

“Melchizewhat?” – Hebrews 7:1-3

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Take your Bible and meet me in Genesis 14... Yes, I know we are working through the book of Hebrews at the moment, but in order to understand the next section in Hebrews it's crucial that we take a page out of Genesis first. This particular section in Genesis involves a very mysterious figure by the name of Melchizedek. This is the only place he appears in the narrative of the Old Testament and he would have disappeared into obscurity were it not to one curious reference to the man in the Psalms and for the next section in the book of Hebrews.¹ “If not for the book of Hebrews,” writes Al Mohler, “the name Melchizedek might be left off the list of those we really need to know.”² As it turns out, his part in the Old Testament story, despite initial impressions, is very important for understanding the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Three times already in the book of Hebrews the author has mentioned Melchizedek in passing and in connection to Christ but has yet to expand on that association. When pastor Derek preached last week, you may recall that the last verse in chapter 6 claimed that Jesus has “*become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*” (Hebrews 6:20; cf. 5:6, 10). The wording there, as in the previous two allusions, is drawn from Psalm 110:4, which we will consider in greater detail next week. The point I'm making now, however, is that the original audience has been waiting for the author to explain the link between Melchizedek and Jesus. He has merely whet their appetite in passing. They have been primed with anticipation. Now, in chapter 7, he puts all speculation to rest by showing how what is said and left unsaid about Melchizedek forecasted the eventual appearance and priestly tenure of Jesus Christ.

So who is this man and what does he have to do with Jesus Christ? That's what the next couple sermons will address. Today, since we are sharing the Lord's Supper and have additional children with us for a family worship service, we will keep things simple and short. I simply want to show why the story of Melchizedek in the Old Testament pointed ahead to the person and work of Christ in the New Testament. Next Sunday, Lord willing, we will get into the meat of how Melchizedek's story plays into the argument of Hebrews, which is designed to show the superiority of Jesus to everyone and everything. So think of today as your introduction to Melchizedek as we connect the dots to Christ.

Hopefully by now you have found your way to Genesis 14. Before I read the story, let me review the context so we can get our bearings. Many of you have been studying Genesis in Sunday school lately with the Gospel Project curriculum, so hopefully this will sound familiar. We find ourselves in the middle of the story of Abram (who will eventually be called Abraham) in the wake of a battle. You see, there was an alliance of kingdoms led by Chedorlaomer, the king of Elam, who attacked another alliance, which included the city of Sodom. Chedorlaomer was victorious and the Sodom was ransacked.

What does this have to do with Abram? Well, as it turns out, his nephew Lot had been taken captive for he had been “dwelling in Sodom” (Gen. 14:12). Abram gets word and springs to action. He takes his fighting men and defeats Chedorlaomer and his coalition of kings from the east, freeing Lot, the other captives, and all their stolen possessions. Now Melchizedek had no part in the battle, but he shows up after the dust settles. Let's pick things up in verse 17. This is Word of God...

“After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley).¹⁸ And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.)¹⁹ And he blessed him and said, ‘Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;²⁰ and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!’ And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.²¹ And the king of Sodom said to Abram, ‘Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself.’²² But Abram said to the king of Sodom, ‘I have lifted my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth,²³ that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, “I have made Abram rich.”²⁴ I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share.’” (Genesis 14:17-24)

Interesting story. The verses that have to do with Melchizedek are sandwiched between verses that reference the king of Sodom, which suggests that a certain contrast between these two kings is in view. The king of Sodom offers Abram the victor’s spoils after the battle, but the patriarch wants nothing to do with Sodom’s wealth. He informs the king of Sodom that he has sworn to “*to the LORD, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth*” that he would take no reward from Sodom (Gen. 14:22-23). “Such a transaction would have entangled Abraham in a covenantal alliance with that notoriously evil metropolis, which was rushing unwittingly toward destruction.”³ And such a transaction could have one day given Sodom reason to take credit for Abram’s wealth, when the glory for his blessings belonged to God alone.

By contrast, Abram’s encounter with Melchizedek is much more cordial. Unlike the king of Sodom, who came to negotiate, Melchizedek came to bless. The strange figure approaches Abram with bread and wine, pronounces a blessing, and receives an unprompted tithe from Abram. It’s a curious exchange that is left unexplained. What is clear, however, is that Melchizedek and Abram “displayed their shared devotion to the true creator and possessor of the universe, whom both knew as ‘God Most High’ and whom Abraham called by his covenant name, ‘LORD.’”⁴ What are we to make of that? Well, not much. At least not until the appearing of the Son of God.

