



King of Righteousness and Peace!

Melchizedek

מֶלְכִּי-צֶדֶק
(Hebrew)

Μελχισεδέκ
(Greek)

- Who was he and what role did he fill?
- What was the significance of his appearance to Abram?
- What was the order and rank of his priesthood?
- How does his priesthood compare to the Levitical priesthood?
- Is it likely that he was Shem or another Old Testament character?

DAVID ALSOBROOK



King of Righteousness and Peace!

Melchizedek

מֶלְכִּי-צֶדֶק
(Hebrew)

Μελχισεδέκ
(Greek)

- Who was he and what role did he fill?
- What was the significance of his appearance to Abram?
- What was the order and rank of his priesthood?
- How does his priesthood compare to the Levitical priesthood?
- Is it likely that he was Shem or another Old Testament character?

DAVID ALSOBROOK

Note: The name "Melchizedek" is spelled "Melchisedec" in the Epistle to the Hebrews due to anglicization by the King James translation. The most correct spelling is the former. Only in the direct quotes from the Book of Hebrews have we used the latter spelling.

© Copyright 1984 by Anointed Bible Study Fellowship, Inc., a/k/a David
Alsobrook Ministries

First printing July 1982
Second printing July 1984

Permission to reprint Melchizedek usually granted to anyone upon request.

All Rights Reserved
Printed in U.S.A.

One additional copy of this important message will be sent free of charge to anyone. There is no set price on this book. We want to spread the Word. This literature outreach is made possible by the love offerings of God's people. If you desire more copies please state the number of copies you wish to distribute. They are sent on a love offering basis. Contributions for Melchizedek are tax deductible. Order directly from:

David Alsobrook Ministries
P.O. Box 2676
Paducah, Kentucky 42002

Contents

I <u>Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18-20</u>	7
II <u>Melchizedek In Psalm 110:4</u>	15
III <u>Melchizedek in the Book of Hebrews</u>	19
IV <u>Melchizedek in My Opinion</u>	31

**"The LORD hath sworn, and
will not repent, THOU ART A
PRIEST FOR EVER after the
order of Melchizedek"**

(Psalm 110:4).

I Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18-20

From a casual reading of chapter 14 of Genesis we find what appears to be a long list of seemingly endless names. But if you will anoint your eyes with eye salve and let the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God enlighten the eyes of your understanding, this chapter can become most illuminating. It concerns this wonderful person, Melchizedek, who met Abram when he returned from the slaughter of the kings.

Four different kings had formed an alliance to come against various rulers especially the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. They fought against and overcame these two cities, taking all of their goods, and all of their victuals. Now I'm sure they destroyed many of the people of Gomorrah, and evidently took only people who were of some noteworthiness. That included Lot, Abram's nephew.

You might ask, "Why was Lot living in Sodom and Gomorrah in the first place?" The Bible tells us in Genesis, chapter 13, that the men of Sodom were exceeding great sinners before the Lord. Lot had lived with Abram for years, before his herd grew so large that Abram had said to him, "Go ahead and take any part of the country you desire." Lot saw that beautiful, lush green valley in which were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. He decides to live in that valley, evidently for commercial reasons, taking his flocks to market, etc. It was more profitable businesswise to live closer to Sodom. No doubt he began compromising, inching his way toward the city of Sodom, until finally, he moved into that city. And he was a man of great wealth

and renown. Eventually he became an elder in that town, sitting in the gate, a man of quite some esteem.

Abram receives word that these raiding kings had overcome Sodom and Gomorrah and had taken away all of the goods, riches, wealth, and also his nephew, Lot. Abram banded together 318 servants, who were born in his own house. These were not men, in all likelihood, who were great fighters or warriors. They were not trained as soldiers; they were servants. One of the greatest of military miracles that ever took place transpired shortly afterward.

We will begin reading in Genesis, chapter 14, verse 13: **"And there came one [of the captives] that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew"** that Lot, his nephew, had been captured.

Abram never called Lot his nephew, but always referred to him as his "brother." Why did he call Lot his brother?

Abram's brother, Haran, and his wife had given birth to this boy, Lot. Later Haran died and Lot came to live with Abram. It was more or less a father-son type of relationship, yet Abram never called him son. Evidently Lot had so much of his father's resemblance, features, characteristics that Lot reminded Abram of Haran to the point that Abram referred to Lot as "brother," rather than nephew, or even as son.

"And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eschol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram." Mamre was a good friend of Abram, and had this big plain, allowing Abram, the Hebrew (the first person in the Bible referred to as a Hebrew), to dwell in that plain, as well as Mamre's brothers Eshcol and Aner.

