriptural passage in the context of the whole Bible. [from Greek exēgēsis, from exēgeisthai = to explain, interpret, from ex- + hēgeisthai = to lead]).

Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary - Bible scholars believe a biblical text must be interpreted according to the language in which it was written, its historical context, the identity and purpose of the author, its literary nature, and the situation to which it was originally addressed. ([Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#))

In a number of languages the equivalent of **translate** or **interpret** is an idiomatic expression such as 'it comes out in our language as', 'in our words it means' or 'in our mouths it says.'

Hermeneuo is used 3 times in the NT...

John 1:42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas " (which is **translated** Peter).

John 9:7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam " (which is **translated**, Sent). And so he went away and washed, and came back seeing.

Hebrews 7:2 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.

Hermeneuo is used 3 times in the Septuagint (Ezra 4:7, Esther 10:3, Job 42:17)

Ezra 4:7 And in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of his colleagues, wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the text of the letter was written in Aramaic and **translated** (Hebrew = tirkam = interpret; Lxx = hermeneuo) from Aramaic.

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HERMENEUTICS, EXEGESIS & EXPOSITION

As an aside since **exegesis** and **exposition** is so closely related to **hermeneutics**, the following definition of terms is presented from Dr Lewis' paper [Hermeneutics](#)...

EXEGESIS AND EXPOSITION - The communication of the meaning of the text (the Bible) along with its relevance to present-day hearers. It starts with a given passage and investigates it using the process of historical/cultural, grammatical, rhetorical analysis.

What is the difference between Exegesis and Exposition? The word "exegesis" is a transliteration of the Greek word which, according to Arndt and Gingrich, means "narrative, description, or explanation, interpretation." In the Septuagint this noun is used in Judges 7:15 in referring to the "interpretation" of a dream. The verb "exegeomai" according to Arndt and Gingrich, means to "explain, interpret, tell, report, describe."

In Webster's Dictionary the terms **exegesis** and **exposition** are very similar in meaning. The former is "an explanation or critical interpretation of a text," and the latter is "a setting forth of the meaning or purpose" of a writing. However, at EAST and in other biblical circles a more technical distinction is often made between these two terms. The primary concern in exegesis is an understanding of the text, whereas the primary concern of exposition is the communication of the meaning of the text.

An effective **expositor** is first an effective **exegete**. Exegesis precedes exposition just as baking a cake comes before serving it. The exegetical process takes place in the workshop, the warehouse. It is a process in private, a perspiring task in which the Bible student examines the backgrounds, meanings, and forms of words; the structure and parts of sentences; the ascertaining of the original textual reading (textual criticism); etc. But not all those details are shared when he preaches or teaches the Bible. An artist, in the process of creating his work, agonizes over the minutiae of his painting, but in the end he wants others to see not the fine details but the whole and how the parts are related.

Exegesis is thus a means to an end, a step toward the end result of **exposition**. **Exegesis** is more technical and is basic to **exposition**, which is more practical. In the privacy of his study, the exegete seeks to comprehend the exact meaning of the details of the Bible passage being studied. But in the pulpit or classroom the expositor, having built his material on an exegetical base, seeks to communicate the content. One is to the other as the foundation is to the building. ([Hermeneutics](#))

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One purpose of the Aaronic priesthood was to offer sacrifices which would restore the people to a right relationship to God. These sacrifices since they were of the blood of animals could never perfectly succeed in any deep and lasting way, for they were but a pre-figurement or type of the one perfect sacrifice of the Lamb of God did remove sin and provide lasting forgiveness. The Aaronic sacrifices symbolized and pointed to the sacrifice of the Cross that alone makes men righteous and results in genuine peace with God (see **note** Romans 5:1), but they themselves could not make men righteous or give men lasting peace. As a temporary ritual they accomplished their God-ordained purpose. But they could not bring men to God. They were never meant to.

King of righteousness - As alluded to elsewhere in this discussion, this ultimately points to the King of kings Whose return ushers in a 1000 year reign of righteousness. Jesus is the King of righteousness and as Dwight Pentecost points out - When various religious groups propose their own views of what Jesus Christ would or would not do in today's world, reigning as "King of Righteousness" usually is not something they include. Be wary of those cultists, religious liberals, or radicals who say they "believe in Jesus." Always ask them to clarify which "Jesus" they believe in—the "Jesus" of their own philosophy or the Jesus of the Bible! (Ibid)

AND THEN ALSO KING OF SALEM, WHICH IS KING OF PEACE: epeita (then) de kai basileus salem o estin (3SPA1) basileus eirenes:

