

Salvation – God’s Way for All People – Lesson 2

August 4 & August 11, 2013

Class 2 – Integrating Melchizedek into our Understanding of Salvation

A) Melchizedek – King of Righteousness and Establishes Messianic Priesthood

Who is this Melchizedek?

- Name means “King of Righteousness”
- Priest and king of Salem, “Old Jerusalem before it was the Holy City”
- Mentioned only Genesis and Psalm are the only two Old Testament references to Melchizedek
- He existed and occupied the land before the Israelites arrived through Abraham
- He was the high priest of the Canaanites in old Jerusalem
- He exercised both royal and priestly prestige, supreme authority over the city
- Scriptures hail him as the Prototype of the Davidic Messiah, Above Abraham and Aaron and precursor to Jesus
- Melchizedek is not found on the register of the only line of legitimate priests, no record of his name, his father’s name, nor his mother’s name, no evidence points out his line of descent from Aaron
- Was he pagan by our definitions?

Genesis 14:17-20

¹⁷ After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley). ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, ¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. ²⁰ And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.” Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Psalm 110:4

The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

Hebrews 5:4-10

And no one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.” And he says in another place, “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” ⁷ During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰ and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6:20

²⁰ where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:1-28

This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, ² and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.” ³ Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest

forever. ⁴ Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! ⁵ Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from their fellow Israelites—even though they also are descended from Abraham. ⁶ This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. ⁷ And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater. ⁸ In the one case, the tenth is collected by people who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. ⁹ One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, ¹⁰ because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor. ¹¹ If perfection could have been attained through the Leviticus priesthood—and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood—why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? ¹² For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. ¹³ He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. ¹⁵ And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, ¹⁶ one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is declared: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

¹⁸ The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God. ²⁰ And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, ²¹ but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever.’”

²² Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant. ²³ Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. ²⁶ Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men in all their weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Key Points:

- More written about him in the Dead Sea writings from Essene sect in Qumran (Apocrypha)
- Abraham acknowledged his authority and divine priesthood
- Typified a priest who did not get their position from family or a system of earthbound laws
- Inferiority of Leviticus priesthood; Not a priestly descendent, but appointed by God in a special way from his earthly genealogy
- Jesus relation to the order of Melchizedek’s priesthood established
- He existed and occupied the land before the Israelites arrived through Abraham
- Scriptures hail him as the Prototype of the Davidic Messiah, Above Abraham and Aaron and precursor to Jesus
- Melchizedek worshipped God, was saved and would have been classified a “Pagan” by the Jews during that time or at best a Gentile.

B) Jesus Blood Purchased for Every Tribe, Language, People and Nation

- Jesus, The Lamb, takes the Book Of Life
- Scope of Christ’s redemptive work includes all human beings regardless of tribe, tongue, people or nation
- All made into priests with direct access to God and worship
- Does not sound exclusionary due to race, time, geography or age lived

Revelation 5:6-10

⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.” ⁶ Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits^[a] of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign^[b] on the earth.”

Key Points:

- Scope of Christ’s redemptive work includes all human beings regardless of tribe, tongue, people or nation
- All made into priests with direct access to God and worship

C) God’s Wisdom Revealed But Not Believed - 1 Corinthians 1:18-21

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.” ²⁰ Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since **in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him**, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. ²² Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength

Key Points:

- Couple of meanings for Vs 21 “In the wisdom of God” 1) referring to man’s failure to observe the revelation of God present in nature, 2) process of cross
- Later part of Vs 21 is God offering His Son as a redemptive way due to man’s inability to know him described in the first part of 21
- No esoteric wisdom, no reflective wisdom, no rhetorical wisdom leads to a faith in God that saves

Group Questions:

1. With the high praise and words for Melchizedek, he was obviously “Saved” and believed in the One True God (as defined in Hebrews Ch 11). Since he was a Gentile/Pagan that lived before the Israelites arrived, how could he have been saved?
2. Without the benefit of the God’s Old Testament Covenant Promise, Law or Christ and explain his salvation process?
3. Being saved thousands of years before Jesus and before the Israelites entered his land, where did Melchizedek get spiritual guidance, inspiration or knowledge of the One True God?
4. Explain how you believe the Melchizedek society knew and worshipped the one and true God?
5. Discuss Revelation 5:9 about “all people” having chance to be saved?
6. How might this integrate with the thinking of salvation as a eternal process for all people?

7. Do you believe that there is a singular process for salvation that has been in place since the beginning of time for all people that have lived?
8. How is Jesus' statement in John 14:6-14 consistent with a singular salvation process for Old Testament and all others?
9. Does John 14:6-14 define God's new path to salvation after Jesus death? What about people who have not heard of Jesus or understand about sin and salvation? Can there be salvation for those people?
10. Can there be someone who has not heard about Jesus and still is saved through Faith in the True Living God?
11. Carefully read 1 Corinthians 1:21 and talk about "In wisdom of God" section, do you believe it is referring to God general revelation through nature and other spiritual revelations, which is why Jesus came later?