And when Abram heard that Lot was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, and pursued them unto Dan (verse 14). Abram equipped his servants, saying, "Let's go and rescue Lot and his family and his goods from these kings who have run off with them" (paraphrased).

Now this took great boldness. Can you imagine 318 non-professional soldiers going out against thousands—four kings, each with thousands of soldiers? But Abram is moving in divine favor and knows that Elohim is with him. El Shaddai, the Almighty God will soon make himself known to Abram. Abram knows that God has blessed him. Yahweh has talked with him and so he goes in His might and His confidence to get back nephew Lot.

Verse 15: **"And he divided himself against them, and he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people."** He had great, total victory! He overcame, having slain each of the opposing, warring five kings and his armies. Hebrews 7:1 referred to Abram's victory as a "slaughter."

Verse 17: **"And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedor-laomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale."** We see here the king of Sodom greeting Abram on his victorious return and then we see that someone else comes on the scene. In the next three short verses we read of this personage, Melchizedek.

Verse 18: **"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God."** This is the first place in the Bible where we see the concept of a *king*, who was also a priest, for it says

"king of Salem... and he was the priest of the most high God." This is spoken concerning the man Melchizedek.

Verse 19: **"And he blessed him."** The author of the Book of Hebrews clearly indicates who is blessing whom – not that Abram is blessing Melchizedek, but leaving no doubt that he, Melchizedek, blessed Abram, saying, **"Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand."** So we see that Melchizedek pronounces a blessing upon Abram. First he blesses Abram, who he says is **"of the most high God,"** who is **"possessor of heaven and earth."** How true! Melchizedek was the first person to use the title "Most High God" in the Scripture. That is who Melchizedek was a priest to.

Verse 20: **"And blessed be the most high God (Hebrew: El-Elyon)."** Now he blesses the God of Abram, **"which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand."** Melchizedek says that Abram's great military miracle is completely from God. Abram recognized that it was God who delivered thousands of soldiers into his hands, with only a few hundred men fighting in his behalf.

We see that after Melchizedek blesses Abram, **"he gave him tithes of all."** Hebrews, chapter 7, brings out that it is Abram giving the tithe to Melchizedek. Here is another first—the first time in the Bible where we see the word "tithe." Tithing is not an old covenant institution. That is, it did not start with the law, because over 400 years before the old covenant was inaugurated, God had established a covenant with Abram. It was in this Abrahamic Covenant, that the tithe was first offered. Someone has said that Abraham COMMENCED it, Moses COMMANDED it, Jesus COMMENDED it, so who are we to CANCEL it! Abram commenced the tithe, as he gave to Melchizedek

one-tenth of all of the spoil, all of the goods all of the victuals, all of the riches, that he recovered from the raiding kings.

Then after the three verses in Genesis 14 Melchizedek disappears from this record, and we see the king of Sodom once again addressing Abram.

Notice three things: (concerning the Melchizedek-Abram encounter). **First**, in verse 18, *Melchizedek served Abram bread and wine*. We might think of the bread and wine only in the sense of refreshment, having returned from the battle, but we will see in our further study something far deeper than a refreshment in Melchizedek's serving Abram bread and wine. **Second**, notice in verse 19 that *Melchizedek blesses Abram*. We will see in the Book of Hebrews that the one who is greater blesses the one who is less, or in a lower position. Without contradiction, the less is blessed by the greater. So this Melchizedek must really be some person who was able to bless Abram, because Abram is in a pretty high position himself. Three times the Bible tells us that Abram was the *friend of God*. And here is someone who is in a higher position with God than even "the friend of God." Melchizedek is higher in relationship to God than Abram is because he blesses Abram, and the Book of Hebrews indicates it is the one who is greater who blesses the one who is less. **Third**, verse 20: *Abram gave a tenth of all of the goods to Melchizedek* that he had brought back from that great, victorious battle.

Then just as mysteriously as he has been introduced, this personage, Melchizedek disappears from the written Word of God until the Psalms. The king of Sodom, who had begun to address Abram (v. 17), who for the following three verses has been pushed aside while Melchizedek addresses Abram, now comes back into the picture saying, **"Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself"** (v.

21).

Now we have to understand that the king of Sodom was being very generous and benevolent by offering Abram all of the goods, the bounty, the spoils, the riches that the five kings had taken from Sodom and Gomorrah. He said, "Abram, just take it all." No doubt those two cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, being the great metropolitan areas of their day, were full of the richest things imaginable, having multiplied millions of dollars worth of goods.

Abram, without asking anyone's permission has already taken one-tenth of the goods and given it to Melchizedek, and now the king of Sodom said, "You just give me back all the people you have rescued and you keep all of the rest of the goods and riches as a reward for the valiant deed that you did."

