

## Hebrews 7:1-3

### “J.E.S.U.S.”

#### I. Introduction

#### II. Vs. 1-3 Five superiorities Melchizedekian Priesthood

#### I. Introduction

In the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of Hebrews the author presents to his readers a portrait of Jesus. What's interesting is that he takes the picture of Jesus as High Priest through the lens of Melchizedek. Further more the snap shot is taken from a very fuzzy picture found in Genesis 14:18-20 and an incident in Abraham's life, where Abraham met Melchizedek. The story recorded there was when Abraham was returning from a battle with the five kings, and this strange King from Salem met him and blessed him, and Abraham in response to this gave tithes to this King named Melchizedek. What we know of Melchizedek is that he was a priest of the true God, who lived in the village of Salem (later known as Jerusalem) and here in Hebrews we see that according to the writer, he fulfilled a role that foresaw and foreshadowed the ministry of Jesus Christ. The division of this section is meant to be a comparison of the two priesthoods Melchizedekian and Aaronic; the writer will do this two ways:

- a. First in verses 1-3 we will see five positive differences that Jesus has in the Melchizedekian Priesthood, that aren't available in the Aaronic Priesthood.
- b. Second, in verses 4-26 the writer presents three negative differences, which we will take up next week.

#### II. Vs. 1-3 Five superiorities Melchizedekian Priesthood

Vs. 1-2 This section starts out with the phrase, “**For this Melchizedek**”, which reveals to the readers that what they are going to read is going to be a comparison between **Melchizedek** and the Aaronic priesthood. Then as they read a little further they pick up a story between the father of their people Abraham and this same Melchizedek where they witness a seldom used word today, **reciprocity: Which is defined as the mutual exchange of benefits**. We read about when Melchizedek met Abraham and gave to him bread and wine which are the symbols of life and strength, the **very things that we partake of when we come to the Lord's table**. Abraham, in turn, gave tithes of everything he possessed to Melchizedek. Now, the tithe, or tenth, is always the mark of ownership. **To pay a tenth is to indicate that God owns the whole**. Symbolically, therefore, **Abraham was saying to Melchizedek, “You have the right of ownership over everything in my life.”** The provision of strength from Melchizedek exactly equaled the degree of commitment on the part of Abraham, **reciprocity**. You may exercise dominion to the same degree you are prepared to submit to the dominion of Jesus Christ in your own heart. You can have as much of Christ as, in turn, you are ready to permit him to have of you. Abraham wouldn't have done this to a mere man, that is why we are told that Melchizedek was, “**a priest of the Most High God**.” And it is here in this phrase where we see the first of five qualities that makes Jesus by way of Melchizedek superior to Aaron and the Levitical priesthood.

1. Vs. 1 “**Priest of the Most High God**”: The first way in which Melchizedek is superior to the Aaronic Priesthood has to do with **the quantity of people effected by Melchizedek's priesthood when compared to Aaron's**. The key to noting this superiority is in the use of the phrase **Most High God**. When God choose to reveal

Himself by use of the word Yahweh He did so by declaring *His name as the unique Covenant name that was used exclusively for Israel.* The Levitical priests were priests for Yahweh, they served Him and His people Israel and no other. That describes a Levitical priesthood that was *NATIONALISTIC* in origin, *exclusively for the Hebrews or converts to Judaism.* But that is not how God is described in Genesis 14:18 or here in Hebrews, instead God is described in a more *UNIVERSAL* name *El Elyon* which is a name that represents *the God over heaven and earth.* Here we learn that *the Melchizedekian Priesthood was above national distinctions and was instead universal in nature.* Jesus is the Messiah over Jews and Gentiles, not just over Israel but over the world! This is further illustrated in the fact that the Melchizedekian Priesthood came into existence hundreds of years before the Levitical Priesthood. Of further interest it is interesting to note that only after this encounter with Melchizedek did Abraham speak to the king of Sodom using a combination of the national name along with the universal name of God.

2. Vs. 1-2 **“King”**: The second thing we note is both in verse 1 and 2 where no less than four times Melchizedek is referred to as king. The comparison is obvious as the Levitical priesthood forbid any sort of ruler-ship being associated with it. Israel never knew this kind of authority in the priesthood though it was clearly predicted in Zech. 6:13 where we read, *“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.”* As such what we see that is superior is that Melchizedek’s priest had more authority because it was also a Royal priesthood.
3. Vs. 2 **“King of righteousness and King of peace”**: The third aspect of the superiority

of the Melchizedekian Priesthood looks at the specific aspects of that royalty in the twofold quality of His reign as “*He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace.*” That is what Jesus gives us today! He can give you what only he is. These names reveal that: **We need what He is in order to be what he was!**

- a. First He is the, “**King of Righteousness**”: **He is the one who has the secret of right living, the divine plan that results in right behavior.** He is the king of that, he controls it.
  - b. Second, He is also the “**King of Peace**”. **He is the king of inner peace; He alone has the power to give us the right frame of mind.** He holds in His hand the secret of inner calm, that sense within that gives **poise, power** and **purpose** irrespective of what turmoil and confusion is going on around us.
4. Vs. 3a “**Without father, without mother, without genealogy**”: The word “**without genealogy**” only appears here in all of Greek literature the reason for this is that it can fit no other person in history and would make no sense to anyone else. Jesus was chosen because of WHO He is, NOT because of where He came from. The point the writer is making has to do with **continuity** here: “*He is without father or mother or genealogy..*” **What this verse says is that there is no mention made of Melchizedek's ancestry, his pedigree, record of his birth or death.** There are two possibilities in this regard:
- a. It may mean that Melchizedek was a perfectly normal man and that all these things were true of him, but none of the normal things were recorded.
  - b. Or it could suggest that Melchizedek was a pre-incarnate manifestation of Jesus.
- Either way the silence in the record by Moses as interpreted by the writer of Hebrews is taken as an illustration of the eternal, changeless, PERSONAL, unending priesthood.** The point the author is making practically to his readers deals with **Availability!** What this practically means to us is that Jesus is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year, throughout every year

over each and every lifetime. Or as the writer will later say in Hebrews 13:5 “***I will NEVER leave you nor forsake you.***” *Because Jesus is High Priest in the order of Melchizedek those that belong to Him are never out of his presence, never shut off from His resources, never separated from his wisdom, His peace, or His truth.*

5. Vs. 3b “***Having neither beginning of Days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.***”: This final aspect of the superiority of **Melchizedek’s priesthood when compared to Aaron’s** deals with the fact that his is eternal and not temporary. A Levitical priest served only from the age of 25 until they were 50. No priest no matter how good, faithful or talented could serve more than 25 years. They were all temporary. Further more the priesthood began in the wilderness when the covenant was established with Moses at the giving of the law until it ended at the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. But what the writer says is that **Melchizedek’s priesthood** had no dispensation attached to it! Jesus abides as our great High priest without end because He lives forever and because as a High Priest in the order of **Melchizedek’s priesthood** is also forever!

In the final analysis of the first three verse of chapter 7 we realize five superiorities of **Melchizedek’s priesthood** as it is: **Universal, royal, righteous and peaceful, personal and eternal!** Folks, **Jesus is just want we need,** He is the very Person we have been looking for! Someone has well said that when we consider Jesus His name makes a perfect acronym for us: J-E-S-U-S, “**Just Exactly Suits Us Sinners.**”