

Hebrews

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[0 : 0 0] Today we are going to begin chapter 7 of Hebrews, and I just want to remind you, even though I recognize that this makes me sound like a broken record, but the best way to learn is through repetition, and we learned that at a very early age.

And this letter is due primarily to a clientele, if you will, a specific group of people that occupied, at the time and even today, two-tenths of one percent of the world's population.

These are the Jewish people. And perhaps the greatest error that is committed in Christians trying to interpret and understand the book of Hebrews is their insistence on Christianizing the book.

It cannot be done and should not even be attempted. While it is true, in the book of Hebrews, as well as in the book of Genesis, in the Psalms, in Isaiah, and wherever you turn, there are abiding spiritual principles and truths that cover the whole spectrum of humanity for all time.

These are abiding truths. They are always applicable, and they never change. They are spiritual principles that God has built into His Word. And we may extract those from any place in the Bible and apply them to our own lives.

[1 : 3 6] But when it comes to specifics, you've got to keep in mind what Miles Coverdale said about it will greatly help you to understand Scripture. If thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom and to whom, at what time, with what consequences, considering what goes before and what follows.

And I just murdered Miles Coverdale's rules for interpreting. I left out a couple of things. But you get the idea. And the principle is you've got to understand that this epistle is written to those to whom it is addressed.

Is that all that difficult? See, Hebrews, these are Jewish people. And he's going to say things to these Jewish people that non-Jews won't even understand and can't connect with.

So you've got to keep in mind those to whom he is writing, because he has special truths and special things that he is going to be sharing with them and asking of them that is not asking of the Christian community as a whole.

So, we are going to just jump into chapter 7 after I remind you. We've got another unfortunate chapter division and sometimes I think that most of them are unfortunate.

[2 : 5 6] But in chapter 6, verse 20 he leads off with whether the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

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 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all.

So you can see once again if you end the thought with chapter 6, you completely disrupt the continuity because there is a flow of thought that is being developed here and we need to allow chapter 7 to develop it.

But when we break it up like this and stop with our mental thinking and our comprehension of what is being said and we just end with chapter 6, you're just left dangling there.

So, we've got to keep right on going and that will require us to go to the new sheet that you've been given this morning that is labeled 7b, which is a continuation of chapter 7.

[4 : 08] To whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all. This goes back all the way to Genesis, I think it's 17. We're on 7b now.

First, being by interpretation king of righteousness righteousness. And after that, also, king of Salem, which is king of peace.

A couple of things need explanation there, but I just want to remind you that when we're looking at these scripture sheets that we've prepared for you, this is taken from the 26th Translation New Testament.

And all that means is it is an embedding of several different translations and renderings of each verse so as to give a little different thought regarding the verse that sometimes enables something to click where it didn't before.

And that means that the bold print that you see, the dark print, that's the King James version. That's the lead version that they are using. And those that follow after it, you see R-H-N, that's a Rains, I believe, and Weymouth, W-E-Y, and M-O-N is abbreviation for Montgomery, a different translation.

[5 : 30] So these are just a little different renderings with a little different emphasis where one may not grab you in another will. This King of Righteousness, who is referred to as Melchizedek, is one of the most enigmatic characters in all of scripture.

There are basically two schools of thought regarding his identity, and neither of which can be conclusively established. One is that this Melchizedek was simply an individual whom God raised up at the time and place to fulfill the ministry that he did and that he is present in Genesis for the sole reason of establishing this type.

Christ is going to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek because he's not qualified to be a priest after the order of Levi. He's from the wrong tribe.

He's from the tribe of Judah. And the writer of Hebrews will explain that a little later. So what we need to keep in mind is the possibility that what I just shared with you is the identity of this man and he just kind of passes off the scene.

We never hear any more about him. but Christ becomes the antitype or the fulfillment of Melchizedek. The other possibility is that this Melchizedek is actually a pre-incarnate Christ himself.

[6 : 58] That this is a Christophany. And that in the person of Christ being described as Melchizedek Abraham is paying tithes to him.

That is to Christ. One thing we do know and the text will establish this for sure. That this Melchizedek was the superior to Abraham.

Now that's very significant and that does give some credence to the idea that this is a Christophany because whoever Melchizedek is, Abraham obviously uncontestedly considers Melchizedek his superior.

superior. And that is why he will pay tithes to him rather than pay tithes to a lesser which of course is not done. So the text will go on to explain that.

And when we are told that he is the king of Salem, which is king of peace, he is actually king of Jerusalem. and you can see the last part of the word Salem, Jerusalem and Salem are identical here.

[8 : 12] And his being the king of peace also refers to the same. And he is in verse 3 described as without father, without mother, without descent.