But notice that Abram is not for a minute going to accept anything from the king of Sodom for the ways of Sodom are very grievous against the Lord (as chapter 13 tells us), and therefore he doesn't want anything to do with Sodom.

The word SODOM had come to mean "perversion." The word "sodomy" is derived from the word SODOM. The king of Sodom is the picture of Satan in the Bible. It is no different from saying "the king of perversion," sodom, or sodomy. And the "king of perversion" said, "Abram, give me back the people and keep the goods for yourself."

Abram received the blessing of the king of righteousness, but refused to accept even a shoestring from the king of Sodom, king of perversion, or Satan in type and symbol. Verse 22: **"And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I**

will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: save only that which the young men have eaten and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

Notice Abram's determination. "I'm not going to take anything from you, none of the goods. I don't want you to ever be able to say, Sir, that you made me rich." Many preachers could learn from this precept. The prophet, Elisha, knew this precept. When Naaman the Syrian, after he was healed, came to Elisha and tried to force upon the prophet of God all kinds of beautiful garments, silver and other riches, and the prophet of God realized that in a sense Naaman would be paying for his healing, he refused the gifts. Being a man of God, he said, "I won't accept that because you can't pay for what you received; that was truly the work of the Lord." Ministries need to learn this. I understand it takes large amounts of money to operate ministries, but whenever a minister receives money unto himself, beyond that which he needs to live, survive, get by reasonably well in this life, then he is getting into the position of danger in which Gideon found himself. You may recall after Gideon had completely overthrown the Midianites, he gathered together the men of Israel (see the Book of Judges) and said, **"You know that it was the Lord who delivered you from the hand of the Midianites who oppressed you, therefore give HIM GLORY, but bring unto ME YOUR GOLD."** The Bible goes on and says, **"which thing became a snare unto Gideon and to his house"** (Judges 8:27).

Abram wisely said to the king of Sodom, "I'm not going to take a piece of thread or even a shoestring from you. I don't want to take anything ever that you have." If

we as Christians could just say to the devil: "I don't want to take anything you have."

Melchizedek is not listed in any genealogy in the entire Old Testament, nor does he appear in any other place in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), with the exception of these short verses in Genesis, chapter 14. Melchizedek appears in a very mysterious way, and disappears in a mysterious way, most unlike the Word of God, especially dealing with men who are righteous, and people that are really commendable. He disappears completely throughout the rest of the Old Testament, with the exception of one short line in Psalm 110.

II Melchizedek In Psalm 110:4

Psalm 110 has for many, many centuries been recognized by conservative Bible scholars as a Messianic psalm. It is a psalm of David, who often speaks about the Lord Jesus Christ, of His first and second coming.

In verse one we read: **"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."** Here, of course, he has spoken concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, that Yahweh (the one later to be addressed as the Father), saying unto Him, **"Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."** And if you believe in the New Testament, you accept Hebrews 1:13 as this being a direct reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. We see that **"[Yahweh shall] send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies,"** and how His people will be willing in the day of His power, or actually "be a willing sacrifice" in the day of His power (verse 3).

Now we come to verse 4, and here is the fourth verse in the entire Old Testament, and the last verse about Melchizedek until we get to the Book of Hebrews, chapter 5, where Psalm 110:4 is quoted five times (5:6,10; 7:11,17,21): **"Thou art a priest for ever after the order (rank) of Melchizedek."**

"The LORD hath sworn and will not repent." Jehovah has made an oath, and He will not change His mind

concerning this oath that He now utters.

"Thou"—there can be no doubt that this is speaking to the Lord Jesus Christ. One would have to deny the inspiration of the Scriptures to say anything else, as Hebrews so clearly quotes, **"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,"** and applies the fulfillment of this prophetic oath to none other than our precious Lord Jesus Christ. **"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."** Notice that in verse 4, God gives an oath and said, **"You are a PRIEST for ever after the order of Melchizedek."** Then there is more talk in the rest of this psalm concerning what is probably the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is yet ahead.

Before we go to the New Testament, the Book of Hebrews, and study about Melchizedek, we want to notice something that the author of Hebrews later brings out, and this is the name, or word MELCHIZEDEK. As it appears in your Bible, MELCH—notice the line under the CH—that is why it is pronounced with the "K" sound. Actually in the Hebrew if transliterated—letter for letter—it would be a "K" (TRANSLITERATING is taking a *letter* for a letter and putting as close as you can the English equivalent of what the Hebrew or Greek says. TRANSLATING is taking the *words* that one may be working with and putting them into appropriate or near as possible equivalent in the other language.) If we transliterated this name from the original Hebrew it would be spelled: MELKI-ZDK. MELKI in the Hebrew literally means "king." ZDK, (according to commentaries and other Bible aids) is the root meaning "righteousness." One of the redemptive names of Jehovah or Yahweh (whichever pronunciation you prefer) is "Jehovah-Tsidkenu" which in the Hebrew has the ZDK root. Ezekiel spoke to priests

whom God had commended as "sons of righteousness," and he called them ZADOK (Ezekiel 40:46; 44:15), literally it is "ZDK" and an "a" and "o" are added in our English pronunciation.

