

Thought for Sunday 13th June 2021
Pastor Gordon Hamilton

Hebrews 7:1-28

Over the past few weeks, even months, the name Melchizedek keeps cropping up. He is getting a lot of mentions even though it all flows from just a few verses in Genesis 14:18-24, and the majority of that is what Abraham is saying to Melchizedek, and in fact it is just verse 18, where it says; *'Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High,'* the next two verses say; *'and he blessed Abram, saying, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.'* From that comes a small mention in Psalm 110 and here in Hebrews we see Jesus is likened to Melchizedek. The reason, as I have said before is because they didn't know where Melchizedek came from, he just appeared, or where he went afterwards, he was never seen again, but he came with the gift of bread and wine, and we share bread and wine at the communion, in remembrance of Jesus at The Lord's supper. We know that Melchizedek wasn't a priest of the Levitical line, as the Levitical line wasn't established until the time of Moses, and that was many years after the death of Abraham. The name Melchizedek means 'king of righteousness,' and the name king of Salem means 'king of peace.' As verse 3 says; *'Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.'* Now you may say that we have two lists of the genealogy of Jesus, in Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38, but we have to remember that Jesus was born of a virgin and these two genealogy lists go back from Joseph, Mary's betrothed, and as it says in Luke 3:23; *'Jesus was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph.'* We know that Jesus wasn't Joseph's son he was God's Son. There had to have been something special about Melchizedek for Abraham to give him 10% of the plunder and getting a blessing in reply. Verse 14 tells us; *'it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah,'* so rather than being a Levitical priest, as it says in verse 17; *'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'* What was it Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:17; *'Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.'* Here in Hebrews 7:19 we read; *'for the law made nothing perfect.'* And it is true, even today I tried to find out how many laws there are in the UK. Nobody has a clue, not even Google. Does it make the UK perfect? Of course not, all it does it fill up the legal system with cases waiting to be heard. Going right back to the beginning, God gave Adam one rule, Genesis 2:17, *'you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,'* and I'm sure we all know what happened in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3 says it all. Then God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, did that make any difference? No, then the Jews made 300+ laws to surround the Ten Commandments, did that help? No. today in the UK, or whatever country you are living in, there will be hundreds, possibly thousands of laws which get broken every day. Many of them are now outdated laws, made for a specific situation at a specific time and have never been rescinded. In the UK for instance if you owned a Hackney Carriage, even if it is a motorised one, you should have a bale of hay on the passenger seat. That was fine when the vehicle was pulled by a horse. The law may have been changed now but it was in force until not that many years ago. So why did Jesus come? To give us a better hope by which we can draw closer to God. That is why he is in the order of Melchizedek, because Jesus is The King of Righteousness and The King of Peace. V22; *'Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.'* And Jesus lives forever, and because he lives forever he has a permanent priesthood and is able to save completely, he always lives to intercede for us. The end of the chapter ties the whole thing together, verses 26-27; *'Such a high priest truly meets our need – one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart*

from sinners, exalted above the heavens. 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.' Our passage ends saying that high priests are appointed by men, whereas Jesus was appointed, or ordained by God and being the perfect high priest, there was no need for another. Most high priests offer sacrifices on behalf of mankind and themselves, but with Jesus there is no need for any further sacrifice because the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ himself, gave himself for us, the sinless for the sinner, the perfect sacrifice, purely because God loves us. Amen.

Hallelujah! Sing to Jesus;
His the sceptre, His the throne;
Hallelujah! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark, the songs of holy Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood:
'Jesus out of every nation
Hath redeemed us by His blood.'

Hallelujah! not as orphans
Are we left in sorrow now;
Hallelujah! He is near us,
Faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the clouds from sight received Him
When the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget His promise,
'I am with you ever more'?

Hallelujah! Bread of heaven,
Thou on earth our food, our stay;
Hallelujah! here the sinful
Flee to Thee from day to day.
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
Earth's Redeemer, plead for me
Where the songs of all the sinless
Sweep across the crystal sea.

Hallelujah! sing to Jesus;
His the sceptre, His the throne;
Hallelujah! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark, the songs of holy Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood:
'Jesus out of every nation
Hath redeemed us by His blood.'