

Melchizedek, Pt. 2: Hebrews – Week 9

INTRO

Spiritual Federalism: One person stands as a representative of many. Those being represented are considered to have done what the representative did and receive the punishments or rewards the representative deserves. **Ex. Adam, then Jesus.** (Rom.5)

Biblical Typology: (probably something you already understand)

The O.T. is the foundation of God's work in the N.T. **Augustine** – “The new [testament] is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed.”

In the O.T, “**types**” are real people, things, and true events which point to Jesus. They are like puzzle pieces which are best understood in hindsight of seeing the final picture (**ex.** Puzzle piece that's blue/tan? When placed correctly, “Hey look, it's the edge of a sailboat.) When we go back and spot “types,” they can even help us have a better understanding of Jesus.

- **Examples:** (Person) **Isaac**, (Thing) the **Bronze Serpent (John 3:14-15, Num. 21)**, and (Event) **Passover** in Egypt. (**ex.** Moses, Samuel, David, Zerubbabel, & etc.)
 - These “types” are powerful O.T. symbols which we can see have always pointed to Jesus, but now help us understand what He did even better.

Last week, looking at **spiritual federalism**, we discussed how the high priest of Israel represented the whole nation to God. Then we considered how profound it was that Melchizedek represented God to Abraham. When Abraham gave him an offering, he was giving God an offering.

Tonight, we'll see how Melchizedek was a real person but also a “type” foreshadowing Jesus. The author of Hebrews is going to capitalize on this and use it to help us better understand Jesus' role in our salvation.

SO FAR in Hebrews... Jesus has been called a **priest** since the beginning of the book, but the author begins explaining in detail at the end of **Ch.4**. In **Ch.5**, he unexpectedly brings up Melchizedek quoting David's **Psalm 110**. Twice, the author suggests there's something big going on with this character from **Genesis 14**, BUT the author pauses his explanation until the end of **Ch.6**.

Who was Melchizedek and why was he important?

In **Gen. 14**, Melchizedek functioned as the king and priest of Salem who surprisingly worshipped YHWH in a pagan nation. He's a very mysterious character in the Bible. Genesis doesn't give us his background, genealogy, or how he died.

Abraham was the man God chose to be the father of THE family through which God would save the world. But, something significant happened when Abraham met Melchizedek. Abraham received a blessing from him and then gave him an offering. **This exchange shows us 4 things we need to remember for Heb. 7:**

1. Melchizedek is a legitimate priest of YHWH.
2. His unique office originates by God's sovereign choice and not by genealogy.
3. He stands as a representative of God to Abraham.
4. Abraham honors him as a superior.

Melchizedek seems to come from nowhere and then disappears into history never to be spoken of again until David oddly mentions him in **Psalm 110** (most quoted in the N.T -7x). God had already revealed by the prophet Nathan to king David that the promised Redeemer will be David's descendant and reign as king. Remarkably in **Ps. 110**, David records a conversation between YHWH and that coming Redeemer

- = Between God the Father and God the Son

Psalm 110:1-4 – *The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."* 2 *The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies!* 3 *Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours.* 4 **The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."**

- Both royal & religious = the Redeemer will be both king and priest. (Zech. 6:9-14)

"The LORD has sworn" – God rarely makes oaths. He doesn't need to. All He says is truth because He is truth (**Js 1:17**). But, He uses strong wordage for our benefit to get us to pay attention when He's doing something BIG, history-altering big. Back in Lev./Deut., when God established the first priesthood under Aaron, He didn't initiate it with an oath. But this priesthood of Melchizedek has been.

"You are a priest forever" - In the former covenant, Levitical high priests served for life (30-40 yrs). In the new covenant, David's descendant will also serve for life. But, somehow, being in the order of Melchizedek, He'll be a priest forever??

"the order of Melchizedek" - The only way to become a high priest was to be born a descendant of Aaron in the priestly family of Levi. David knew that.

But David is not from Levi. He's from Judah, so his descendant would be from Judah and not in the order of Aaron. But God revealed, the Redeemer would be of the order of Melchizedek. David is prophesying a full departure from their understanding of the priesthood for the last 500 years and preparing them for something new.

Melchizedek is a "type" foreshadowing Jesus and revealing that Jesus is superior to the Levitical priesthood. 2 Questions for Tonight:

1. **What does Melchizedek teach us about Jesus?**
2. **Why is it important that Jesus' priesthood is superior to Aaron's?**

BOOK

1. MELCHIZEDEK REPRESENTS JESUS

Hebrews 6:19-20 - *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*

- We have security in our salvation because Jesus has gone ahead of us into God's presence. How does Jesus have the right to do this? He's a high priest in the priesthood of Melchizedek = ???

