Bible Study Notes

STUDY NOTES ON THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

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Study Notes on the Melchizedek Priesthood

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Abstract

In this collection of notes, I hope to assemble useful information on the subject of the King-Priest Melchizedek and how this informs his identity. More and more scholars are taking an interest in the subject and demonstrate the linkages between the Abrahamic, Davidic and New Covenants.
This Melchizedek is a King and a High Priest in an Order – implying lower order kings and priests. It seems obvious that Christians, as a Royal Priesthood, will occupy those positions.
NB: this is not a study paper, article or similar. It is a collection of important quotes and information with my comments which I trust the reader may find useful in their own studies.

Introduction

According to Raymond F McNair's Ministerial Conference notes (of which I have 2 volumes), Herbert W Armstrong stated that:

> "The Levitical priesthood analogy should not be overdone. We are ministers under the Melchizedek priesthood." (18 January 1973)
>
> "Mr HWA said some of these people look upon ordination more as a coronation." (17 January 1972)

For a long time, many ministers equated themselves as priests, though this was not the official teaching of the Church apparently.

HWA did not develop his thoughts on the Melchizedek (= My King is Righteousness)[1] priesthood concept further as far as is known. Presumably he was preoccupied by other matters or, more likely, he dropped the entire idea. However, he had previously written an article identifying Melchizedek with Jesus Christ titled *The Mystery of Melchizedek Solved!* Further proofs arguing for this identification are offered in the ***Appendix. Biblical Illustrator: Genesis 14:18-20.***

Others such as Walter Kaiser have researched the linkage between the Abrahamic-Davidic-New Covenant system and the parallel Sinaitic and Levitical Covenants. This of necessity must include the relationship of the Melchizedekian priesthood and its superiority to that of the Levitical. And in particular the Melchizedekian role of David in ancient Israel and Christ's continuing role.[2]

There have been many, indepth scholarly studies on the subject and there is no need for one from me. Instead, I hope that these notes assist others with their research and bolsters, to some degree, the Church of God's traditional views on this intriguing subject.[3]

[1] http://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Melchizedek.html#.W2L8U9L-jtU

[2] Refer to two of Kaiser's works listed in the 'References and Suggested Reading' section: "The Old Promise and the New Covenant: Jer 31:31-34"; and "The Davidic Promise and the Inclusion of the Gentiles."
Several months after writing this article, I came across an article about Christ as High Priest by David Sielaff. It is worthwhile reading and available at http://www.askelm.com/doctrine/d090201.htm

[3] Most of my information on this (and other subjects) are in storage, so I shall add to these notes once I find those items

The Origin of Melchizedek

The origin of Melchizedek is not explicitly stated in the book of Genesis, but he appears on the scene rather abruptly. After a brief encounter with Abram, receiving his tithe and described as "priest of God Most High," no more is heard of him in Genesis.[4]

It is noteworthy that he shares bread and wine with Abraham which is clearly a feature of covenant making and perhaps a precursor of the Passover, or perhaps even a pre-Mosaic Passover?[5]

In recent times, scholars of Israelitish and church history have explored the various documents and traditions surrounding this mysterious figure.

For instance, the famous Dead Sea or Qumran Scrolls include what is known as the Melchizedek document or 11QMelch.[6] This document contains parallels between him and Michael, the Archangel.[7]

In turn the community at Qumran's portrayal of him is as a heavenly high priest and is linked to Leviticus 25 as well as the 70 weeks of years of Daniel 9:24-27 which a number of authors have pointed out. This would equate him with Christ to many Christians as a result.

An exhaustive study into the history and traditions surrounding Michael is *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity*. The author includes information that suggests that Michael is identified with Melchizedek in certain traditions[8] or some other heavenly being or allusions interwoven between Melchizedek, Yhwh and Elohim – "Hebrews coalesces its presentation

[4] The name Zadok seems to be related in some way with Melchizedek. Is he not the righteous priest who sides with the prophet Nathan in fighting for the throne so that Solomon can inherit it (IChron 14:3-4; 16:39; IKings 1:39. See also IISam 12:24). Another is the Canaanite king Adoni-Zedek who ruled at Jerusalem at the time of Joshua (Joshua 10:1-3).

[5] It is clear from Genesis that Abraham "was one who pictured God's Law written on his heart. He obeyed the Law … He kept the commands … decrees … and laws. These terms are well known from the pages of Deuteronomy … In this respect the picture of Abraham that emerges from chapters 14 and 26 is much like that of the "new covenant" promise in Jeremiah 31:33, in which God has promised to write the Torah on the heart of his covenant people so that they will obey it from the heart." (Gaebelein, 1990, p. 124)

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/11Q13 ; Van de Water 2006, pp. 75-86

[7] "Melchizedek is shown functioning in a manner virtually identical to that in which Yahweh and the Son of Man operate" (Sporer 2016, p. 44). A few researchers (but only a minority) maintain that Melchizedek is God Himself (Franco Manzi, *Links between Qumran and the Letter to the Hebrews,* www.liquisearch.com, 2021)

[8] Hannah 1999, pp. 70-74.

"… the Melchizedek Scroll (110Melch) complicates the status of his high priest via a series of biblical allusions that conflate Melchizedek's status with that of God. Here, in a text … **Melchizedek is not merely a human figure e, but an entity that participates in God's own divinity** in a war-like eschatological context. In his charge is an army, the nation of the holy ones of God." (Deborah L. Forger, *Divine Embodiment in Jewish Antiquity: Rediscovering The Jewishness of John's Incarnate Christ* by A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Near Eastern Studies) in the University of Michigan 2017, pp. 144-45)

"… Psalm 110:4 presents Melchizedek as the first, and primary example, of a militant, royal priesthood. Like many kings from antiquity, the psalmist portrays Melchizedek as commanding an army, but he depicts his soldiers as being arrayed in holy splendor (Ps 110.3). In particular, instead of being clothed in battle armor, they don priestly garb. Moreover, though the psalmist portrays God as the one who ultimately both crushes kings and judges the nations, he closely associates Melchizedek with these roles and places him at the Lord's right hand (Ps 110:5, 6, respectively)" (p. 146)

of Jesus with 'God' by using the text of Ps. 45.6 to address Jesus in this way (Heb. 1.8)".[9]

Whatever the tradition, Scripture shows him as priest of the Most High God (El-ELyon) (Gen 14:18-20) and later as eternal priest of Yhwh, apparently jointly with the King of Israel (Ps 110:4). So, the Bible itself says little but there are clues in the Psalms and of course, Hebrews offers clarification. In fact, there are so many excellent research papers out there, that I shall list only several of them:

- *Melchizedek in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* by L Stuckenbruck[10]
- *Psalm 110:1 and the New Testament* by H Bateman IV
- *The Royal Components of Melchizedek in Hebrews 7* by D Kang
- *Thematic Connections in Psalm 110 and Genesis 14* by S Pahl

At this stage, it is important to view every Scripture that refers to Melchizedek, but having the awareness of the complexities surrounding the book of Hebrews according to scholars:

> "The logic of the book is based on ancient rhetorical patterns and pre-modern exegetical principles that makes the reader's task exceptionally difficult".[11]

However, I will attempt to keep this study straight-forward as possible.

> "After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).
> And **Melchizedek** king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.)
> And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High [El-Elyon], Possessor of heaven and earth;
> and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!"
> And Abram gave him a tenth of everything." (Gen 14:17-20)

David even seems to use himself or Solomon as a typology for Melchizedek:

> **"**A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."
> The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies!
> 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.[12]

[9] Stuckenbruck 2018, p. 134

[10] There are so many examples from the Dead Sea Scrolls (3rd century BC-1st century AD) which demonstrate a great interest in whom this Melchizedek figure is. One such tradition has him as a heavenly deliverer heading up the 'gods of justice' and 'sons of heaven' who presides over the last judgment including that of Satan. (Carlson 2019, p. 18). In other Scrolls he functions as a righteous king who enforces the Jubilee (Mallek c2010, p. 5). Also, "A significant passage in the text [ie 11QMelch fragment] finds El (the highest God), in the midst of Elohim (other "gods") in his council, and another Elohim (who is Melchizedek." (Madsen 1986, p. 3). You can actually view it online here https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/manuscript/11Q13-1?locale=en_US

[11] Nelson 1993, p. 141

[12] Ross 2016, p. 358 comment on Ps 110:3 explained: "6. The Masoretic text has a difficulty with the spelling of the second word: "dawn" has a letter mem prefixed to it … If the second word had the [Heb symbol] repointed it would be another preposition: "from the womb from the dawn"… The Greek has "out of the womb before the dawn" or "morning star," …
7. … The MT has … "From the womb, before the morning star, I have begotten you." … by recalling the royal

The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of **Melchizedek**."
The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.
He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth.
He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head." (Ps 110:1-7) (compare with Psalm 2 where it may be Solomon typing the Messiah)[13]

"So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "**You are my Son, today I have begotten you**";[14]
as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of **Melchizedek**."
In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.
Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.
And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,
being designated by God a high priest after the order of **Melchizedek**." (Heb 5:5-10)

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

"For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,
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.
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.
See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!
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.
But this man who does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.
It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.
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.
One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham,
for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when **Melchizedek** met him.
Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of **Melchizedek**, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?
For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law

coronation"

[13] It is interesting to note that Melchizedek ruled from Jerusalem (probably Zion itself) as will Christ and where David had the Ark of the Covenant (IISam 6).

[14] Barnard 2011, p. 6 believes that by virtue of stating "you are my Son" means that this is declaring his High Priesthood status.

as well.[15]
For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.
For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.
This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of **Melchizedek**,
who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.
For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of **Melchizedek**."
For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness
(for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.
And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath,
but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever.'"
This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.
The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,
but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.
Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.
For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.
He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.
For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever."
(Heb 7:1-28)[16]

Unfortunately, Genesis does not state explicitly who he was, but when we consider Paul's writing to the Hebrews[17], it seems that this priest was none other than the One whom became Christ. Herbert W Armstrong wrote about this in his article *The Mystery of Melchizedek Solved!*

However, clues contained within Paul's writings are:

- Melchizedek abides as a priest continually which indicates that he is currently a priest when Christ is our High Priest. This indicates that they are one and the same.
- We are told how great he is – surely only the Son of God on earth can be considered great?

[15] "… the author of Hebrews bypasses the human instrument (Jeremiah) entirely because he hears the text as God speaking directly. If God's mouth uttered both oaths using the exact same structural template, the author of Hebrews cannot logically cancel the Levitical framework of Jeremiah 33 without implicitly compromising the New Covenant framework of Jeremiah 31 … **The writer is here arguing hypothetically, for the law itself cannot be changed.** He has primarily in mind the law affecting the Aaronic priesthood... It occurs to the writer that some confusion might arise in his readers' mind over the co-existence of two orders of priesthood. He proceeds, therefore, to show that the priesthood of Jesus was not established on the earth... This leads into his thesis that the superior priesthood is that which operates in heaven, not on earth" (Donald Guthrie, *Hebrews. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries,* Vol. 15, pp.164, 174-175). [emphasis mine]

[16] I wonder if Paul is not 'teasing' or writing in a circuitous manner to make one think and deliberate on the matters he raises? Note Peter's comments in IIPet 3:15-16. For instance, Paul's writing in IICor 12:1-10

[17] It should be remembered, however, that our modern thinking can limit our understanding of the Bible and in particular Hebrews: ""The logic of the book [of Hebrews] is based on ancient rhetorical patterns and pre-modern exegetical principles that makes the reader's task exceptionally difficult" (Nelson 1993, p. 141)

- Implying that he is not mortal. *English Standard Version* has Heb 7:8 as: "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" and *New American Standard Version* "In this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on." In other words, Levites die but this high priest literally continues on.
- In Heb 7:3 we are told that Melchizedek was "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" (ESV). But the *Phillips* translation has it as: "He had no father or mother and no family tree." In other words it is perpetual as he "continue a priest forever." Sometimes this term is used for deities in the ancient world amongst other usages.[18]
- Evidently, he is superior to Abraham, the father of the faithful (Rom 4:16; Heb 11:8).[19]

This shows that he had no human parents. It also shows that this does not mean there were no records or that they became lost as some speculate - for priests were not allowed to serve if they could not prove their genealogy according to Ezra 2:62.