- Zec 6:13
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Expositor's Greek Testament writes that - "first" by his very name, "then" by his actual position; probably the peace of his kingdom is considered as a consequence of its righteousness. Righteousness and peace are characteristic properties of the Messianic Kingdom. ([Hebrews 7 Commentary - Marcus Dods](#))

The **psalmist Solomon** writes "In his (Solomon desire for his son finds ultimate fulfillment in the Messiah's reign) days may the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace till the moon is no more. (Psalm 72:7)

Spurgeon commenting on **Psalm 72:7** writes "Where Jesus reigns He is known as the true Melchizedek, King both of righteousness and peace. Peace based upon right is sure to be lasting, but no other will be. Many a so called Holy Alliance has come to the ground ere many moons have filled their horns, because craft formed the league, perjury established it, and oppression was the design of it; but when Jesus shall proclaim the great Truce of God, He will ordain perpetual peace, and men shall learn war no more. The peace which Jesus brings is not superficial or short lived; it is abundant in its depth and duration. Let all hearts and voices welcome the King of nations; Jesus the Good, the Great, the Just, the Ever blessed.

King of Salem ([08004](#)) (**shalem** - from Hebrew **shalom**) = **King of peace**. See also Hebrew word study - **Peace** ([07965](#))(**shalom**)

The designation **King of Salem** emphasizes not only the place (Jerusalem) but also the character of this king as one who rules with peace or shalom. As an aside, it is notable that there is no single English word that can truly convey the richness of the meaning of the familiar Hebrew word **shalom**. The general meaning behind the root **sh-l-m** is of **completion and fulfillment** and thus of entering into a state of **wholeness and unity** (oneness) signified by a restored relationship, especially wholeness of the relationship between a person and God. Shalom signifies a sense of well-being and harmony both within and without, health, happiness, quietness of soul, preservation, prosperity, tranquility, security, safety and includes all that makes life worthwhile. Shalom also conveys the sense of being at peace with God and involves more than forgiveness of sin, in that fullness of life, prosperity, and peace with men is the expected result of shalom. In narrative books shalom typically is used to describe an absence of hostility or strife. In the psalms and the prophets it goes beyond this, so that in at least 2/3 of the biblical references shalom indicates a total fulfillment that comes when individuals experience God's presence.

Shalom is used as a greeting and also as a way of inquiring after someone's state of being & to want the very best for him in life. To be at peace is to be happy, to be whole, to be right with God, fellow humans, and creation. Peace is the opposite of the rivalry, instability, and division brought by envy and ambition. Shalom is still used today in Israel in greeting & thus wishing one another well, saying in essence "may all things be prosperous with you." Someone has well said that "Peace in the Jewish sense is the symphony of life made meaningful through a right relationship with God." (New Geneva study Bible: Thomas Nelson: Nashville) Shalom always means everything which makes for a man's highest good. In the east when one man says shalom to another, he does not mean that he wishes for the other man only the absence of evil things; he wishes for him the presence of all good things. In the Bible peace means not only freedom from all trouble; it means enjoyment of all good.

*Lovingkindness and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*
-- Psalm 85:10

[Adrian Rogers](#) on **righteousness** and **peace** - Now put down Psalm 85:10 in your margin and listen to this: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." In the Bible, God makes righteousness and peace to cohabitate together. Righteousness loves peace. Peace loves righteousness. Our high priest is the King of Righteousness and He is the King of Peace. Now, friend, when sin comes, righteousness leaves, and when righteousness leaves, peace leaves. I mean, you cannot have peace without righteousness. Righteousness and peace cohabit together. And righteousness and peace have kissed one another. Sin came into the world, and when sin came, righteousness went that way and peace went that way. And people are wondering why can't I have peace in my home? Because you don't have righteousness there! Why can't we have peace in our city? Because we don't have righteousness! Why can we not have peace in our world? Because we don't have righteousness! There, you know, all the world wants peace, but the world doesn't want righteousness. Ha. We're trying everything we can do to have peace. How can we have peace without righteousness? Righteousness and peace have kissed one another. **Jesus is the King of Righteousness, and Jesus is the King of Peace, and so we'll never have peace until sin is dealt with.** And, thank God, at Calvary, let me tell you what happened at Calvary. One more time, righteousness and peace kissed one another at Calvary. You see, at Calvary righteousness and peace are reunited.

