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[HOME](#) | [STUDY INDEX](#)

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The Melchizedekian Priesthood Pt 2

Hebrews 5:1-10

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Good morning, Bereans. In our [last study, we looked at the Melchizedekian priesthood](#) and this morning I want to look at it a little more. In dealing with this subject, I want you to understand something the Bible tells us about it.

In Hebrews chapter 5, the author introduces the subject of Melchizedek. He tells his readers that Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. In the first 10 verses of chapter 5, he references Psalm 110:4 twice. You would think that the logical sequence of our author's argument would have led him on to expound the significance of Christ's being a high priest *"after the order of Melchizedek."* And he does this in Chapters 7-10, but first he turns aside to address some words of particular admonition to his reader's spiritual condition. He says,

About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. Hebrews 5:11 ESV

"About this"—is a neuter pronoun referring to the teaching of the Melchizedekian priesthood of the Lord Yeshua the Christ. About this priesthood, the writer has *"much to say"*—his subsequent discussion is indeed lengthy (7:1-10:18) as well as deep. He anticipated that this discussion would be *"hard to explain"*—this is the Greek word *dusermeneutos*, which comes from the words *hermeneuo* ("to interpret") and *doos* ("hard or difficult").

Difficulty of explanation may lie in one of three directions: (1) The teacher is not fully instructed and, therefore, cannot explain the material, (2) The subject itself could be deep and difficult, and (3) The hearers are too lazy to work at understanding. In this case, our writer says the problem lies in the hearers. He charges these Hebrew believers with being *"dull of hearing."* The word "dull" is *nothros*, which comes from

two Greek words—one meaning "no" and the other meaning "to push." The meaning, then, is "no push" thus to be slow or sluggish. It is used only here and in 6:12 in the New Testament. It appears in 1 Clement 34:1, where it refers to a lazy and careless workman. Here it has the idea of mental laziness. So dull hearing doesn't mean there is anything wrong with your physical ears. It means there is something wrong with your heart. The heart is not eager and diligent to embrace the promises and turn them into faith and patience. If this is said of first-century believers, what would the author of Hebrews say to twenty-first century believers? The author's audience may have been too lazy to work at understanding. But today our problem is most likely a combination of all three:

1. The teachers are not fully instructed.
2. The subject itself is deep and difficult.
3. The hearers are too lazy to work at understanding.

This subject is not fluff and stuff. This is something we have to put some work into.

So, who is Melchizedek that we meet in Genesis 14? Some think that Melchizedek was a preincarnate Christ: This view teaches that Melchizedek was a theophany of the Second Person of the Trinity. A theophany is a preincarnate appearance of Christ. But Hebrew 5:1 says, *"For every high priest chosen from among men."* Hebrew 2:14 says, *"he had to be made like his brothers in every respect."* The preincarnate Christ was not a man. Hebrews 7:3 says he was *"resembling the Son of God."* It does not say that he "was" the Son of God. There is a difference between being "like" something and actually being that thing. The word *"resembling"* is from the Greek word *aphomoioo*, which means "assimilate closely, facsimile." A dog is not like a dog; it is a dog. And if Melchizedek is "like" Christ, then he is not Christ.

Melchizedek is a type or prototype of Christ. A type is a prefigurement. It's not a one-to-one equivalent in all aspects. These Old Covenant pictures are called "types" and Christ is their fulfillment. There's much in Scripture that comes under the category of typology. Typology is that part of theology which studies the Old Covenant pictures of the person and work of Christ. A "type" is something or someone that prefigures the person to come. There are many types of Christ in the Tanakh. In Hebrews 7, Melchizedek is a type of Christ. These types are always a frail illustration at best. They are pictures meant to give us insight from an illustrative point of view.

I see Melchizedek as a man, whose history is treated topologically. This is the most common view among modern scholars. Melchizedek is presented as a historical figure, a normal human being whom God uses as a type. The writer of Hebrews says,

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. Hebrews 7:1-2 ESV

Four times in two verses we are told that this man was a king. This was something totally foreign to the Aaronic and Levitical priests in Israel. The two offices of king and priest were never held in combination by a priest in Israel. Speaking of Messiah, Zechariah said:

It is he who shall 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." Zechariah 6:13 ESV

Zechariah prophesied that the Messiah was to be a priest who ruled upon a throne. Melchizedek is presented as the type of the Messianic priest-king. Last week we said that there are only two priesthoods mentioned in the Bible—the Melchizedekian priesthood and the Aaronic priesthood. The writer of Hebrews compares these two priesthoods. We know when the Aaronic priesthood started but when did the Melchizedekian priesthood start?

