

Pentwater Bible Church

Hebrews Message 11

February 11, 2018



Abraham Meets Melchizedek by Rubens Cir. 1625

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message Eleven

THE MOST SPECIAL HIGH PRIEST

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Hebrews 5:5-10

⁵ So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. ⁶ As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. ⁷ Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; ⁸ though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; ⁹ and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; ¹⁰ called of God ⁹a high priest after the order of Melchisedec (KJV).

THOU ART MY SON

Hebrews 5:5

⁵ So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee (KJV).

Here Paul continues the discussion of the requirements of the high priest. He was taken from men but *ordained for men in things pertaining to God*. Again, the four characteristics that are prerequisites for priesthood are: He must be human; He must function in a priestly order offering gifts and sacrifices; He must be compassionate and sympathetic and He must be appointed by God as was Aaron to represent man to God

God had to call him. He had to be appointed by God as was Aaron. Aaron was chosen by God to be the high priest. He was officially called into the priesthood. Anyone who tried to be a priest without God's appointment was rejected by God. Jesus fulfilled these characteristics but *not* in the same way or order. Jesus was divinely appointed. As he says *So also Christ*, he references the appointment of Jesus similarly to that of Aaron. In the same manner Jesus did not glorify Himself to the office of High Priest. Then Paul references Psalm 2:7 to affirm that God appointed Him to that office as God did Aaron (Exodus 28:1-3).

Psalm 2:7-9

⁷ I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee. ⁸ Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. ⁹ Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (ASV, 1901).

The office of the Christ also known as the Messiah was founded upon a royal decree from God the Father Himself. This was not a sudden expression of God's will. This was the result of the knowledge and wisdom of God Himself as to the future needs of the world before it was formed. God planned out the gospel through Christ before the Creation was even formed.

II Timothy 1:8–10

⁸ So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News. ⁹ For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus (NLT).

God the Father chose to send Himself in the body of a human our Lord Jesus the Son of God to atone for the sins of this world. Man's redemption is represented by the covenant that God made with David and his seed. This covenant, the Davidic Covenant promised to King David a dynasty that would be eternal. It would originate with him but the kingdom and throne would be permanent and eternal which specified a realm over which the God-Man Son of David would reign forever. This office to which Christ was appointed was necessarily limited to only a Son of God that could serve the royal priesthood. God said *Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee* (Hebrews 5:5; Psalm 2:7)

Psalm 98:3

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant (ASV, 1901)

This Psalm is a promise to David by God to bring the Messiah through Him. The promise was developed in the Old Testament. The Hebrew term *Mashiach* means anointed one, and the idea of a Messiah for Israel is developed in the OT designating a righteous king, one who would be like David. Throughout the books of Samuel, the Lord's anointed this is a major theme (I Samuel 16:3, 6, 12–13; 24:6; 26:9, 11, 16, 23; II Samuel 1:14, 16; 3:39; 19:21). The king is God's anointed one, that is, his earthly precursor to the genuine Messiah. The rule of David as God's anointed one, his messiah type, is later developed more fully by the prophets to picture the coming eternal Messianic king Jesus (Isaiah 7:14–16; 9:1–7; 11:1–16). Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant. Our Lord Jesus referred to this as; *This is the will of him that sent me*, (John. 6:40). *This commandment have I received of my Father*, (John. 10:18; 14:31).

AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK

Hebrews 5:6

⁶ As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, (KJV).

Here in verse 6, God also said, in Psalm 110:4, *Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek.*

Psalm 110:4

⁴Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek (ASV, 1901).

We see Jesus *not* appointed to the order of the Levitical Priesthood of which the highest order was the high priest, but to one much higher in stature than that. This is the order of the office of Melchizedek. Melchizedek is a unique character who first in the Scriptures appears to Abraham.

In an effort to stop a rebellion of five vassal kings near the Dead Sea four powerful Eastern kings invaded the Jordan Valley near the Dead Sea and defeated all the forces in the region. In doing so they plundered five Jordanian kings and took Lot captive. The four kings formed a consortium under Chedorlaomer king of Elam and then conducted a military sweep north to the south of Canaan. The five kings from the Dead Sea area followed and confronted them. Abraham became involved when he learned that his nephew had been captured. He pursued the offending party with 318 men. He successfully defeated them in a night attack, and recovered Lot, his possessions, and liberated the other captives.

After the battle of the kings and the rescue of Lot as well as those women that were captured with him Abram met with two additional kings. The first one mentioned is the king of Sodom (Genesis 14:17-24). This is the successor to the first king of Sodom because the first one perished in the slime pits with the king of Gomorrah in the vale of Siddim (Genesis 14: 10). Abram met with the new king of Sodom and a king named Melchizedek. This man has a Hebrew name, which is the combination of two names: *Melech* means King and *Tzedick*, which means righteous.