Spurgeon - Salem, which, brought down to our tongue, signifies "peace," is in reference to a place rather than a person. You see, our Lord Jesus is essentially righteousness; that is interwoven with His name and person. But He gives, bestows, deposits, pours forth peace in a place that He has chosen, and upon a people whom He has ordained, and whom He has brought near unto Himself: so that His kingdom of peace links Him with His redeemed, to whom He has given the peace of God. In beginning to deal with an apostate race the Lord observed the fitting order of our text: He began with righteousness, and afterwards went on to peace. At the gate of the garden commenced the dispensation of mercy and peace, but first of all there was the pronouncing of the sentence that man should eat bread in the sweat of his face, and that unto dust he should return. Substantial righteousness was dealt out to the guilty, and then peace was provided for the troubled. At the fall God first set up a judgment seat, and right speedily a mercy seat. Righteousness must ever lead the van. ([First, King of Righteousness and After That, King of Peace](#))

As emphasized **righteousness** always precedes **peace**, the prophet Isaiah recording that "the work of **righteousness** will be **peace**, And the service of **righteousness**, quietness and confidence forever." (Isaiah 32:17, cp Heb 12:11-note)

The **psalmist** writes that...

Lovingkindness and truth have met together; **Righteousness** and **peace** have kissed each other. (Psalm 85:10)

Spurgeon comments that ultimately there is a sense in which this verse speaks of "Christ Jesus, the reconciling Word. In Him, the attributes of God unite in glad unanimity in the salvation of guilty men, they meet and embrace in such a manner as else were inconceivable either to our just fears or to our enlightened hopes.

God is as true as if He had fulfilled every letter of His threatenings, as righteous as if He had never spoken peace to a sinner's conscience; His love in undiminished splendour shines forth, but no other of His ever blessed characteristics is eclipsed thereby. It is the custom of modern thinkers(?) to make sport of this representation of the result of our Lord's substitutionary atonement; but had they ever been themselves made to feel the weight of sin upon a spiritually awakened conscience, they would cease from their vain ridicule. Their doctrine of atonement has well been described by Dr. Duncan as the admission "that the Lord Jesus Christ did something or other, which somehow or other, was in some way or other connected with man's salvation." This is their substitute for substitution. Our facts are infinitely superior to their dreams, and yet they sneer. It is but natural that natural men should do so. We cannot expect animals to set much store by the discoveries of science, neither can we hope to see unspiritual men rightly estimate the solution of spiritual problems -- they are far above and out of their sight. Meanwhile it remains for those who rejoice in the great reconciliation to continue both to wonder and adore."

Peace (1515) (**eirene** [word study] from verb **eiro** = to join or bind together that which has been separated) literally pictures the binding or joining together again of that which had been separated or divided and thus setting at one again, a meaning conveyed by the common expression of one "having it all together". It follows that peace is the opposite of division or dissension. Peace as a state of concord and harmony is the opposite of war. Peace was used as a greeting or farewell corresponding to the Hebrew word *shalom* - "peace to you". **Eirene** can convey the sense of an inner rest, well being and harmony. The ultimate peace is the state of reconciliation with God, effected by placing one's faith in the gospel. In eschatology, peace is prophesied to be an essential characteristic of the Messianic kingdom (Acts 10:36).

Peace is a condition of freedom from disturbance, whether outwardly, as of a nation from war or enemies or inwardly, as in the current context, within the soul. **Peace** implies health, well-being, and prosperity.

Like a River Glorious

Stayed upon Jehovah,

Hearts are fully blessed;

Finding, as He promised,

Perfect peace and rest.

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Peace Illustrated - Jim Walton was translating the NT for the Muinane people of La Sabana in the jungles of Colombia. But he was having trouble with the word **peace**. During this time, Fernando, the village chief, was promised a 20-minute plane ride to a location that would have taken him 3 days to travel by walking. The plane was delayed in arriving at La Sabana, so Fernando departed on foot. When the plane finally came, a runner took off to bring Fernando back. But by the time he had returned, the plane had left. Fernando was livid because of the mix-up. He went to Jim and launched into an angry tirade. Fortunately, Walton had taped the chief's diatribe. When he later translated it, he discovered that the chief kept repeating the phrase, "*I don't have one heart.*" Jim asked other villagers what having "*one heart*" meant, and he found that it was like saying, "*There is nothing between you and the other person.*" That, Walton realized, was just what he needed to translate the word **peace**. To have **peace** with God means that there is nothing--no sin, no guilt, no condemnation--that separates us. And that **peace** with God is possible only through Christ (see **note** Romans 5:1). Do you have "one heart" with God today?

C H Spurgeon on **Melchisedec** (some repetition from his notes above)...

