

Melchizedec

by F.B. Meyer

Christ's priesthood is an unchangeable priesthood that draws all men unto Himself, and it is a priesthood that receives tithes of all.

Scripture: Judges 17:10, Song of Solomon 6:5, Isaiah 32:17-18, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 5:5, Hebrews 7:1-4, Hebrews 7:21-28, Revelation 5:6

Topics: "The Priesthood of Christ", "Righteousness and Peace"

Description

F.B. Meyer explores the significance of Melchizedec as a type of Christ, emphasizing that Melchizedec's priesthood foreshadows the eternal and superior priesthood of Jesus. He highlights that Christ, like Melchizedec, is both King and Priest, embodying righteousness and peace, and that His priesthood is divinely appointed and unchangeable. Meyer encourages believers to recognize Christ's unique role as the mediator between God and humanity, and to respond by offering their lives and resources in service to Him. The sermon calls for a deeper understanding of Christ's eternal nature and the implications of His dual role as King and Priest in the lives of believers.

Transcript

"This Melchizedec, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God." -- Hebrews 7:1.

Christ is here! The passage is fragrant with the ointment of His name. Our hands drop with myrrh, and our fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, as we lay them upon the handles of this lock (Song of Solomon 6:5). Let us get aside from the busy rush of life, and think long, deep thoughts of Him who is the Alpha and Omega of Scripture, and of saintly hearts. And let us draw from the unsearchable depths of His nature, by the bucket of this mysterious record touching Melchizedec, the King of Salem.

There is a sense in which Christ was made AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEC; but there is a deeper sense in which Melchizedec was made AFTER THE ORDER OF THE SON OF GOD. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that Melchizedec was "made like unto the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3). Christ is the Archetype of all; and from all eternity has had those qualities which have made Him so much to us. It would seem as if they could not stay to be manifested in the fullness of the ages; they chafed for expression. From of old His delights were with the sons of men. And so this mysterious royal priest was constituted -- reigning in his peaceful city, amid the storm and wreckage of his times -- that there might be given amongst men some premonition, some anticipation, of that glorious life which was already being lived in Heaven on man's behalf, and which, in due course, would be manifested on our world, and at that

very spot where Melchizedec lived his Christ-like life. Oh that we, too, might be priests after the order of Melchizedec in this respect, if in no other, that we are made as like as possible to the Son of God!

MELCHIZEDEC WAS A PRIEST

The spiral column of smoke climbing up into the clear air, in the fragrant morn, and at the dewy eve, told that there was one heart at least which was true in its allegiance to the Most High God: and which bore up before Him the sins and sorrows of the clans that clustered near. He seems to have had that quick sympathy with the needs of his times which is the true mark of the priestly heart (Hebrews 4:15). And he had acquired thereby so great an influence over his neighbors that they spontaneously acknowledged the claims of his special and unique position. Man must have a priest. His nature shrinks from contact with the All Holy. What is there in common between vileness and purity, darkness and light, ignorance and the knowledge which needs no telling? And in all ages, men have selected from among their fellows one who should represent them to God, and God to them. It is a natural instinct. And it has been met in our glorious Lord, who, while He stands for us in the presence of God, face to face with uncreated Light, ever making intercessions, at the same time is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, succors us in our temptations, and has compassion on our ignorance. Why need we travel farther afield? Why imitate Micah in setting up for ourselves a priest whom human hands have made? (See Judges 17:10). Why permit any other to bear this sacred name, or to intrude on this holy office? None but Christ will satisfy or meet the requirements of God, or "become us" with unutterable needs (Hebrews 7:26).

THIS PRIESTHOOD CAME OF GOD, AND WAS RATIFIED BY AN OATH

The priests of the house of Levi exercised their office after "the law of a carnal commandment" (Hebrews 7:16). They assumed it, not because of any inherent fitness, or because specially summoned to the work by the voice of heaven, but because they had sprung from the special sacerdotal tribe. The Priesthood of Christ, on the other hand, is God's best gift to men -- to thee, my reader, and to me; more necessary than spring flowers, or light, or air. Without it our souls would wander ever in a Sahara desert. "Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest" (Hebrews 5:5), but He was called of God to be a High Priest after the order of Melchizedec (ver.10). And such was the solemnity of His appointment, that it was ratified by "the word of the oath." "The Lord swore and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec" (Hebrews 7:21-28). Here is "strong consolation" indeed. No unfaithfulness or ingratitude can change this priesthood. The eternal God will never run back from that word and oath. "Eternity" is written upon the High Priest's brow: "for evermore" rings out, as He moves, from the chime of His golden bells: "an unchangeable Priesthood" is the law of His glorious being. Hallelujah! The heart may well sing, when, amid the fluctuation of earth's change, it touches at length the primeval rock of God's eternal purpose. He is "consecrated" Priest "for evermore."

THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS ALSO CATHOLIC

Abraham was not yet circumcised. He was not a Jew, but a Gentile still. It was as the father of many nations that he stood and worshipped and received the benediction from Melchizedec's saintly hands. Not thus was it with the priesthood of Aaron's line. To share its benefit a man must needs become a Jew, submitting to the initial rite of Judaism. None but Jewish names shone in that breastplate. Only Jewish wants or sins were borne upon those consecrated lips. **BUT CHRIST IS THE PRIEST OF MAN.** He draws ALL MEN unto Himself. The one sufficient claim upon Him is that thou bear the nature which He has taken into irreversible union with His own -- that thou art a sinner and a penitent pressed by conscious need.

Then hast thou a right to Him, which cannot be disallowed. He is thy Priest -- thine own; as if none other had claim on Him than thou. Tell Him all thy story, hiding nothing, extenuating, excusing nothing. All kindreds, and peoples, and nations, and tongues, converge in Him, and are welcome; and all their myriad needs are satisfactorily met.

THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS SUPERIOR TO ALL HUMAN ORDERS OF PRIESTS

If ever there were a priesthood which held undisputed supremacy among the priesthoods of the world, it was that of Aaron's line. It might not be as ancient as that which ministered at the shrines of Nineveh, or so learned as that which was exercised in the silent cloisters of Memphis and Thebes; but it had about it this unapproachable dignity -- in that it had emanated, as a whole, from the Word of God. Yet even the Aaronic must yield obeisance to the Melchizedec Priesthood. And it did. For Levi was yet in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedec met him; and he paid tithes in Abraham, and knelt in token of submission, in the person of the patriarch, beneath the blessing of this greater than himself (Hebrews 7:4-10). Why then need we concern ourselves with the stars, when the sun has arisen upon us? What have we to do with any other than with this mighty Mediator, this Daysman, who towers aloft above all rivals; Himself sacrifice and Priest, who has offered a solitary sacrifice, and fulfils a unique ministry!

THIS PRIESTHOOD PARTOOK OF THE MYSTERY OF ETERNITY

We need not suppose that this mystic being had literally no father, or mother, beginning of days, or end of life. The fact on which the inspired writer fixes is -- that no information is afforded us on any of these points. There is an intention in the golden silence, as well as in the golden speech of Scripture. And these details were doubtless shrouded in obscurity, that there might be a still clearer approximation of the type to the glory of the Antitype, who abides continually. He is the Ancient of Days; the King of the Ages; the I AM. The Sun of His Being, like His Priesthood, knows nought of dawn, or decline from meridian zenith, or descent in the western sky. "He is made after the power of an endless life." "He ever liveth to make intercession." If, in the vision of Patmos, the hair of His head was white as snow, it was not the white of decay, but of incandescent fire. "He continueth ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood." "He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever." He does for us now what He did for the world's grey fathers, and what He will do for the last sinner who shall claim His aid.

THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS ROYAL

"Melchizedec, King of Salem, priest." Here again there is no analogy in the Levitical priesthood.

The royal and priestly offices were carefully kept apart. Uzziah was struck with the which brand of leprosy when he tried to unite them. But how marvelously they blended in the earthly life of Jesus! As Priest, He pitied, and helped, and fed men: as King, He ruled the waves. As Priest, He uttered His sublime intercessory prayer: as King, He spoke the "I will" of royal prerogative. As Priest, He touched the ear of Malchus: as the disowned King, to whom even Caesar was preferred, He was hounded to the death. As Priest, He pleaded for His murderers, and spake of Paradise to the dying thief: whilst His Kingship was attested by the proclamation affixed to His cross. As Priest, He breathed peace on His disciples: as King, He ascended to sit down upon His throne.

He was FIRST "King of Righteousness," and after that also King of Salem, which is King of Peace (Hebrews 7:2). Mark the order. Not first Peace at any price, or at the cost of Righteousness, but Righteousness first -- the righteousness of His personal character; the righteous meeting, on our behalf, of

the just demands of a Divine and holy law. And then founded on, and arising from, this solid and indestructible basis, there sprang the Temple of Peace, in which the souls of men may shelter from the shocks of time. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet restingplaces" (Isaiah 32:17-18).

Ah, souls, what is your attitude towards Him? There be plenty who are willing enough to have Him as Priest, who refuse to accept Him as King. But it will not do. He must be King, or He will not be Priest. And He must be King in this order, first making thee right, then giving thee His peace that passeth all understanding. Waste not precious time in paltering, or arguing with Him; accept the situation as it is, and let thy heart be the Salem, the city of Peace, where He, the Priest-King, shall reign for ever. And none is so fit to rule as He who stooped to die. "In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). Exactly! The throne is the befitting place for the Man who loved us to the death.

THIS PRIESTHOOD RECEIVES TITHES OF ALL

"The patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils" (Hebrews 7:4 RV). This ancient custom shames us Christians. The patriarch gave more to the representative of Christ than many of us give to Christ Himself. Come, if you have never done so before, resolve to give your Lord a tithe of your time, your income, your all. "Bring all the tithes into His storehouse." Nay, thou glorious One, we will not rest content with this; take all, for all is Thine. "Thine is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as King above all. Now, therefore, we thank Thee and praise Thy glorious name."

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