Hebrews 7:1-2 - *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, "king of righteousness," and then he is also king of Salem, that is, "king of peace."*

- **1) Melchizedek is a legitimate priest of YHWH, the Most High God.**
- The writer of Hebrews grabs on to his name to show this (**Heb.7:2**). Melchizedek's name means "king of righteousness" and being king of Salem meant he was also the "king of peace." The Messiah is also referred to as the "Righteous Branch" who will be raised up for David (**Jer.23:5-6**) and the "Prince of Peace" who rules from David's throne (**Is.9:6-7**).
- **2) He stands in the place of God as a representative of God to Abraham.**

Hebrews 7:3 - *He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.*

- THIS is the author's purpose for raising the topic of Melchizedek all of these times. **“resembling”** – The author is pointing out he's an O.T. **“type”** which foreshadows Jesus and intends to teach us something by comparing them.
 - **“a priest forever”** – The author is fusing Ps. 110 with Gen. 14 to make a BIG point. Just as Melchizedek is missing a genealogy or recorded death suggests an unending priesthood, being the **“Son of God”** **3) Jesus is a priest forever.** This is a huge key to understanding Jesus' superiority.

Application: Do we represent Jesus to the world around us? (“Little Christs”)

2. JESUS IS SUPERIOR TO THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD by comparing Mel. and Jesus.

Hebrews 7:4-7 - *See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils! 5 And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham. 6 But this man who does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. 7 It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.*

- **“from their brothers”** – The Jewish priests were commanded to receive tithes from the people of Israel. But the priests aren't superior than those they received tithes from. They're all of the same family – **“brothers... descended from Abraham.”** The Levites had a different role (as priests) but were equal to those they receive tithes from.
- **“how great this man was”** - But the relationship between Abraham and Melchizedek was different than the relationship between the priests and the people. There was, in fact, a greater and a lesser. Shockingly, Abraham, who was the most important person alive, **4) Honored him as the superior.**
- **Spiritual federalism.** Abraham is representing all of the nation of Israel yet to be born. He is the spiritual “head” of all twelve tribes of his future descendants **including the priesthood from Levi.**

Hebrews 7:8 - *In the one case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives.*

- Those priests who are receiving tithes are mortal men. They die. But Jesus is far different from them. He isn't mortal. But, as **proven by the testimony of His resurrection, He's eternal... making Him a high priest forever.**

(Let's tie it all together. What's the author trying to say?)

Hebrews 7:9-10 - *One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham [to Mel.], 10 for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.*

JESUS' PRIESTHOOD IS SUPERIOR TO AARON'S = **Spiritual Federalism**: ALL Israelite high priests were descendants of **Aaron**, Aaron was a descendent of **Levi**, and Levi was a descendant of **Abraham**. Therefore, Abraham stood as the "federal head" of the Levitical priesthood. When Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek honoring him as superior, it was as if all the Levitical priests who would come from Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek honoring him as their superior.

SO, if Melchizedek's priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood from Abraham, and Jesus is of the order of Melchizedek then His high priesthood is superior to Aaron's priesthood.

How does Melchizedek foreshadow Jesus?

<u>Melchizedek</u>	<u>Jesus Christ</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King and priest. • Legitimate priest of YHWH despite not descending from Levi. • Office given by God's choice. • Being a human priest, he represented his people to God. • As a man, held the role of partially representing God to Abraham. • Greater than Abraham. • Symbolizes a priest who lives forever. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King and Priest. • Legitimate priest of YHWH despite not descending from Levi. • Office given by God's choice. • Being a human priest, He represents us to God. • Jesus being God fully represents God to us so we can know Him. • Greater than the Levitical priesthood. • Is a priest who's the eternal Son of God.

Why is it important for Jesus' priesthood to be superior to the Levitical one?

3. JESUS' COVENANT IS SUPERIOR TO THE MOSAIC COVENANT

Where did the Levitical priesthood come from? Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to Mt. Sinai. God blessed them with the gift of having His manifest presence with them in their camp echoing Adam and Eve's walking with God's presence before the fall. BUT, to have a holy God among them they must be holy.

So, God established His covenant with them. He would purify them, and they would be His holy people. God's covenant established the Law, the system of animal sacrifices (where spotless animals were killed as substitutes for people's sin), and the Priesthood to oversee the Law and sacrifices.

In short, it was God's covenant with Israel through Moses (called the Mosaic Covenant) which established the Levitical priesthood with its sacrifices.

Hebrews 7:11-12 - *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.*

- **“the law given”** = Mosaic Covenant. Why would God speak of another priestly order in **Ps.110** if Aaron's was sufficient to deal with sin? It wasn't.
- It was **imperfect**, incomplete... insufficient to truly save people. The sacrifices only covered past sins like a band-aid. With the first lustful thought or unkind word, a person would need to sacrifice again! Plus, animal sacrifices could never change the condition of the human heart.
- **“when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed”** - An enormous claim! If the old covenant is temporary, then so is the priesthood. **Conclusion: If there's a new priesthood coming, then there's a new covenant.**

In fact, God had promised a NEW covenant (to be discussed next week in Heb.8):
Jeremiah 31:31-34 – *Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers...*

- **Why is it important for Jesus' priesthood to be superior to the Levitical one?** Because His superior priesthood comes with a superior covenant. If the old wasn't sufficiently dealing with sin, we needed a better, perfect covenant.
- **Luke 22:20** - *This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.*

Application: We have no need to fear for our salvation always striving to do enough.

