

I. Introduction and review.

- A. The great theme of the book of Hebrews is the high priesthood of Christ. 8:1**
- 1. You must study Hebrews, if you are to understand Jesus' High Priesthood.**
 - 2. In order to understand Hebrews, you must know about Melchizedek.**
 - 3. The Old testament foretold of a perfect, eternal king-priest who would offer a once for all sacrifice. Ps. 110:4 Zech. 6:11-13**
- B. In order to understand Melchizedek, you need to know his place in history. v. 1**
- 1. God chose Abraham, giving him great promises and sending him to Canaan. Ge. 12**
 - 2. Lot and Abraham part ways, with Lot taking the best land for himself. Gen. 13**
 - 3. Lot is captured when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah are defeated by four kings from the East. Ge. 14:1-12**
 - 4. Abraham defeats the Eastern kings and rescues Lot. Gen. 14:13-16**
 - 5. Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, meets and blesses Abraham who gives him a tithe (approximately 2000 BC). Gen. 14:18-20**
 - 6. One thousand years later, King David looks back upon these events and writes of the Messiah who will be both King and a Priest, like Melchizedek. 1:3b,13Ps. 110:4**
 - 7. One thousand years after David, the writer of this epistle takes up the theme of the Messiah being a priestly king in the order of Melchizedek. 5:6,10 6:20 7:1-28**
- C. In order to understand Melchizedek, you need to understand types and antitypes. John 3:14 1:29 Num. 21:8 John 1:29 Re. 5:6,8**
- 1. Types share important characteristics in common with what they prefigure.**
 - 2. The antitype is that to which the type points and corresponds.**
 - 3. The antitype, not the type, is the original of which the type is the copy, even though the type precedes the antitype in history. 9:23-24**
 - 4. Types should be identified and taught based upon careful study of Scripture.**

II. Melchizedek points to Christ. v. 1-3

- A. By his offices. v. 1**
- 1. He is a king, probably of the city which became Jerusalem. Ps. 76:2**
 - 2. He is a priest of the Most High God. 5:1f Dt. 32:8**
 - 3. Under the Mosaic covenant, which came centuries after Melchizedek, it was impossible for these offices to be combined. II Chron. 26:16-21**
 - 4. Yet the Old Testament anticipated a Royal Priest. Ps. 110:4 Zech. 6:11-13**
 - 5. Jesus, like Melchizedek, is a King and a Priest.**
- B. By his names/titles. v. 2**
- 1. King of righteousness. 1:8-9 Ps. 45:6-7 97:2 Isa. 9:7 Jer 23:5-6**
 - 2. King of peace. Isa. 9:6 Zech. 9:9-10 Ps. 72:7**
 - 3. Jesus righteously brings peace between God and men. Rom. 5:1 3:26 Is. 53:11**
- C. By his divine appointment. v. 3a**
- 1. Melchizedek is a type of Christ in what Genesis doesn't tell us about him.**
 - 2. How can Melchizedek be said to be without father and without mother?**
 - 3. The point is that Jesus and Melchizedek are priests, not based upon their heredity (like the levitical priests), but by divine appointment. Ex. 28:1 Num. 3:10 18:1 Lev. 21:7 Ezek. 44:2 Ezra 2:62-63 Neh. 7:63-65**

- D. By his never ending priesthood. v. 3b,21-24 1:12 13:8 Ps. 110:4
 - 1. There is no record of the end of Melchizedek's priesthood.
 - 2. Christ's priesthood is perpetual in reality. 1:12 4:14 6:6 10:29 13:8
- E. Was Melchizedek a theophany, a pre-incarnate appearance of the Son of God?
 - 1. Unlike the theophanies, Melchizedek had a settled place and position as King.
 - 2. The type cannot be identical to the antitype. The text does not say that he was the Son of God, but that he was *made like the Son of God*.
 - 3. Christ became our high priest through His perfect life, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension. 2:17 1:3b,5

III. Consider the greatness of Melchizedek. v. 4-10

- A. Melchizedek received a tithe from Abraham. v. 4-6 Neh. 10:37 Lev. 27:30
 - 1. Abraham, as the possessor of God's promises was a very great man. Is. 41:8 51:2
 - 2. Tithes are given to God through those whom He has appointed to represent Him.
 - 3. Abraham recognized Melchizedek's greatness by tithing to the Lord through him.
- B. Melchizedek blessed Abraham. v. 7
 - 1. The greater man pronounces God's blessing upon the lesser. Ge. 27:27 48:15 49:1f
 - 2. The levitical priests pronounced God's blessing upon Israel. Dt. 21:5 Nu. 6:22-27
 - 3. Abraham, the most important man on earth, received blessing from Melchizedek.
- C. Levi, through Abraham, tithed to Melchizedek. v. 8-10
 - 1. The Levites were God's representatives who received tithes under the Old Covenant. v. 8 Num. 18:21-32 Lev. 18:21 Neh. 10:38f
 - 2. Yet Levi himself, in effect, acknowledged Melchizedek's superior priesthood when Abraham, his representative, tithed to Melchizedek.
 - 3. This argument is based upon the important biblical principle of representation. Rom. 5:12,18-19 I Cor. 15:22
- D. Melchizedek lives on. v. 8b
 - 1. The levitical priests weren't able to continue. 7:22
 - 2. There is no record of an earthly successor to Melchizedek.
 - 3. Melchizedek prefigures Christ whose priesthood continues forever. 7:21,24-25

IV. How does this passage apply to us?

- A. Pay careful attention to God's Word.
 - 1. Take time to meditate upon and study God's Word. II Tim. 2:15 Mark 12:30
 - 2. Don't neglect the Old Testament.
 - 3. Jesus Christ is the focal point of all Scripture.
 - 4. We should marvel at the beauty of the divinely inspired Scriptures. Ps. 19 119
- B. Consider the greatness of Christ and worship Him.
 - 1. What is true of Melchizedek in a limited typical sense is true absolutely of Christ.
 - 2. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Rev. 17:14
 - 3. He is our High Priest who brings us God's blessing: righteousness and peace.
 - 4. His sacrifice is complete and his Priesthood endures forever. Rom. 5:1 Ps. 85:10
 - 5. He blesses us with every spiritual blessing. Eph. 1:3f Luke 24:50
 - 6. We owe Him our worship (and our tithes). I Cor. 16:1-2 I Tim. 6:17-18 Pr. 3:9 II Cor. 8-9 Gen. 28:22
 - 7. Why would anyone want to go back to the old, inferior priesthood?

Discussion questions

- 1. What is a type? What is an antitype? Which is primary?**
- 2. Who is Melchizedek? Where does he fit into history?**
- 3. What is the significance of his offices?**
- 4. What is especially unusual about his offices?**
- 5. What is the significance of his names?**
- 6. What is the significance of Melchizedek's lack of genealogy?**
- 7. In what sense does Melchizedek have no end of life?**
- 8. How is Melchizedek's greatness displayed in his encounter with Abraham?**
- 9. How can it be said that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek? Why is this significant?**
- 10. How does this passage apply to us?**