

# The Blessor of Abram

## *Hebrews 7:2*

Nutshell: Just as God's oath to Abraham was an oath to us, so God's blessing of Abraham is a blessing to us! Gal 3:9.

I. Context: Melchizedek as the Great Shift.

II. Text

**Heb 7:1** For this **Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High**, the *one* meeting Abraham returning from the striking of the kings, **and blessing him**;

**Heb 7:2** to whom also Abraham **apportioned a tenth from all** (first, indeed, being interpreted, King of Righteousness; and after that, also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace;

**Heb 7:3** no father, no mother, no genealogical record; also without beginning of days nor having end of life, but having been made a likeness of the Son of God, *he* remains a priest in perpetuity).

Literal Standard Version with modifications

Blue text represents phrases that the Literal Version takes as direct quotes from Gen 14:17-20

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

A. Paul wrote an inspired book to a Jewish audience; 2 Pet 3:15-16; 1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 3:1. Hebrews is the only possibility.

1. The "us" of Heb 2:3 only puts the author outside the original 12
2. Peter speaks of the Apostles in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person as well, 1 Pet 1:12

B. Outline of Hebrews:

### **The Preeminence of the Son**

*Authority*: God has at last spoken In **Son** (*Ἰερωφητ*), ← follow this font

His express image, 1:1-3a

*Theme*: **The SON** purified us from sin (Priest), then sat in authority (**King**), **1:3b**

- I. **Supreme over** the angels, Inheritor by ordeal, 1:4-14  
Therefore hear Him, 2:1-4

- II. Supreme **as** man, 2:5-9  
**Psalm 8**- Since man must inherit, 2:5-8a  
 but man failed, 2:8b, **Christ** became man, 2:9a  
*Theme* reprise: crowned with glory and honor (**King**), 2:9b  
 to taste the death of “each one” of His own (**Priest**), 2:9c  
 to bond with them and help them, 2:10-18  
 freeing them from bondage to Satan and fear, 2:14-15
- III. A better stewardship than Moses, 3:1-6  
 Therefore **THINK HARD ON HIM**, unhardening our hearts,  
**Ps 95**- for Moses’ folk didn’t inherit God’s **rest**, 3:7-19;  
 consequently, **EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY**, 3:13
- IV. A better **Rest** than Joshua, 4:1-11  
 ♦ Therefore, fear (4:1a), lest we also miss **God’s rest**  
**Ps 95**- David invited his generation into that same **rest** of  
 Creation, a type of Salvation, 4:1b-8  
**Christ’s** Salvation has become the final *Sabbatismos*, 4:9-  
 10, which we must **EXERT** ourselves to enter, 4:11  
 For the Word penetrates, exposing us before God, 4:12-13  
*Theme* reprise: Having a high**Priest**), the **Son** of God (**King**),  
 Let us hold to our confession of Him (*Prophet*), 4:14  
 especially since He felt all our temptations +, 4:15
- V. A better **priesthood** than Aaron, 4:14 - 10:18
- VI. Exhortations based on Christ Supreme, 10:19-13:21  
 VII. Concluding remarks, 13:22-25
- C. “**Let us approach**” (Προσερχώμεθα) in **4:16** and **10:22** tells us that Jesus’ priesthood is so we will approach God.  
**Prayerlessness**, then, **dismisses Jesus’ priesthood**.
- D. 5:1-10, OT priests from Aaron; Christ from *Melchizedek*  
 1. 5:11-14, The Hebrews were too babyish to learn of *M*  
 2. 6:1-2, Reaffirm the 6 **FUNDAMENTALS** (3 pairs): (hand-laying a fundamental) *or* risk being beyond repentance, 6:4-6, like cultivated land that only yields thorns, v 7-8.
- E. But there are signs of life among you! 6:9-11. Press on, believing God’s oath, as Abraham did, 6:12-18,  
 2. Our hope being an anchor, sunk into the Holiest, v 19  
 3. Where our Forerunner ensures we **SHALL** follow, v 20
- F. Back to *Melchizedek*! 7:1