Melchisedec seems to have been, first by name, and then by place of office, doubly designated a king...I believe in the verbal inspiration of Scripture; hence, I can see how there can be instruction for us even in the proper names of persons and of places. Those who reject verbal inspiration must in effect condemn the great apostle of the Gentiles, whose teaching is so frequently based upon a word. He makes more of words and names than any of us should have thought of doing, and he was guided therein by the Spirit of the Lord, and therefore he was right. For my part, I am far more afraid of making too little of the Word than of seeing too much in it.

This man is, first, named "Melchi-zedek" — "**king of righteousness**" by interpretation; and herein he is like our divine Lord, whose name and character can only come to us by interpretation. What he is and who he is and all his character, no angel's tongue could tell. No human language can ever describe to the full what Jesus is. He is King, but that is a poor word for such royalty as his. He reigns, but that word "reigns" is but a slender description of that supreme empire which he continually exercises. He is said to be King of righteousness, but

that is by interpretation, by the toning down of his character to our comprehension. Scripture might have called him King of holiness, for he is “glorious in holiness.” His character, better known to spirits before the throne than to us, is not to be comprehended in that one word “righteousness:” it is but an interpretation, and most things lose by translation, and so the perfect character of the Son of God, as it stands before the Eternal Hind, cannot be fully expressed in human language. In fact, when our faculties are enlarged, and our spirits raised to the highest platform, they can never reach the eternity of our Lord’s sonship, and the glory of his kingdom: the equity of his character, and the loveliness of his mind, both as God and man, must still be far beyond us. But this much is translated to us into our own tongue — that he is a King, and that he is a righteous King — yea, the very King of righteousness — the Sovereign of the realm of equity, the supreme Lord of everything that is good and holy. That, you see, is wrapped up in his name and nature. Jesus is righteousness, and every righteous thing gathers beneath the right scepter of his kingdom.

But the second word, **Salem**, which, brought down to our tongues signifies “peace,” is in reference to a place rather than a person. You see our Lord Jesus is essentially righteousness, that is interwoven with his name and person; but he gives, bestows, deposits, pours forth peace in a place which he has chosen, and upon a people whom he has ordained, and whom he has brought near unto himself: so that his kingdom of peace little him with his redeemed, to whom he has given the peace of God.

“First, **King of righteousness.**” How early that “first” is I cannot tell you.” In the beginning was the Word,” but when that beginning was, who knows? — for is he not, indeed, without beginning? First and firstborn, from everlasting thou art God, O mighty Son of Jehovah! First King of righteousness, and then afterwards when men fell, when rebellion, and strife, and war had sprung up — then he came to heal the mischief and become “King of peace.” He comes himself as the divine Ambassador, our Peacemaker and Peace; he comes here into this place even into the midst of his Salem, into the midst of his people, and gives us now, as he has long given, the vision of peace; opening up before the eye of faith the completeness, the sureness, and the delight of perfect peace in himself.

The one matter which I am going to set forth at this time is just this — **First King of righteousness, and after that also King of peace.**” Note well the order of these two, and the dependence of the one upon the other; for there could be no true peace that was not grounded upon, righteousness; and out of righteousness peace is sure to spring up. Righteousness is essential to peace; if it were not first, peace could not be second. If there could be a lying peace apart from righteousness, it would be dank, dark, deadly, a horrible peace, ending in a worse misery than war itself could inflict. It is needful where an unrighteous peace exists that it should be beholden up, that a better peace should be established upon a true foundation which will last for ever.

I shall ask you — and may the Spirit of God help us to do it — first, to admire the King, and, secondly, to enjoy him — to enter with holy delight into the full meaning of his name and character as King of Righteousness and King of peace. ([First, King of Righteousness and After That, King of Peace](#))

Hebrews 7:3 [Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually](#) * ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [apator](#), [ameter](#), [agenealogetos](#), [mete archen hemeron mete zoes telos echon](#), ([PAPMSN](#)) [aphomoiomenos](#) ([RPPMSN](#)) [de to uio tou theou, menei](#) ([3SPA1](#)) [hiereus eis to dienekes](#).

Amplified: Without [record of] father or mother or ancestral line, neither with beginning of days nor ending of life, but, resembling the Son of God, he continues to be a priest without interruption and without successor. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

NLT: There is no record of his father or mother or any of his ancestors—no beginning or end to his life. He remains a priest forever, resembling the Son of God. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Young's Literal: without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, and being made like to the Son of God, doth remain a priest continually.

