

Hebrews 10 Chapter 7a

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The writer is going into great detail comparing Melchizedek, the mysterious High Priest who met Abraham on his return from rescuing Lot, with Jesus Christ who he is presenting to his Hebrew readers as our Great High Priest, the mediator of a New Covenant who is, in fact, God Himself, our Savior and Redeemer, Israel's long awaited Messiah.

Chapter 7:1 'For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also 'king of Salem,' meaning "king of peace," ³ without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.'

The writer of Hebrews is presenting Melchizedek, with whom they are familiar, as Jesus Christ. His name means king of righteousness and he is called the king of peace. Everything about him says, God Himself. No one else is without father or mother, without genealogy and having no beginning or ending of life. Finally he says, he was made like the Son of God and a priest forever.

We only see Melchizedek for one brief instance in the Bible in Genesis 14. Then we hear of him once more in Psalm 110 as a prophetic reference to the Messiah and finally we see Jesus Christ as our High Priest, compared to Melchizedek in Hebrews chapters 5,6 and 7. Here, we learn more about him than when he was first introduced back in Genesis.

To understand what the writer of Hebrews is saying in his comparison of Jesus Christ to Melchizedek, we must first understand who Melchizedek is, his relationship to Abraham, and Abraham's relationship to God.

In Genesis 14 we read of Abraham, as he is returning from killing a group of kings who had taken Lot, his nephew, captive; he rescued Lot with all his goods and people.

Earlier, Abraham's and Lot's families and flocks had become too large to continue living together so Abraham gave Lot the choice of where he would live. Lot selfishly chose the green and well watered valley around the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Sometime after that, Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, conquered the area and carried away Lot with all his goods. When Abraham heard of it, he took 318 servants and went after them, attacking and defeating Chedorlaomer and rescuing Lot.

We meet Melchizedek, for the first and only time, as Abraham is on his way back from the '*slaughter of the kings*': Gen 14:16... 'So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back (his nephew) Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people. ¹⁷ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.

¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said:

"Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

And he (Abraham) gave him (Melchizedek) a tithe (10%) of all.

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

²² But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, ²³ that I *will take* nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich,' except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

Abraham refuses to take any of the 'spoils of war,' previously belonging to the king of Sodom, but does insist that the men who went as his allies should receive their fair share for their work and the risk they took.

As Abraham is returning from defeating this group of kings, he is met by Melchizedek. Notice that he is called THE priest of God, Most High... not A priest of God, Most High. He is the only true priest of God... He is the only

one who is able to mediate between man and God... notice, Melchizedek doesn't need to sacrifice an animal or shed any blood to be able to minister between God and Abraham. He brings out bread and wine, obviously a picture of His future broken body and shed blood, remembered and observed by us, the Church, in our regular Communion service. Here, in this bread and wine, with the nation of Israel still within himself and us, the Church, still 'spiritually' within him, Abraham is able to commune directly with God, through the mediation of Melchizedek who is really the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice that Abraham doesn't have to fulfill any law to be able to come to God through Jesus Christ... just like us.

Man has always been allowed to come to God, but only through the Lord Jesus Christ. Here with Melchizedek, Abraham has direct access to God. Later, God restricts man's access by establishing the Law, the Priesthood and the sacrificial system. He did not give the Law as a means of access to God;

Some think God gave the Law as a way to approach God... if we try hard enough, if we keep enough of the Law... if we 'do our best,' then God will allow us to come to Him... that is completely false!

He gave the law to show man the perfect righteousness of God and the absolute unrighteousness of man.

He establishes the sacrificial system to show the wickedness of sin and that it must be atoned for... a price must be paid to legally do away with sin; blood must be shed; God cannot simply overlook and allow sin; otherwise, He is not really righteous and holy.

He establishes the Priesthood as the temporary agency of the mediation between God and man.

