

HEBREWS — PART 4

JESUS' INTERCESSION — TODAY

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Several times in the Book of Hebrews we've seen Jesus presented as our High Priest. **Psalms 110:4 prophesied that the Messiah would be High Priest — forever — after the Order of Melchizedek.**

More details are given in Hebrews Chapter 7. But before going there ... let's look at the "original" Melchizedek.

Genesis 14:11-12

11 **Then they (the attacking kings) took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions,** and went their way.

12 **They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods,** and departed.

In the wars at that time ... Abraham's nephew ... Lot ... was taken captive.

Genesis 14:13-17

13 **Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew,** for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram.

14 **Now when Abram heard that his nephew was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house,** and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

15 He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.

16 **So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his nephew Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.**

17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.

Abraham was powerful and super wealthy (318 military-aged servants). He rescued Lot. And recovered a great deal of plunder.

Genesis 14:18-24

18 **Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.**

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 gave him a tithe of all.**

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.”

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, **“I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth,**

23 **that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich’ —**

24 except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”

Melchizedek is a Priest of the Most High God. His name means “King of Righteousness”. He is King of Salem (King of Peace).

He blesses Abraham. Hebrews Chapter 7 will tell us that the one who blesses is the SUPERIOR OF THE TWO!

If a church wants to establish tithing on income as a regular practice — they can’t use Abraham!

This is only ONE TITHE — NOT FROM HIS REGULAR INCOME. A TITHE OF GRATITUDE TO THE MOST HIGH GOD’S PRIEST AT THAT TIME — JUST AGAINST HIS

“WINDFALL”. 10% TO THE PRIEST — AND ABRAM KEPT NOTHING!!

Hebrews 7:1-3

- 1 **For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God**, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings **and blessed him**,
- 2 **to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all**, first being translated **“king of righteousness,”** and then also **king of Salem**, meaning **“king of peace,”**
- 3 **without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.**

Melchizedek — like the Son of God — no beginning and no end. If literal ... it seems further evidence that it's Jesus ... manifesting in human form?

The key point of the author is that **Jesus has a SUPERIOR PRIESTHOOD** to the former one —the Levitical Priesthood. To the Hebrews (Jewish converts) ... this would be a radical idea ... but something they must come to understand.

A BETTER PRIESTHOOD

Hebrews 7:4-10

- 4 **Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.** (*Not a tenth of his income — but of the plunder*)
- 5 And indeed **those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law**, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham;
- 6 but **he whose genealogy is not derived from them** received **a tithe** from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.
- 7 **Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.**

8 Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives.

9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham,
so to speak,

10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Although it seems to talk a lot about tithes ... it's not directly commenting on tithes as a topic. **IT'S USING TITHES TO ILLUSTRATE THE KEY POINT — MELCHIZEDEK'S PRIESTHOOD IS SUPERIOR TO THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD.** And also ... **MELCHIZEDEK IS SUPERIOR TO ABRAHAM!** Likely a shock to Jewish converts?!

Hebrews 7:11

11 Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?

We need a BETTER AND DIFFERENT PRIESTHOOD because the Levitical one can't bring us to spiritual maturity!

Hebrews 7:12-14

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.

13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.

14 For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.

THE LAW OF PRIESTHOOD NEEDS TO BE CHANGED. JESUS CAN'T SERVE AS A PRIEST UNDER THE "CURRENT LAW". JESUS IS OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH — NOT LEVI AND AARON.

Hebrews 7:15-19

15 And it is yet far more evident if, **in the likeness of**

Melchizedek, there arises another priest

16 who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life.

17 For **He** (GOD) testifies:

“You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek.”

18 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness,

19 **for the law made nothing perfect**; on the other hand, **there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.**

Jesus represents a BETTER PRIESTHOOD — WITH A BETTER HOPE — BETTER OUTCOME — SPIRITUAL MATURITY. Closer intimacy with The Father.

Hebrews 7:20-22

20 And **inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath**

21 (for they have become priests without an oath, but **He with an oath by Him who said to Him:**

“The LORD has sworn

And will not relent, *(this will never change)*

‘You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek’ ”),

22 **by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.**

More evidence of Jesus’ superiority — **HE WAS CONFIRMED PRIEST BY A DIVINE OATH.**

And has **BECOME SURETY — GUARANTOR — OF A BETTER COVENANT** (which contains **BETTER PROMISES**).

Hebrews 7:23-28

23 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing.

24 But **He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.**

25 **Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.**

26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, **who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;**

27 **who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.**

28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but **the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.**

Jesus' ministry as our High Priest — HE INTERCEDES WITH THE FATHER FOR US. (I assume we need His intercession? Will experience problems if Jesus were not interceding?)

Because Jesus lived a fully human life — and knows exactly what it's like — He can effectively intercede all of the time for us!

As an aside ... many people and churches focus almost exclusively on Jesus' death on the cross.

Jesus' death is crucial to us — vital — a great demonstration of God's love. But it's far from the whole story of Jesus' role in our salvation.

But for many ... it seems only the crucifixion is really important. The Book of Hebrews will clearly show otherwise.

JESUS HAS A GREAT MINISTRY TO OCCUR AFTER HIS CRUCIFIXION!

I spoke some months ago about;

John 19:28-30

28 After this, **Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished**, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!”
29 Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth.
30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, **He said, “It is finished!”** And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Large numbers of people believe Jesus accomplished everything to do with salvation at His death.

We are to “rest” in the “Finished Work” of Jesus! But NO! Jesus death — important as it is — was not sufficient.

JESUS DEATH IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO SAVE YOU OR ME!!

1 Corinthians 15:14-18

14 And **if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.**
15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.
16 For **if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.**
17 **And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!**
18 **Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.**

Jesus’ death — without His resurrection means our faith is futile — our sins are not forgiven ... and we’ll perish.

Jesus must be resurrected! Death is not sufficient for salvation!

Romans 5:6-8

6 For when we were still without strength, **in due time Christ died for the ungodly.**

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

8 **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

Jesus died for us. True and necessary. But — is it enough? It's not all that is required!

Romans 5:9-11

9 Much more then, **having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.**

10 For **if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, **having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**

11 And not only that, but **we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.**

Saved by Jesus' life — His resurrection and current ministry as our High Priest.

Jesus' resurrection allows Him to become High Priest ... ascend into Heaven ... and act there on a daily basis interceding for us — using the life experiences He gained during His physical life.

It's His present-day ministry that saves us ... not His death 2,000 years ago.

Jesus' influence on our lives wasn't just 15 hours of crucifixion. **It was years of preaching ... teaching and healing during His "real" life** — learning to be a Pioneer for us ... plus His ultimate crucifixion ... but then — of vital importance — **His**

resurrection ministry at the right hand of God interceding for us as High Priest for nearly 2,000 years.

We shouldn't "minimise" the life of Jesus as all wrapped up in 15 hours of His crucifixion suffering.

Jesus died (in part) for us. But **we absolutely need His Ministry today as our High Priest.** (What would happen if Jesus stopped His work of intercession?)

Romans 8:31-34

31 What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?**

32 **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?**

33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

34 Who is he who condemns? **It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.**

Jesus is now risen — at God's right hand —making intercession for us. Now! Today!

This is His present-day Ministry — as our faithful High Priest.

Romans 8:35-39

35 **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

37 **Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.**

38 For I am persuaded that **neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,**

39 **nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall
be able to separate us from the love of God which is in
Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Nothing ... and no one ... can separate us from the Love of God apart from us!

“Take heed ... don’t harden your hearts ... don’t drift away ... don’t fall away”! **JESUS IS DOING HIS PART — we must do ours!**