

# A Shared High Priest: Melchizedek's Meaning

Genesis 14, Psalm 110 & Hebrews 5 – 7

Unity, Diversity and Our Identity in Christ

Part 13 of 14



# Unity, Diversity, and Our Identity in Christ

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4. To appreciate **biblical diversity as a spiritual strength** that expresses itself in the people and ministries of our church.

Previously in this series

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- As we look back on our previous messages, consider how each segment contributes to **our identity in Christ**.
- This is the story that we all fit into together.

Previously in this series

# A Shared Origin: The Story of Creation

Genesis 1 – 2

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Tragedy: Sin and Its Effects

Genesis 3 – 11

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Promise: The Covenant with Abraham

**Genesis 12:1-3**

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Standard: The Law of Love

Leviticus 19, Deuteronomy 6:4-9

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# A Shared King: The Covenant with David

2 Samuel 7

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Songbook: Christ in the Psalms

**Psalms 2, 16, 22, 110 & 118**

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# A Shared Expectation: The Nations in Prophecy

Isaiah – Malachi

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# A Shared Savior: The Lord Jesus Christ

Matthew 1 – 2

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Assignment: The Great Commission

Matthew 28, Luke 24 & Acts 1

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Spirit: Uniting of Jew and Gentile

Acts 2, 10 – 13

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Responsibility: The Use of Spiritual Gifts

**1 Corinthians 12 – 13**

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Previously in this series

# A Shared Citizenship: Reconciling of Jew and Gentile

**Ephesians 2:11-22**

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# A Shared High Priest: Melchizedek's Meaning

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- In the Ancient Near East a Priesthood was defined as:
- “Those who claimed religious authority to serve as intermediaries between a people group and their deity or deities.”<sup>1</sup>

# A Shared High Priest: Melchizedek's Meaning

- When Israel left Egypt, God gave the priesthood to the family of **Aaron** the brother of Moses from the tribe of Levi.
- From that time on, the priests that served in the tabernacle and the temple all came from **Aaron's descendants**.

# A Shared High Priest: Melchizedek's Meaning

- Exodus 29:6-9 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> And you shall set the turban on his head and put the holy crown on the turban. <sup>7</sup> You shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him. <sup>8</sup> Then you shall bring his sons and put coats on them, <sup>9</sup> and you shall gird Aaron and his sons with sashes and bind caps on them. And the priesthood shall be theirs by a statute forever. Thus you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.

# A Shared High Priest: Melchizedek's Meaning

- One of the roles of the Messiah – the Christ – is to mediate between God and humanity.
- **1 Timothy 2:5-6** (ESV)

<sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

# A Shared High Priest: Melchizedek's Meaning

- Jesus does not come from the family of Aaron.
- He is from the tribe of Judah and the family of David.
- Jesus never had Levi's genes. 😊
- How then can he function as a mediator or a priest?

# A Shared High Priest: Melchizedek's Meaning

- Enter **Melchizedek**, a relatively obscure character who appears unexpectedly in a few important moments.
- We will look at this man in three stages, through three relationships:
  - I. Melchizedek and Abraham
  - II. Melchizedek and David
  - III. Melchizedek and Jesus Christ

# I. Melchizedek and Abraham

# I. Melchizedek and Abraham

- After winning a battle in which he and his men rescued his nephew Lot, we find Abraham in what is today Jerusalem.
- The story is in **Genesis 14**.
- We will read **Genesis 14:17-20**.

# I. Melchizedek and Abraham

- **Genesis 14:18** Melchizedek was both **king** of Salem and the **priest** of God Most High.
- **Genesis 14:19-20** He gives **a blessing** to Abraham.
- Abraham gives Melchizedek **a tithe**.

## II. Melchizedek and David

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- We do not hear again of Melchizedek for about 1000 years.
- He then appears in the messianic Psalm 110:1-4.

## II. Melchizedek and David

- **Psalm 110:1-3** When we see talk of a scepter and ruling, we know we are dealing with a future king.
- God's covenant with David is in view.
- **Psalm 110:4** Out of the blue, David unites the roles of **king and priest**, referring to **Melchizedek**.
- An eternal throne is united with an eternal priesthood.

### III. Melchizedek and Jesus Christ

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### III. Melchizedek and Jesus Christ

- Let's start with **Hebrews 5:1-10**.
- The first quotation is from **Psalm 2** and stresses **kingship**.
- The second is from **Psalm 110** and stresses **priesthood**.
- The author informs us that David was talking about Jesus Christ in both cases.

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### III. Melchizedek and Jesus Christ

- Now let's go to **Hebrews 6:13-20**.
- The author encourages us to anchor our hopes upon **Jesus**, who has gone into the **Most Holy Place**.
- As the High Priest would go into the **Holy of Holies** on behalf of the people, Jesus went behind the curtain for us.

## III. Melchizedek and Jesus Christ

- Our final chapter will be **Hebrews 7**.

### III. Melchizedek and Jesus Christ

- The priesthood of **Melchizedek** is superior to that of the Levites and family of Aaron.
- Even **Abraham paid him a tithe** and received a blessing from him – the one who was **both a king and a priest**.
- A better priesthood is part of **a better covenant**, now based upon the perfect sacrifice of Christ.

### III. Melchizedek and Jesus Christ

- Jesus is appointed our High Priest forever.
- He is able to “save to the uttermost,” that is “completely” or “at all times.”
- He “always lives to make intercession” for us.

A Shared High Priest

Conclusions

# A Shared High Priest      Conclusions

- Our sin separates us from God.
- Therefore, we need a mediator.
- In the wider culture in which the Bible was written, this function was served by priests.

# A Shared High Priest      Conclusions

- No priesthood was able to accomplish that role perfectly.
- The priesthood of Aaron that was established by God still had human priests who were both sinful and mortal.
- The Levites and descendants of Aaron allowed us to see that a better priesthood was needed.

# A Shared High Priest      Conclusions

- When Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek, he illustrated that a better priesthood existed.
- When Christ offered himself as a sacrifice, he became that better – truly perfect – High Priest.
- No other offering will now ever be needed to put us in a right standing with God.

# A Shared High Priest      Conclusions

- As we tell the stories that shape our identity, let's be sure to include that we have Christ as our Mediator.
- The imperfect traits of our families of origin have now been surpassed by our connection with the eternal Son of God.

# A Shared High Priest      Conclusions

- Before we pray, let's conclude with **Hebrews 10:19-25**.

# A Shared High Priest      Conclusions

- Let's pray that God would help us to:
  1. See ourselves along with all other humans – separated from God because of our sin.
  2. See Christ as the one and only Mediator, the one man who can come into the presence of God on our behalf.
  3. Continuously trust in Christ's sacrifice, which cleanses us perfectly from our sins.
  4. Draw near to God in full assurance, knowing that Christ's sacrifice will always be enough.

# A Shared High Priest      Conclusions

- Finally, may the Lord make a church that is
  1. Even more unified
  2. Even more diverse
  3. So fully identified with Christ that God's nature, love and wisdom will be evident to us and to the outside world.

Next Week

# A Shared Eternity: The New Heaven, New Earth and New Jerusalem

Revelation 21 – 22

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# Reference List

1. Meeks, C. 2016. "Priesthood." In *The Lexham Bible dictionary*, edited by J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott and W. Widder. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.