WITHOUT FATHER, WITHOUT MOTHER, WITHOUT GENEALOGY HAVING NEITHER BEGINNING OF DAYS NOR END OF LIFE: apator ameter agenealogetos mete arche hemero mete zoes telos echon (PAPMSN):

- Exodus 6:18,20-27; 1Chronicles 6:1, 2, 3
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

This verse has perplexed many especially in view of the fact that Genesis where Melchizedek is first mentioned is filled with genealogies. Melchizedek however has none -- at least none that is recorded. He disappears from Genesis 14 as quickly as he had appeared. The silence of Scripture on His genealogy is a perfect type of our great High Priest Christ Jesus Who is eternal (without beginning or end).

Spurgeon - We find no father or mother mentioned in the case of Melchizedek, because he did not come to the priesthood by natural descent as did the sons of Aaron. In this he is the great type of Jesus, who is not one of a line, but the sole and only priest of His order. As a priest He is "without beginning of days or end of years," neither taking the priesthood from a predecessor, nor passing it on to a successor, nor laying it down because of old age. So mysterious is Melchizedek that many deeply taught expositors think that he was veritably an appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are inclined to believe that he was not a king of some city in Canaan, as most of us suppose, but that he was a manifestation of the Son of God, such as were the angels that appeared to Abraham on the plains of Mamre, and that divine being who appeared to Joshua by Jericho, and to the three holy ones in the furnace. At any rate, you may well "consider how great this man was" when you observe how veiled in cloud is everything about his coming and going—veiled because intended to impress us with the depth of the sacred meanings that were shadowed forth in him.

H A Ironside exhorts us writing "Again let us worship as we contemplate the perfection of Scripture—just as perfect in what it omits as in what it relates! ([Hebrews 7 Commentary](#))

Without father ([540](#)) (**apator** from **a** = without + **pater** = father) means fatherless and was a term used in secular Greek to describe children who were orphaned, abandoned, estranged, or born out of wedlock.

TDNT adds that **apator** had the following secular uses "Humans. When used of humans, apator can mean "orphan," "foundling," "bastard," "of unequal parentage," "disinherited," or "of nonnoble or unknown origin." In Judaism converted pagans are said to be "without father," and Judaism also applies the sense of "unnamed" to Esther, who is an orphan in Esther 2:7. Deities. Such deities as Athena, Hephaestus, and Aphrodite are said to be without father or mother. God has no father in Orphic, Gnostic, and mystic works. The point is that he has no origin, or is uncreated. (Referring to the sole NT use in Hebrews 7:3) This says of Melchizedek that he has no father, mother, nor genealogy. The point is that he does not fall into the sequence of the Levitical priesthood. As the promise precedes the law in Paul, so this priesthood precedes the Levitical priesthood in Hebrews. Similarly, as the reference of the promise is to Christ, so the reference of Melchizedek's priesthood is to the high priesthood of Christ. ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

Without mother ([282](#)) (**ameter**) is motherless.

Barclay comments on **apator** and **ameter** noting that "These words are very interesting. They have certain uses in secular Greek. They are the regular description of waifs and strays and of people of low pedigree. They contemptuously dismiss a man as having no ancestry. More, **apator** has a technical legal use in the contemporary Greek of the papyri. It is the word which is used on legal documents, especially on birth certificates, for father unknown and, therefore, illegitimate. So, for instance, there is a papyrus which speaks of: "Chairēmōn, **apator**, father unknown, whose mother is Thasēs." ([Hebrews 7 Commentary](#))

Without genealogy ([35](#)) (**agenealogetos** from **a** = without + **genealogeo** = to trace a genealogy) is literally without a traceable genealogy and so without pedigree or descent.

Barclay comments that this "is a word that, so far as we know, no Greek writer ever used before."

([Hebrews 7 Commentary](#)) **Vincent** -The meaning is that there is no record concerning his parentage. This is significant as indicating a different type of priesthood from the Levitical, in which genealogy was of prime importance. No man might exercise priestly functions who was not of the lineage of Aaron.

The absence of traceable lineage is significant because it indicates that this order refers to one that is distinctly different from than the Levitical priesthood, wherein it was of critical importance to know one's genealogy. If one was not of the lineage of Aaron, they could not exercise priestly functions. As someone has said, the result of this emphasis on lineage was that priests were often more concerned about pedigree than holiness.