From what I've been able to understand about the Hebrew language (and I am a novice), many Hebrew words don't even have vowels. Even the holy name where we say Yahweh, or Jehovah, is anglicized. Actually it is YHWH or YHVH with no vowel in it, so the "A" and "E" are added to give some kind of pronunciation. The same is true of MELKI-ZDK. The "E's" are added between the consonants so that you have ZEDEK. ZEDEK or ZDK means "righteousness." So Melchizedek means KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. And Jehovah said here prophetically concerning Jesus, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, the king of righteousness." So even in this verse we see the *priest* and *king* aspects of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His present rule and reign at the Father's right hand, and in His soon-to-come rule and reign upon this earth—He is both priest and king.

Now we leave this study in the Psalms. We have seen only four verses in reference to this unusual personage, Melchizedek, in the entire Bible. The three verses in Genesis and the one verse in Psalm 110 in the midst of those messianic verses, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we come to the Book of Hebrews to study the One who is a *priest* eternally with the rank of Melchizedek.

III Melchizedek in the Book of Hebrews

The Book of Hebrews has often been called "the book of better things." The word BETTER appears 13 times and paints for us a most illustrious book. This book is reserved for those who desire to go on unto perfection. Maybe that is why there is so little preaching on this book in most Christian circles. This is a book dealing with perfection, and with "the better covenant."

In Hebrews, chapter 5, the Bible is dealing with the fact that no man can become a priest of his own volition, but has to be called of God to be a priest, and especially a high priest, even as Aaron was. In the Old Testament the Levitical tribe was given to Aaron and his sons as a gift to assist in the ministry of the tabernacle or sanctuary, and later the temple. Every high priest was taken from the Aaronic line, and they were direct descendants of Aaron. They served as long as they lived, and when they died they were replaced with another in the line of Aaron.

But in Hebrews 5:5 we read, **"So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. As He saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."** Now what this has told us is that Jesus is not the high priest at the Father's right hand because of His own choosing but that the same BEING who said, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU," is the same One who also said, "YOU ARE A PRIEST." Jesus is a priest because He has been

called of God to be the high priest. "**Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,**" quoting Psalm 110:4. Right in the midst of all those verses dealing with Jesus in His rule and reign, the Psalmist David, acting in his role or in the office of a prophet, has declared that the Lord Jesus Christ will be a *priest* forever under the same order or rank that Melchizedek was a priest. And goes on dealing with the personal temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ and the things He went through to merit the fulfillment of His call, how He suffered, how He was made perfect through His sufferings, and how He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

Again in 5:10 we see Melchizedek mentioned. The author of Hebrews has already spoken of Melchizedek half as many verses as the entire Old Testament covered.

Now we come to chapter 6, and the author of Hebrews gives us a goal—to leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ and to go deeper, to go forward into perfection. In dealing once again with Jesus in His role of priest, he said in verse 20, talking about the Holy of Holies behind the veil, the forerunner for us is entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

In chapter 7:1 the author of Hebrews begins talking for a full chapter about this Melchizedek, king of Salem, and giving comparison after comparison, a beautiful analogy and teaching, how that Melchizedek and Jesus correspond or correlate. I believe Melchizedek was a Christophany, that is, an appearance of Jesus to the saints in the Old Testament. Jesus appeared as The Angel of Yahweh in several places in the Old Testament, taking on principles and the attributes of deity that no other angel of the Bible was ever allowed to take. And here we see things concerning Melchizedek, who absolutely **MUST** be divine.

Let us begin reading in chapter 7:1: **"For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God."** The writer has said a mouthful! Melchizedek, as we pointed out, means king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, along with the many kings listed in Genesis, chapter 14, and now here comes a man who is king of SALEM. SALEM in Hebrew means "peace." So the interpretation of his name, Melchizedek, means king of righteousness, and the interpretation of his title, KING OF SALEM, is "king of peace." So he is a two-fold king: king of righteousness, and king of peace.