Of course, that hasn’t kept people from speculating about Melchizedek. Some have wondered if Melchizedek was a preincarnate appearance of the Son of God, a theophany (or, more precisely, a Christophany). The description in Hebrews 7 would seem to rule this out for, as we will see, the writer of Hebrews doesn’t say that Melchizedek *is* the Son of God, only that he is *like* Him. The two are distinct. Compared, yes, but not identified.⁵ There are also some extra-biblical traditions that claim that he was actually Shem, the ancestor of Abraham and son of Noah. Others have entertained the possibility that he was an angelic figure of some sort. There’s even a famous Dead Sea Scroll that associates him with the final judgment and the declaration of forgiveness for Israel. It’s all quite fascinating and not too surprising that such theories have developed over the centuries. But at the end of the day there is no biblical evidence to support such claims. They are all speculative at best and we should not put stock in imaginative traditions.

The information we find in Hebrews is of an entirely different sort. It was inspired by the Holy Spirit. It answers several of the questions that have lingered for centuries and perplexed interpreters for generations. Its interpretation is true and authoritative. And, as we will see next week especially, it shows how the story of Melchizedek was meant to glorify the Lord Jesus. Flip with me to Hebrews 7.

Chapter 6 closed with these words, “*We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*” (Heb. 6:19-20). Chapter 7 is one long exposition on what he means by “*the order of Melchizedek*.” I want us to focus the rest of our time on what the author says in verses 1 through 3. Follow along as I read them. This is God’s Word...

“For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,² and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace.³ He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.” (Hebrews 7:1-3)

Even just three verses in, it’s already clear that “Hebrews does not merely reference this encounter; it draws deep theological comparisons between Melchizedek and Jesus that inform how we understand Christ’s identity as our great high priest.”⁶ There is some neat stuff ahead in this chapter. I can’t wait! When it’s all sorted out we will see that Melchizedek was a *type* of Christ. What’s a *type*? A *type* is some person or thing that symbolized and anticipated someone or something that would come later, which is called the *antitype*. This idea stands behind the term “typology” and if you attend our church long enough you’ll become quite familiar with biblical typology because the whole story of the Bible is the story of the Gospel and the heart of the Gospel is a person, Jesus Christ. So it shouldn’t surprise us that the Biblical stories point ahead to Jesus in more ways than any of us could possibly catalog. The story of Melchizedek is no different. He was a type, who pointed ahead to the antitype, Jesus Christ. How so?

Evidently the writer of Hebrews, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, finds significance in both what is said in Genesis and in what is left unsaid. Verses 1 and 2 explore some of the details that are explicitly mentioned in Genesis 14. But in verse 3 “he treats the *silences* of Genesis 14—facts about the historical Melchizedek that Moses omitted from the narrative of his encounter with Abraham—as intended by the Holy Spirit, Scripture’s divine author, to *portray* that ancient priest-king as ‘resembling [*aphomoioō*] the Son of God.’”⁷ While we should be very cautious in reading into the silences of Scripture, we are given permission to do so in the case of Melchizedek by the author of Hebrews. He shows us how what was left unsaid in Genesis 14 can be “mined for meaning.”⁸ Let’s start with that...

The *Silences* about Melchizedek Point to Christ

Look again at verse 3. “*He [i.e., Melchizedek] is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.*” The beginning of the verse literally translates, “fatherless, motherless, genealogy-less...” Is the author of Hebrews claiming that Melchizedek had no earthly parents and never died? No. That’s not what he is saying. He’s pointing out that Genesis, a book filled with genealogies (i.e. family trees) for all its main characters, says nothing of the family of origin of Melchizedek. As Dennis Johnson explains,

“To have one’s name embedded in these genealogies is to have a place in the covenantal history of Abraham and his offspring (Gen. 12:1-2; 15:5; 17:1-8; 22:15-18). Yet Melchizedek, though a worshiper of the same ‘Most High God’ who called Abraham to himself, appears and disappears suddenly in Abraham’s story, altogether lacking genetic ‘credentials’ or generational context.”⁹

