

## MELCHIZEDEK NOTES

A. As to Melchizedek, **WHO WAS HE?** A “type” of **Jesus** OR **Jesus** Himself?

1. *malāk* = “angel”                      *melek* = “king”
2. Melchi [*melek* = Hebrew: “king”] (**of**) Zedek [*zedek* = Hebrew: “righteousness”]

B. Key Passages

**Genesis 14:17a, 18-20:** After Abram had defeated Chedorlaomer and the kings with him and had come back,...then **Melchizedek, king of Salem** and **priest of God Most High**, brought out **bread and wine** and **blessed** Abram. He said, “May **God Most High, Maker** of heaven and earth, bless Abram,...” Abram gave him a **tenth** of everything.

**Psalm 110:1, 4:** The **LORD** says to **my Lord**, “Sit at **My** right until **I** make **Your** enemies **Your** footstool.”

The **LORD** has sworn and will not change **His** mind: “**You** are a **Priest** forever **like** Melchizedek.”

**CONTEXT:** The NT Book of *Hebrews* is almost all about “sin and sacrifice,” namely, our sin, the *ineffectiveness* of the OT priests and their sacrifices, and the subsequent High Priestly sacrificial death of Christ. (Contrast: “Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain could give the guilty conscience peace or wash away the stain” WITH “Himself the Victim and Himself the Priest.”)

(This “priestly” emphasis basically covers Hebrews 5—10, **CONTRASTING** the Aaronic priesthood with that of **CHRIST’S** Priesthood. These chapters key in on the “forever” part of Christ’s Priesthood and highlight the difference between the “temporary,” and now “unnecessary” Levitical priesthood. Christ’s death and forgiveness was a “once and for all,” “lasting” Priesthood, as compared to the “failed” priesthood and the “ineffective” sacrifices of the Aaronic priesthood.)

**Note:** It seems the author of *Hebrews* had an audience of Jews who wanted to go back to the ways of the OT and its Levitical priesthood. Being *lazy* Bible students (cp. 5:11—6:3), they had forgotten OT messianic content and its meaning. They were very much like moderns who want to “work” their way into heaven, being ready to abandon “effective” faith in the sole work of Christ, and at the same time, not taking *comfort* in the “finished” work of the Savior.

**Hebrews 1:3b:** After **He** had made a cleansing from sins, **He** sat down at the right hand of the **Majesty** in heaven.

**Hebrews 6:19, 20:** We have this hope like an anchor for our souls, ...which goes behind the curtain,... In **Christ** we can reach behind the curtain and by faith be close to **Him**, where **Jesus**, as a **Forerunner** on our behalf, has entered in, having become a **High Priest** forever “according to the nature of Melchizedek's priesthood.”

**Hebrews 7:1-3:** This Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, met Abraham coming back from defeating the kings. He blessed Abraham. And Abraham gave him a **tenth** of everything. **His name**, in the first place, **means** “king of righteousness,” but then **he is also called** “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” There is no record of his father, mother, or line of ancestors, of the beginning of his days or the end of his life. **(All these records served as credentials for the person who held the position of high priest (cf. Ezra 2:62f.; etc.)**

**Hebrews 7:11-27:** Levi's descendants were the priests; on this basis the Law was given to the people. Now, if the priests who descended from Levi could have given us perfection, why did **God** say another Priest still needed to come “according to the nature of Melchizedek's priesthood,” rather than according to Aaron's priesthood?

Now when the priesthood is changed, the Law also has to be changed. For the **One** of whom these things are said belongs to a different tribe which has never had a priest serving at the altar. For everyone knows our **Lord** descended from Judah, but Moses said nothing about priests in regard to this tribe. That point is much clearer still when we see a **different Priest** appear exactly **like** Melchizedek, not appointed because **He** fulfills a certain regulation that says **He** must be someone's descendant, but because **He** has the power of a life that cannot be destroyed. For this declaration is made about **Him**: “You are a **Priest** forever ‘according to the nature of Melchizedek's priesthood.’”

The foregoing rule is canceled since it is weak and cannot help us because the Law made nothing perfect; there is also the introduction of a **better** hope by which we continue to come close to **God**.

Since this priesthood was not established without an oath—For when those men [the Levites] were made priests, there was no oath, but when **Jesus** was appointed, **God** took an oath, as **He** said to **Him**: “The **Lord** has sworn and will not change **His** mind. ‘You are a **Priest** forever’”—therefore **Jesus** is established as the **Guarantee** of a **better** “last will and testament.”

Once many were made priests because death did not let them continue as priests. **But because Jesus lives forever, His is an unchanging priesthood.** And so **He** can forever save **those** who come to **God** by **Him**, because He always lives to pray for them.

Here is the **High Priest** we needed—holy, innocent, spotless, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. **He** does not need to bring sacrifices every day like those high priests, first for His own sins, then for the sins of the people. **For He did this once and for all when He sacrificed Himself.**

**Hebrews 8:1, 2:** Now, this is my main point. We have such a **High Priest**, and **He** sat down at the right hand of the throne of the **Majesty** in heaven to serve as **Priest** of the **SACRED PLACE** and of the true **TABERNACLE** set up by the **Lord**, not by men.

**Hebrews 9:11, 12:** But **Christ** came as a **High Priest** of the good things that have come; **He** went through that greater and more perfect **TABERNACLE** not made by human hands (that is, not a part of our created world). And **He** did not use the blood of goats and calves, but with **His** own blood He entered once and for all into the **MOST HOLY PLACE** and paid a price that frees us forever.

See Lauersdort's *Hebrews* (Peoples Bible Commentary)!

“Covenant” (Hebrew: *berith*) & “Last Will & Testament” (Greek: *diathēkē*) are used 17 times in *Hebrews*.

*LW*, 2, pp. 381-394 (exposition on Genesis 14:18-20, concerning Melchizedek).