According to Ryan Watson

> "The first key point is in Hebrews 7:3 as Melchizedek is described as being fatherless (ἀπάτωρ), motherless (ἀμήτωρ), without genealogy, and "having neither beginning of days nor end of life." These predicates are used to link the historical Melchizedek and his office of priest with Jesus, **and speak of divinity since one finds "evidence from ancient Greek sources.**.. that it belongs to a true deity to be both 'without father' and 'without mother' and no genealogy" (Neyrey 1991, p. 447). This raises two questions as to the nature of the typology used in this passage."[20] [emphasis mine]

From this one can deduce that he was probably Christ Himself, in the role of King-Priest,[21] perhaps from the time of Noah forward, if not before. At some stage His role on earth ended, perhaps at the time of Israel's period in Egypt.[22]

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[18] Morris 1982, p. 63. Kang, 2012, p. 115 states that very similar term was used in the ancient Middle East because kingship was considered to be of "divine origin" which throws light on this verse.

Adrian Giorgiov, "Melchizedek, The Priest Who Derived His Pattern from the Preexistent Christ," *Perichoresis* Volume 21. Supplement 1 (2023), pp. 67-79 notes:
"There have been various interpretations as to the identity of Melchizedek…
Could it be that Melchizedek was actually a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Are Melchizedek and Jesus the same person? A case can be made either way. The question is not unfounded, given the fact that Abraham received another special visit from the Lord (Genesis18:17-33). Some think that it is possible that Abraham, after his weary battle, met and gave honor to the Lord Jesus Himself." (p. 68)
"'He had no beginning or ending of days as far as creation is concerned- He is the eternal God… We have in Melchizedek a marvelous picture of the Lord Jesus Christ' (McGee 1981, p. 65)." (p.73)
"Therefore, **Christ's frame of reference goes back not only to Melchizedek, but to himself in his eternal existence**." (p. 78) [emphasis mine]

[19] One speculation for Christ commanding Mary to not touch Him after the resurrection (John 20:16-17) was that Christ had to be accepted by the Father as the sacrifice for human sin and falling short of His glory. This seems similar to the inference that no human could touch the high priest after purification, prior to entering the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement. (Lev 16)

[20] Watson 2013, p. 13

[21] "The book of Hebrew doesn't say that Melchizedek was literally the Son of Gode making a cameo appearance. Rather, the author drew parallels between the two figures, suggesting that what Melchizedek was literally, Jesus Christ is literally." (Svigel 2017, p. 1)

[22] Researcher Sung Jin Park in his paper *Melchizedek as a Covenantal Figure: The Biblical Theology of The*

Of this, researcher Astour states that he must be Christ given the way Hebrews describes him as

> "a primeval, immortal being, coeternal with the Son of God."[23]

Representative of God

At this juncture, we need to understand that some of the holy men of God and other representatives were regarded as if it were God Himself speaking through them. That is not the case today as none of us (including ministers) are regarded in that sense in the New Testament.

We are sons and daughters of God in His embryonic family, but no way in the sense of being priests so that one is so inspired it is as if God Himself speaks through any of us.

Following are some of the most noteworthy verses which throw further light on the issue:

> "And the LORD said unto Moses, See, **I have made thee a god [elohim] to Pharaoh**: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." (Ex 7:1)
>
> "And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and **thou shalt be to him instead of God**." (Ex 4:16)
>
> "Then **Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father**, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him." (IChron 29:23)[24]

Eschatological Royal Priesthood admits: "However, if we just interpret the mysterious statement about no genealogy according to this principle, the author of Hebrews seems to go too far in his expression because **he almost describes Melchizedek as having the same eternal attributes as those of the Son of God**, Jesus Christ. Even though this Jewish hermeneutical principle is valid in a typological setting … The reason why the author of Hebrews mentioned Melchizedek is to emphasize the superiority of Christ's priesthood to the Aaronic priesthood by suggesting Melchizedek's superiority to Abraham who was the ancestor of the Levites. Christ performed his priestly function by shifting his priestly activity into his willing self-sacrificial death within the framework of the Yom Kippur ritual … Even though there is no clear evidence of the existence of a king-priest, **the Israelite kings seemed to be king-priests in a limited sense. Thus, they were called "the sons of God."** Only through Christ as the eternal Son of God, has the perfect royal priesthood been accomplished. His royal priesthood can be described as the imagery of the Lion and the Lamb. In the Scriptures the image of the Lion represents the kingship, while that of Lamb the priesthood." [emphasis mine]
Another author notes: "Adonai in verses 1 and 5a, where it is not clear whether Adonai is an equivalent for YHWH, the same Adonai as mentioned in verse 1, an equivalent to Melchizedek in verse 4, or a separate being altogether" (Stuckenbruck 2018, p. 127)
"The conflationary hermeneutic in 11Q13 makes it possible for the text to identify or link Melchizedek, both explicitly and implicitly, with a number of functional labels: *'elohim* (Pss. 7; 82; Isa. 52), YHWH (implied from the use of Isa. 61.1), priest (Ps. 110), king (Isa. 52), bearer of good news (Isa. 52), and anointed one (Dan. 9)." (Stuckenbruck 2018, p. 134)

[23] Astour 1992, p. 687. "It occurs to the writer that some confusion might arise in his readers' minds over the co-existence of two orders of priesthood. He proceeds, therefore, to show that the priesthood of Jesus was not established *on earth*. The main point he is making is the impossibility of Jesus fulfilling the conditions either in genealogy, or in the precise nature of the gifts, which are stipulated in the Mosaic Law. This leads into his thesis that the superior priesthood is that which operates in heaven, not on earth... it should be noted that although his high-priestly work is in heaven, his offering up of himself took place on earth. The earthly ministry must be regarded as the preparation for the heavenly work ..." (Guthrie 2008, p. 172) [emphasis mine]

[24] Herbert W Armstrong wrote of this: "David succeeded Saul. David sat on the *Eternal's throne.* David's son Solomon succeeded him, also sitting on the Eternal's throne. "Then Solomon sat on *the throne of the Eternal* as king instead of David his father" (I Chron. 29:23; see also II Chron. 9:8)." 1980, p. 49)

> "And of all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen **Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD** over Israel." (IChron 28:5)
>
> "Blessed be **the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, *to be* king for the LORD thy God**: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice." (IIChron 9:8)
>
> "**I have said, Ye [a senior council of angels or perhaps priests] *are* gods**; and all of you *are* children of the most High." (Ps 82:6)
>
> "In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and **the house of David *shall be* as God, as the angel of the LORD** before them." (Zech 12:8)

Scholars recognise that

> "At its most basic level, Jesus is God's envoy. In the ancient world, a duly authorized representative (an agent) had the power to speak and act in the name of the sender. Thus the rabbinic saying **"A man's agent is like himself"** (*m. Berakoth* 5:5) means that Jesus (as God's agent) is authorised both to work for and to speak for the Sender"[25] [emphasis mine]
>
> "… since in Hebrew thought the occupant of the throne of David was regarded as God's representative, it is in this sense that the king could be addressed as God."[26]

Notice other Scriptures assigning the term *son of God* to some of the holy men of old, including the king as priest:

> "When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.
> I will be to him [Solomon] a father, and **he shall be to me a son**. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.
> And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.'" (IISam 7:12-16)
>
> ""As for me, I have set my King [David] on Zion, my holy hill."
> I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "**You are my Son;** today I have begotten you." (Ps 2:6-7)
>
> "He shall cry to me, '**You are my Father, my God**, and the Rock of my salvation.'
> And **I will make him the firstborn**, the highest of the kings of the earth.
> My steadfast love I will keep for him forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him.
> I will establish his offspring forever and his throne as the days of the heavens.
> If his children forsake my law and do not walk according to my rules,
> if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments,

[25] Burge 2000, p. 193
[26] Guthrie 2009, vol 15, p. 81. Professor James McGrath exhibits similar sentiments in his article *How Jesus Became God: One Scholar's View*, p. 4

> then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes,
> but I will not remove from him my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness.
> I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips.
> Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David.
> His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me.
> Like the moon it shall be established forever, a faithful witness in the skies." (Ps 89:26-37. Refer also to Ps 18:35; 45:7)

Mowinckel comments:

> "The king performs the will of Yahweh, and through him Yahweh's blessing to land and people is transmitted; he represents Yahweh before the people. In all this he is primarily seen as 'son' …
> "Several traditions make it plain that **the king (or his sons) acted as priests** and were theoretically the legitimate priests and responsible for carrying out the cultus" (1 Sam 13.9 f.; 2 Sam 6.17 f.; 7.18; 1 Kings 8.54 f.)."[27] [emphasis mine]

This seems similar to the practice in the ancient Middle East where

> "many monarchs of the ancient Near East did participate in the cult to a degree that certainly exceeded the term ... **David clearly is connected to the priesthood, although it is the priesthood of Melchizedek**"[28] rather than the Levitical. [emphasis mine][29]

Another work states:

> "The main implication of the declaration that the **king was son of God is the implication that he is empowered to act as God's surrogate on earth**. This entails the promise of divine support, especially in warfare. As God's surrogate, he is sovereign of the whole world by right. He can shatter the nations with and iron rod and execute judgment upon them."[30]

Others agree:

> **"**Divine sonship (2:7) is a characteristic ... often associated with Jesus, and through him we can claim it for ourselves (John 1:12-13). **Yet almost a thousand years before Christ (e.g., 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7)**, the Davidic kings of Israel were already claiming to be sons of Yahweh **..."**
>
> "The background of this relationship is clearly the Davidic covenant described in 2 Samuel 7:4-16. **There, as here, Yahweh describes his relationship to the Davidic kings in terms of sonship** (2 Sam 7:14). Such sonship with God would have imparted to the kings special powers and privilege as well as the responsibility to mediate

[27] Mowinckel 1954, pp. 69, 71
[28] Hess & Carroll 2003, p. 67
[29] Ezek 37:24 and 34:23 where David is referred to in the dual role of King and Shepherd referring either to David in his role under the Messiah or as a type of the Messiah during the Millennium. "When centuries later, Jerusalem fell into David's hands and became his capital (2Sam. 5:6ff), he and his heirs became successors to Melchizedek's kingship, and probably also (in a titular capacity at least) to the priesthood of God Most High" (F F Bruce 1990, p. 124). "
[30] Collins & Collins 2008, p. 22

> justice and equity to all God's people and to lead them in the way of true faith" [31] [32]

It is rather plain that David (and probably some of his descendants), acted in the Melchizedekian priesthood. After all, Jacob prophesied:

> "Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you.
> Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?
> **The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet**, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples." (Gen 49:8-10)

This ties in well with what another author asserts:

> "The book of Chronicles is a history of the Davidic monarchy and its opening genealogies further this historiographic agenda. Chapter 1 of Chronicles includes the genealogies of the peoples of the world found in Genesis and **implies that David's kingdom was rooted at the beginning of mankind. Chapters 2-4 deal with Judah, giving this tribe much more space than any other tribe, and include the Davidic genealogy also found in Ruth.**
> The remaining genealogies (chs. 5-8) deal with the other tribes of Israel, including the Levites and the Priests. By using these tribal lists, **the Chronicler further ignores the historic Northern kingdom implying that the four-hundred-plus year Davidic monarchy was the sole and legitimate ruler over all Israel.**"[33] (Cf Ps 78:70-71; 114:2)

To this I add:

> "He rejected the tent of Joseph; he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,
> **but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which he loves**.
> He built his sanctuary like the high heavens, like the earth, which he has founded

[31] Wilson 2003, pp. 102, 111
NB: "The sacramental act of anointing is a ritual of inauguration, which designates an individual for a specific office consecrated by Yahweh... Prior to Samuel's anointing of Saul, the ritual was restricted in the Old Testament to the tabernacle and its priests. This marks Israel's new monarchy as a divine institution on a level of the priesthood. Here also, anointing stamps Saul with a special character and privilege because of a unique standing before God" (Bill T. Arnold, *1 & 2 Samuel*, *NIV Application Commentary*, p. 164). [emphasis mine] And "In the ancient Near East the relationship between a great king and one of his subject kings, who ruled by his authority and owed him allegiance, was expressed not only by the words "lord" and "servant" but also by "father" and "son." The Davidic king was the Lord's "servant" and his "son" (2Sa 7:5,14)" (Kenneth Barker, General Editor, *NIV Study Bible*, Note on Psalm 2:7). Even the British Kings and Queens hold both civil and religious functions to this day.
It should be noted that Saul was descended from Benjamin and not Judah which the Melchizedekian role was applied to (Gen 49:10).