Hughes - The point is, Jesus' priesthood, like Melchizedek's, was based solely on the call of God, not on heredity. Jesus and Melchizedek were both appointed as "priests of God Most High." ([Hughes, R. K. Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul. Volume 1. Crossway Books; Volume 2](#))

The silence of the Genesis narrative concerning Melchizedek's parents or line of priestly descent was significant because of the contrast it posed with the Levitical priesthood, where recorded line of descent was required for accession to the priestly office

Expositors Greek Testament writes that the terms "Without father, without mother, without genealogy" indicate that "he stands in Scripture alone, no mention being made of an illustrious father or mother from whom he could have inherited power and dignity, (and) still less can his priestly office and service be ascribed to his belonging to a priestly family. It is by virtue of his own personality he is what he is; his office derives no sanction from priestly lineage or hereditary rights; and in this respect he is made like to the Son of God. Of course it is not meant that in point of fact he had neither father nor mother, but that as he appears in Scripture his is without (such lineage)."

Having neither beginning...nor end - This does not mean that he came from nowhere. It simply means that in the Old Testament record nothing is said of his parents or origin. In practical terms the point the writer is seeking to get across to his readers with this statement about Melchizedek's having no beginning or end is that he was shadow the substance of which was realized in Messiah's eternal priesthood.

As **Vincent** says "That is to say, history is silent concerning his birth and death."

As an aside notable that some who believe in reincarnation appeal to this section of Hebrews to support their premise that Jesus is a reincarnation of Melchizedek. Clearly this is not a valid interpretation because the writer says Melchizedek was only "**made like**" Jesus, not that Jesus **was** Melchizedek. The writer also states in Hebrews 7:11 that Christ was a priest "according to the order of" Melchizedek and not that He was Melchizedek.

BUT MADE LIKE THE SON OF GOD HE ABIDES A PRIEST PERPETUALLY: aphomoiomenos (RPPMSN) de to huio tou theou menei (3SPA1) hierous:

- Heb 7:17,23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28
- Hebrews 6 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Made like - Note carefully that the Son of God is not made like Melchizedek, but he is made like the Son of God, and thus Melchizedek is presented in Scripture in such a way that he points to the truth about the Son of God.

Spurgeon - Melchizedek just passed across the page; he has no predecessor, he has no successor. We see him in Scripture, and we know nothing of his descent; we know nothing of his death. We only know that he was a priest of the Most High God; and this very silence about him is highly significant and instructive, for in this he is like "the Son of God—he remains a priest for all time." Now consider who this great man was, unto whom even "Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth from the spoils." If Abraham, the father of the faithful, the friend of God, paid tribute to him, how great must he have been, how high his office!

Leon Morris - And it is the Son of God Who is the standard, not the ancient priest-king. The writer says that Melchizedek is "made like" (aphomoiomenos) the Son of God, not that the Son of God is like Melchizedek. Thus it is not that Melchizedek sets the pattern and Jesus follows it. Rather, the record about Melchizedek is so arranged that it brings out certain truths that apply far more fully to Jesus than they do to Melchizedek. With the latter, these truths are simply a matter of record; but with Jesus they are not only historically true, they also have significant spiritual dimensions. The writer is, of course, speaking of the Son's eternal nature, not of his appearance in the Incarnation. ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing](#))

Guthrie commenting on Melchizedek's priesthood wrote that "Any priesthood is evaluated according to the status of the deity who is served, which means that Melchizedek's must have been of a highly exalted kind.

Guzik commenting on "made like the Son of God" writing that "It really isn't that Jesus has Melchizedek's kind of priesthood. Instead, Melchizedek has Jesus' kind of priesthood. (Ibid)

Made like (871) (aphomoioo from apo = intensifies meaning or also means away from + homoioo = to make like) means make like or similar or to produce a facsimile. In the passive sense it means to be like, to resemble or to portray ("to be or become like" or "make oneself out to be like.")

Guthrie adds that **aphomoioo** "is a suggestive word, used in the active of 'a facsimile copy or model' and in the passive of 'being made similar to.'"

TDNT writes "that Melchizedek "is like" the Son of God. The point may be that the Son of God is the prototype, or that the OT text is taken to be a messianic prophecy, i.e., a sign that points forward to Christ."

Thayer writes that **aphomoioo** means "to cause a model to pass off (apo) into an image or shape like it -- to express itself in it."

F B Meyer - It was as if the Father could not await the day of His Son's priestly entrance within the veil; but must needs anticipate the marvels of His ministry, by embodying its leading features in miniature (The priesthood of Melchizedek).

In summary form what the writer has also done is to present several characteristics of an ideal priesthood -- righteous, peaceable, personal and eternal.

Compare Isaiah's description of the Messiah in which righteousness is emphasized...

But with **righteousness** He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.