That's another argument that some have for saying that this is a Christophany. That is, this is Christ appearing long before he was born as a babe in Bethlehem.

This Christophany hearkens all the way back to Genesis 19, where remember the three who are described as three angels appear to Abraham, the plains of Mamre, in the heat of the day, and Abraham thought they were just three men, three strangers.

Two of them were angels. One of them was the Christophany. One of them was the Lord himself. Almost 2,000 years before the incarnation in Bethlehem.

So, that leads some to believe that this without father, without mother, without descent, is speaking of an eternal being.

[9 : 32] And if it's an eternal being, then it of course would have to be Christ, the eternal son of God, in a pre-incarnate appearance. Other scholars, however, are of the opinion that when it says without father, without mother, without descent, it simply means that his ancestry is not given.

He isn't described as the son of someone. It is simply no record of his genealogy, which is also a possibility.

And without descent means that he would not, either he married and had no children, or he never married and had no children. And that's the meaning of without descent.

So, the jury is still out. We cannot positively identify this man except to say that he fulfills a very important function. he is being the individual after whom Christ derives his priesthood.

Because Christ is prophet, priest, and king. He fulfills all three offices. He's the only one who does.

[10 : 47] None of the Israelites were allowed to do that. If you were a king, you could not function as a priest. David, the king, was not allowed to function as a priest.

That was out of his bailiwick. He was the ruler. He was a king. And if you were a priest, like Aaron, you could not function as a king. That was limiting you.

And here we have a separation of powers and influence. And I don't know if you're aware of it or not, but this is something that our founding fathers picked up on when they declared that our government would be made up of three separate branches.

The legislative, the judicial, and the executive. And each of those is to serve as a check and a balance on the others so that absolute power would not be vested in any entity.

This is called the separation of powers. And we all know how this works in our own government with the Supreme Court, the legislature, and so on. And our founding fathers recognized that because when they drafted the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they understood the nature of humanity.

[12 : 04] Today's Congress and today's government does not. And therein lies a big difference. So, let's continue on. without having solved this, but he having neither beginning of days nor end of life, and was made like unto the Son of God.

He abides a priest continually. Now, consider how great this man was. That's talking about Melchizedek.

And by the way, the name Melchizedek comes from two words in the Hebrew. And it means literally king of righteousness. Sedeek is Jehovah our righteousness, and the Melpart is the king of righteousness.

Consider how great this man was. Very strategic. Unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

And it's really significant that Abraham is doing this because Abraham is undisputedly considered to be the father of the Jewish nation.

[13 : 20] Because, remember, well, actually you can go all the way back to Shem, one of the sons of Noah, because Abraham is going to come through Shem. That's the word from which we get the word Semite or Semitic.

and Abraham is going to come from the son of Shem. And out of Abraham will come Isaac and Jacob. And Jacob will produce from his four wives, two concubines and two wives, twelve sons.

These twelve sons will be the tribes of Israel. And of those twelve tribes, two will be extremely important and significant.

And the first is Levi, the thirdborn son. Levi will be the father of all of the Jewish priests. Aaron and Moses will be direct descendants of Levi.

And the fourthborn son is Judah. Judah is the royal line. That's the line through which the Messiah will come. And if you read the genealogies in Matthew 1 and in Luke 4, you will discover that Judah is involved in both of those because Luke's gospel gives us the genealogy of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

[14 : 48] She came from David through David's son, Nathan. Joseph, came from David also, but he came from David's other son, Solomon.

And Solomon and Nathan were brothers. And that created two different lines, so they have some ancestors in common and some that are different. So let's continue on.

To whom even the patriarch, the word patriarch means first father. comes from two words, patriarch, from which we get the word pater or father, and the ark, which literally means first.

We use the word archaeology, and all that means is the study of first things. Archaeology. So a patriarch is a first father, and for the nation of Israel, their patriarchs are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And any time you read in the New Testament where it talks about the promises that God gave to our fathers, plural, it always means Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And verily, verse 8, they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law.

[16 : 15] And you must understand that the reason that God instituted tithes and that the people were required to give tithes was because the priesthood, having been ordained and established of God for specific purposes, would not be available to provide an income for their families.

They would not be working at a trade or a job like every other Israelite would. they would be functioning as priests, caring for the temple, the tabernacle, the sacrifices, and everything in connection with that, and they simply would not be available to earn a living to support a family.

So the rest of the people who are of the other 11 tribes are going to kick in. They are going to provide support for the Levites.

And the animals that are going to be sacrificed, unless it is a whole burnt offering where the whole thing is consumed, the animals that are brought for sacrifice and prepared for sacrifice are offered to God.

Then they are butchered. And the priests even. The priests feed their family with this meat. And when people bring the first fruits of their grain and offerings and everything, they bring them to the temple, they do it for the specific purpose of divvying it up among all the priests.