[32] In relation to the David-Yahweh linkage, Peter Lee notes: "It is possible that in the mind of the ancient poet the future Davidic monarch **would not only be *representative* of Yahweh, but he would also be *representational* of Yahweh**. David Mitchell makes a similar comment when he states that "there seems to be a conflation of Yahweh and the king…..to stress their oneness of will and purpose." Consequently, Psalm 110 is an exaltation of a future "lord" of David whose idealism is expressed by utilizing divine attributes. This explains why the descriptions of the two are similar, nearly identical … Whereas the two figures are portrayed in a near-literary union in Psalm 110, the two are separated and each given a separate, poetic homily in the subsequent psalms. However, the close association between them continues and this is manifest in the organizational structures that the two psalms have in common. In other words, the bipartite structure of Psalm 110 is mirrored in the bipartite organization of Psalms 111-112". (Lee 2017, pp. 32, 39)

[33] Demsky 2016, p. 2

forever.
He chose David his servant and took him from the sheepfolds" (Ps 78:67-70)

"Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim is my helmet; **Judah is my scepter** [lawgiver]." (Ps 60:7. Cf Ps 108:8)

"**Judah became his sanctuary**, Israel his dominion." (Ps 114:2)

Edwards is also of the opinion that the Melchizedekian order is traced through the line of David in accordance with IISam 7:14 and as such, this makes it genetic as well as covenantal.[34]

This means that the kings of Judah were likely regarded as King-Priests after the order of or following in the footsteps of Melchizedek, subject to Him. Israel was of course promised a line of kings whom God would rule through (Gen 17:16; 35:11; 49:8-10), even though the way they went about it was not the right way (ISam 8).[35]

David and Solomon as King-Priests

It may come as a surprise to some, but King David himself probably functioned as a sort of king-priest in the order of Melchizedek. It is not clear when this function commenced for the kings, but it likely started with David[36] thereby commencing a dynasty of king-priests based in Jerusalem with Solomon building the temple and their descendants performing a role oversighting the temple (typological of Christ building the spiritual temple and oversighting the Millennial temple).[37]

[34] Edwards 1993, p. 304. One wonders if even Job and Joseph functioned as sort of priests: Some researchers believe that the coat of many colours may be a quilted or patchwork garment Bledstein 2000, p. 68). "As one who regularly made sacrifices, Job wore a priestly garment … in Job 1.20. Later he referred to his garment as a *k'tonet* (30.18). The woman in the Song of Songs (5.3) has removed her *k'tonet* in preparation for retiring for the night. She is the only woman aside from Tamar, daughter of King David, who wears a *k'tonet*, so the connotation may be intended to imply royal status." (ibid, p. 71) Perhaps Joseph wore "a version of the flounced garment which indicated high priesthood" (ibid, p. 78). Diagram on between pages 75 and 76 shows the sorts of priestly flounced, quilted garments found throughout the Middle East in ancient times.

[35] Perhaps a bit like the way Jacob obtained the birthright (Gen 25:27-34; 27:1-46)

[36] Although is also not clear if this function covered both the kings of Judah and Israel or only Judah, it would appear that the Melchizedekian priesthood functions (in some sort of capacity) continued through the Kings of Judah, rather than Israel

[37] Even at His initial coming, there are allusions of Christ spiritually fulfilling a role of high priest in John 17 (see Brown 2010, pp. 109-110).
Michael Barber, "The New Temple, the New Priesthood, and the New Cult in Luke-Acts," *Letter & Spirit*, Vol. 8 (2013), notes:
"In some texts the Davidic messiah is explicitly described as having a cultic role. Jeremiah 30:21 explains, "Their prince shall be one of themselves, their ruler shall come forth from their midst; I will make him draw near and he shall approach me, for who would dare of himself to approach me? says the Lord." **The word translated, "I will make him draw near" (qārab), is frequently used in cultic settings (see Exod. 29:4, 8; 40:12, 14; Lev. 3:6; 7:35; 8:6, 13, 24; Num. 8:9, 10; 16:5, 9, 10), as is the word for "he shall approach"** (nāgaš—see Exod. 28:43; 30:20; Lev. 21:23; Ezek. 44:13). Used together, these terms unavoidably convey the notion that the future Davidic king will have cultic responsibilities.
The Davidic figure of the eschatological era in Ezekiel is also associated with cultic responsibilities. He is given the unique privilege of entering the eastern gate and is able to "eat bread before the Lord" (Ezek. 44:3). Here it seems that the Davidic king is associated with the Bread of the Presence, food reserved for the priests. In addition, he is said to provide the sacrificial offerings (Ezek. 45:17,22–25; 46:6–15)." (p. 107)
"**Recognizing a priestly role for the Davidic figure in the eschatological age would not be entirely unprecedented**. Psalm 110, a passage that was interpreted eschatologically in later Jewish sources, describes the Davidic king as "a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. 110:4). Even more striking, David's sons are said to be "priests" (kōhenim) in 2 Samuel 8:18.

By way of background,

> "It may be, however, that David composed the psalm for the coronation of his son Solomon, that he called him "my Lord" (v. 1) in view of his new status, which placed him above the aged David, and that in so doing he spoke a word that had far larger meaning than he knew. This would seem to be in more accord with what we know of David from Samuel, Kings and Chronicles."[38]

One of the most useful and famous books on the subject of Israel's history is *Kingdom of Priests. A History of Old Testament Israel* by Eugene Merrill. I present several quotes from him below which I trust will aid in understanding this concept:

> "The juxtaposition of anointing and kingship in many other Old Testament passages, not least of which is Psalm 2. Though the Psalm is anonymous, there is every good reason to view it as a Davidic composition designed to attest to David's messianic kingdom and his status as the son of God. Ps 110 likewise speaks of David's kingship[39] as transcending a mere political office. This time, however, it is not his sonship that is stressed, but rather his priesthood. Noteworthy here are the tie-in to Melchizedek, a contemporary of the patriarchs, and, once again, the complete bypassing of the whole Mosaic covenantal and cultic institution. **David functions as both king and priest not by virtue of his Israelite citizenship, but because he stands in the direct continuum of Abrahamic promise and fulfilment.**
> The link to the patriarchs is clearly seen in the initiation of the Davidic covenant (I Chron. 15-17). Having prepared facilities for the ark and having appointed cultic personnel to serve as its ministers, David, clothed in the priestly ephod, brought the ark to its new resting place (I Chron. 15:25-28)."[40] [emphasis mine]

Matt 21:9 describes Christ as the Son of David:

> "Jesus himself confirmed this when he pointed out to the Pharisees that by identifying the Messiah as the son of David, they were at the same time conceding Messiah's anteriority to and lordship over David, a matter patently clear from Psalm 110 (Matt 22:41-46). The same psalm describes the messianic king as a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. The author of Hebrews makes much of this point, and though he nowhere mentions David in this connection, he speaks of Jesus Christ as such a priest precisely as the psalm does of David. **David and Jesus Christ, as Melchizedekian priests, functioned outside the Mosaic priestly order … The continuum Melchizedek – David – Christ is thus uninterrupted by Mosaism in the**

Numerous other texts could be mentioned. For example, David himself is described as having priestly prerogatives: he wears the ephod (the priestly garment—see 2 Sam. 6:14; 1 Chron. 15:27; compare Exod. 28:4), erects the tabernacle for the ark (2 Sam. 6:17; 1 Chron. 15:1; 16:1; compare Num. 1:51; 4:1–33), offers sacrifices (2 Sam. 6:17; 1 Chron. 16:2; compare Num. 3:6–8, 14–38; 4:47; 6:16–17; 8:14–26), and blesses the people (2 Sam. 6:18; compare Num. 6:22–27). Given this background, it is not at all surprising to find sources describing the eschatological Davidic figure as enjoying priestly prerogatives." (p. 108) [emphasis mine]

[38] Barker 1995, p. 906 (note on Ps 110). There is much debate surrounding this, but the Solomonic link seems to be the most credible. In fact, some have identified 8 aspects to a coronation in this Psalm (Bateman 1992, p. 450)

[39] As such this is regarded as a 'Royal Psalm': "Psalm 110, unlike Genesis 14, is not formulated as a narrating storyline; it is instead a 'royal psalm', the superscription of which (in both the Hebrew and Greek traditions) is linked to the figure of David." (Stuckenbruck 2018, p. 126)

[40] Merrill 1996, p. 186

priestly role just as that of Abraham – David – Christ is in the regal."[41] [42][emphasis mine]

"Being of the order of Melchizedek was also the basis of David's role as royal priest and of his selection of Jerusalem as the site of the ark and tabernacle. **He understood that just as Melchizedek had been king of Salem, so he, as successor to Melchizedek, must reign from Jerusalem. And just as Melchizedek was priest of God Most High, so he, as successor to Melchizedek in an order that was superior to that of Aaron, could exercise the holy privilege of priesthood before Yahweh**."[43] [emphasis mine][44,45]

"David led the procession clothed in the priestly linen ephod, and sacrificing and dancing before Yahweh … David and the Levites offered up burnt offerings … Neither the chronicler nor the author of Samuel mentions a priest in the whole course of sacrificing. **Clearly David saw himself as a priest and was accepted by the people and the Levites as such.** His sacerdotal role is seen also in his appointing of the religious personnel to attend to the tabernacle."[46] [emphasis mine]

"However, David was dressed as a priest (2 Sam 6:14), was in charge of the sacrifices (2 Sam 6:17-18), and gave a priestly blessing to the people (2 Sam 6:18). **This was also true of Solomon (1 Kings 8:14, 55, 62-64), as his authority extended over the high priest (1 Kings 2:27, 35) ..."**

"The irrevocable oath [of Psalm 110:4] is none other than the what the Lord has promised to David pertaining to his dynasty (2 Sam 7:13; Pss 89:3, 28-29, 34-35; 132:11). David had shown a deep concern for the Lord's dwelling place; and with the divine appointment of Jerusalem as the focal point of his earthly rule, the Lord made great promises to David (see 132:13-18). **Here the Davidic king serves as God's priest "in the order of Melchizedek"**... The Davidic king is after the order of Melchizedek only in so far as the sacerdotal kingship is concerned. He is charged with responsibility over the true worship of the Lord..."[47] [emphasis mine]

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[41] Merrill 1996, pp. 187, 205
Note: "... what God stood for in heaven, David was appointed to be as a symbol and pledge of God's kingdom on earth ...
Here, the palmist combined priesthood and royalty in the Messiah. For just as the whole nation had been constituted a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, so now **the Davidic monarchy was made a priest-king, after one named Melchizedek, whose history and life paralleled the older man of promise, Abraham**..." (Kaiser 1991, pp. 161-162) [emphasis mine]

[42] Peter Lee's article makes similar statements: "The oath differs in that it is **the priestly nature** of the royal seed of David that is promised. The sons of David could not be priests in the order of Aaron, so **their priesthood comes by way of a divine oath in a different order**. This suggests that there was a latent priestly element to the Davidic kings (cf. 2 Sam 8:18) that becomes more explicit as the history of redemption progresses." (Lee 2017, p. 24)

[43] Merrill 1996, p. 265

[44] Interestingly, "The Aaronic priests never sat down in the sanctuary; they remained standing throughout the whole performance of their sacred duties..." (Frederick F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews. New International Commentary on the New Testament*, p. 245). This demonstrates their respect for God Who rules from his seat of authority – His throne.