If there are in fact only two priesthoods mentioned in the Bible, I would assume, (because I can't prove it) that Adam would have been the first priest. Before we go further, we need to be sure that we understand what a priest is. What are the duties and responsibilities of a priest?

The priest was a go-between or an intercessor between man and God. Such a person was necessary because of the Holiness of God. Holiness means God is totally separate from fallen man and, in a real sense, unapproachable. For this reason, God ordained that certain men who were ritually cleansed in a special way should approach him on behalf of the people. These men were chosen by God for the office. They would give sacrifice to God which symbolically atoned or paid for the people's sins.

We could put it this way: a priest stands before God on behalf of man, and before man on behalf of God. The key role, the one which separates priesthood from any other role, is to offer sacrifice to atone for the sins of the people. Priests were ordained by God do **offer sacrifices**—

For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. Hebrews 5:1 ESV

The priest shall offer the sin offering, to make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. And afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. Leviticus 14:19 ESV

And the priest shall use them, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge. Leviticus 15:15 ESV

Priests were also to teach the Law–

and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them by Moses." Leviticus 10:11 ESV

Then they said,

"Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words." Jeremiah 18:18 ESV

To Levi God says,

They shall teach Jacob your rules and Israel your law; they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar. Deuteronomy 33:10 ESV

So, the priest was to teach God's law and offer sacrifice for those who broke the law. The reason that I think the Melchizedekian Priesthood is so important is because Melchizedek gives us a glimpse of God's work in people outside of the Bible's storyline and because his priesthood was universal.

We may think that once Adam and Eve got kicked out of the garden that that was it and God had nothing to do with man until Abram. We may get ideas like that from verses like the following:

He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and rules to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his rules. Praise the LORD! Psalms 147:19-20 ESV

So, did Yahweh give Israel and only Israel His statutes and ordinances? No. The text says, *"He has not dealt thus with any other nation."* So, Israel was the only nation to receive his Law but were they the only people to receive it? Was Israel the only people to ever know Yahweh's rules for their life? No, Adam and Eve knew Yahweh. They dwelt in Eden, the Temple of Yahweh. But because of their sin, they were put out of Eden. I used to believe that once that happened that was the end of Yahweh's communication with man until he called Abram.

Even though man is removed from the garden Temple, Yahweh is still communicating with man. Notice these three very important verses:

Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Genesis 5:22 ESV

Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. Genesis 5:24 ESV

These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. Genesis 6:9 ESV

"Walked with God"—is a very significant phrase. How can you walk with God if you don't know what he wants from you? This phrase only occurs three times in the Bible, and none in the New Testament. When God walks with men, it is a really rare thing. The first occasion of this was in Genesis 3, *"Yahweh God walking in the garden."* Adam was in that Garden; Adam walked with God in that Garden/Temple. Walking with God depicts a direct divine encounter, a direct divine relationship. Sometimes we think (or at least I did) that the people from Adam to Abraham were ignorant of Yahweh and His ways, but these men walked with Yahweh; they knew Him.

We see this idea of men knowing Yahweh very early in the story of Job.

I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food. Job 23:12 ESV

Job must have had commandments from Yahweh in order to treasure them. So, from the beginning, men had teaching from Yahweh. We also see this in Genesis 7.

Then the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, Genesis 7:1-2 ESV

The Mosaic Law would not be given for over a thousand years, so how did they know clean and unclean animals? Yahweh must have men communicating with man. Early in the texts, we seem men offering sacrifices to Yahweh.

After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken

of me what is right, as my servant Job has." So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what the LORD had told them, and the LORD accepted Job's prayer. Job 42:7-9 ESV

Job is said to be one of the earliest books of the Bible and here we see men sacrificing to Yahweh.

and Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill country and called his kinsmen to eat bread. They ate bread and spent the night in the hill country. Genesis 31:54 ESV

Here we see Jacob offering sacrifice. Was Jacob a priest? Offering sacrifices was a function of a priest. Of what order was his priesthood? Was this in line with the Melchizedek priesthood? What other priesthood was there? The term Priest is only used seven times prior to its being used of the Aaronic priesthood.

Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword." Exodus 5:3 ESV

There must have been priests of Melchizedek in Egypt who would offer sacrifices to Yahweh. Some teach that the Melchizedekian Priesthood was given to Adam in the Garden, passed on to Abel and Seth, his sons, and then given to all the Patriarchs going forward—including Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and through Moses. We can't prove this, but I guess that it is possible. I think that the Melchizedekian priesthood began with Adam and continued until the Levitical priesthood was given. I think this because there are only two priesthoods mentioned in the Bible and because the Law and priesthood go together.

For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. Hebrews 7:12 ESV

So, when the Law was given at Sinai, the type of the Melchizedekian Priesthood ended and the Aaronic Priesthood was established. As I said last week, this happened at the Old Covenant feast of Shavuot/Pentecost. This priesthood continued until the birth of the church on Pentecost where it shifted to the universal and everlasting priesthood of Melchizedek. If this is the case, then the Aaronic priesthood was sandwiched in between the type and antitype of the Melchizedekian Priesthood. Bracketed by the feast of Shavuot/Pentecost. So, I guess we could say that Israel was a parenthesis.

Therefore, he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the

service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 2:17 ESV

This is the first overt reference in Hebrews to the topic of "priesthood." Yeshua became just like us, a human, so that he could become our high priest, and he became our high priest "to make" (or "for the purpose of making") atonement for our sins. In other words, the reason Yeshua became incarnate into humanity is so that he might become our high priest, and the reason why he became our high priest is so that he might atone for our sins.

This tells us that both his incarnation and his high priesthood are said to be for the purpose of atoning for our sins, which means removing our sins. So, Yeshua's high priesthood is of the utmost importance.

Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Yeshua, the apostle and high priest of our confession, Hebrews 3:1 ESV

Since then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Yeshua, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. Hebrews 4:14 ESV

The author tells us that Yeshua is a great high priest. Do you understand how radical the claim that Yeshua is a high priest would be to the Jews of that day?

to be a reminder to the people of Israel, so that no outsider, who is not of the descendants of Aaron, should draw near to burn incense before the LORD, lest he become like Korah and his company—as the LORD said to him through Moses. Numbers 16:40 ESV

This law was so strict on this point, that not even the other Levites could engage in priestly activity on pain of death (Numbers 18:1-3) – this privilege was exclusively granted to the sons of Aaron. The Jews were well aware of this, so the writer of Hebrews demonstrates from their own Law how Yeshua is a High Priest not in the order of Aaron but of Melchizedek.

So also, Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." Hebrews 5:5-6 ESV

Here the author quotes from two passages in the Psalms—Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. Both of these passages, according to the author of Hebrews, describe God (the Father) glorifying His Son. Psalm 2 is about the reign of Messiah.

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. Then he [Yahweh] **will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, "As for me, I [Yahweh] have set my King on Zion, my holy hill." I [Yahweh] will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me [Yahweh], "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Psalms 2:4-7 ESV**

We have seen in other studies this idea of two Yahweh's, also known as the two powers in heaven. This psalm presents two Yahwehs. The first is the one mentioned in verses 4-5 who starts speaking in verse 6. The second Yahweh is introduced in verse 7 by the first Yahweh. The first Yahweh is then quoted as saying to the second Yahweh, "*You are my Son! This day I have begotten you!*" This plainly reveals two Yahwehs, one a Father, and the other, His Son. The psalm presents the Son as honored and glorified by the Father. For example, the Father says to the Son in verse 8:

Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. Psalms 2:8 ESV

The word "heritage" here is from the Hebrew *nachalah*, which means, "something inherited - heritage, to inherit, inheritance, possession." What is Yahweh's possession at the time this Psalm was written?

But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day. Deuteronomy 4:20 ESV

The word "inheritance" is *nachala*. Israel is Yahweh's inheritance. We see this in Deuteronomy 32.

When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage. Deuteronomy 32:8-9 ESV

The words "inheritance" and "heritage" are both *nachalah*. Israel is Yahweh's possession, but the promise is that Yahweh will someday make the "nations" the Son's possession. The nations that were dispossessed at Babel will once again be Yahweh's possession.

So, Melchizedek is connected to the fate of the nations because he is the priest of the Most High God. It was the most High God that divorced the nations in the first place back in the days of Babel. These themes are connected.

So also, Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I

have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." Hebrews 5:5-6 ESV

Then the author of Hebrews quotes from Psalm 110 in verse 6.

