

O.T. Shadows of Christ: Melchizedek

INTRODUCTION:

1. Today we return to our study of O.T. shadows of Christ.
 - A. To understand the value of this study we must remember that O.T. shadows, or types, are faint pictures or outlines of the real thing that was to come in the fullest sense in Christ.
 - B. Last month we considered the shadow of the manna from heaven given Israel in the wilderness and how it foreshadowed the Christ as the true bread from heaven that gives eternal life.
2. Our focus today is on an individual that although very little is said about him, his appearance in biblical history provides a very powerful and significant shadow of the Christ, his nature, and work.
 - A. That individual is Melchizedek spoken of in Genesis 14.
 - B. I hope by considering him we can come to appreciate how amazing inspiration truly is.
 - C. And, I hope we will learn a bit more about our Christ and His nature and purpose in God's plan.

BODY:

I. The Shadow/Type: Melchizedek

- A. Melchizedek appears, blesses Abraham, praises God, and receives a tithe of the spoils from Abraham (Genesis 14:17-20 – “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; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he gave him a tithe of all.”).
 1. He appears when Abraham had returned from defeating the four kings who had taken Lot from Sodom.
 2. Melchizedek is described as:
 - i. *King of righteousness*, which is what his name meant.
 - ii. *King of Salem, or peace*, which some connect to *Jerusalem*, which is possible but never stated in scripture.
 - iii. *Priest of God Most High*, which was said 500 years before the Levitical priesthood would even exist.
 3. Abraham acknowledged Melchizedek's priesthood by receiving the blessing and honoring Melchizedek by giving him a 10th of the spoils!
 4. Nothing else concerning Melchizedek is revealed in the O.T.
 - a. There is no mention of his nationality, family, life, or death.
 - b. He comes and goes with only this short, almost incidental, mention of this event.
- B. O.T. inspiration was not through with Melchizedek, seeing his name and priesthood surface again in David's prophecy of the victorious Messianic king (Psa. 110:1-4 – “**The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”** ² The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! ³ Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. ⁴ **The Lord has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”**”).
 1. When David spoke these words in 110:1, he was king over Israel, occupying the highest position in God's earthly kingdom, and therefore, the highest position on earth.
 - a. Yet, here David claims that Jehovah was speaking to someone who was Lord over him.
 - b. This necessitates that this be the coming Messiah, Emmanuel, or **God** with Us, who *as God* would be above David in power and glory.
 - c. This concerned how *His Lord* was told by *Jehovah* to sit at His right hand, conferring authority and power upon the Messiah.

2. In 110:4 comes this most unusual, *but divinely inspired*, statement concerning how Jehovah had *sworn* to make the Messiah king “a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”
 - a. Why would David, *if not by revelation*, suddenly present such a strong affirmation of the Messiah being a priest after the *order of Melchizedek*?
 - i. Melchizedek hasn’t been mentioned since Genesis 14—nothing!
 - ii. Even in Genesis 14 there is no statement or explanation of the *order of Melchizedek*’s priesthood. Nothing biblical was known of it except that he *was* a priest of God!
 - b. Yet, this Messianic prophecy about *kingship* and *power* comes an *oath* of God that *will not be changed* concerning the Christ being a **Melchizedek priest forever**!
 - i. This statement is given without justification or explanation, which is what gives it such great power in the Holy Spirit’s usage of it later in the N.T.
 - ii. For, the Spirit’s *silence* concerning the details of Melchizedek and His priesthood are the means of the Spirit’s wide-ranging applications to the Messiah and his work as *king and high priest* of God in the scheme of redemption!

II. The Substance/Antitype: Jesus the Christ

- A. The N.T. confirms Melchizedek as a shadow, or type, of Christ and the strong connection between them (Heb. 6:19–7:3 – “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,²⁰ where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, **having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.** 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.**”).
 1. First, Jesus is said to now reside “behind the veil” in the presence of Jehovah, *having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*
 2. Second, in the many ways listed in which they are connected, Melchizedek is said to be “made like the Son of God,” not vice-versa. *Jesus preceded Melchizedek, being eternal.*
- B. Melchizedek meant “king of righteousness: Jesus rules as king in righteousness.
 1. Acts 2 shows Jesus’ resurrection and ascension to the Father’s throne to be the fulfillment of David words in Psa. 110:1 (Acts 2:32-36 – “This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.³³ “Therefore being **exalted to the right hand of God**, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.³⁴ “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘**The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand,** ³⁵ **Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”**’³⁶ “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both **Lord and Christ.**”).
 - a. The One the world rejected and crucified now sits and rules on God’s throne!
 - b. And, as king he is also the Christ, the Savior of all who will believe.
 2. In speaking of Jesus’ superiority to the angels, His righteous rule is confirmed (Heb. 1:8 – “But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.”).
- C. Melchizedek was *king of Salem/peace*: Jesus rules as the “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6-7 – “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, **Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.** ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, **upon the throne**

of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, **even forever**. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”).