"Priest of the most high God," we here again see the concept of the king AND the priest as given in the Old Testament. We do not see a king who is ever a priest, or a priest who is ever a king, with the exception of the one occasion when David stripped himself of the kingly robe and clothed himself with the priestly ephod (2 Samuel 6) while bringing the ark of the covenant from the house of Obed-edom the Gittite to the city of David. Those functions were left separate. But here we see one who is both a king—even doubly called king—king of righteousness and king of peace. (Is that something in the natural realm? Is there a literal place called righteousness? A literal place called peace? We don't even read about SALEM until later—"Jerusalem.").

Abram recognized this Melchizedek person coming from a higher realm, a realm where there is righteousness and peace. Romans 14:17 tells us that that's the kingdom of God: **"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."** And here comes a person to meet Abram, who is the king of righteousness.

Some say that Melchizedek was Shem who had lived, before the flood and the only man from that era still alive

upon the earth at the time of Abram. How can we say that Melchizedek was Shem, for Shem was a sinner? **"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"** (Romans 3:20). Melchizedek could not have been a direct descendant of Adam. He could not have been one of Adam's seed, because had he been, he would have been a sinner, and Melchizedek was king of righteousness—absolute ruler of righteousness. Melchizedek never had sinned. Saints in the Old Testament especially, were given names which are *symbolic* in meaning, and "this Melchisedec" king of righteousness, king of peace, is priest of the most high God as we read in Hebrews 7:1. In Zechariah, chapter 3, He is the one who rebuked Satan when he was accusing Joshua the high priest. You see, when the Word left heaven and came to earth to be wrapped in the flesh, He took the name "Jesus." When He was clothed in human form—He was a priest to God—He was THE priest to God during that time. Then after He lived among us, died and rose again, He went back and continued on as priest with greater effectiveness than before because now He had the legal merit of His blood to offer up for our sin. Praise God!

"King of Salem, priest of the *most high God*." The Hebrew for the phrase "most high God" is El-Elyon and means "God in His highest state" or refers to God on His throne. We know He is omnipresent in Spirit, etc., but this is in His highest level of authority—that's where this Melchizedek was priest, at the very throne level of the entire universe. Please remember "This Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abram from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him." God had given divine aid to Abram in that battle, and he had literally slaughtered those kings—and "he blessed him."

Hebrews 7:2: **"To whom also Abraham gave a tenth**

part of all." As we have stated, here is where the tithe commenced.

"First being by interpretation king of righteousness," (meaning his name), "and after that also king of Salem, which is, king of peace." We need to see that in this verse the author of Hebrews tells us it is permissible to take the literal name of Melchizedek, and the literal title, king of Salem and to give their symbolic meanings as the real intended meaning of the Holy Spirit—"king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is, king of peace." (I would encourage you to get my pamphlet "Your Peace Can Increase" where I talk about these two verses to establish the principle, first righteousness and after that peace.) I'm not dealing with that principle in this message, but with the literal meaning in verse 2: "first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is king of peace." Note what Isaiah 9:6 says about Jesus, **"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."** The word PRINCE can also be translated "king." So when we are told Melchizedek was King of Peace, it is confirmation of what Isaiah said about the "Prince of Peace" our Savior.

Hebrews 7:3, concerning Melchizedek, **"Without father, without mother."** So some say this means "Well, without *recorded* father, without *recorded* mother..." The Greek Interlinear does not substantiate this view, however, so let us accept that the Bible means what it says when it tells us that Melchizedek had no parents.

"Without descent"—that means without pedigree or genealogy. True, He does not appear in any genealogy. What we are told in the middle of verse 3 should settle it:

"Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life." As I studied some on a Bible definition for eternity, the Lord gave me Hebrews 7:3 – **"having neither beginning of days nor end of life"** – having neither beginning nor ending. That is the Bible definition for ETERNAL, no beginning and no ending. Theologians try to define "eternity" and use such long polysyllabic words that most people don't even understand, and cannot convey in paragraphs, trying to discuss and define eternity when the author of Hebrews says it so clearly and simply: having neither beginning of days, nor end of life.

Melchizedek is eternal. Eternal is a characteristic that belongs solely to God. You and I do not have that characteristic until we receive eternal life, still we have a beginning. The Word has never had a beginning. He always has been and ever will be, the first and the last, and this is true of Melchizedek – "neither beginning of days, nor end of life" – this Melchizedek, who visited Abram, was the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the writer of Hebrews goes on to say, **"But made like unto the Son of God."** How is he made like unto the Son of God? You see where Melchizedek blessed Abram. Melchizedek, therefore, was in a higher position than Abram, and Abram, the "friend of God," was absolutely without the shadow of a doubt, higher than any other man who was alive on the earth at that time. Yet, Melchizedek was higher than that! He must be the Son, you see.