[45] Nathan Albright explains it well in his paper in the **Appendix. Succession in the Melchizedek Priesthood -- A Biblical Analysis in ContrasttTo Levitical and Roman Catholic Models** that there is no succession to Christ – Melchizedek. Of course, this does not mean that Christians will not function as junior priests in that Order, for indeed they will.

[46] Merrill 1996, p. 266

[47] VanGemeren 2008, pp. 699

Concerning Solomon, was he the son David referred to as typological of the Messiah in Ps 2?

Many scholars of Biblical typology are of the view that, amongst other things, the Solomonic era (in part) and Temple portrayed the Millennium in a number of ways.

For instance, when the Temple was dedicated it was during the Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles) – which pictures the Millennium. Notice:

> "**Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name's sake**
>
> **(for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty hand, and of your outstretched arm)**, when he comes and prays toward this house,
>
> hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name.
>
> "If your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way you shall send them, and they pray to the LORD toward the city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name,
>
> then hear in heaven their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause." (IKings 8:41-45)

This seems prophetic of the Millennium:

> "For I know their works and their thoughts, and **the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory**,
>
> and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow [Heb for *draw* is maw-shak' which may refer to the ancient Moschi or Meschech], to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations." (Is 66:18-19)

Other typologies include:

- He built the Temple which was full of splendour, typing the Millennium (IKings 6:1-14. Cp Zech

6:12-13)[48] [49]

- He may have typed Christ as the Melchizedek King-Priest (Ps 110. Cp Ps 2; Rev 17:14; 19:16)
- Fair judgment and rulings were the order of the day (IKings 2:25-46. Cp Matt 25:31-32)
- Ruled with great wisdom (IKings 3:5-13. Cp Is 11:1-5)
- A time of peace – as the Millennium will eventually be a time of peace (IChron 22:6-9; Cp Is 2:2-4; 9:6-8; 11:6-9)
- Glory of the Lord visible (IKings 8:6-11. Cp Is 24:23; 40:5; 60:1-3 Is 4:2-6; Ezek 43:1-5; Hag 2:3-9)
- Israel will reign supreme (IKings 10:23-27. Cp; Mic 4:2; Zech 8:20-23)

A number of authors have promoted the belief that King David was a sort of king-priest because Israel, they believe, was a royal priesthood (Ex 19:6).

> "Here, the palmist combined priesthood and royalty in the Messiah. **For just as the whole nation had been constituted a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, so now the Davidic monarchy was made a priest-king, after one named Melchizedek**, whose history and life paralleled the older man of promise, Abraham ..."
>
> "**In a totally unique way ... each Davidite stood in this relation of son to his God**. Yet it is not said that any single Davidite would ever realize purely or perfectly this lofty concept of divine sonship. But should any person qualify for this relationship,

[48] "It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech 6:13).
Of this Lambert Dolphin wrote: "The prescribed worship services of Ezekiel's temple are also described for us in great detail by the prophet. The priests presiding over the temple services will be of the line of Zadok (44:15) who proved faithful after the failure of the Levitical priests in the line of Eli (1 Samuel 2:35, 1 Kings 2:26-27, 35). **The Millennial Temple will not have a separate High Priest. Instead the previously separate offices of King and Priest will be combined in the Messiah** as noted, (See Zechariah 6:9-15)" (Lambert Dolphin 2004, p. 5). Zadok means *righteousness*.
Adam Clarkes *Commentary* agrees: "And he shall be a priest upon his throne - He shall, as the great high priest, offer the only available offering and atonement; and so **he shall be both king and priest, a royal king and a royal priest**; for even the priest is here stated to sit upon his throne."
As does Albert Barnes' *Notes on the Bible*: "**And He shall be a priest upon His Throne - He shall be at once king and priest, as it is said, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec**." When the Christ should reign, He should not cease to be our Priest. He, having all power given to Him in heaven and earth, reigneth over His Church and His elect by His grace, and over the world by His power, yet ever liveth to make intercession for us … And the counsel of peace shall be between them both - "The counsel of peace" is not merely peace, as Jerome seems to interpret: "**He is both king and priest, and shall sit both on the royal and sacerdotal throne**, and there shall be peaceful counsel between both, so that neither should the royal eminence depress the dignity of the priesthood, nor the dignity of the priesthood, the royal eminency, but both should be consistent in the glory of the One Lord Jesus." For had this been all, the simple idiom, "there shall be peace between them," would have been used here, as elsewhere (Jdg 4:17; 1Sa 7:14; 1Ki 5:16 (12 English)). But "counsel of peace," must, according to the like idioms, signify "a counsel devising or procuring peace" for some other than those who counsel thereon. We have the idiom itself, "counsellors of peace" Pro 12:20." [emphasis mine]

[49] "Solomon's accomplishment of this task [building the Temple] will win lasting permanent blessing from the Lord, **the foundation of a permanent dynasty,** which will be an inaugural manifestation of the kingdom of God ... Dynasty building and temple building are intertwined. The chronicler and his first readers knew what it was not yet time to say, that Solomon was in view as temple builder. A temple was indeed to be built, but not yet, and by Solomon, not by David. **His building of the Temple was to constitute a guarantee of the Davidic dynasty and its perpetuity** … Solomon's dual role is summed up in v.14, God would "set him over" the Temple and the theocracy, giving him a once-for-all supervisory role in these two areas." (Allen 1999, pp. 403, 407) [emphasis mine]

> he would also need to be a son of David" [50]

After all, David

- Had authority over the priesthood (2 Sam 6)
- Re-ordered the priesthood (IChron 23-25)
- Blessed the Israelites (2 Sam 6:18)
- Wore an ephod (2 Sam 6:14; 1; Ch 15:27)
- Ate the shewbread (1 Sam 21:6)
- Offered sacrifices (2 Sam 6:13, 17-18; 24:18-25; 1 Ch 21:18-28)
- His sons were regarded as priests (2 Sam 8:18)[51]

Concerning the latter point, the translation *priests* is disputed by some. They are of the view that the word should instead be translated as *chief ministers*, *chief officials*, *chief rulers* and such like.

McCarter, however concludes that

> "Almost all critics, therefore, have agreed that the readings of I Chron 18:17 and the versions in II Sam 8:18 are interpretive paraphrases of the reading of MT by scribes who considered it impossible that there should be non-Levitical priests."[52]

And that is why they are wrong in their interpretation and the translation *priests* is the correct one.

Finally, what can we make of Hebrews 7:14 which states that

> "For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests."

Yet as we have seen, David and his descendants function as sort of Melchizedekian Priests. It may be that Paul means that Moses is saying that Judah did not produce priests that are like the Levites. Here is another thought:

> "… we must note that the instances where the king's personal action is beyond question are all very special or exceptional: the transference of the Ark, the dedication of the altar or sanctuary, the great annual festivals. Ordinarily, the

[50] Kaiser 1991, pp. 161-62, 152

[51] Other supporting Scriptures include Ps 51:12-16; 40:6; ISam 21:4-6
Note also the insights by Barker: "110:4 The second oracle (see note on v. 1). *has sworn.* In accordance also with his sworn covenant to maintain David's royal line forever (see 89:35-37). The force of this oath is elaborated by the author of Hebrews (Heb 6:16-18; 7:20-22). *priest . . . in the order of Melchizedek.* David and his royal sons, as chief representatives of the rule of God, performed many worship-focused activities, such as overseeing the ark of the covenant (see 2Sa 6:1-15, especially v. 14; 1Ki 8:1), building and overseeing the temple (see 1Ki 5-7; 2Ki 12:4-7; 22:3-7; 23:4-7; 2Ch 15:8; 24:4-12; 29:3-11; 34:8) and overseeing the work of the priests and Levites and the temple liturgy (see 1Ch 6:31; 15:11-16; 16:4-42; 23:3-31; 25:1; 2Ch 17:7-9; 19:8-11; 29:25,30; 31:2; 35:15-16; Ezr 3:10; 8:20; Ne 12:24,36,45**). In all these duties they exercised authority over even the high priest**. But they could not engage in those specifically priestly functions that had been assigned to the Aaronic priesthood (see 2Ch 26:16-18). In the present oracle the son of David is installed by God as king-priest in Zion after the manner of Melchizedek, the king-priest of God Most High at Jerusalem in the days of Abraham (see Ge 14:18). As such a king-priest, he was appointed to a higher order of priesthood than that of Aaron and his sons. (For the union of king and priest in one person see Zec 6:13.) What this means for Christ's priesthood is the main theme of Heb 7. *forever.* Permanently and irrevocably; perhaps alluded to in Jn 12:34" (Barker 1995, p. 907 (note on Ps 110)) [emphasis mine]

[52] McCarter 1984, p. 255

> conduct of worship was left to the priest (2 K 16:15). Anointing did not confer on the king a priestly character ... **he was not a priest in the strict sense**."[53]

Regardless of how we interpret the priestly function of David, it is clear he functioned in the tradition of Melchizedek and typified Christ's future reign on earth. Melchizedek was probably Christ, and it seems that both David and Solomon typified Him in His Millennial role. All of those three ruled on the earth. So will Christ Himself according to Rev 5:10.

Whether Melchizedek was Christ or not is immaterial in relation to this typology: he ruled on earth as a type of Christ ruling on earth.

Concluding Remarks. A Royal Priesthood (King-Priests)

The destiny of Christians is to become a Royal Priesthood or King-Priests within the order of Melchizedek Who is and was Jesus Christ Himself – the Messiah and thus our Mediator.[54] We will not fulfil the Levitical Priesthood which is based on genetics only. Nor is it some sort of vague royal priesthood – rather it is specific and meaningful.

> "In the NT Church the whole body of Christians were regarded as a 'royal priesthood' (1 Pet. 2:9) not in the sense of a ruling or tyrannical priesthood but as a body charged, like a king, to mediate blessings to the world and to offer spiritual sacrifices."[55]

We serve under Melchizedek, Who has functioned throughout the Bible as an Yhwh at times, the Angel of the Lord and of course Jesus Christ in the first century.