All of the Old Covenant System is to present a panoramic preview of the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ and His ministry, to prepare the way and expectation of, the true Lamb of God, the only acceptable sacrifice for sin, mediated by the only acceptable Priest of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus' later words harken back to this very time when He says, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.' Through Jesus Christ, as Melchizedek, Abraham has direct access to the Father. God speaks directly to Abraham both before this and after. He calls Abraham His friend. Why is Abraham God's friend? It's because Abraham believes and trusts in God, he believes and trusts in the Word of God... there is no other reason. Remember, this is 500 years before Moses, the Exodus, the Law or the Priesthood... this is before anything of Israel even exists except Abraham and Sarah. Abraham has not kept any law or done any work to be accepted as God's friend... all he has done is believe God and act accordingly... all he has done is place his faith and trust in the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God chose Abraham for Himself and Abraham responded. God chose us for Himself and we responded.

This is very early in Genesis. All we know of Abraham before this is that Terah, his father, took his family and left Ur, in modern Iraq, and traveled up to Haran, near the border between modern Turkey and Syria.

After Terah dies, God speaks to Abraham:

'Now the LORD had said to Abram:

“Get out of your country (Haran) from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you.

² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

What an incredible promise... that God would, out of the blue, come to Abraham like this... but then we see why God considered Abraham His friend. It says:

⁴ ***So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, (Just like that! He gathers up all his family and all his belongings and leaves 'home' where they had been living for 60 years.)*** and Lot went with him. And

Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵ Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. ⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ And he moved from there to the mountain east of

Bethel, and he pitched his tent *with* Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. ⁹ So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South. Later: '... ¹⁴ And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; ¹⁵ for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. ¹⁶ And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, *then* your descendants also could be numbered. ¹⁷ Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

¹⁸ Then Abram moved *his* tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which *are* in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.

Whenever God came to Abraham and spoke with him, whether visibly or invisibly... it was the Second Person of the Trinity, God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God. Whenever God speaks to man... it is the Word of God... it is the Lord Jesus Christ, whether before He was born into a human body, as He did throughout the Old Testament, or later, within a human body, as He did throughout the Gospels, or later still, in His Glorified Eternal Body, as He did with Paul and John. (We will also possess a body like His very soon.)

Abraham was acceptable to God because his faith and trust were in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was able to come to God through Jesus Christ. It says, 'Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him as righteousness.' He believed God... he trusted in the Word of God... he trusted in Jesus Christ, the Word of God.

The writer of Hebrews is showing how Jesus Christ corresponds to Melchizedek, that Jesus Christ is actually God Himself, that Melchizedek is the preincarnate Christ. (before He was born into a human body)

He is the High Priest of God; He has always been the High Priest of God; He has always been how God has chosen to interact with man and ***He has always been the same.***

Mal. 3:6 says, 'For I *am* the LORD, I do not change.'

Heb. 13:8 says, 'Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever.'

As Melchizedek, He was interceding for Abraham. He interceded for Adam, for Noah, for Moses and for every one of God's chosen people since Adam.

He is not just *like* Melchizedek, He *is* Melchizedek, the High Priest of God.

And He has done something marvelous for us since He created His body, us, the Church.

'But you (we) *are* a chosen generation, ***a royal priesthood***, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1Pet 2:9

John wrote, 'To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶ and ***has made us kings and priests*** to His God and Father, Rev 1:5

He has chosen us. He has called us out of darkness into His light. ***We are His own special people.*** He has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. He has made us to be a ***royal priesthood, kings and priests unto God.*** Can we even begin to imagine what that really means!

God established kings to be the representatives of God down to the people.

He established priests to be the representatives of the people up to God.

He has established us to fully represent God to people and people to God... both directions... like Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote, ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ¹⁸ Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and ***has given us the ministry of reconciliation***, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, ***and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*** ²⁰ Now ***then, we are ambassadors for Christ***, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, ***that we might become the Righteousness of God in Him.*** 2 Cor 5:17 We are the Righteousness of God!

All of God's Word, from Genesis to Revelation, is just one seamless intricately woven tapestry, the presentation of God to man, **in** the Lord Jesus Christ and the drawing of man to God **through** the Lord Jesus Christ...

And He has created us to accomplish the very same ministry.

Here, with Abraham to Melchizedek, is an example of voluntary tithing long before any Law was given to Moses and Israel. Abraham chose to give Melchizedek 10% of all he had recovered. Melchizedek didn't ask for it... Abraham just did it. I think Abraham recognized that this was actually God Who was blessing him, Who had given his enemies into his hands. Remember what Melchizedek said to Abraham... "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

Notice, he wasn't tithing out of his bank account, he was tithing from his sudden windfall of wealth. He probably took quite a lot of *'spoils of war'* from the kings he slaughtered... that was what he tithed from. What he **recovered** from Chedorlaomer, he returned to the rightful owners... what he **took** from Chedorlaomer, he kept and tithed to Melchizedek. What was taken from the king of Sodom, he gave back to the king of Sodom after deleting the wages of his allies and the tithe to Melchizedek.