"Abideth a priest continually." The word ABIDETH is in the present tense. No matter which way you look at it this shows Melchizedek continues as priest. Melchizedek is still a priest, and is ministering with the kingly authority.

There are seven distinct features about Melchizedek

recorded here.

1. King of righteousness,
2. king of peace,
3. without father or mother,
4. without descent,
5. having neither beginning of days nor end of life,
6. made like unto the Son of God,
7. abideth a priest continually.

After saying all of these things, the writer of Hebrews exhorts us:

"Now consider how great this man was." Have you ever considered how great Melchizedek really was? Under whom even the patriarch Abram gave the tenth of the spoils? Consider how great this man was. The patriarch, a revered father, Abram recognized the greatness of Melchizedek and gave him the tenth of all of his spoils—consider how great this man was!

He came from a different realm than the one that Abram was acquainted with. Abram lived in a natural realm, and through faith he experienced divine intervention into his natural realm on several occasions. The most notable example of this being the quickening of his body and the barrenness of Sarah's womb to conceive and bring forth that child of promise, Isaac.

Abram immediately recognized Melchizedek when returning from his great victory. Abram was certainly thanking the Lord and he was in enough spiritual frame of mind to recognize certain divine attributes and qualities about Melchizedek which he knew from previous experiences with God. That is why Abram received Melchizedek's blessing, and why he in turn gave a tenth of

all of his spoils to him.

Have you wondered why Melchizedek gave bread and wine to Abram as he returned from the slaughter of the kings? Surely it was far more than just physical refreshment.

The new covenant that we as Christians today enjoy is actually the extension, fulfillment or completion of the covenant that God made with Father Abraham. This was 430 years before the old covenant became the law that was given through Moses to God's natural people, Israel. The covenant He made with Abraham was a covenant of faith, not a covenant of works, and that covenant is fulfilled today in the new covenant. This is why we Gentiles, being circumcised in our hearts are called "the seed of Abraham," in Galatians 3:29. The bread and wine that Melchizedek served Abraham was actually a foreshadowing of the bread and wine that Jesus served His disciples. They were the first recipients of this new covenant inaugurated when He arose from the dead and breathed on them, or into them, that breath of eternal life. The bread symbolized His body and the blood was symbolized in the wine. Jesus said, **"This cup is my blood which is shed for the remission of sin. The bread is my body which is broken for you."** And so Melchizedek serving the bread and wine to Abram was a beautiful symbol of the Lord's Supper that we now enjoy in the new covenant.

Does Melchizedek, king of Salem mean that he was literally from a geographical city known as Salem, later to have the prefix JERU added to it and known as Jerusalem, city of peace? Or was he from a Salem that was not on this physical realm, but actually from a spiritual, heavenly, eternal realm?

In Galatians, chapter 4, the Apostle Paul makes it abundantly clear that yes, there ARE two Jerusalems. There is the Jerusalem from below, which is here on this planet, which genders to bondage. There is a Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and Paul adds, **"which is the mother of us all"** (4:26). And in Hebrews 12:22, the author of Hebrews tells us that **"ye are come unto mount Sion,"** that we are there right now. We are not at that physical hill at Mount Sion that the Old Testament speaks so much of, but we are the Zion of the habitation of God. We are the Israel of God, circumcised not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

Melchizedek was from above. He was from this heavenly Jerusalem, of which the one of earth was just a pattern. He was from the real temple, the minister of the true sanctuary, the true tabernacle (Hebrews 8:2), and yet the one here on earth was just a replica of that which was in heaven. That is why the author of Hebrews refers to it as a "shadow."

The author of Hebrews is going to great effort to show that the priesthood we have today (Jesus, our Melchizedek) is a much greater and more perfect priesthood than the one that Israel had through the Levitical tribe. That's why he goes on in Hebrews 7:6:

"And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises."

Melchizedek is not from the tribe of of Levi, nor was

Jesus, as we are told in verse 6: **"But he whose descent is not counted from them."** He is actually talking about Jesus, for he had already said in verse 3 that Melchizedek had no descent. Then, in another reference to Jesus, the writer of Hebrews declares in verse 14: **"For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."**

The author of Hebrews is showing the better priesthood. The Book of Hebrews is the book of better things, constantly comparing the new to the old, and showing the better that we have today, and why God took away the first so that He could establish the second. He says that Jesus is a priest after the order or rank of Melchisedec (v. 11), that perfection by the Levitical priesthood was unattainable, and had it been available, then there would have been no need to establish a new priesthood. There would have been no need to say in the Book of Psalms that there would arise a priest who would be after the order of Melchizedek; rather, he would have been called after the order of Aaron. The Aaronic Levitical priesthood was an imperfect priesthood, because the priests were imperfect. If you have an imperfect priest you cannot have a perfect priesthood. The Aaronic priest operated upon the law, his rule of practice by which he ministered to God. That is why Hebrews 7:12 tells us **"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."**

So you see, that's the reason why in the new covenant we do not endeavor to follow the multiplied 613 different commandments given through Moses. This is why we do not keep those commandments today, because Jesus said, "A new commandment I give you that you should love one another." Jesus said, "I didn't come to do away with the law, I came to fulfill it."