Rev 1:6 and 5:10 show that we will be a kingdom of priests (ruling on the earth) which contains the joint functions of office similar to David: political power (kings) and religious power (priests).[56] This dual role of the Melchizedek Priesthood is demonstrated in Psalm 110 where He functions as a Priest (verses 1-4) and as a King (verses 5-6).[57]

He performed the ultimate sacrifice – He offered up Himself to God as a sacrifice for all of humanity for all time (Rom 3:24-25). He intercedes for us and performs priestly duties, sitting at God's right hand (Ps 110:1; Mark 14:61-64; 12:35-37; Zech 6:12-13).

Similarly, Christians constitute a Royal Priesthood (IPet 2:9) with Christ as the High Priest of this continuing order (Heb 5:5-10; ITim 2:5-6). Christians function now as priests in-making, serving and sacrificing to God spiritually but will in a complete sense in the Kingdom. Note that we will be reigning with Christ (Matt 19:28; Rev 3:21).

Resurrected Christians will be replacing the demonic forces in the heavenlies – that is in the first

[53] Youngblood 1992, p. 873 (quoting de Vaux, AIs, p. 114)

[54] This is revealed in Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24; ITim 2:5. Refer also to Eph 1:9-10; Col 1:9-20; Jude 1:24-25. In the Old Testament Moses was mediator and by extension Aaron and the Priests (Deut 5:1-5, 22-23; Ps 106:23; Gal 3:13-22)

[55] *Oxford Dictionary of the Bible* online http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/opr/t94/e1526#

[56] "In fact the term [kingdom of priests] were so closely combined in their unity that Israel was to be at once priest-kings and also royal priests". (Kaiser 1991, p. 108)

[57] The verb *poimanei* ("will rule") in 19:15 is future active indicative and reveals that Jesus' rule over the nations is future at the time of His second coming from heaven. Jesus is not coming to consummate an already kingdom reign. His second coming brings His rule over the nations. This truth is consistent with Jesus' words in Matthew 19:28 and 25:31-32 where He stated that His Davidic throne reign awaits His second coming to earth." (Michael Vlach, *Revelation 19:15 and the Coming Reign of Jesus over the Nations*, https://sharperiron.org/ 30 Sept 2020)

heaven that surrounds the earth. See Eph 6:12; Dan 10:13, 20-21 and Heb 10:11 (cp Luke 2:37); Rev 7:9,15; Luke 14:5-6). The saints will rule on earth which is surrounded by the first heaven – the atmosphere where Satan and the demons dwell, but note Ephesians 2:6 as if we are already reigning with Him – a figure of speech known as a *prolepsis*.

It is logical to link the royal priesthood granted to Christians to that of Melchizedek – what other king-priest order could it possibly be?

Consider this: if Christ is a High Priest, are there probably lesser or junior priests under Him? And given it is an order or priesthood, this seems to indicate that it includes others in priestly function.

The only others who would thus be qualifying for this royal priesthood to become king-priests are Christians. So, they will occupy offices under Christ – Melchizedek – in this order and granted this status at His coming. As such they will occupy the dual role of kings and priests during the Millennium.

> "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and **serve him day and night in his temple**; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence." (Rev 7:15)[58]

> "Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ**, and they will reign with him for a thousand years." (Rev 20:6. Cp Is 61:6; IITim 2:12)[59]

The Expositor's Bible Commentary explains:

> "This transformation simultaneously involves the induction of blood-freed sinners into Christ's "kingdom" and priesthood. Of Israel it was said that they would be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod 19:6; cp. Isa 61:6). The OT references as well as John's probably refer to both a "kingdom" and "priests" rather than a

[58] "That this throng serves God day and night (7:15, cf. 4:8) reminds us that the saints are a kingdom of priests (1:6; 5:10), doing what priests and Levities did in the temple courts (1 Chron. 9:33; Ps. 134:1)" (Keener 2000, p. 245). [emphasis mine]

[59] "These verses should be interpreted in connection with the millennium of ch. 20, a limited time where the Messiah rules on earth together with the faithful: "They shall be priests with him and rule with him for 1000 years" (20:6).
"The concepts of **royal believers ruling the land** may be indebted to the painful loss of the land in the years 67–70, a recent memory for John the seer. Furthermore**, "priests ruling the land" would for a Jewish reader recall the rule of the Hasmonean priests**. 4QapocrJer C describes three bad priests that did not walk in God's ways (4Q387 3 4), probably Jason, Menelaus, and Alcimus, during the years 174–163 b.c. These three priests as well as the Hasmoneans could be anti-types for the end-time priests who shall rule in the name of the Lamb-like Messiah. The loss of the land in the great revolt as well as the OT background suggest that we should first read these passages as "ruling the land," and only secondarily as "ruling the earth."" (Torleif Elgvin, "Priests on Earth as in Heaven" Jewish Light on the Book of Revelation" in *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament*, p. 275) [emphasis mine]

> kingdom of priests"[60] [61]

In the Millennium there will be the

> "opening the door to the Melchizedekian High Priest of Ps 110:4 (cf. Ezek 21:26-27; Zech 6:13: "He will be a priest on His throne"), whose visible presence on earth during the coming Kingdom age will be the ultimate answer to this dilemma of the ages.".[62]

It is indeed a priestly kingdom that we will inherit which I term "kings and priests formulated into a kingdom." Why? Because we will provide the dual role of kingship (political office) and priests (religious office) under Christ – as we have seen that is the dual role of Melchizedek and as such, we will be Melchizedekian King-Priests.

After all He is described as "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (Rev 19:16. Cp 17:14; ITim 6:15; Dan 2:47) signifying that there are other kings (political power) and lords (probably inferring priestly power) reigning under Him. This makes Him an Emperor.

In September 2021 (several years after initially writing this article) I came across an "The Priesthood of Melchisedec: Its Millennial Character" by William Maude. The article was published in 1882 in *The Prophetic News and Israel's Watchman* periodical. Of special interest to me was that the author discussed the Melchizedekian aspect of Christ's rule during His future reign which dovetailed into my own research. Given the synergy of this, I thought it pertinent to quote relevant portions of his article which adds to the argument presented herein:

> "His functions in the Millennium.
> 1. … a priesthood exercised in conjunction with kingship … the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ is His Millennial priesthood …
> 2. … the Millennial character of the priesthood of Melchisedec is, it seems to me, indicated by the fact that it was after the slaughter of the Canaanitish kings that Abraham was met and blessed by Melchisedec. Now this slaughter of the four kings (*four* being the world number) is evidently typical of the last great conflict, in vicinity of Jerusalem … (Zech. xiv. 2-5)."
> 3. But most especially and unmistakable is the Millennial character of the Melchisedec priesthood proved by the fact that it is a *regal priesthood* …

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[60] Johnson 1992, p. 422
Note also *Revelation, A Commentary: Critical, Experimental and Practical on the Old and New Testaments* "The saints shall constitute peculiarly a *kingdom* of God, and shall themselves be *kings* (Re 5:10). **They shall share His King-Priest throne in the millennial kingdom**. The emphasis thus falls more on the *kingdom* than on *priests:* whereas in *English Version* reading it is equally distributed between both. This book lays prominent stress on the saints' *kingdom.* They are kings because they are priests: the priesthood is the continuous ground and legitimization of their kingship; they are kings in relation to man, priests in relation to God, serving Him day and night in His temple (Re 7:15; 5:10)" (p. 656). [emphasis mine]
"The heavenly Church is elected, not merely to salvation, but to rule in love, and minister blessings over the earth, as king-priests" (p. 722).
[61] "The kingdom of God is a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. It has a sacred ministry of priesthood, as well as sovereignty with reference to the nations of the world. As holy, the Israelites are the subjects of their holy King, and as priests they represent Him and mediate for Him with the nations ... the essential thing became the relation which they were to assume on the one side to God their king, and on the other to the nations ... a ministry of royalty and priesthood. **They are a kingdom of priests, a kingdom and a priesthood combined in the unity of the conception, royal priests or priestly kings**" (Charles A. Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy* 1889, p. 102, quoted in Kaiser 1991, p. 108). [emphasis mine]
[62] Whitcomb 1985, p. 216

> The joint exercise of the priestly and kingly functions will be "*peace*;" "the counsel (or mystery) of peace shall be between them both; that it, *between the two offices as exercised in conjunction*." (pp. 19-21)

Maude brings up other salient points but which are less powerful than those expressed above.

And His reign will not be one to be meddled with – any uprisings will be swiftly dealt with (Ps 2, Rev 19:11-16). As one author notes:

> "The Old Testament priesthood was militant rather than pacifistic … The priests were called to conduct holy war on sin. Messiah, the king-priest, and His priestly followers will shed the blood of the enemies of the Lord."[63]

As Herbert W Armstrong wrote

> "He is coming not only to reign and to rule, as King of kings. But as Lord of lords, He is coming as High Priest to SAVE!"[64]

We will be assisting Him in His High Priestly role, fully understanding the sinful plight of humans as we would have experienced what they go through as Christ Himself did and follow in His footsteps:

> "But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.
> For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering …
> Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,
> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
> For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.
> **Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God**, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." (Heb 2:9-10, 14-17)

What does this Priesthood do?:
1. sacrifice – Christ sacrificed Himself (Heb 8:3; 7:27; rev 5:6, 12)
2. sympathises for humans (Heb 4:15-16)
3. He makes intercession (Heb 7:25; Is 53:12)
4. He advocates (IJohn 2:12; Heb 4:16; 10:22)
5. we draw nigh to God through Him (Heb 7:25; John 14:6)

Credentials:
1. Ascend to God (Heb 4:14; 6:20; Heb 1:3 13)
2. Divine (Heb 4:14; 1:14)
3. was human (John 1:1, 14; Heb 2:9-10, 14-17; 4:15-16)

[63] Deffinbaugh 2004, pp. 6-7. See Persaud 2015

[64] Armstrong 1943, p. 9. Approximately 8 or so months after originally writing and circulating this article I was undertaking an internet search when I came across an article I had not been aware of: "The Order of Melchizedek" by Dexter Wakefield (details in the References and Suggested Reading section). I felt vindicated that another author came to the same conclusion as myself – Christians are in training for the Melchizedek Priesthood, not just a vague priesthood that we know little about.

4. learned obedience and perfection (Heb 5:7-9; 7:26)
5. sacrifices (Heb 8:3; 7:27)
6. possesses eternal life (Heb 7:25; 2:9)

More detailed information is contained in the ***Table. The Melchizedek and Levitical Priesthoods Compared.***

It follows that we, as priests in the Order of Melchizedek, likewise suffered in order to be able to be empathetic and fully understand the humans we will be representing. See Rev 1:5-6; 5:9-10. Notice the priestly garments of the saints: Rev 3:4, 18; 6:11; 7:9; 19:7.

Finally, concerning Christ Himself, He continues His Melchizedek role from His resurrection through the Millennium:

> "down to the foot--a mark of high rank. The garment and girdle seem to be emblems of His *priesthood.* Compare Ex 28:2, 4, 31; *Septuagint.* Aaron's robe and girdle were "for glory and beauty," and combined the insignia of royalty and priesthood, the characteristics of Christ's antitypical priesthood "after the order of Melchisedec." His being *in the midst of the candlesticks* (only seen in the *temple*), **shows that it is as a *king-priest* He is so attired. This priesthood He has exercised ever since His ascension**; and, therefore He here wears its emblems. As Aaron wore these insignia when He came forth from the sanctuary to bless the people (Le 16:4, 23, 24, the *chetoneth,* or holy linen coat), so when Christ shall come again, He shall appear in the similar attire of "beauty and glory" (Isa 4:2, *Margin*). The angels are attired somewhat like their Lord (Re 15:6). The ordinary girding for one actively engaged, was at *the loins;* but JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities,*3.7.2], expressly tells us that the Levitical priests were girt higher up, about the breasts or *paps,* appropriate to calm, majestic movement. The girdle bracing the frame together, symbolizes collected powers. *Righteousness* and *faithfulness* are Christ's girdle. The high priest's girdle was only interwoven with gold, but Christ's is all of gold; the antitype exceeds the type."[65] [emphasis mine]

May we all strive for membership of that soon-coming priestly order of Melchizedek!