Prov 13:22 says, '...the wealth of the wicked is stored up for the righteous.' You can't get much more wicked than the king of Sodom or much more righteous than Melchizedek, the King of Righteousness.'

Interesting note: When Lot originally split away from Abraham, he moved down to the plains 'around' Sodom. When Sodom is destroyed by God, Lot is living in a house 'in' Sodom. After Abraham conquered those who had previously conquered Sodom, freeing Sodom and recovering and restoring the wealth of the king of Sodom... just imagine what heroes Lot and his family must have been after that, after his uncle Abraham had done so much for Sodom! No wonder Lot's family didn't want to leave Sodom... they were honored citizens, celebrities.

Verse 4: ⁴Now consider how great this man *was*, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. ⁵And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; ⁶but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.'

The writer is saying to his Hebrew listeners, 'Melchizedek was so special that even Abraham tithed unto him. Therefore, even the later Levitical Priesthood, including all of the High Priests, also tithed unto Melchizedek since they were still inside Abraham, as it were.

Verse 7: 'Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.'

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is blessing Abraham after having gone before him into battle and delivering his enemies into his hands. The lesser is blessed by the better.

Paul wrote, 'But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: ¹¹For there is no respect of persons with God.' Rom 2:10

God is not a respecter of persons. He doesn't show partiality or favoritism. In other words... He loves you and me as much as He does Abraham or Moses or David. God loves us and His desire is to bless us... to honor and glorify us.

In many ways, God the Father is a mystery to us... except that He has revealed Himself to us in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. One thing we know about Jesus Christ is that, not only is He fully God but He is also fully human. Other than not having a nature to sin... being completely sinless... He is very much like us inside... His emotions, for example. He experiences love, joy, peace, anger, happiness... even sadness... Remember he wept at the death of His friend, Lazarus.

What would bring Him Joy... gladness... happiness?

Think about it... It will be His joy when we are filled with joy at His appearing and when He rewards us. It is His glory to glorify us who are so much less than He is. It is His honor to honor us who are so undeserving of His honor and glory. That He would condescend, that He would lower Himself to draw us to Himself is so incredible. It's as if He is saying to us... 'Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which I have called you

because it will be my great joy to reward you... and to honor and glorify you before all My angels. You are my trophy. I was willing to go to the Cross to redeem you... to draw you to Myself... to have you for Myself forever.

Verse 8: 'Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he *receives them*, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, ¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Notice he contrasts Melchizedek with 'mortal men.' He is saying that Melchizedek is an 'immortal man.'

He is also punctuating the fact that the Levitical Priesthood was incomplete and inferior to the Priesthood of Melchizedek, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Old Covenant was inferior to the New Covenant. The old sacrifice was inferior and ineffectual until the final and complete sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

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

There was no perfection through the Levites or through the Law... No one was ever perfected through the Old Covenant, through the Law or through the sacrifices... not until Jesus Christ, through His perfect sacrifice.

He perfected for all time, those who have come to Him.

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

The Levitical priesthood was inferior and insufficient. They were sinful men offering inferior sacrifices for the sins of themselves and other sinful men. The Law was insufficient. It never made anyone holy. It merely contrasted the absolute Holiness of God with the absolute sinfulness of men. The Law exemplified how unapproachable the Holy God really is from sinful man... the great unbridgeable gulf between God and man. We could never approach God or be acceptable to Him through the mediation of sinful priests... not until we had a High Priest Who was Himself sinless and Holy... only then... through Him... could we approach God as acceptable to Him.

And the Law had to be changed also. The Lord Jesus **completely** obeyed and fulfilled all the Law **for us**... in our place... once for all. Now we are no longer under the law at all. **Now we are no longer under the law at all.** Many people don't like to hear that... we must be still under the law to some degree... there must be some portion of the Law that we must keep... there must be some degree of the Law that we **can** keep... there must be some degree of righteousness to which we can attain... some degree of obedience and holiness in which we can glory... isn't there... please... I want to do my part... I want to feel useful, like I'm a good person.