It really would have been a striking omission from a Jewish perspective. But when the writer of Hebrews says that Melchizedek had “*neither beginning of days or end of life,*” he is speaking in a “literary” sense, not a literal sense. The assumption is not that he had no family of origin or expiration in life. The assumption is that these details are left out for a reason and that reason is wrapped up in the priesthood of Jesus. Just like Melchizedek’s priesthood was not tied to the Jewish priesthood, which was tied to the tribe of Levi and the offspring of Aaron, so too Jesus’ priesthood is not derived from Israel. His priesthood predates theirs. It’s superior to theirs. It’s anticipated in Melchizedek, whose tenure as priest is never brought to a stated close in the text because his death is never described.

“Melchizedek was not a priest because his father was a priest, nor was he a priest who had successors. By providing this familial background, the author is trying to communicate the unprecedented nature of Melchizedek’s priesthood. Melchizedek is a priest of God Most High by divine ordination. Melchizedek enters into the Genesis story as if he has no mother, no father, and no sons. This kind of priesthood stands in stark contrast with the priesthood of Israel, which was entirely based on Levitical familial descent. The contrast will be highlighted for us in a later verse, but the author is using this verse [i.e. verse 3] to enforce that Melchizedek’s priesthood had nothing to do with ancestry or descent. Divine designation predicates his appointment as priest. Thus it continues forever.”¹⁰

And, Christians, what good news this is for us! Among other things, this means that on the day “you die and are presented before God’s throne, he will be there, pointing to the wounds he earned upon the cross, charging your debt to the account he has already paid.” Rejoice, O Church, “His priesthood is eternal, never-ending, securing eternal life to give to you.”¹¹ We’ll have more to say about this next week. But for now, simply notice that the lack of closure to Melchizedek’s priesthood is taken as a picture of the unending nature of Jesus’ priesthood. In the case of Jesus, His priesthood is without end because in His resurrection He enjoys life unending. And while Melchizedek is said to have no beginning and no end in a *literary* sense, God the Son has no beginning and no end in a *literal* sense. So what is left unsaid in Genesis 14 proves to be significant. As A. W. Pink put it, “The entire omission was ordered by the Holy Spirit...in order to present a perfect type of the Lord Jesus.”¹²

Now let’s consider Hebrews 7:1 and 2 for a moment and what they say about the explicit statements of Genesis 14...

The Statements About Melchizedek Point to Christ

Look again at verses 1 and 2—“*For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace.*” With the remainder of our time, and with the author of Hebrews as our guide, let’s consider how Melchizedek foreshadowed Jesus through his name, offices, and activities...

The Name of Melchizedek Pointed Ahead to Jesus

When we here the name “*Melchizedek*” it strikes us a strange name. I mean can you imagine the teacher taking attendance in school. “Matthew Parker?” “Here!” “Melissa Miller?” “Present” “Mel...Melchi...?” “It’s Melchizedek.” “Mechizewhat?” “Melchizedek” “Last name?” “I have no last name, no beginning of days, no end of life.” “Yeah, okay Mel, keep that up and you’ll see no end of detention...” You just don’t meet kids named Melchizedek these days. It sounds strange to our Western ears. But this would not be the case for a Jew familiar with the Hebrew language.

You see, the name Melchizedek is a contraction of two Hebrew words. The first is *melek*, which means “king” and the second is *tsedeq*, which means “righteousness.” Put them together and you get “Melchizedek,” which the writer of Hebrews rightly translates “king of righteousness” in verse 2. The name speaks volumes about the ancient figure from Genesis. “In the midst of the extreme depravity of the Canaanites, in contrast with the despicable worship and gross immorality of men like the king of Sodom, this man exercised his kingly rule for the extension of righteousness.”¹³ He is unique in this way. As John Calvin put it, “Amid the corruptions of the world, he alone, in that land, was an upright and sincere cultivator and guardian of religion.”¹⁴ You just don’t see that in anyone after the flood. Not even Abraham,

who was an idolater, until the Lord called him out. A king of righteousness really stands out on the backdrop of Genesis, with all the godless depravity associated with the other kings.

More importantly, his name pointed forward to the ultimate King of Righteousness. The name calls to mind what the author of Hebrews has said about Jesus in chapter 1, when he applied the words of Psalm 45:6-7 to Jesus...