4. IF JESUS IS A PRIEST FOREVER, THEN HIS SALVATION IS FOREVER

Heb. 7:13-17 - *He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. 14 For it is clear that our Lord*

descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. 15 And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, 16 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. 17 For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

- **"different tribe"** - Another priest has appeared, Jesus. And His qualifications aren't His genealogy but are far greater. In the same way, Melchizedek wasn't from the tribe of Levi, Jesus also doesn't come from Levi, but Judah. Therefore, **5) His unique office comes by God's sovereign choice and not by arbitrary genealogy.**
- **The prophecy of Ps. 110** points to the coming high priest operating in his office forever. This could only be done by God, so His priesthood would last as long as He lives. That makes Jesus and His covenant far superior to the Mosaic covenant because **Jesus's covenant is eternal.**

(Therefore...)

Hebrews 7:18-19 - The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless 19 (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

- **"weak and useless"** - Jesus' inauguration does 2 things: **1)** It sets aside the imperfect covenant, and **2)** it replaces it with **"a better hope."** It's not one which leaves us separated from God by a curtain or requires repetitive animal sacrifices, but one which does the opposite. It draws us **"near to God"**.
 - **Ex. A bank check vs. cash.** The paper check itself is worthless. Its value is the promise of the giver to come through on the amount. The Levitical priesthood with its sacrifices were God's **paper check** and Jesus the promised **amount**. God has now given Christ, so the paper check is no longer valid (**"weak/useless"**). It's fulfilled, complete, finished.
 - Exciting! I'd much rather have the \$ the check represents than the check itself. How much more should we celebrate that God has given us Jesus, our High Priest, with a sufficient covenant for sin!
- **How big a deal is this new covenant?**

Hebrews 7:20-25 - And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, 21 but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever.'" Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant. 23 Now there have been

many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; 24 but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. 25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

- The Levitical priesthood came into existence without God making an oath. Had God established it with an oath, their priestly line would have lasted forever.
- **How did Jesus become high priest?** Not by genealogy but by “*an oath*” of God’s sovereign choice. **Heb. 5:10** says He was “*designated by God to be high priest.*” (“*designated*” = “to call by name.” Very specific.) His priesthood will not end.

Because of all these reasons, Jesus can guarantee a perfect and final covenant between God and man.

1. Jesus is both King and Priest
2. His priesthood is by God’s choice.
3. Jesus’ priesthood makes the way for us to enter God’s presence.
4. Being God, He stands as God’s perfect representative so we can know God.
5. Being human but sinless, He’s our perfect priest representing us to God.
6. Being holy, gave Himself as a perfect sacrifice for our sin.
7. The covenant that accompanies His priesthood is totally sufficient.
8. Being the eternal Son of God, His priesthood and covenant are eternal.

~ **What do these add up to? Jesus is able to save “*completely*”!** ~

(Therefore...)

5. JESUS IS EVERYTHING WE NEED

Hebrews 7:26-8:1 - *Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. 27 Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. 28 For the law appoints as high priests men in all their weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever. 1 Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven*

- **Spiritual Federalism:** Our representative goes behind the veil into the presence of God as our representative. He is holy and doesn’t need to give sacrifices for His own sin. Therefore, those whom He represents are seen by

God as holy and not needing any more sacrifices for sins. The sacrificial system is fulfilled and no longer needed. His sacrifice was perfect and final.

- **Make Jesus your High Priest.**

Application: No sin blocks Him from saving you. Repent, His covenant is sufficient.

Illustration: Mac Gober – Impossible convert unchained by a sufficient priest.

RECAP

- Melchizedek represents Jesus.
- Melchizedek's priesthood was superior to the Levitical priesthood.
- Jesus' priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood.
- Jesus' priesthood inaugurates a new covenant.
- Where the old covenant was empty and imperfect, the new is all-sufficient.
- There's hope for everyone who will make Jesus their Lord and High Priest.

Challenge 1: Repent of your sins to a sufficient high priest.

Challenge 2: Don't give up on your unsaved loved ones.

~ Soli DEO Gloria

eGroup Questions /// Melchizedek Pt. 2

Pray:

Key Verse: Hebrews 7:18-19 - *The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless 19 (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.*

Questions:

1. What was a time when you replaced something flawed with something better?
2. Why was the Old Covenant imperfect?
3. What are some reasons the new covenant is perfect?
4. Can you remember some of the ways Melchizedek foreshadows Jesus?
5. What is the end goal of the new covenant? (see Heb. 7:18-19 above)
6. What are some ways people try to earn their salvation?
7. Why can those who are saved rest in the security of their salvation?
8. What did it take for the new covenant to be established?
9. What are some ways we can respond to God's amazing work through Jesus?
10. Who is someone in your life you think is past hope in being saved?

Ask for prayer requests: Pray