In fulfilling the law He took the principle behind the letter of the commandment and *made the principle His commandment*. He said, **"You've heard it said in old time Thou shalt not kill, but I say, Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be liable to the judgment."** The Old Testament forbade murder. Jesus, knowing that the root behind murder is anger and hatred made that His rule by which to walk. He said, **"You've heard it said you shall not commit adultery, but I say unto you, that whosoever looks upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart."** This is what He means in the Book of Hebrews when He said, **"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people"** (8:10). This is the new covenant. He said, "I will take the letter and by the Spirit impress upon the human heart the meaning of my law." Hebrews 8:13 reads: **"Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."**

Jesus has a different priesthood than the Old Testament priest had, and as a different priesthood, He must have a different law, because the law that Moses gave said that priests had to come from the Levitical tribe. Jesus sprang from the tribe of Judah, therefore He is operating by a different law.

What was the purpose of the old law? It was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Sin was already in the world, and by the law sin became exceedingly sinful, the Apostle Paul states. Perfection is not by the law. I have friends who feel they are going on to perfection by observing the letter of the law, the feast days, the Sabbath, all of these many things. Now concerning the Sabbath,

there is a question because early in the Book of Genesis, God set apart the seventh day, before the law was given to Moses. But all the little rules of the law, like dietary parts of it, as well as the feast days, the so-called holy days, all were a shadow of things to come. Colossians 2:16 makes this very clear. The last chapter in Hebrews tells us that the heart is established with GRACE and not with meat, which has not profiteth those who have been occupied therein. The Apostle Paul said the key to the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Jesus said that which goes into the mouth, goes into the belly and passes out into the draught, purging all meats. The New International Version reads that Jesus was declaring all foods clean. Hebrews 7:9 tells us something that could be called the theme of Hebrews: **"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."**

So Jesus is the priest forever, through the order and rank of Melchizedek. His present-day ministry involves what He is now doing for us at the Father's right hand. We were *initially saved* by what He did for us initially at the cross. We are *kept in His grace* by what He continues to do for us every day. **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"** (Hebrews 7:25).

"And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:15-16).

IV Melchizedek in My Opinion

Who was Melchizedek? I'm sure you know by now that I believe he was, as scholars say, a "Christophany" (appearance of Christ in the Old Testament), and to me there are many arguments in support of this opinion.

However, I should inform you, if you are not already aware of the fact, that this is an unpopular view. Rabbinical writers conclude that Melchizedek was Shem the son of Noah. This view, widely accepted by both evangelical and pentecostal authorities, does not have a shred of historical or biblical evidence. It appears to be just another of the many religious traditions theologians accept and purport without any established foundation.

There are several reasons why I cannot, in the light of the Word, accept Shem as being Melchizedek. First of all, let us consider the meaning of the name "Melchizedek" as previously discussed. Shem definitely comes under the category of Romans 3:23. How could a King of Righteousness be a sinner? Of Jesus Christ it is said, "**And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins...**" (Isaiah 11:5). Of Melchizedek it is said, "**...first being by interpretation king of righteousness...**" (Hebrews 7:2).

Secondly, Abraham was in all probability the closest man to God on the earth at that time. Three times the Scriptures refer to him as "the friend of God." God had special conversations with Abram and had destined him to become the father of many nations. Through Abraham a Seed would come forth to crush the serpent's head (cf. Galatians 3:16; Genesis 3:15). Yet the writer of Hebrews exhorts us to consider how great Melchizedek was for

Abraham to pay homage to him with a tenth of the spoils. Surely had Shem approached Abraham this would not have been the case. Of Shem we read nowhere of special dealings with God as in the case of Abraham. The lesser is blessed by the greater and Abraham was blessed by Melchizedek.

The third reason is one of logic. What purpose was there in Shem changing his name to Melchizedek? What precipitated such a name change? What basis is there for it anywhere at all in the Word of God?