“But of the Son he says, ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.’⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” (Hebrews 1:8-9)

You might remember from when we studied those verses that the writer is using them to prove that God’s Son, Jesus Christ, was the promised and long-awaited Davidic King. And King Jesus clearly loves righteousness and hates wickedness. He is the King of Righteousness *par excellence*.

Next, let’s notice that...

The Offices of Melchizedek Pointed Ahead to Jesus

I say offices plural because he is said to hold two offices—he is both a king (political) and priest (religious). First of all, he’s described as the “*king of Salem*.” While we cannot say for certain, there is some evidence to suggest that Salem may refer to the city that eventually became known as Jerusalem. The parallelism found in Psalm 76:2 links “Salem” and “Zion,” which would seem to suggest that Salem was just an older name for Jerusalem. We know the Canaanite tribe of the Jebusites inhabited the region prior to King David’s siege on the city. So when you start combining the sounds of *Jebus* and *Salem* it’s not hard to see where you might end up with a word like “Jerusalem.”

More important for the author of Hebrews is the fact that “Salem” derives from the Hebrew word for “peace.” By saying he is the “*king of Salem*” is to say that Jesus is “*king of Peace*,” as the author points out in verse 2.¹⁵ “In a godless, warring region, here was a king of righteousness who ruled the city of peace.”¹⁶ Melchizedek’s reign anticipate the reign of an even better King. Indeed, Psalm 72:7, a messianic psalm, says Jesus’ reign will produce both “*righteousness*” and “*peace*” to the end of time. No surprise then that Isaiah calls Christ the “*Prince of Peace*” (Isa. 9:6) and the Apostle Paul says, “*He is our peace*” (Eph. 2:14).

But Melchizedek was not just a king. He was “*priest of the Most High God*” (Heb. 7:1). Since the priesthood of Jesus is going to occupy our attention in the pages ahead, I won’t belabor this point today except to point out what an anomaly it is in the Old Testament to find someone who is both priest *and* king. That was a big no-no in the nation of Israel. The assumption seems to be that because kings and priest are just men, they can succumb to sin and corruption and so the offices were kept separate. As Richard Phillips explains,

“There was a separation of power not unlike the United States Constitution’s checks and balances between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Because of this separation, no one man could utterly dominate Israel’s civic life.”¹⁷

Kings were not to be priests and priests were not to be kings. In case there was ever any doubt that God was serious about this separation, there are several stories in the Old Testament that warn against any attempt for a king (or anyone not a Levite, from the house of Aaron, called of God, for that matter) to undertake priestly duties. A few examples will suffice.

In Numbers 16 we read a story that's usually referred to as "Korah's Rebellion." A man named Korah becomes jealous of Moses and Aaron and refuses to believe that God appointed them for their leadership in Israel. Korah, who himself was a Levite, assembles 250 people from Israel to confront Moses and Aaron because they believed that they were just as qualified to serve as priests for Israel as Aaron and his family were. How do you think that worked out? Not well for Korah and his company. Long story short, when they attempted to bring incense before the Lord (something that priests would do) the ground opened up and swallowed them and closed in around them. Israel learned a big lesson that day: the priesthood is not for everyone; it's only for those whom God appoints.

In 1 Samuel 13, Israel's first king, a man by the name of Saul, was in the city that he had been crowned King, and he was waiting for the prophet Samuel to come and offer up a sacrifice. And he waited. And waited. And waited, until he felt like he could not wait any longer. In his impatience, he offered up the sacrifice himself. How do you think that ended? Not well. Samuel arrives and sees what King Saul has done. In the prophet's fury, he announces that the Lord will now strip the monarchy from King Saul and his offspring and give it to another family. The king learned an important lesson that day: the priesthood is not for everyone and it's not for the king; it's only for those God appoints.

In 2 Chronicles 26 we are told of the failure of another king in Israel by the name of Uzziah. Uzziah arrogantly decided to enter into the temple and burn incense on the altar, which only priests were permitted to do. Azariah, a priest, and eighty other priests described as "*men of valor*" subdue the king, but not before God struck him with leprosy. He would remain a leper and in isolation until the day he died (see 2 Chronicles 26:16-21).