[65] *Revelation, A Commentary: Critical, Experimental and Practical on the Old and New Testaments*, p. 659

Table. The Melchizedek and Levitical Priesthoods Compared

Assembled by Craig M White, version 3.3

Levitical Priesthood	Melchizedek Priesthood	Comment
What does the Priesthood do?		
Passover (Ex 12; Lev 23; Num 28; Deut 16)	Passover? (Gen 14:16; Matt 26; Luke 22)	
Blesses and praises God (IChron 16:4	Blesses and praises God (Gen 14:19-20; Luke 10:21-22)	
Tithing (Num 18:21, 24)	Tithing (Gen 14:20)	
Offered as an offering (Num 3:44-51; 8:11-15)	Sacrifice – Christ sacrificed Himself (Heb 8:3; 7:27; Rev 5:6, 12)	Even today, Christians practice sacrifices: These are "praise of God" (IPet 2:9; Heb 13:15), "witness" (IPet 2:9; Rom 15:16), "prayer" (Rev 5:8; 8:3), "giving" (Phil 2:17, 25), laying down one's life for the gospel" (Phil 2:17), and "the consecration of the life to God's will" (Rom 12:1).
Offered animals (Num 8:12 etc)	Offered His Divine self (Heb7:27; 9:11-14)	
Sacrificed for themselves and for others for temporal forgiveness (Heb 10:4)	Sacrificed Himself for all mankind for others for eternity – for others (Heb 7:26-27)	
Presumably sympathises for humans and shows mercy	Sympathises for humans and shows mercy (Heb 4:15-16; 2:17)	
Intercedes (Lev 6:7)	He makes intercession (Heb 7:25; Is 53:12)	
Advocates (Ex 30:10; Lev 16)	He advocates (IJohn 2:12; Heb 4:15-16; 10:22)	
Assists Israelites in drawing nigh to God	We draw nigh to God through Him (Heb 7:25-26; John 14:6)	
Washings/baptisms (Ex. 29:4; 30:17–21; Num 8:6-7,11,2)	Baptised (Matt 3:13-17)	After the initial baptism, Christians undergo daily washings. Christians must be cleansed and

Levitical Priesthood	Melchizedek Priesthood	Comment
		sanctified by sprinkling (Heb 10:22; ICor 11:28; IICor 7:1; Titus 2:14). Further, the Levites had to be bathed or washed clean in water in Ex 29:4 "one of the ceremonial washings referred to in Heb. 6.2, and rendered "baptisms"" (Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, page 113). Similarly, Christians have been baptised and must be 'baptised' by the washing of the spirit each and every day until they die (ICor 6:11; IICor 7:1; Eph 5:25-26). And by connecting Titus 3:5 with IICor 4: 16 and Eph 4:22-24 we can see that we must be washed clean each day by the water and the blood.
Entered a man-made tabernacle and priests entered the holy of holies (holy place)	Entered a spiritual tabernacle and holy place (Heb 9:11-12)	
Entered the tabernacle by means of animals' blood	Entered the spiritual tabernacle by means of His own blood (Heb 9:11-12)	
Credentials		
Succession of High Priests (Ex 29:29-30; Num 18:1-7, 21-22)	One High Priest (Heb 7:23-24)	
Remains on earth	Ascended to God (Heb 4:14; 6:20; 1:3 13)	Will rule on earth (Rev 5:10; 20:1-6; 19:11-16).
Representative of the Divine	Divine (Heb 4:14; 1:14)	
Human	Was temporarily human (John 1:1, 14; Heb 2:9-10, 14-17; 4:15-16)	
Learns obedience and strives for perfection	Learned obedience and perfection (Heb 5:7-9; 7:26)	
Performs animal sacrifices (IIChron 29:34; 35:11; Ezra 6:20)	Sacrifices Himself (Heb 8:3-4; 7:27)	
Daily sacrifices (Ex 29:38-46)	One sacrifice for eternity (7:27; 9:12)	

Levitical Priesthood	Melchizedek Priesthood	Comment
Temporary, mortal life	Possesses eternal life (Heb 7:25; 2:9)	
Temporal redemption	Eternal redemption (Heb 9:12)	
Inherent Qualities		
For Israel on behalf of YHVH (that name is associated with His covenant relationship with Israel)	For all mankind on behalf of the Most High God (Elyon) (that is God over the universe and all peoples)	
Not royal (the royal line came via Judah)	Royal Priesthood (ie King-Priest)	
Through the Levitical line	Precede Judah, but later through the Judaic line	
Peace was temporary	King of Salem - ie King of Peace	
Righteousness was temporary	King of righteousness for eternity	
Levi is forefather – hereditary is absolute	No genealogy revealed (Heb 7:3)	
Temporary priestly service (age 25-50)	Eternal priesthood (Heb 7:3, 23-24)	
Sinners	Pure, innocent, never sinned (Heb 7:26-28)	

Appendix
Biblical Illustrator: Genesis 14:18-20

Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine

The narrative of Melchizedek

I. CONSIDER THE HISTORICAL FACTS OF THIS NARRATIVE.

1. Melchizedek makes his appearance at the close of the first war recorded in the annals of the human race. Abraham was on his journey home from the rescue of Lot, and had reached a place called the King's Dale, when his meeting with the priest took place.

2. Who was Melchizedek? There is an old tradition of the Jews to the effect that he was Shem, the son of Noah, Shem being his personal name, Melchizedek his official designation. This, however, is improbable, since

(1) it is unlikely that Moses, who has hitherto spoken of Shem by his proper name, should here veil his identity under a different one;

(2) it seems unlikely that Abraham and Shem could have been co-residents in the same land without intercourse;

(3) it is unlikely that a man whose pedigree was distinctly known should have been selected as a typical instance of a man whose pedigree was altogether unknown. We are therefore limited to the conclusion that he was a Canaanitish prince, who retained the uncorrupted faith of his forefathers.

3. What was the secret of his peculiar greatness? His names suggest an explanation. He must have been eminently righteous to have earned such titles as "King of Righteousness" and "King of Peace." He stood alone in his office, as priest of the Most High God. He was known by undeniable tokens as the man whom God had consecrated to be His priest.

II. CONSIDER THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS NARRATIVE OF MELCHIZEDEK.

1. He was a symbol of the mystery connected with the Saviour's person.

2. He shadowed forth important truths in relation to Christ as our Priest. His priesthood was distinguished for its antiquity, its catholicity, its independence.

3. Melchizedek was the prefiguration of Christ as the King of His people.

4. The story seems to be a typical picture of Christ exercising His ministry of benediction. (*C. Stafford, D. D.*)

Abram and Melchizedek

The priesthood of Melchizedek was not based upon his birth, for he was not in any priestly line. It was not based upon the performance of any written laws of sacrifice; we know nothing of his burnt offerings. But higher than any priest by birth, he was a priest of the Most High God, because of his character, his righteousness. It was a spiritual, rather than a mere legal service which he rendered. His office work and his character were a unit in their inspiring motive and in their results. "True priesthood is life, and true life is priesthood." There is something almost weird in this meeting of Abram and Melchizedek. It was at the close of the first recorded war in history, in which the patriarch had become a hero. For the first time in human affairs this was the celebration of a victory. It had been the first conflict between the Church and the world. "Melchizedek is the setting sun of the primitive revelation which sheds its last rays on the patriarchs, from whom the true light of the world is to arise. The sun sets, that when the preparatory time of Israel have passed away, it may rise again in Jesus Christ the antitype." No sooner had he appeared and spoken, than he disappeared again into obscurity and silence. No priest had preceded him; and lie left no successor,—a lonely example of the eternal glory, greater than Abram whom he blessed. Such being the men and their meeting, we observe two of the practical lessons.

I. THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S NOBILITY. Melchizedek was the "king of righteousness" before he was king of Salem; and this king of righteousness blessed righteous Abram. The patriarch was called the Friend

of God, and history knows him as the "father of the faithful." But his trust in God was more than a profession; it was his life. His daily conduct was the tree bearing the fruit of a perfect faith; not that he was perfect, but he strove to become such. Every deed was an act of his living faith. It was no strange event when the king of Sodom prostrated himself at Abram's feet. And if all of God's children were like Abram, the world would pay still greater honour to the Church of the living God. The saints are the world's nobility.

II. THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S BLESSING. No benediction was too great for Abram, as the patriarch bowed before "the priest of the Most High God," and received through the sacred lips the blessings from "the possessor of heaven and earth." (*D. O. Mears.*)

The true priest for mankind

I. THE TRUE PRIEST IS DIVINELY APPOINTED.
- **1.** Called of God.
- **2.** Separated from the rest of mankind.

II. THE TRUE PRIEST IS ONE WITH THE RACE HE REPRESENTS.
- **1.** The dignity of human nature.
- **2.** The destiny of human nature.

III. THE TRUE PRIEST HAS THE POWER TO BLESS.
- **1.** To pronounce blessings on men.
- **2.** To bless God on their behalf.
- **3.** To declare God's benefits towards men.

IV. THE TRUE PRIEST IS A MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN.
- **1.** He receives gifts from God for men.
- **2.** He receives gifts from men for God. (*T. H. Leale.*)

Melchizedek a type of Christ

I. HE WAS A ROYAL PRIEST.
II. HIS GENEALOGY IS MYSTERIOUS.
III. HE WAS PERPETUALLY A PRIEST.
IV. HE WAS AN UNIVERSAL PRIEST.
V. HE WAS A PRIEST OF THE HIGHEST TYPE. As compared with the priesthood of Aaron, that of Melchizedek was superior—
- **1.** In time;
- **2.** In dignity;
- **3.** In duration.

VI. HIS PRIESTHOOD HAS THE HIGHEST CONFIRMATION. Divine oath. (*T. H. Leale.*)

Melchizedek

I. MELCHIZEDEK WAS A PRIEST.
II. THIS PRIESTHOOD CAME OF GOD AND WAS RATIFIED BY AN OATH.
III. THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS ALSO CATHOLIC.
IV. THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS SUPERIOR TO ALL HUMAN ORDERS OF PRIESTS.
V. THIS PRIESTHOOD PARTOOK OF THE MYSTERY OF ETERNITY.
VI. THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS ROYAL.
VII. THIS PRIESTHOOD RECEIVES TITHES OF ALL. (*F. B. Meyer, B. A.*)

Jesus meeting His warriors

Let us consider Abraham as the type and picture of all the faithful.

I. We mention, then, what you must all know right well by experience—you who are God's people—THAT THE BELIEVER IS OFTEN ENGAGED IN WARFARE.
- **1.** This warfare will be both within and without—within with the innumerable natural corruptions

which remain, with the temptations of Satan, with the suggestions of his own wicked heart; and without, he will frequently be engaged in warfare, wrestling "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, etc." The peculiar case of Abram leads me to remark that sometimes the believer will be engaged in warfare, not so much on his own account as on the account of erring brethren, who, having gone into ill company, are by and by carried away captive.

2. Observe that this war is one against powerful odds. The four kings mentioned in this chapter were all great sovereigns.