A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. Psalms 110:1-5 ESV

Psalm 110 is the most quoted psalm in the New Testament. The psalm begins by declaring that this future king will be given greater honor, power, and authority than any human king before him: he sits at Yahweh's right hand, the place of highest honor as Yahweh's vice-regent and representative (110:1). As such, he derives his authority from Yahweh and exercises Yahweh's own royal rule, resulting in the subjection of the king's enemies (110:2). He rules from Zion, which is the place from which the kings of Judah ruled. Likewise, he will rule with a scepter and gain victories over his enemies. This language is similar to Jacob's blessing of Judah found in Genesis 49: 9-10. So, this demonstrates that the one who is sworn into the Melchizedekian priesthood is a kingly Judahite figure.

But this messianic figure isn't only a king—he's also a priest in the order of Melchizedek (110:4). That's the first four verses. And now Psalm 110 turns eschatological.

The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. Psalms 110:5-6 ESV

"The day of his wrath"—is the Day of the Lord. These enemy kings represent the cosmic powers of chaos that Yahweh defeats through his ultimate Melchizedekian Priest-King on behalf of Israel and all the other nations.

Here again, we have two Yahwehs. The first is mentioned by name in verse 1, where He speaks to "my lord" who is told to sit at His (Yahweh's) right hand. Then in verse 5 we read of the *"Yahweh at your right hand"* showing that the "my lord" at the right hand of Yahweh in verse 1 is actually Yahweh as well. Also, as was the case in Psalm

2, we here have a begotten Yahweh who is to rule over his enemies and who is honored by the other Yahweh.

What is unique about this Psalm is that the begotten Yahweh is sworn into an everlasting priesthood *"after the order of Melchizedek."* The author of Hebrews is quoting these passages in order to show that there is indeed another priesthood to be established, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek. Any Jew who accepts the prophecies of David must accept this reality.

Psalm 110 is quoted again in Hebrews 7 where the author goes over and explains the Genesis 14 text about Melchizedek. Chapter 7 is devoted to demonstrating the role of Christ as a priest after the order of Melchizedek. The writer shows that Christ is superior to the Levitical priesthood established in the Old Covenant and demonstrates that the only priesthood existing today is Christ, in the order of Melchizedek. Verses 1-3 outline the history of Melchizedek, while verses 4-10 illustrate His superiority to Levi.

For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." Hebrews 7:17 ESV

Here he quotes Psalm 110 again to demonstrate that it had, in fact, been prophesied that there would arise another priest after a different order than that of Aaron. The Aaronic priests became such because of *"a legal regulation about physical descent,"* but this priest who would come *"after the order of Melchizedek"* would gain his priesthood *"by the power of an indestructible life,"* as indicated by the fact that he was to be *"a priest forever."*

The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Psalms 110:4 ESV

Notice that Hebrews says that,

For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. Hebrews 7:13 ESV

We know that Yeshua came from Judah, as our author also points out in the following verse.

For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. Hebrews 7:14 ESV

So, Yeshua is a high priest of the order of Melchizedek which is a universal and everlasting priesthood. Let's go back to Genesis 14 and look at what verse 18 says.

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) Genesis 14:18 ESV

Melchizedek, just as Christ would later do, brought out bread and wine. This, in and of itself, establishes a connection. What is especially significant here, though, is the parenthetical note in the verse. The author of this passage has inserted this note here as if to connect the bread and the wine with Melchizedek's priesthood. To paraphrase his meaning, it is as if he is saying, "*Melchizedek brought out bread and wine (he was, after all, a priest.)*"

Just as Melchizedek, who was the King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine to Abraham, who would later receive God's blessing, so Yeshua, as the King of God's Kingdom, brought forth bread and wine to his disciples, who would later receive God's blessing to become the very foundation in God's Kingdom. (Matthew 26:26–29).

The coming about of this other priesthood was also spoken of in another text known as The Testament of Levi.

The Testament of Levi Chapter 18

1 "When vengeance will have come upon them from the Lord, the priesthood will lapse."

2 "And then the Lord will raise up a new priest to whom all the words of the Lord will be revealed. He shall effect the judgment of truth over the earth for many days."

3 "And his star shall rise in heaven like a king; kindling the light of knowledge as day is illumined by the sun. And he shall be extolled by the whole inhabited world."

18:8 "For he shall give the majesty of the Lord to those who are his sons in truth forever. And there shall be no successor for him from generation to generation forever."