We are under no law at all... except the perfect Law of Liberty, the glorious liberty of the children of God. This is clearly born out in Romans chapter 8. 3 verses from that chapter reveal: Rom 8:1. 'There is therefore now **no condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

That there is now no condemnation to us must mean one of two things... either there is now no law to which we are accountable to keep or... we are now able to completely keep all the law... which is it?

Rom 8:21. 'Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the **glorious liberty of the children of God.**'

Rom 8:33. 'Who shall lay **anything** to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.'

We desperately want to be under some law... something that will let us be good in our own eyes... not too much law however... but just enough so that we can be at least better than those other people... those people going to Hell. And it's important that the 'just enough' law be rules that we ourselves can, in fact, keep... like 'some' of the 10 commandments... or other rules like... no smoking or drinking or bad movies or... whatever...

The reality is that we, the children of God, are **under no law whatsoever** except to **believe on Him Whom the Father has sent.** (And that was the only law which Abraham kept which resulted in his being acceptable before God... to be God's friend... He believed on Him whom the Father had sent... the Word of God... the Lord Jesus Christ.) Then... if we really are born again... the desire to obey God in every area will have been birthed in us... and all the fruit of the Spirit will come out of us... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control and the **desire** and will to obey God in all things... even if we don't perfectly do it all the time.

That is the perfect Law which replaced the insufficient Law of the Old Covenant... and that perfect Law had to be mediated by a perfect sinless High Priest Who first kept and fulfilled the Old Law for us.

Don't misunderstand... the Law itself is not imperfect... it is perfect... it is only every human except Jesus Christ who is sinful and imperfect and therefore incapable of being made perfect by the Law... that is what the Law could not do.

Psalm 19:7 says, 'The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple; ⁸The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.'

The perfect Law could only be kept by a perfect man Who alone could then become the perfect sacrifice for sin to bring imperfect men into fellowship with the Perfect God.

Verse 13: For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. ¹⁵ And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedec there ariseth another priest, ¹⁶ Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. ¹⁷ For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec.

This new and perfect Priest could not come from the same imperfect priestly tribe of Levi. He arose, rather, from the tribe of Judah out of eternal prophecy. When Jacob was about to die, he prophesied over each of his sons. What he prophesied over Judah is quite interesting: and he is speaking prophetically of Jesus Christ also: He said, "Judah, you *are he* whom your brothers shall praise; (Every knee will bow and every tongue confess) Your hand *shall be* on the neck of your enemies;
Your father's children shall bow down before you.

⁹ Judah *is* a lion's whelp;

From the prey, my son, you have gone up.

He bows down, he lies down as a lion;

And as a lion, who shall rouse him?

¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, (the royal scepter of David's line and the King of kings)

Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,

Until Shiloh comes; (Shiloh refers to the return of Jesus Christ to rule during the Millennial Kingdom.)

And to Him *shall be* the obedience of the people.

¹¹ Binding his donkey to the vine,

And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, (Jesus riding on a donkey's colt, He is the Vine)

He washed his garments in wine,

And his clothes in the blood of grapes. (His crucifixion)

¹² His eyes *are* darker than wine,

And his teeth whiter than milk.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Before He was born into a human body as the Son of David, He was Melchizedek and now He is our perfect eternal High Priest, forever, after the order of Melchizedek.

(AS AN ASIDE: There is no mention of giants when Abraham first goes to Canaan. Back in Gen 6, before the Flood, fallen angels came down to human women and took wives for themselves, the result being giants and 'mighty men of old, men of renown,' and it says, 'it happened later also.' This great evil is one of the reasons why God destroyed everything except Noah and his family in the Flood. See this: God calls Abraham and promises to make him a great nation and bless all the families of the Earth through his descendant, the promised Messiah. God takes Abraham to Canaan, later Israel, and promises it to him. Then, 500 years later, after the Exodus, we see the same land filled with giants. Satan heard God promise this land to Abraham and for the next 500 years, more fallen angels mated again with human women and the result was more giants, in an attempt to prevent the Israelites from taking possession of the land which God had promised to Abraham and his descendants... Just one more of those things we can deduce from all the clues.)