Moral of the story? The priesthood in Israel was not up for grabs. The king was not the priest. The office was not open to the most charismatic personality or the most educated or the one with the most resources at his disposal. The defining issue was the call of God. And that call was given to the Aaron and his posterity. What does Hebrews 5:4 say? "*No one takes this honor for himself...*" Not even the king! If anything, Israel's history has some of its harshest warnings against a king trying to assume the role of priest.

Yet, Melchizedek is said to be both king and priest without indictment. Furthermore, he "not only combines these vital offices, but is manifestly worthy of them both."¹⁸ That makes him utterly unique in the Old Testament. That dual office pointed ahead to the ultimate Priest-King who would be sent a couple thousand years later, Jesus Christ. But the fact that the Christ would be both priest and king was not entirely unanticipated in the Old Testament. The writer of Hebrews, in the verses ahead, is going to make much of how this was anticipated in Psalm 110:4. But even the prophet Zechariah saw this coming. He said that the Christ would "*build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both*" (Zech. 6:13). Zechariah said a priest shall sit on the throne. The New Testament announces that Priest does sit and reign from God's throne! Amen, someone?

Now it's interesting how the writer of Hebrews goes out of his way to point out the order statements about Melchizedek. He is first, "*king of righteousness*" and then "*king of peace.*" Perhaps that order is significant. Phillips reminds us,

"It is only as Jesus achieved righteousness by his life, and secured that righteousness for us by his death on the cross, that peace with God is available to sinners. He offers us peace because he first achieved the righteousness we lack and need... Because he came to establish righteousness first, and then peace, Christ ascended not an earthly throne, not a warhorse, but a cross. There they nailed the sign saying 'King of the Jews.' But they might well have written 'Melchizedek': King of Righteousness to reign over the city of peace."¹⁹

Charles Spurgeon made a similar point.

“Note well the order of these two, and the dependence of the one upon the other; for there could be no true peace that was not grounded upon righteousness; and out of righteousness, peace is sure to spring up.”²⁰

The prophet Isaiah made a similar point when he predicted that the coming Christ would “*reign in righteousness*” and in the same chapter he adds, “*the effect of righteousness will be peace*” (Isaiah 32:1, 17). As Spurgeon continues,

“He knew that he could not be King of peace to us till, first of all, he had woven a perfect righteousness in the loom of his life, and dyed it in his own heart’s blood in his death.”²¹

Oh boy could turn a phrase! Finally, as we wind down and prepare for the table, let’s consider how...

The Actions of Melchizedek Pointed Ahead to Jesus

Now the main action the writer of Hebrews is going to focus on is the initiative of Melchizedek to bring blessing to Abraham. The significance of that blessing will be teased out in the verses ahead and we will explore it next week. But given that this Lord’s Day was the day we were scheduled to share the Lord’s Supper together, it’s curious, is it not, that Genesis 14 tells us that before Melchizedek blessed Abraham (and by extension his offspring, the people of God) he served him bread and wine (Gen. 14:18).²² It’s a detail that stands out more to Christian eyes familiar with the Christian ordinance before us today than it would have to ancient Jewish eyes.

Is there an intended parallel? Now we have to be careful here because the writer of Hebrews doesn’t make much of this connection to Christ. Still, the same Holy Spirit who inspired Moses to write what he did in Genesis 14 “surely knew that in light of the completed Scriptures a sacramental connection would be made by this appearance of the bread and wine.”²³ So perhaps we should take it with a grain of salt (if you’ll forgive the pun), but I think what Richard Phillips wrote on this point is helpful. I’ll close with it as we transition to the Lord’s Supper...

“[I]n Melchizedek’s going out to bless Abraham in the presence of the Canaanites, we see a wonderful type of Christ’s ministry to us. When our battle is over, the risen Jesus Christ will bless us before the eyes of this world. Indeed, in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, he proclaims us blessed even now from the throne of heaven. Like Abraham, we are despised by the world. Our blessing is hidden to sight, and no one realizes that we hold the promises of God. But Christ acknowledges us as God’s own, and the day will come when every eye will see it.

His blessing helps us inwardly as well as outwardly. Melchizedek’s bread and wine spoke of the body and blood of Christ, sacrificed on the cross for us, as the source of spiritual blessing to all who believe, and thus he brought bodily and spiritual refreshment to Abraham. So too Christ now ministers to us from that same source, by means of his Holy Spirit. Paul sums this up by saying, ‘Christ redeemed us...so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith’ (Gal. 3:13–14).”²⁴

To be continued...

