



We know now that the greatest gift that was given to humanity was Jesus!

Lesson 11, The Gift and the Giver, Jesus!

Hebrews 7

Jesus, High Priest in the Order of Melchizedek...

Hebrews 6:19-20, "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Who in the world is Melchizedek? And...How does he compare to Jesus?

One...He is like one not of this world, but in the world

Two...He had no history or heritage to become priest.

Three...He has no history of being anointed by another man

God anointed Melchizedek and God anointed Jesus (HIS Son).

His priesthood had no beginning and no end...as far as being proved by man or records.

The entire 7th chapter of Hebrews is about Jesus and Melchizedek. Why do you suppose the comparison between the two were so important to the writer of Hebrews?

Hebrews 7:1-28, "This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him,² and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace."³ Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.⁴ Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder!⁵ Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from their fellow Israelites—even though they also are descended from Abraham.⁶ This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.⁷ And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater.⁸ In the one case, the tenth is collected by people who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living.⁹ One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham,¹⁰ because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.¹¹ 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?¹² For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also.¹³ 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."¹⁸ 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. ²⁰ 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.'" ²² 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. ²⁶ 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."

Melchizedek was one of those puzzling people in the Bible who appear only briefly but are mentioned again as examples of holiness and right living. The startling fact about Melchizedek is that although he was not a Jew, he worshiped God Most High, the one true God.

Melchizedek's holiness have led some scholars to describe him as a type of Christ, showing the same qualities as Jesus. With no record of father or mother, and no genealogical background in Scripture, this description is fitting.

Other scholars go a step further, theorizing that Melchizedek may have been a theophany of Christ, or a manifestation of deity in temporary form.

We see that sometimes, the Angel of the LORD, is God, Himself — Yahweh — showing Himself in the Old Testament.

Exodus 3:2-6, "There the angel of the Lord appeared to him (Moses) in flames of fire from within a bush. 'Do not come any closer,' God said. 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' Then he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God."

Understanding Jesus' status as our high priest is a key point in the book of Hebrews. Just as Melchizedek was not born into the Levitical priesthood but was appointed by God, so Jesus was named our eternal high priest, interceding with God the Father on our behalf:

Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 5:8-10, NIV)

"Jesus...High Priest."

Jesus became the High Priest because He was obedient unto death (Without Sin) and therefore God anointed Him for Priesthood!

- **Jesus became the sacrifice and became the priest only when He sacrificed Himself on the altar.**
- **He was the gift and the giver.**
- **He was the priest (pontifex, bridge builder) and the bridge itself.**
- **He was the atonement and the atoner.**

All for us and all for the glory of God the Father.

The human priesthood and the law (sacrificial system) could not do what God required.

There was no escaping the human estrangement from which followed sin; and the problem was that not all the efforts of the priesthood and not all the sacrifices could restore that lost relationship.

The argument of the writer of Hebrews...that what is needed is a new and different priesthood and a new and effective sacrifice.

The writer sees in Jesus Christ the only high priest who can open the way to God for man.

He calls the priesthood of Jesus a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

How does the quality of the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek differ from the quality of the ordinary Aaronic priesthood?

1. Melchizedek has no genealogy; he is without father or without mother (Hebrews 7:3).

Scripture does not provide Melchizedek with any genealogy.

Unusual because: a) it is the reverse of the regular practice of Genesis. Genealogies are a feature of Genesis, where long lists of a man's ancestors constantly occur. Melchizedek arrives on the scene, as it were, from nowhere, and b) it is the reverse of the rules which governed the Aaronic priesthood...which depended entirely on descent. Under Jewish law, a man could not under any circumstances become a priest unless he could produce a certificated pedigree going back to Aaron. Character and ability had nothing to do with it.

Therefore...Aaronic priesthood depended on genealogical descent, while the priesthood of Melchizedek depended on personal qualification alone.

2. Aaron's (Man's) priesthood ended...and Melchizedek's has no beginning or ending (by Scripture)...and no time when Melchizedek was born or died (by Scripture). He had no beginning or ending and his priest hood lasts forever.

Five Great Qualities in the priesthood of Melchizedek.

1. It is a priesthood of righteousness (7:2)

2. It is a priesthood of peace (7:2)

Righteousness always comes before peace. Without Righteousness there can be no peace.

Romans 5:1, "Therefore since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 14:17, "The Kingdom of God is...righteousness and peace and joy."

The order is always the same.

3. It is a royal priesthood, for Melchizedek was a king (7:1)

4. It is personal and not inherited, because he has no genealogy (7:3)

5. It is eternal, because he has no birth or death, and his priesthood has no beginning and end (7:3).

Superiority of the new Priesthood...

From Hebrews 7:11 onward through the end of Chapter shows where the greater, the more superior of the priesthood lay.

1. A new priesthood promised shows that the old one was inadequate (7:11)...According to the law, all priests must belong to the tribe of Levi; but Jesus was from the tribe of Judah...showing that the whole old system was superseded. Something greater than the law had come.

2. The new priesthood was forever (Hebrews 7:15-19)
Under the old system, the priests died and there was no permanence; but now there had come a priest who lives forever.

3. The new priest offered no sacrifice for himself (7:27).
The ordinary priest always had to make sacrifice for his own sin before he could do so for the sins of the people. Jesus Christ, the new High Priest, was sinless and needed no sacrifice of himself.

4. The new priest did not need endlessly to repeat sacrifices (7:27).
He made the one perfect sacrifice, which never needs to be made again because it has forever open the way to the presence of God.



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!