**Kid-speak:** Last time, we started talking about a king who was also a priest. What was his name? Melchizedek.

G. In Hebrews 7:2, we see Melchizedek in the priestly work of ensuring a blessing for his people.

**Outline: Hebrews 7:1**

- I. Melchizedek, the Only Old Testament King-Priest
- II. Melchizedek as a Priest
- III. Melchizedek Initiated His Meeting with Abram
- IV. Melchizedek Blessed Abram, Gen 14
  - A. As God had blessed Abram in Gen 12
  - B. Favoring Melchizedek as the preincarnate Christ?
- V. The Arguments from Melchizedek Taking a Tenth From and Blessing Abram

H. Last time, we saw:

- 1. That Melchizedek represents a **FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT** in God's redemption: a whole new priestly line:
  - a. But well-prepped in the OT
  - b. Which shift is Paul's whole message in our passage
- 2. In the other NT epistles, this **fundamental shift** seems *implicit*
  - a. It's OK if there's only one book where it's worked out
  - b. Especially since it's worked out here in such detail
- 3. Melchizedek represents "**SOLID FOOD**," which baby Christians must move on to from their "milk," 5:12
  - a. Solid food is not for the elite! It is for all. *All* must mature. Infancy is *not* a Christian norm.
  - b. Hence, all Christians should understand, be able to explain (5:12), and embrace the teaching of Melchizedek

**Kid-speak:** Why do we need to know about Melchizedek? Because **Jesus** is a priest the way Melchizedek was. So Jesus wasn't a priest from Aaron? No.

- 4. Melchizedek's two OT occurrences:
  - a. Gen 14, the historical account
  - b. Ps 110, the comment/ commitment
- 5. Melchizedek was king of Salem
  - a. As recorded in Gen 14:18
  - b. "Salem" only there and Ps 76:2, where it is juxtaposed with Zion, making them the same?

- c. No, in Ps 76:1, Israel and Judah, different regions, are juxtaposed
- d. The theme of Ps 76 is God's reign over *all* domains, so Salem as God's transcendent (beyond) domain vs. Zion as His immanent (near) domain?
- 6. So far, does this favor Melchizedek as a human king-priest who was a *type* of Christ **or** Melchizedek *as* Christ preincarnate? Hm.
- I. ***Melchizedek is the hinge point in the book***
  - 1. Paul has worked up to his main point: Christ's superior priesthood
  - 2. Melchizedek is the fundamental point in that superiority
- J. "Priest of God Most High"
  - 1. Melchizedek is in a company of **one** in the OT
    - a. The *only* king-priest combo
    - b. Whose exceptional priesthood is recognized in Ps 110:4

**Kid-speak:** How many people in the Bible were a priest and a king at the same time? Only Jesus and Melchizedek.

- 2. "God Most High" is more literally "The highest God," but in English, that can connote other Gods under Him
  - a. Melchizedek was a priest of the true God, though seemingly unknown to Abram before this
  - b. When God called Abram, he didn't send him to Melchizedek for help or support, nor do Melchizedek and Abe apparently interact afterwards
  - c. Melchizedek, if a man, was seemingly on a separate track from Abraham, their paths crossing in Gen 14
- K. "Priest," 750x
  - 1. Gen 14:18, Melchizedek, is the first mention of "**priest**" in the Bible
    - a. The next one is an *Egyptian* priest, Gen 41:45, then *Jethro*, priest of Midian, Exod 2:16
    - b. Exod 19:6 is the first mention of *Israelite* priests, which category predominates thereafter
    - c. The last OT word about priests warns straying Israelite priests, Mal 2:1, 7; a good setup for a new priesthood
    - d. In the Hebrew Bible arrangement, the last word on priests was also of their transgression, 2 Chron 36:14
  - 2. *Generally*, a **PRIEST's** ministry was to **REPRESENT/ PRESENT**