Pray with me...

¹ “The only place Melchizedek is mentioned in the NT is in Hebrews. Melchizedek does appear, however, in the Dead Sea Scrolls in 11QMelch. According to this document, Melchizedek will proclaim at the final judgment the liberty of Jubilee to Israel and declare that they are forgiven of their sins. He is identified as ‘God’ and will also assess people at the final judgment. Probably the identification of Melchizedek as ‘God’ (cf. Exod. 7:1) should not be read literally. It simply designates the significant role he plays in the final judgment. The exalted position of Melchizedek at the final judgment indicates that discussion and speculation over his role were in the air when Hebrews was written. The reference to Melchizedek, then, would not have shocked the readers because we see from other sources that Jews discussed his significance and his role.” Thomas R. Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews* (BTC; Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2015), 207-208.

² R. Albert Mohler, *Exalting Jesus in Hebrews* (CCE; Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 98.

³ Dennis E. Johnson, “Hebrews” in *Hebrews-Revelation* (ESVEC; Wheaton: Crossway, 2018), 96.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁵ Schreiner, 210; Johnson, 97.

⁶ Mohler, 99.

⁷ Johnson, 97.

⁸ Schreiner, 209.

⁹ Johnson, 98.

¹⁰ Mohler, 101. Similarly, Tom Schreiner writes, “Jesus also serves as a Melchizedekian priest. It is not the case that his genealogy is unknown. In fact, the author is keenly aware that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah (7:13-14). The point is that Jesus’ priesthood, like Melchizedek’s, is not established on the basis of his genealogy. Instead, the focus is on his eternal priesthood (anticipating Ps 110:4) as the Son of God. By virtue of his resurrection from the dead, he continues as a priest forever, he continues as a priest forever, in contrast to the Levitical priests whose priesthood ends upon death.” Schreiner, 211.

¹¹ Richard D. Phillips, *Hebrews* (REC; Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2006), 227.

¹² Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis* (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 160. Similarly, F. F. Bruce writes, “In all this—the silences as well as the statements—he is a fitting type of Christ. . . Melchizedek remains a priest continually for the duration of his appearance in the biblical narrative.” F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Hebrews*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 160.

¹³ Phillips, 224-225.

¹⁴ John Calvin, *Genesis* (Carlisle: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 388.

¹⁵ “Perhaps in Genesis Melchizedek’s irenicism is tied to his not waging war, for he did not engage in war like the other kings in Genesis 14.” Schreiner, 208-209.

¹⁶ Phillips, 225.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 223.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 227. “Although ‘peace’ (*eirēnē*) appears rarely in Hebrews (11:31; 12:14; 13:20), it expresses the result of the atoning sacrifice that priests offer, namely, a relationship of communion between guilty people and the holy God (cf. Rom. 5:1-10; Eph. 2:14-18).” Johnson, 97.

²⁰ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “*The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 63 vols. (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, 1975), 30:162.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 164. Also cited in Phillips, 227.

²² “Roman Catholic teachers have long seen this as a vindication of their view of the priesthood and the eucharistic mass, a view that the Protestant Reformers roundly condemned. Many Protestant commentators conclude that the bread and wine are a mere coincidence, having nothing to do with the comparison between Melchizedek and Christ, particularly since this is overlooked in Hebrews. However, the Holy Spirit, inspiring Moses as he wrote the Book of Genesis, surely knew that in the light of the completed Scriptures a sacramental connection would be made by this appearance of the bread and the wine. I believe, therefore, that this is part of what the writer of Hebrews intended when he noted that Melchizedek blessed Abraham. He not only spoke the blessing, but also spiritually ministered to Abraham’s need. Jonathan Edwards puts it well: “The bread and the wine signified the same blessings of the covenant of grace that the bread and wine do in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper. . . . Melchizedek’s coming to meet him with such a seal of the covenant of grace, on the occasion of this victory, evinces, that it was a pledge of God’s fulfillment of the same covenant.” As far as the Roman Catholic priesthood is concerned, this passage offers no support at all. Instead of some merely human priesthood exercising sacramental powers, Melchizedek represents the messianic priesthood of the Son of God, based on the power of his sacrificial death and resurrection life.” Phillips, 224.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 226.