3. Carefully notice, that as it is a battle of fearful odds, it is one which is carried on in faith. Abram did not venture to this fight with confidence in his own strength, or reliance upon his own bow, but he went in the name of the Lord of Hosts. Faith was Abram's continual comfort. The Christian is to carry on his warfare in faith. You will be vanquished, indeed, if you attempt it by any other method.

4. In this great battle, carried on by faith, Abram had a right given him from God, and the promise of God's presence virtually in that right. What business had Chedorlaomer to come unto Canaan? Had not Jehovah said to Abram, "All this land will I give unto thee?" Therefore he and his confederate monarchs were neither more nor less than intruders. It is true they would have laughed at the very idea of Abram's claiming the whole land of Canaan, but that claim was nevertheless valid in the court of heaven, and the patriarch by right divine was heir of all the land. Christian, you are, by virtue of a covenant made with you to drive out every sin, as an intruder.

5. Yet more, the Christian is engaged in a conflict in which he walks by faith and leans upon God; but yet it is a conflict in which he uses all means, calls in all lawful assistance, and exerts himself with all vigour and speed.

6. Abram marching on thus with activity, and using discretion, by attacking his enemies at night rather than by day, did not cease until he had gained a complete victory over them.

II. While engaged in such earnest spiritual contention, the believer may expect to SEE HIS LORD. When Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, were fighting Christ's battles in the fiery furnace, then the Son of Man appeared unto them. He understands that warriors require strengthening meat, and that especially when they are under stern conflict they need extraordinary comforts that their souls may be stayed and refreshed.

1. Why does Jesus Christ, as set forth here under the type of Melchizedek, appear unto His children in times of conflict?

(1) He comes to them first, because they are weary. In every conflict which the child of God has to wage, it is not the private person who goeth to the warfare, it virtually is Christ fighting—Christ contending. It is a member of Christ's body labouring against Christ's enemy for the glory of the Head. Christ the Head has an intense feeling of sympathy with every member, no matter how humble.

(2) The King of Peace met the returning warrior for another reason. Abram was probably flushed with victory, and this is a very dangerous feeling to any child of God.

(3) Yet again, was not this visit bestowed because Abram was about to be tried in a yet more subtle manner than he had been before? It is easier to fight Chedorlaomer, than to resist the king of Sodom. Joshua down in the plain never grew weary when he was fighting the Amalekites, but Moses on the mountain felt his hands grow heavy. Why? Because the more spiritual the exercise, the more aptness is there in us to grow weary in it; and so the more spiritual the temptation the more likelihood of our becoming a prey to it, and the more strength do we need to overcome it.

2. In what character did He meet Abram? As one possessed of a royal priesthood.

3. What did He do for him? Brought him bread and wine. Christ's flesh and blood our spiritual sustenance.

4. What Melchizedek said to Abram.

(1) He blessed him.

(2) He blessed God.

III. When a wrestling believer is favoured with a sight of the great Melchizedek, voluntarily and yet necessarily he makes a NEW DEDICATION of himself to God. You see Abram does not appear to delay a moment, but he gives to Melchizedek a tithe of all, by which he seemed to say, "I own the authority of my superior liege lord, to all that I am, and all that I have." (*C. H. Spurgeon.*)

Melchizedek and his typical character

Persons who study the phenomena or aspects of the heavens inform us, that sometimes a great comet or a beautiful meteor has appeared most unexpectedly in the skies. Some of these heavenly visitants engage only the notice of astronomers: but a few are so exceedingly grand and lovely, that they attract every eye. Now these lights in the heavens suddenly arise, shine awhile in glory, and then disappear forever. But some are so remarkable, and so amazingly beautiful, that they live in the memory as "a joy forever." Now such appears to me to be the meteoric or comet-like vision of Melchizedek in the bright sky of the ancient Church, as he starts before our view in the sacred writings. Melchizedek glances suddenly on the sight here, as a brilliant meteor or a glorious comet. We gaze on the starry light shining so brightly in the firmament of the early Church; but, like its brother in the heavens, as we gaze in admiration it is gone!

I. THE HISTORY OF MELCHIZEDEK.

1. War was the occasion of introducing this royal priest, in its successful issues in the deliverance of Lot.

2. But who was Melchizedek? The question has been agitated often, and very strangely answered, though I believe its true solution can clearly be found in the holy writings. The best opinion is, that Melchizedek is a real historic personage; that his name was not found in the regular lists of the priesthood; that as king as well as priest, he shadowed the glorious offices of Christ; and the Lord set him forth in Scripture as the living type and image of our blessed Redeemer, as our great and only High Priest, our Divine King and Saviour. Melchizedek was a ray of heavenly light in the early morning of the Church, which led the intelligent eye to the sun dawn and glory of the Sun of Righteousness. He was as the finger post or pillar, with the broad arrow, on the king's high road; the royal statue in the court, which pointed to the heavenly King on His throne. As a prince on earth, he shone in the light also of a priest divine, directing faith in prophetic grandeur to the glory of the Great Prince of heaven, descending on earth to feed and bless His people, conquerors through His might, as our High Priest at the sacramental banquet of His love, signifying His dying work and mediation on the Cross, as our true sacrifice, and typical of His imperishable glory and majesty in the heavens, where Christ ever liveth to intercede for and satisfy, and bless us forever.

II. CONSIDER HOW MELCHIZEDEK WAS A LIVING TYPE OF OUR LORD IN HIS OFFICES.

1. He typified Christ in His illustrious person. His origin and end are veiled in mystery for our instruction in the Sacred Writings, that our curiosity may be checked where God's wisdom gives all the light we need. As he was "king of Salem," signifying peace, and "king of righteousness," as his compound Hebrew name, Melchizedek, means, he was a noble figure of Christ, the true "Prince of Peace," who brought peace by the blood of His cross between God and man, and brought in everlasting righteousness, as the joyful fruit of His passion, sufferings, and blessed mediation.

2. He typified Christ, especially in His sacerdotal character. Melchizedek was a priest as well as a king: a royal priest, and not of Abraham's or Aaron's line. In this he especially resembled the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is our one and only royal High Priest: His office is unchangeable; He never can die; He ever liveth to intercede for us in the heavens; and He hath His true type, therefore, not in Aaron, but in Melchizedek, as both King and Priest. Besides this, Melchizedek blessed Abram; and the latter gave him tithes of all, as a sign of his inferiority, and of the Jewish priesthood; as the apostle says, "Levi paid tithes to the king of Salem in the loins of Abraham." The sum or heads of this most able argument of St. Paul must be clear to any reflecting mind, that Christ was constituted by the Father a royal Priest, whose Divine office was singular; it had its typical origin not in Levi, but in Melchizedek; that Christ has no successor in His Divine work; and that He is our only Intercessor before God above.

III. TWO PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS MUST NOW CONCLUDE THIS SUBJECT.

1. Consider how important in its bearings is the great truth, that Christ Jesus the Lord is our Royal High Priest in God's presence for us. We had imperative need of such a Redeemer on earth, and such a Mediator in heaven. In His nature God and man are united. He only reconciles man to God; Christ only joins heaven and earth. He is the world's great peace offering; He is the King of righteousness and peace for His beloved people.

2. Consider whether your soul has ever been awakened to see the spiritual glory of Christ, and the inestimable value of His love. A moral film must be removed from the eye of the soul to see spiritual things, and the full glory of Christ. Live not in a dreamy state as professing Christians, but awake and arise to your true position as redeemed by Christ, to glorify Him both in body and soul. (*J. G. Augley, M. A.*)

Melchizedek

Melchizedek is mentioned by three inspired writers, Moses, David, and Paul. The places where he is spoken of are Gen_14:18-20; Psa_110:1-7, and Heb_5:1-14; Heb_6:1-20; Heb_7:1-28. The first notice is purely historic; the second purely prophetic; the third explains and shows the fulfilment of the former two in the person of Christ.

1. The first resemblance is found in the names or titles of the mysterious ancient. He is called Melchizedek, which means King of Righteousness. He is said to have been the king of Salem, that is King of Peace. It matters not where this Salem was. The import is the same. Now Jesus Christ is the Lord our righteousness; He is the righteousness of God for our complete justification; He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him; He is also our Peace; yea, He is the Prince of Peace; He came and preached peace to them that are afar off. He was the great Sin bearer. He is the great Peacemaker. The peace He gives passes all understanding.

2. Then Melchizedek was a man. It is not necessary to disprove or even to state the wild and foolish opinions which have been sent forth respecting this person. He was a man. He was taken from among men. So was Jesus Christ a man, truly and properly a man. He is often so called by inspired men, by Himself, by His Father. He must needs be a man, that He might fully sympathize with His people, and that He might have somewhat to offer.

3. But Melchizedek was not only a man; he was also a great man. He was the priest of the Most High God. Melchizedek was greater than Abraham. The proofs are two:

(1) Melchizedek received tithes from him;

(2) Melchizedek pronounced an authoritative blessing upon him; and yet with the exception of Melchizedek sacred history tells us of no one greater than Abraham. So the man Christ Jesus was great—truly great—greater than Abraham. Hear Him: "Before Abraham was I am." Interpret this as you may, it establishes Christ's superiority over Abraham. The fact was that the Son of God was the author of Abraham's existence (Joh_1:3; Col_1:16; Heb_1:2).

4. Moreover, Melchizedek was not of the tribe of Levi, nor of the order of Aaron. No Jew ever claimed that Melchizedek was a Levite, or learned or derived anything from Aaron. Nor was Jesus Christ of the order of Aaron, nor of the tribe of Levi.

5. Nor is this all. For Melchizedek was the first and the last of his order. Aaron had no predecessor, but he had many successors. ***[however, David and probably others followed as priests within that priesthood as we have seen - Craig]*** But Melchizedek had neither predecessor nor successor. His order was wholly independent of all others. It was just so with Christ Jesus. Christ has an unchangeable, an intransmissable priesthood. His priesthood is according to the power of an endless life. Thus we have an explanation of those phrases used of Melchizedek: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." The law of the Levitical priesthood was minute and exact as to both the parents. A defect here was fatal. But Melchizedek's parents are not named in the genealogical tables of the Levites. Neither did they contain the names of any of Christ's ancestors. The priests of the order of Aaron could not act before a certain age, nor were they to officiate after a certain age—all which must be ascertained

by the tables of lineage. But these tables tell us not (neither do any records) when Melchizedek began or closed his sacred functions. Neither do they mention the name, or birth, or time of Christ's entering on His Priesthood. Thus was Christ's Priesthood set forth to us as personal and perpetual—truly a glorious Priesthood. In it let us trust. In it let us exult forever. (*W. S. Plumer, D. D.*)

The patriarch and the priest king

I. THE PRIEST KING.

1. The person himself.

2. His position.

3. Melchizedek's prophetic blessing.

II. THE PATRIARCH.

1. Abram recognizes in Melchizedek a person worthy of special respect and honour.

2. Note the religious spirit in which Abram viewed his success.

CONCLUSION: From Abram's conduct we may learn—

1. Humility.

2. Thankfulness.

3. Stedfastness of religious purpose. (*W. S. Smith, B. D.*)

Melchizedek

The sacred historian having here met with what I may call a lily among thorns, stops, as it were, to describe it. Let us stop with him, and observe the description.

1. He was doubtless a very holy man; and if a Canaanite by descent, it furnishes a proof among many others, that the curse on Canaan did not shut the door of faith upon his individual descendants. There never was an age or country in which he that feared God, and worked righteousness, was not accepted.

2. He was a personage in whom was united the kingly and priestly offices, and as such was a type of the Messiah and greater than Abram himself. This singular dignity conferred upon a descendant of Canaan shows that God delights, on various occasions, to put more abundant honour upon the part that lacketh.