**THE PEOPLE TO GOD** (versus a **PROPHET** presenting God to the people)

- ★ a. God sending a priest portrays “God Most High” becoming *God Most Low*, chiefly in Christ! Philip 2:8
  - ✳ b. *This God who seeks us out to retrieve us is surely worthy of our worship!*
- ☆ 3. The new priesthood was anticipated in Ps 110:4.
4. The line *between* **priest** and **king** in the OT was rigid
- a. When king Uzziah crossed the line into priestly duties, God struck him with leprosy, 2 Chron 26:16-21,
  - b. in which state he died
5. But here’s a king-priest whom Abe acknowledges as God’s true representative
- a. And *from whom* God promises a continued line, Ps 110:4!
  - b. Not further elucidated in the OT,
  - c. but which must be grouped with all OT references to  
MESSIAH
- L. “The *one meeting Abraham* returning from the striking of the kings”
1. MELCHIZEDEK TOOK THE INITIATIVE FOR THIS MEETING

**Kid-speak:** Was it Melchizedek who decided to meet Abram or Abram who decided to meet Melchizedek? It was **Melchizedek** who decided to meet Aaron.

- a. Melchizedek’s initiative seen in the words “brought out bread and wine,” Gen 14:18. He intended the meeting.
  - b. Bread and wine. Now there’s a foreshadowing for you!
  - (c. Is that how Jesus settled on bread and wine as the elements of Passover to preserve in the Lord’s Table?)
  - d. But Paul doesn’t even mention the bread and wine here!
  - (e. Bread and wine are paired 19x, OT. A common use of the pair was as a synonym for food and drink)
  - f. Since Paul doesn’t make bread & wine part of Melchizedek as a type, we won’t dwell on them
2. Abram had struck the kings who had captured Lot and his family when they sacked Sodom
3. This is the place where Melchizedek enters the picture
- a. The 4 kings had defeated the 5 kings
  - b. Then Abram defeated the victorious 4-king alliance
  - c. Abram was top dog!

- d. Now this *unaligned* king, Melchizedek, meets Abram to give worship to God
- 4. Abram, a conqueror of kings, looks like a type of Christ here
  - a. But *another human* type of Christ meets him to bless him
  - b. **Or** the preincarnate Christ meets Abram to consecrate Abram as the predecessor of *THE King of Kings*
- M. “And blessing him”
  - 1. “Meeting” and “blessing,” are parallel grammatically
  - 2. Melchizedek took in hand to both *meet* Abram and to *bless* him. He *met* him **to** *bless* him.
  - 3. “Bless” is *not* a participle in Gen 14:19
    - a. I appreciate the Literal Version putting in quotes the words in Heb 7:1-2 that seem word-for-word from Gen 14:18-19. It’s a helpful study addition.
    - b. But I would have left off the word “blessing” in Heb 7:2, since Paul has structured it with different grammar in 7:2
- N. “Blessing”
  - 1. Paul will revisit “blessing” in v 7
    - a. Following the concept of superiority and inferiority
    - b. A critical concept
  - ☞ 2. The word “bless” itself provides a perspective on Melchizedek, *starting from the start*:
    - a. God blessed, **IN ORDER**: fish, man, the 7th day, man (5:2 recap), Noah post-Flood, [then 9:26 is the first *indirect* benediction], ABRAM & co. 4x in 12:2-3
    - ☞ b. *Then* Melchizedek blesses Abram 3x in 14:19-20.
    - c. *Melchizedek* is introduced doing what *God’s* been doing, blessing, most recently blessing Abram.
    - d. Melchizedek blessing God in Gen 14:20 might show a *man* blessing God, or the *preincarnate Christ* blessing the Father. By the flow of the word “bless” I favor the latter.
  - 3. Salem stacked up pretty well in support of the preincarnate Christ to me. Now also the flow of “bless.”