9 "And in his priesthood the nations shall be multiplied in knowledge on the earth, and they shall be illumined by the grace of the Lord, but Israel shall be diminished by her ignorance and darkened by her grief. In his priesthood sin shall cease and lawless men shall rest from their evil deeds, and righteous men shall find rest in him."

Clearly, the priesthood described here is not the Aaronic priesthood; rather, the things said concerning it are the same things said concerning the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek in Psalm 110.

In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. Hebrews 8:13 ESV

Hebrews here is speaking of the covenant specifically as it relates to the priesthood, as is made plain by the following verse.

Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. Hebrews 9:1 ESV

In chapter 8, the author of Hebrews has demonstrated that, according to these various prophecies, when the new priesthood arises, the old will pass away. What need would there be for it when the thing to which it pointed has already arrived and the new priesthood, which is able to accomplish its task, is on the scene and in operation—especially since the typical priesthood was unable to accomplish these things.

In agreement with Hebrews, The Testament of Levi also declared:

5:2 And He said to me: Levi, I have given thee the blessings of the priesthood until I come and sojourn in the midst of Israel.

4:4 And there shall be given to thee a blessing, and to all thy seed, until the Lord shall visit all the Gentiles in His tender mercies forever.

18:1 ...the priesthood will lapse." 2 "And then the Lord will raise up a new priest to whom all the words of the Lord will be revealed.

When a new priesthood is established, the old priesthood functions no more.

Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. Thus, it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

Hebrews 9:22-24 ESV

The author of Hebrews shows that even when the tabernacle was first being erected, Moses was plainly told that it was to be built according to the pattern shown him in the mount. In other words, the earthly tabernacle was made according to the pattern of the heavenly tabernacle and was thus but a sketch, or a shadow, of that heavenly tabernacle. So it is that from the beginning, the earthly priestly system was only to point us to the heavenly priestly system. The earthly sanctuary and priesthood, *"is symbolic for the present age."* (Hebrews 9:9), governed by *"regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation."* (Hebrews 9:10). Expanding on this, the author of Hebrews says:

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Hebrews 10:1 ESV

Since the earthly services could not actually accomplish the work of atonement and since God does not delight in the blood of bulls and goats, when the antitypical system would be put in place, the typical system would pass away. And indeed it did.

In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. Hebrews 8:13 ESV

The Aaronic priesthood has vanished away. The true Melchizedekian priesthood has replaced it forever. The Melchizedekian priesthood is everlasting and universal. This Melchizedekian priesthood arrived in Acts 2 at Pentecost. This is made clear by the New Testament writers.

but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days. Acts 20:6 ESV

What does this tell us? Where did Paul celebrate the Passover? The days of Unleavened Bread was the feast which lasted seven days immediately after Passover. So, they had Passover and Unleavened Bread in Philippi. What's the problem with that? Under the Levitical law, all males were required to keep the three pilgrim feasts at the temple in Jerusalem. What were the pilgrim feasts? Passover, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

If Paul had been under the system of the earthly temple (the Levitical system), he would have been breaking the law on this point. But, since he was under the priesthood of Melchizedek, his priestly activity was to be done in connection with the heavenly temple and, therefore, was not centered around the temple in Jerusalem. Notice what Paul says to the Philippians.

Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. Philippians 4:16-18 ESV

The material gift sent to Paul by the Philippians was a fragrant offering and an acceptable sacrifice. Is this an acceptable sacrifice in the Levitical order? No. Yet, it is

an acceptable sacrifice in the system in which Paul operated. Let me show you one more.

Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel. 1 Corinthians 9:13-14 ESV

The idea here is that just as the priests of the typical service obtained their sustenance through the work of the temple, so the priests of the antitypical service, working in connection with the anti-typical temple, are to obtain their sustenance by their work.

Believers, we are all priests today in the order of Melchizedek. If Christ is a priest of Melchizedek, then so are we. How many times have you heard me say, "Believers share everything Christ is and has because of our union with Christ." Peter tells us that all believers in the New Covenant are priests.

you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Yeshua the Christ. 1 Peter 2:5 ESV

As New Covenant priests, we offer up living sacrifices. We are priests ministering the Gospel of our God! We represent the Gospel in our work, family life, and relationships. Our conversation either glorifies Christ in the Gospel or detracts from the Gospel. The way we treat others either adorns the Gospel or denigrates it. We cannot sit on the fence when it comes to the priestly roles.

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