Isaiah also emphasizes the Messiah's association with peace in the well known passage in chapter 9 "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, **Prince of Peace**. There will be no end to the increase of His government or **of peace**, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and **righteousness** From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this." (Isaiah 9:6,7-note)

Note that Melchizedek's likeness is not to Messiah as Son of Man but to Him as Son of God. As Son of Man He was born and died. As Son of God, neither could be said of Him.

Son of God - **Arthur Pink** comments that "The various appellations under which our Lord is referred to in this Epistle call for due attention. They are not used at haphazard, but with precision and design. In Hebrews 2:9-note it is "Jesus" that faith beholds—the humiliated but now glorified Saviour. In Hebrews 3:6-note it is "Christ", the Anointed One, who is over God's house. But in 7:3 it is "the Son of God", as High Priest, unto whom Melchizedek was made a similitude. The Spirit here jealously guards the honour of Him whom it is His office and delight to glorify. He hereby intimates to the Hebrews that though Melchizedek were such an excellent person, yet he was infinitely beneath Him whom he represented. The typical person was but man; the antitype, Divine! Furthermore, one who was more than mortal was required in order to fulfil that which Melchizedek foreshadowed: he who should be capable of discharging an always-living, constant-abiding, uninterrupted priesthood, must be **the Son of God!** ([Melchizedek Continued](#))

Remains ([3306](#)) (**meno**) means to remain in the same place over a period of time and so to abide.

Priest ([2409](#))(**hiereus** from **hieros** = sacred, consecrated to deity) is one who is consecrated to the service of deity. Melchizedek truly unique for no other OT individual served as both a king and a priest. The next individual who exercises these two offices in one person will be our Lord Jesus Christ, Who at His second coming will reign and serve as King and Priest when He takes His seat on David's throne to rule over the Messianic age and kingdom.

Perpetually is the Greek phrase [eis to dienekes](#). **Eis** is a preposition of motion into any place or thing. Figuratively **eis** marks the point toward which anything ends. **Dienekes** means carried through or stretched the whole length and thus protracted, continual or perpetual. Taken together this phrase means for all time or without interruption.

In reference to a dynasty [dienekes](#) was used to mean that the royal family would never fail to have a male heir to rule.

Webster's defines "**perpetual**" as the holding of something (such as an office) for life or for an unlimited time.

Pentecost - We know nothing of a time in his life before he became a priest, nor do we know anything of a retirement from the priesthood at the end of his life. In this respect—since he had neither beginning nor ending of days as far as is recorded—he stands as a timeless priest. (Ibid)

Perpetually dramatically contrasts with the length of service of the Levitical priests who were eligible to serve only from age 25 until age 50, regardless of how faithfully they served. Perpetually also contrasts with the Levitical priesthood which was only ordained under the Old Covenant, which the writer later explains has become "obsolete...growing old (and) ready to disappear".

William Lane - Melchizedek's sudden appearance and equally sudden disappearance from recorded history awakens within a sensitive reader the notion of eternity. (William L. Lane, William: Hebrews: A Call to Commitment. Hendrickson, 1988)

The **perpetuity of Melchizedek's personal priesthood perfectly pictures** the eternity of Christ's priesthood which the writer emphasizes later writing that Christ...

on the other hand, because He abides forever, **holds His priesthood permanently**. 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**. (see notes Hebrews 7:24; 7:25)

Gerald Hawthorne - Melchizedek thus was the facsimile of which Christ is the reality. Christ, therefore, is king of righteousness and peace in the fullest sense, and priest 'like', 'in the order of' Melchizedek, that is, priest forever! (New International Bible Commentary)

Hughes sums up this section emphasizing that "The big picture the writer wants us to see is that Jesus perfectly fulfills what was foreshadowed in the Genesis account of Melchizedek. Melchizedek's character type regarding king, priest, righteousness and peace was fulfilled to perfection in Christ. Melchizedek's qualifications, being without genealogy and without beginning or end, prefigured Jesus who had no priestly genealogy or priestly term of service but was appointed by God and ministers eternally. ([Hughes, R. K. Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul. Volume 1. Crossway Books; Volume 2](#))

John Walvoord addressing the question of **when** Christ became a priest writing that...

One of the problems which are raised concerning the eternal priesthood of Christ is the question of the point in time when Christ assumed His priestly office.

Probably the most common tendency has been to assume that His priestly work began with the cross and the glorification that followed His resurrection. As William Milligan points out: "Such writers as Tholuck, Riehm, Hofmann, Delitzsch, Davidson, and Westcott admit with more or less distinctness that the High-priesthood of our Lord began with His Glorification; but they cannot allow that the death upon the cross was not 'an essential part of His High priest's work, performed in the outer court, that is, in this world,' and they are thus driven to the expedient of saying that, High priestly as that act was, the Priesthood of Christ only attained its completeness after His resurrection. This distinction, however, between incompleteness and completeness cannot be maintained; and the true solution appears to be suggested by our Lord's own words. It began upon the cross, and the cross was the beginning of His glory."