**Kid-speak:** What did Melchizedek do to Abram that God had done to Abram too? Bless him.

Heb 7:2 to whom also Abraham **apportioned a tenth from all** (first, indeed, being interpreted, King of Righteousness; and after that, also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace;

O. Looking at v 1-10 as our first paragraph in this section on **Melchizedek's superior priesthood**

- ❖ 1. Melchizedek's priesthood is seen as superior to Aaron's in two ways in this paragraph, v 1-10:
  - a. First, he "tithed" Abram, v 6
  - b. vs. Aaron "tithing" his fellow-Israelites, v 5;
- 2. Secondly, Melchizedek "blessed" Abram,
  - a. an act of a *superior* to an *inferior*, v 7;
  - b. whereas, Aaron was a *fellow-Israelite*, v 5
- (3. So far, I think III. N. 2. is the best argument for Melchizedek being the preincarnate Christ
  - a. Aaron blessed the Israelites, Num 6:22-27,
  - b. Yet he is not counted a superior as Melchizedek was, Heb 7:7
  - c. Hence, how can Melchizedek be a fellow-human)
- ❖ P. "To whom Abraham also apportioned a tenth from all"
  - 1. Giving a tenth is called tithing
  - 2. In the Bible teaching on tithing, Melchizedek is the Bible's foundational entry
  - 3. A basic observation here: tithing predates the Law
    - a. So tithing is not essentially an Old Covenant/ New Covenant issue, nor a Law vs. Grace issue
    - b. Tithing here looks to be a RAW GOD-MAN INTERACTION
  - 4. Here, it is the tithe on a *specific occasion*, not, apparently, the beginning or continuation of a *lifelong* tithe
    - a. YET Paul lays *Melchizedek's* tithe alongside *Aaron's* (which was imposed lifelong)
    - b. They are therefore comparable
    - c. They are both essentially offerings to God

**Kid-speak:** If I make \$20 and give \$2 out of the \$20 to God, how much of the \$20 is the \$2? A tenth. What is it called when we give a tenth of our money to God? A tithe.

- Q. Abram seems to recognize the tithe as an appropriate act of worship to God on this occasion
- 1. Did Abram come up with that on his own?
  - 2. If so, it became standardized in Moses' Law
  - 3. It makes better sense that God had *revealed* the tithe as appropriate worship
    - a. Either before this
    - b. Or *on* this occasion, through Melchizedek

4. But since there weren't yet priests as intermediaries to God, this may have been the *first appropriate occasion* of **tithing**, since Melchizedek is the first priest in the Bible

R. I think many Christians who do not tithe *would* tithe if they could put it right into Jesus' hands

1. Meaning they don't trust the church as a worthy conduit
2. Which brings up the question of whether a church can be a real representative of Christ in *any* regard. Did Christ set it up that way?

IV. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, "Uphold the strengthless")  
The Christ who met *Abram* to bless Him meets *us* to confer blessing on *us*!

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V. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, "Convince, rebuke"): **What have I done wrong?**  
**How have I lost righteousness?**  
Does Christ blessing me *affect* me?

VI. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, "Exhort/encourage"):  
**How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprighteness?**  
I will bless (treat as worthy) the One who blesses me!

VII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How do I take this on the road?**  
Christ, how far You have come to bless me! How near You take me (into Your death and resurrection, into Heaven) to *keep* me blessed! Blessed art Thou!

Vision: Melchizedek *met* Abraham to bless him. The Son of God came a farther distance to bless us.

He *met* us in all He did and was as a human. He *met* us on the cross, where we were united with His death. He *met* us in His resurrection, where we are now seated with Him on high. He *meets* us in sending the Spirit to birth us into *and* keep us in His kingdom.

Christ *meets* us to fix/ situate/ stabilize us. Whenever we stray, this multifaceted *meeting* has faded in our thinking.