This righteous king goes out to meet Abram. He is further identified as the king of Salem, which is ancient Jerusalem (Psalm 76: 2). They meet in the vale of Shaveh, which is the valley of Jehoshaphat on the east side of the temple mount. On the east of that valley is the Mount of Olives. Today this valley is called Kidron.

Melchizedek is one of the most interesting characters in the Bible. He is said to be a priest of the “God Most High.” This is the first mention of a priest in the Bible and the title is *El Elyon*.

This Hebrew title of God is found four times in these verses. It is only found elsewhere in Psalm 78: 35. Frequently we find “Most High” but only here and in Psalm 78 do we see “God Most High.” With this designation appearing here so uniquely it has special significance. First it means that God is the possessor of heaven and earth. It also means that Jehovah God had a relationship with Melchizedek. And Melchizedek was a follower and minister of the Lord of Heaven and Earth. Some have suggested that he was a preincarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus or even a theophany. This designation is not accurate when compared to other

preincarnate appearances of the Lord Jesus. In those instances, the Lord Jesus does not hold an office on earth. Those earthly preincarnate materializations of Jesus are for short periods and then they are gone. Here Melchizedek is said to be both priest and king. Abram acknowledged him as his superior and seemed to recognize that God had revealed Himself to this man.

During the Levitical priesthood under the Mosaic Law the offices of priest and king were separate and were not to be combined. The Lord Jesus did hold both offices as being God Himself. Paul the writer of Hebrews is making a case for the necessity for the Lord Jesus to come into the earth as both king and our priest fulfilling the Law. It is only the Lord Jesus who can forgive sin. Melchizedek did not forgive sin. He blessed Abram but did not forgive any sin. In Hebrews here we see that Melchizedek is used as a “type” of the Lord Jesus since he was a priest and a king. David knew that this was the case too as he wrote in Psalm 110.

Psalm 110: 1-7

1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. 3 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. 4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. 5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. 6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. 7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head (KJV).

He knew that one would come from God who would be God and would usher in the establishment of a messianic priesthood and kingdom. This Psalm was written about 500 years after the inauguration of the Levitical order. This shows that David realized the imperfection and impermanence of the Levitical order. Melchizedek is only a follower of God and not God Himself. Jesus is forever a priest and king.

Some of the Orthodox Jews believe that Shem, Noah’s son who is also the Messianic seed son of Noah is Melchizedek. This is not too farfetched a conjecture since Shem continued to live thirty-five years after Abraham died. Both lived in the same region of Mesopotamia. Of the three sons of Noah Shem was the most righteous and was chosen to bring the Messiah through his line of descendants. It is altogether possible that Melchizedek is Shem.

Paul in Hebrews treats Melchizedek as a Type of Jesus as well as king David writing in Psalm 110. He is never seen *as* the Lord Jesus. Hebrews says he was *like* the Son of God expressed in the KJV as *after the order*. The grammatical figure of speech used here is called a simile. It makes an expressed comparison between two different things. Melchizedek has no record of a genealogy. Not that he did not have one, there was just no record of it. What is important for us to realize is that Melchizedek is a very righteous man. He was a priest and a king and knew God. Abraham realized this and Paul in Hebrews says that Jesus is not a high priest after or like the earthly high priest but *after the order of Melchizedek*. The priesthood of Christ and Melchizedek are not the same. No mere man could possibly compare to Christ’s priesthood.

But knowing what God has revealed of Melchizedek we can see the comparison. Melchizedek, appeared without any ceremony, without visibly being made holy, appeared to Abraham as a high priest. This too was Christ, by the direct word of the Father, saying to him, *you are a priest forever*. In this sense, Christ is called a high priest in the order of Melchizedek because He was divinely appointed.

JESUS IS THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION

Hebrews 5:7–10

⁷ Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; ⁸ though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; ⁹ and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; ¹⁰ called of God ⁹a high priest after the order of Melchisedec (KJV).

Thinking back to the requirements for priesthood we see that Jesus fulfilled one of them was to be a human. Naturally every high priest had to be a human. The text which says *in the days of his flesh*, specifies His entire life on earth from His birth or Incarnation through to His resurrection and ascension (Hebrews 2:14). He offered up both *prayers and supplications* with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death while on the cross. Through the suffering he endured we see illustrations both of the nature and extent of those sufferings by which Christ learned obedience. The clause *being made perfect* validates the second part of the sentence. This shows us how *learned he obedience by the things which he suffered* led to Him who *became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*. Though He was the Son of God, He still had to endure the process of discipline. Discipline is part of Sonship, He experienced and endured the process of discipline to be further identified with humanity. The expression *learned obedience* does not mean that Jesus disobeyed; it means that He learned what obedience cost Him. It cost Him suffering. Paul makes the same point in Philippians.

Philippians 2:7–8

⁷ but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸ and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Next message: The Lord Jesus is Well Qualified

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