[17 : 41] And there are going to be hundreds and hundreds of priests who are going to be involved in this. So this was kind of like a built-in welfare system for caring for the needs of the priests and their families through the tithe.

God doesn't need the money, but God's people do. So that's the way this thing was set up for support. So we read on. I receive the office of priests, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, of their fellow Jews, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.

That simply means Abraham was their father. Physically, they are begotten by Abraham. But he, whose descent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham.

Now what's this saying? Who is this one whose descent is not counted from them? Melchizedek! But he received tithes of Abraham. And blessed him, that is Melchizedek blessed Abraham that had the promises.

Melchizedek didn't have the promises. Abraham had the promises. Started back in chapter 15 of Genesis. And without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.

[19 : 07] That's the simple way of saying the inferior, the inferior in station and position is blessed by the superior.

Not the other way around. A father may bless his baby. A father may bless his infant son. But the son doesn't bless the father.

Because the idea is the son has nothing to offer. The father has everything. The father has all the wealth. The father has all the savvy. The father has all the power and the control.

He is the one who is in charge of the blessing of the lesser or the younger. And when he says without contradiction, that means that's common knowledge. Everybody knows that.

That's the way it works. And he continues on. And here, men that die receive tithes.

[20 : 06] he's talking about ordinary priests. Actually, it would even include the high priest, like Aaron. Because these priests are all going to die, except the one high priest.

And we'll get to that in a moment. But there, he receives them of whom it is witness that he liveth. And he's talking, of course, about Melchizedek.

And as I may so say, Levi also, who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. What in the world does that mean?

Well, just this. For he was yet in the loins of his father. Now, when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, Levi, who would be his grandson to be, wasn't even born yet.

In fact, Levi is going to be a son of Jacob, and Jacob is going to be a son of Isaac, and Isaac is going to be a son of Abraham.

[21 : 22] So, Levi isn't even thought of yet. And the text says that Levi paid tithes while in the loins of Abraham.

What does that mean? It means exactly what it says. Abraham, in his reproductive organs, had the future seed of the entire nation of Israel.

Think of that. This is an incredible thing. You talk about genetics, this is really something. Matter of fact, you and I were potentially in the loins, in the seed of Adam.

Difficult as that is to grasp, because when God created Adam and Eve, and all of the vegetation, and all of the fruit, and everything else, and all the trees, he created everything with the capacity within itself to reproduce itself.

So that when creation was finished, God was finished, God isn't creating anything today. But what we are seeing is the result of the original creation that with every generation recreates, recreates, recreates, recreates, that's built into the system.

[22 : 49] Sheer genius on the part of our God. So, it's necessary for him to create anything. It's all perpetuated from the original creation. So, and as I may so say, Levi also, who would be the grandson of Abraham.

Remember, when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, Isaac hadn't even been born. But Isaac was in his loins, and so was Jacob, and so was Levi.

For he, verse 10, for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.

If, therefore, perfection or completion were by the Levitical priesthood, for under it the people received the law, what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron.

Now, this is fascinating stuff, guys. What this is saying is, look, the writer of Hebrews is saying, you must understand that this whole concept of the priesthood that was established by God through Aaron as the first priest, or through Levi, actually, as the priestly tribe, and then eventually Aaron and Moses, and so on.

[24 : 15] all of these priests were going to function and minister under what is referred to as the covenant, the Mosaic covenant, that is, the law that God gave to Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.

And the important thing, the point that is being made here, is that for the Jew of this day, they looked upon the Levitical law, the sacrifices and everything that went with it, as being the be-all, end-all, finality, that's it.

It's all wrapped up there. And what the writer of Hebrews is saying is, no it isn't! All of that stuff that was ordained for Levi and the priests and Israel and all the rest of it, was from the beginning intended to be temporary.

Never intended to be permanent. And that's where the line of demarcation came for many of the Jews in the first century. They did not understand that there was going to be a new covenant and that the old covenant was never intended to be permanent.

Fellas, this is so critical. This is where so many of our Jewish friends have misunderstood scripture. They have seen the institution of the Levitical law, sacrifices and all the rest to be permanent, cast in stone.

[25 : 52] And the reason they reason this way is because, look, God is eternal, God is perfect, the law that God gave is perfect, therefore the law is eternal.

And what was the charge? What was the charge that was so often leveled by the scribes and Pharisees against Jesus and against Paul the apostle? What was the charge? He teaches against the law of Moses.

Well, neither of them ever did that. They did continually teach against the Pharisees erroneous interpretation of the law of Moses.

That they did, but they never taught against the law, other than to say, the law was never intended to be permanent. That's why Jesus is going to say, on the night that he is betrayed, as he holds up the cup, this cup is the new covenant in my blood.