1. The birth of Christ saw the coming of the Messianic king, the *Prince of Peace*.
 2. Note the divinely eternal nature of the Messiah presented in His names, *Mighty God* and *Everlasting Father*, and how He would establish justice *even forever*.
- D. Melchizedek was king and priest: Jesus serves as both King and Priest today (Zech. 6:12-13 – “Then speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, saying: “Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; ¹³ Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, and **shall sit and rule on His throne**; so **He shall be a priest on His throne**, and the **counsel of peace** shall be between them both.””).
1. The one called “BRANCH” is the Messiah (Isa. 11:1-2ff. – “There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a **Branch** shall grow out of his roots. ² The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord...”).
 2. Thus, His kingship would also involve being a priest and bringing peace on the earth!
- E. Just as Melchizedek had no mention of father, mother, or genealogy by which he could claim the right to his priesthood, Jesus genealogy was not significant to His priesthood (Heb. 7:11-14 – “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? ¹² For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. ¹³ **For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.** ¹⁴ For it is evident that our **Lord arose from Judah**, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.”).
1. Here is where the divine *silence* of the Spirit’s inspiration concerning Melchizedek shines.
 2. The fact that *nothing* was said of his father, mother, or genealogy was intended to show that a great High Priest, to whom even Abraham paid tithes, could exist that wasn’t from the lineage of Levi!
 3. This is significant because for Jesus to fulfill inspired prophecy He had to be of the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah. But, to be priest there had to be precedence for a priest from some other line than that of Levi. Being of the order of Melchizedek allowed this to be.
- F. As the Spirit was also *silent* concerning Melchizedek’s birth and death, *symbolizing* a timeless priesthood, Jesus is our *divinely eternal priest*, having no beginning nor end.
1. Jesus affirmed His eternal nature in John 8:58 where it is stated, “...Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”
 - a. On the surface this appears to be a statement of Christ’s existence before Abraham.
 - b. Yet, Jesus here claims to be the “I AM,” to be *Jehovah*, the eternal God, the “I AM that I AM” that sent Moses from the burning bush to Egypt to free Israel!
 - c. It was this claim to eternal godhood that the next verse says caused the people to take up stones to kill Jesus (Jn. 8:59).
 2. The Hebrew writer affirms Christ’s eternal nature as assurance of God fulfilling His oath spoken by David in Psa. 110:4 (Heb. 7:15-17 – “And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest ¹⁶ who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the **power of an endless life.** ¹⁷ For He testifies: “You are a priest **forever** according to the order of Melchizedek.”).
 3. Since Jesus’ High Priesthood is according to the *order of Melchizedek*, He can *forever* serve before the very presence of God on our behalf (Heb. 7:24-25 – “But He, because He

continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”).

CONCLUSION:

1. What an amazing thread God has woven throughout history and revelation presented most clearly in Melchizedek’s foreshadowing of Jesus as the Christ, king, and priest of God.
2. Just as Jesus our Savior holds the position of King and High Priest, as did Melchizedek, those who become His disciples are given the position of being God’s holy and royal priests (1 Pet. 2:4-5, 9-10 – “Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, **a holy priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ... ⁹ But you are a chosen generation, **a royal [kingly] 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.”).
3. Of course, this exalted position is only offered to those who will seek out Christ’s salvation and forgiveness and follow Him by living holy and pure lives of faithful service as God’s priests.
4. If you are a Christian, ask yourself if you are acting like a priest, if you are following the lead of your High Priest, Jesus, in your commitment to service and holiness?
5. If you are not a Christian, you must decide if you want to be a part of God’s priesthood, the priesthood of the saved, the only place salvation is found. You must do so in F-R-C-B-LF.