The final reason I cannot accept the Shem theory is due to the fact that Melchizedek was "without descent" according to the Book of Hebrews. This phrase, to the best of my ability to understand the Greek language, could refer either to Melchizedek's descent from a lineage or a descent of lineage after him. Of Shem Genesis 10:31-32 gives his lineage of descendants and we know that Noah was his father. Melchizedek was "**without father, without mother, without descent...**" (Hebrews 7:3).

The "without mother" aspect of Melchizedek has disturbed some people. Mary, of course, was the mother of Jesus. To John He said, "**I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending...the first and the last...**" (Revelation 1:8,11). So, we see that Mary was the mother of Jesus according to the flesh, but not the mother of the Word (logos). If this assertion is correct, Melchizedek was an appearance of the pre-incarnate Word. I see no problem with this.

Perhaps all the controversy over **who** this mysterious personage was is overshadowed by the greater importance of **what** he was. He was King of Salem (peace), and Priest of the Most High God. The phrase "Most High God" is a title first introduced in the Scripture by Melchizedek

himself: **"Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God..."** (Genesis 14:19-20). We further see that Abram quickly caught on to this title. Only two verses later he used this name. In the Hebrew it is "El-Elyon" which means "God, God Most High" and is used repeatedly in the Psalms and elsewhere as "the most high."

It would appear that "El-Elyon" could denote God is higher than anyone else. Perhaps this title could speak of God in His highest state of being. If this is true then Melchizedek was priest to God on His throne. The "Salem" Melchizedek was ruler over could as easily refer to the Jerusalem (City of Peace) which is above as I previously shared in this book.

Many people do not realize there has been a heavenly temple in existence before time. They sort of think that God and Moses picked each other's brains for forty days and nights to figure out the best way to build a tabernacle! However, **"Moses was admonished by God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount"** (Hebrews 8:5).

God specifically showed Moses how to build the tabernacle and its furniture, for all of it was already in heaven, even **"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"** (Revelation 13:8). The Word was made flesh in the fullness of time and Jesus offered Himself on the tree so the High Priest of our profession could take the blood of His covenant into the holy places made without hands. Hebrews 9:23-24 makes this abundantly clear. He had to shed His blood, in due time, and make the priesthood good. It could not operate on credit forever. If there was a heavenly temple, then surely there was a heavenly priesthood. The Mosaic temple and the Levitical

priesthood were temporary. A shadow of the better things to come!



David Alsobrook is a living testimony to God's great grace. Although he was raised in a minister's home he rebelled against the church's teachings in his early teens. He became involved in all forms of sin embracing the hippy tradition of the late '60s.

Through active involvement in Transcendental Meditation a strong spirit of suicide obsessed his mind in the Summer and Fall of '69 until in his despair he called on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was born again on November 30, 1969, and read the Bible from cover to cover four times within the first six months.

As a result of intensive study of the Word of God he was led into a conviction of the reality of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit for today. At the age of 17 he began traveling the country sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and teaching the Word of God without partiality to man's traditions.

God has confirmed His Word through supernatural signs and wonders on many occasions. David teaches the Kingdom of God on a wide variety of subjects. Dianne, his wife, assists him in ministering to people's needs. They are the happy parents of two lovely children and make their home in Paducah, Kentucky.

"I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it..." 1 John 2:21.

Deep inside each believer God has placed His great sensing device. His Spirit of Truth continually bears witness to what we read or hear, sifting out error and retaining the pure nutrients of God's Word that strengthen faith and help us grow and mature in Christ.

It is my conviction that the Holy Spirit will use this book as one of His "sifters" in the lives of God's people. It is written with the confidence that the Spirit of Truth will confirm its message to those who know truth.

You can minister to your brothers and sisters in Christ by sharing copies of this book with them. I am sending these out at cost as one of the outreaches of this ministry. We give away literally tons of printed material each year. Your donation is tax-deductible and will be used solely for this literature ministry. ***THANK YOU!***

Clip and mail to:

David Alsobrook Ministries
P.O. Box 2676
Paducah, Kentucky 42002

Dear David,

Please send me ____ copies of "Melchizedek" to pass out to other Christians. I am enclosing a gift of \$_____ to cover costs and assist in your anointed literature outreach worldwide.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Also Available:
God Cannot Lie
No Lion Shall Be There
The Precious Blood
The Fruit of the Spirit
The Mind of Christ
Melchizedek
Jesus Bore Our Sorrows
Free From Fear
The Seven Temples
The Fields Are White
Awake, Church!
Called to Perfection
And Thy House
Have You Ever Heard of Heavenfire?
Fulfill Your Ministry
True Worship
The Accuser
Was the Cross Enough?

These books are sent out upon request as the Lord provides for their printing and postage through the love gifts of His people.

David Alsobrook Ministries
P.O. Box 2676
Paducah, Kentucky 42002