3. He was what he was, considered as a priest, not by inheritance, but by an immediate Divine constitution. (*A. Fuller.*)

Melchizedek

Behold Melchizedek! In wise purpose his descent is hid far beyond our sight. So, too, clouds and darkness mantle the first rise of Jesus. He is, by eternal generation, the co-eternal Son of the co-eternal Father. But who can grasp such mystery? He who begets precedes not the begotten. He who is begotten is not second to the parent cause. This truth is a boundless ocean. Let us meekly stand on the shore and marvel. We read, and are assured, that Jesus, by eternal birth, is God of God, and very God of very God. But while we cannot dive into the depths, we bathe our souls in the refreshment of the surface. For hence it follows, that He is sufficient to deal with God, and to satisfy God, and thus to save His people to the uttermost. We see not Melchizedek's cradle. But we distinctly see him man on earth. Eyewitnesses, who heard Jesus and handled Him, give testimony, that He, too, has tabernacled in our clay, and thus was qualified to shed His life blood as our ransom. In Melchizedek we find neither first nor latest hours. No search can tell when he began or ceased to be. Here is Jesus. His age is one everlasting day. From eternity past to eternity to come, His being rolls in one unbroken stream. Before time was, His name is, "I am that I am." When time shall have run its course, His name is still, "I am that I am." Melchizedek. How mighty is this name? He that utters it, says, King of Righteousness. Who can claim that title, in its full purport, but Jesus: what is His person, what His work, but the glory of righteousness? Since Adam fell, earth has seen no righteousness apart from Him. But His kingdom is first righteousness, then peace (Rom_14:17). There is a throne in it righteously erected to dispense

righteousness. All the statutes—decrees—ordinances—every precept—every reward—every penalty—is a sunbeam of righteousness. Each subject is bright in royal robes of purity—each wears a crown of righteousness (2Ti_4:8). Each delights in righteousness, as his newborn nature. Melchizedek was a local monarch. His city was graced with the name of Salem, which is Peace. The war, which stalked through the land, troubled not these tranquil citizens. Here again we have the sweet emblem of Jesus' blissful reign. His kingdom is one atmosphere of peace—one haven of unruffled calm. Heaven is at peace with the inhabitants. Sin had rebelled. It had aroused most holy wrath. It had armed each attribute of God with anger. It had unsheathed the sword of vengeance. It had pointed the arrows of destruction against our world of transgression. But Jesus cleanses His flock from every stain of evil. He is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Melchizedek is called to the most hallowed functions. He is the consecrated priest of the Most High God. As king, he sat above men. As priest, he stands before God. This holy office exhibits Jesus. He spurns no office which can serve the Church. The entrance of sin calls for expiation. No sinner can approach a sin-hating God without a sin-removing plea. This expiation can only be by the death of an appeasing victim The victim can only die by a sacrificing hand. Hence we need, a priest to celebrate the blood-stained rite. And all which is needed we have in Jesus. Cry out and shout, O happy believer, your "Christ is All." An altar is upraised. The altar is Christ. No other can suffice. He alone can bear the victim, which bears His people's sins. A lamb is led forth. The lamb is Christ. None other has blood of merit co-equal with man's guilt. Jesus, therefore, God in essence, Man in person, extends Himself upon the accursed tree. But who is the priest who dares approach a superhuman altar? Who has a hand to touch a victim God? The very sight would shiver man into annihilation. Therefore Jesus is the priest. The incense of His intercession ever rises, Father, bless them; and they are blessed. Father, smile on them; and it is light around. With extended hand He takes their very offering of prayer, and praise, and service. He perfumes all with the rich fragrance of His merits. He makes all worthy in His own worthiness, and thus our nothingness gains great reward. Melchizedek meets Abraham with bread and wine. The weary warrior is way-worn and faint. Refreshment is provided. Tile Lord is very tender of His people's need. Awful is the curse on the Ammonites and the Moabites, because they met not Israel with bread and water in the way, when they came forth out of Egypt (Deu_23:4). Here again, we see our great High Priest. With God-like bounty He presents every supply which wasted strength, and sinking spirit, and failing heart require. (*Dean Law.*)

Appendix

Succession in the Melchizedek Priesthood — A Biblical Analysis in Contrast to Levitical and Roman Catholic Models

White Paper: Succession in the Melchizedek Priesthood — A Biblical Analysis in Contrast to Levitical and Roman Catholic Models
Posted on May 17, 2025 by Nathan Albright

What are the thoughts of readers concerning issues of succession? It is a subject that for various reasons has come up frequently in discussion recently.

Executive Summary
Succession is a critical element in understanding religious authority and continuity within sacred traditions. The Bible presents several models of succession, each carrying distinct theological and institutional implications. The Levitical priesthood, grounded in tribal inheritance, emphasizes bloodline succession, while the Roman Catholic Church asserts an unbroken apostolic succession through ordination. In contrast, the biblical presentation of the Melchizedek priesthood, most clearly typified in Jesus Christ, offers a radically different view—one not based on genealogy, earthly institution, or continuous office, but on divine appointment, eternal life, and spiritual authority. This white paper explores the characteristics and implications of the Melchizedekian order, contrasting it with the Levitical and Roman Catholic paradigms to assess how authority, legitimacy, and continuity are framed within each system.

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1. Introduction: The Problem of Succession
In both religious and political contexts, succession seeks to preserve authority, doctrine, and legitimacy across generations. Questions arise: Who inherits spiritual authority? On what basis is one considered a valid spiritual leader? How is the continuity of divine mission ensured? The biblical canon addresses these concerns in multiple ways, culminating in the theological prominence of the Melchizedek order of priesthood, which offers a timeless and non-institutional approach to succession.

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2. The Levitical Priesthood: Genealogical and Temporal
The Levitical priesthood, instituted in the Mosaic covenant, is characterized by several key features of succession:

- **Tribal lineage**: Only male descendants of Aaron, from the tribe of Levi, could serve as priests (Exodus 28:1; Numbers 3:10).
- **Sacrificial and ceremonial authority**: Their role centered on offerings, temple service, and ritual purity (Leviticus 1–7).
- **Covenantal continuity**: Their authority was tied to the existence of the temple and covenantal law (Deuteronomy 18:1-5).
- **Death-defined tenure**: Priests served for life, with succession occurring upon death or disqualification (Numbers 20:28).

Succession under this model is visible, hereditary, and institutional. Its authority is mediated through external signs and ritual continuity. However, it is inherently limited by mortality and geographic centrality (i.e., Jerusalem's temple).

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3. The Roman Catholic View of Apostolic Succession
Roman Catholic ecclesiology sees succession not in terms of tribal inheritance but in the passing of *episcopal authority* through *ordination* in an unbroken chain dating back to the apostles. Key tenets include:

- **Petrine primacy**: The pope is seen as Peter's successor (Matthew 16:18-19).
- **Episcopal laying on of hands**: Authority is transmitted through ordination by bishops (Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 4:14).
- **Doctrinal preservation**: Succession is viewed as ensuring doctrinal unity and ecclesiastical legitimacy.
- **Institutional centrality**: Authority resides in the magisterium and is expressed hierarchically.

Unlike the Levitical model, apostolic succession is not hereditary but sacramental and institutional. It assumes a physical chain of ordinations maintaining visible church governance and unity across time.

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4. The Melchizedek Priesthood: Eternal, Singular, and Spiritual

In striking contrast, the Melchizedekian model of priesthood is defined in **Genesis 14**, **Psalm 110**, and **Hebrews 5–7**. This order is presented as transcending both genealogical and institutional succession:

- **Non-genealogical**: Melchizedek is "without father or mother, without genealogy" (Hebrews 7:3).
- **Royal-priestly union**: He is both "king of righteousness" and "king of peace" (Hebrews 7:2), combining civil and spiritual authority in one.
- **Eternal tenure**: He is described as having "neither beginning of days nor end of life," a perpetual priest (Hebrews 7:3).
- **Divine appointment**: Jesus is made priest "by the power of an indestructible life," not by the law of ancestry (Hebrews 7:16).
- **One priest forever**: Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews 7:24 emphasize that Christ "holds his priesthood permanently" because He lives forever.

This model represents a discontinuity with prior systems. There is no succession *after* Jesus in the order of Melchizedek. He is the *eternal* high priest—unchanging, ever-living, and ever-interceding (Hebrews 7:25). His priesthood is singular and indivisible.

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5. Theological and Institutional Implications of the Melchizedek Model

The implications of a Melchizedekian priesthood for succession are profound:

- **No replacement priesthood**: Unlike Levitical or Catholic models, the Melchizedek priesthood does not pass from one to another. There is one high priest—Jesus—who continues forever.
- **Decentralization of institutional authority**: Spiritual access and intercession are mediated directly through Christ, not through an ecclesiastical body (Hebrews 4:14–16).
- **Universal priesthood of believers**: Believers are invited into a priestly identity, not by succession but by participation in Christ (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6).
- **Authority by calling and fruit, not office**: Leadership in the New Testament is based on calling, gifting, and spiritual fruit (Ephesians 4:11-13), not ritual ordination or institutional succession.
- **Transcendent legitimacy**: The legitimacy of Jesus' priesthood derives not from human ordination but from divine oath (Psalm 110:4), a model that challenges the centrality of ecclesiastical institutions.

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6. Comparing the Three Models

Feature	Levitical Priesthood	Apostolic Succession (Catholic)	Melchizedek Priesthood
Basis of Authority	Bloodline (Levi/Aaron)	Institutional ordination	Divine oath and eternal life
Succession Mode	Hereditary	Laying on of hands	None (eternal office)

Feature	Levitical Priesthood	Apostolic Succession (Catholic)	Melchizedek Priesthood
Number of High Priests	Many (due to death)	Many (pope/bishops)	One (Jesus only)
Centrality	Temple-based	Church-based	Christ-centered
Mediatory Role	Yes, temporary	Yes, continuing	Yes, singular and eternal
Endurance	Temporal	Continuous through institution	Permanent through resurrection

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7. Challenges and Controversies

Several theological and ecclesiological debates emerge:

- **Protestant critique of apostolic succession**: Many reformers argued that spiritual authority lies in fidelity to Scripture and spiritual fruit, not lineage or ordination. They appealed implicitly or explicitly to the Melchizedek model.
- **Eastern Orthodox divergence**: While holding to apostolic succession, Eastern Orthodoxy emphasizes mystical participation in the divine more than juridical lineage.
- **Charismatic movements**: Many contemporary Christian movements claim Spirit-led authority akin to the Melchizedek model, rejecting institutionalism.
- **Hebrew Roots and Messianic Judaism**: Some groups emphasize the restoration of Melchizedekian order as superseding or fulfilling the Levitical system.

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8. Conclusion: Succession Without Replacement

The Melchizedek priesthood does not propose a new line of successors but introduces a *final and eternal priesthood* in the person of Jesus Christ. In contrast to the Levitical system's tribal inheritance and the Roman Catholic Church's sacramental chain of office, the Melchizedekian model re-centers spiritual authority on the person and ongoing ministry of Christ. His resurrection guarantees continuity, not through institutional handover, but through unceasing intercession and divine permanence.

This theological model challenges both hereditary and institutional claims to exclusive authority. It elevates Christ as the unique mediator and opens access to God through faith rather than lineage or office. While the church continues to function with roles and teachers, these do not constitute successors to the Melchizedek order but rather servants within Christ's singular priesthood. True succession, in this model, is found not in appointment or ordination, but in abiding in the living priesthood of Jesus Christ.

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Bible Study Notes

STUDY NOTES ON THE MELCHIZEDEKPRIESTHOOD

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