What? What? New covenant? Do you know the Old Testament, the Old Covenant, was never called the Old Covenant?

[27 : 04] until after the New Covenant was instituted? It was the introduction of the New Covenant that made the Old Covenant old. Up until then, it was just called the Covenant, the Law of Moses, because it was the only one there was.

Same thing with World War I. World War I was never called World War I until World War II.

up until then, it was called the Great War. Remember that? Well, no, you don't remember that. Neither do I. It was called the Great War. But once World War II got underway, everybody referred to it as World War II and the Great War became World War I.

And we've got the same kind of application here as regards the Law of Moses. So, let's continue on. Where am I? Thank you.

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertains to another tribe.

[28 : 20] In other words, the one that we're speaking about, the one that we're talking about is Jesus Christ. but he's not from the tribe of Levi. He pertains to another tribe of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

What that means is, no one who was of the tribe of Judah had any business doing anything at the altar. He couldn't offer sacrifice. He couldn't offer prayers.

He couldn't provide ceremonial cleansing. He had to be from the tribe of Levi. And he's saying, no man gave attendance at the altar unless he was from that tribe. Verse 14, For it is evident that our Lord sprang or was birthed out of Judah, the fourthborn son, not Levi, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

Moses never said, a priest is going to arise that will not be of the tribe of Levi. Levi. Moses never said that. And it is yet, verse 15, far more evident for that after the similitude of Melchizedek or the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest.

There is raised up of a different priest who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, that is the flesh, which was the original commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

[30 : 05] And that contrasts our Lord Jesus Christ in his priesthood with Melchizedek as opposed to Aaron and his priesthood with the Levites.

So, we're ending the page and food is here, but I want to open it for any comments or questions that you may have and we'll take a new page next week. Dan and then Joe. this is one of the reasons the Jewish do not acknowledge the New Testament.

Yeah. Exactly. Yeah, you're right. Yeah, you're right, Joe. And of course, when Christ died on the cross, the curtain opened. He's the priest, direct access to the Holy Ghost to God.

And we're part of his body, so we have direct access to God. We don't have to go to a priest to go to the Holy Ghost. Amen. You can come to God through Christ whose body is the new veil.

Right. Absolutely. Now a question, this is a question. The genealogy in Matthew for Joseph goes back to just David, the king. Okay, but the genealogy in Luke for Mary goes all the way back to Adam.

[31 : 13] Why does one take it all the way back to Adam, but on Joseph's side, it doesn't go all the way back to Adam, it's just going to David. I think that's a very good question, and I think there's a very good reason for that.

Because David is the king. David represents royalty, and Jesus is going to derive his legal rights to the throne through David and through Solomon.

David, Joseph, Joseph will be under the curse of Jeconiah. And the curse of Jeconiah, that God pronounced forbade that none of his seed would ever sit on the throne of Israel.

So, from a strict genealogical standpoint, Joseph, who was the adoptive father of Jesus, he would have been the legal heir to the throne of Israel at the time Jesus was born.

father of the father of the father of the father of the genealogical father, and Joseph was disqualified because he was under the curse of Jeconiah.

[32 : 32] God, now, most of you guys who... He derived his legal rights to the throne that Joseph had.

Joseph himself could not sit upon the throne, but his adopted son could, and that was Jesus. And then, when you read the genealogy in Luke, this is beautiful, because Luke goes all the way back, not to David the king, but all the way back to Adam.

Because Luke, Luke, in a very definitive way, sets forth the humanity of Jesus as the son of man, and that begins with Adam.

So, there's a beautiful parallel there. One is the royal line, the other is physical line, and they converge so that Joseph and Mary, both were descendants of David the king, one through Solomon, and the other through Nathan, and they had a number of ancestors in common, but they also had ancestors that were different, and it's a beautiful thing, and I've got some literature on that, I think I shared it with you before, but I'll bring new sheets of it again, and it is absolutely fascinating.

It was put together by Marv Rosenthal, and he's a Jewish believer who's done a beautiful thing on the genealogy of Christ. I'll share that with you next week.

[34 : 07] Any other thoughts or comments? Anybody? Dave? Dave? Don't know.

We're not given that information. And it doesn't mean, be reminded, it doesn't mean that Melchizedek didn't have a human father or mother. It may merely mean that his ancestry or genealogy is not recorded.

And the genealogy of so many Jews is that so-and-so, the father or the son of so-and-so, but we don't have that regarding Melchizedek. So, in my mind, the jury is still out, and he remains an enigmatic, but a very important figure.

Any other comments or questions? This is a kind of a difficult session to consider, but I appreciate your patience as we work through it. And the stuff that is coming up in chapters 8 and 9 is just absolutely top door stuff.

You'll see when we get there.