It is clear from Scripture, however, that Christ long before His dying on the cross served as a priest in the sense of interceding for man and acting as mediator. On occasion He prayed all night, and specifically, according to Luke 22:32, Christ declared of Peter, "I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not." Inasmuch as intercession is a priestly function, Christ was doing the work of a priest.

Another suggestion which has been offered is that the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist was His induction into the priestly office, fulfilling that which was represented in the induction to the Aaronic priesthood of the Old Testament where the priest was given a bath.

Still others point to the incarnation as the beginning of His priestly work in that the union of God and man was necessary for Christ to be the true mediator.

While each of these points of view has some factors to commend it, the solution seems to be that Christ's priesthood is eternal as to its office, and temporal in its fulfillment as far as ministry is concerned.

It is true that the priesthood of Christ depended upon His incarnation, sacrifice, and glorification, all of which was prerequisite to His work as priest at the right hand of the Father.

The office of Christ as priest, however, can be considered eternal in the same sense that Christ is the Savior eternally. In support of this point of view, Psalm 110:4-[note](#) is quoted in Hebrews 7:20-21:

"Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Here the argument is that Christ as a priest was so constituted, not by ordinary appointment in time, but was made a priest by the eternal oath of God. As Psalm 110 was written a thousand years before the birth of Christ, it would seem at that time that Christ was already regarded as a priest and hence, His priesthood did not begin at some later time, such as the time of His incarnation, baptism, or death on the cross. The priesthood of Christ, then, instead of resting on an earthly lineage, historic beginning, ordinances, or sacrifice, instead, originated in the eternal oath of God. (Bibliotheca Sacra, Volume 122, Issue 485, Page 11, 1965).

Jesus, in thee our eyes behold
A thousand glories more,
Than the rich gems and polished gold
The sons of Aaron wore.

They first their own burnt-offerings brought,
To purge themselves from sin;
Thy life was pure without a spot,
And all thy nature clean.

[Fresh blood as constant as the day
Was on their altar spilt;
But thy one offering takes away
For ever all our guilt.]

[Their priesthood ran through several hands,
For mortal was their race;
Thy never-changing office stands
Eternal as thy days.]

[Once in the circuit of a year,
With blood, but not his own,
Aaron within the veil appears
Before the golden throne:

But Christ, by his own powerful blood,
Ascends above the skies,
And in the presence of our God
Shows his own sacrifice.]

Jesus, the King of glory, reigns
On Zion's heav'nly hill;
Looks like a lamb that has been slain,
And wears his priesthood still.

He ever lives to intercede
Before his Father's face:
Give him, my soul, thy cause to plead,
Nor doubt the Father's grace.

S Lewis Johnson ([Hebrews 7:1-3 Melchizedek and Jesus Christ](#)) writes that in Hebrews 7 we have come...

to the major theme of this great book, **the high priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ**. Chapter 7 is of paramount importance because the relationship of Jesus Christ to Melchizedek is so significant to an understanding of this book. What our author has done is to take Psalm 110:4-[note](#) and construct this epistle around this text...

The author of this epistle conceives of "spirituality" as access to God. This is very important because today in evangelicalism it is common to think of spirituality as "being saved". The author of Hebrews does not say that being saved is not important for that is where we begin. But the whole of the Bible especially the New Testament teaches that we are "saved" in order that we may embark on "the way to maturity." Maturity is the goal of Christian thought.

Salvation is a step along the way. Paul makes that very plain in Colossians when he says that his goal is to bring men and women to maturity. That is why Paul labors so diligently. Of course he wants them to be saved, but Paul wants to bring them to maturity. Now this author thinks of maturity as "access to God", not just getting saved. Access to God means having new life and then worshipping God.

This is possible by three things...

(1) By covenant, that is by the divine promises for the covenants contain the promises. Of extreme importance is "the New Covenant" and we will see much more about it in Hebrews 8 and 9.

(2) We also say that sacrifice or the divine redemption is important because there can be no fulfillment of the

divine promises without a sacrifice by which sin is removed.

(3) Finally and very important, that which makes "access to God" possible is priesthood or divine mediation.

So we have...

Divine Promises – The Covenants

Divine Redemption – The Sacrifice

Divine Mediation – The Priesthood