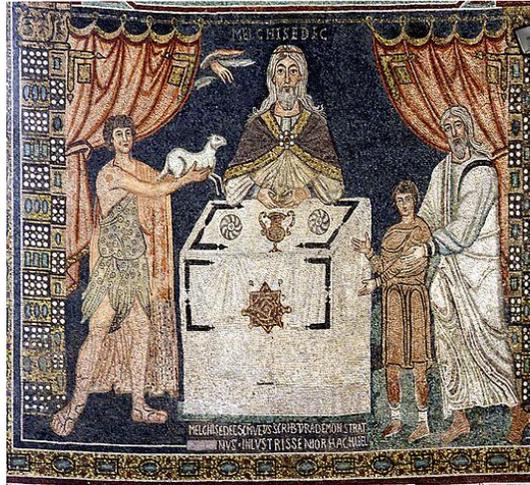


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The Order of Melchizedek

Hebrews 7:1-10

Bernard Bell



Background

The central teaching of Hebrews is about Jesus as our great high priest. But how can he be a priest since he was born into the royal line of Judah, not the priestly line of Levi? He is a priest “according to the order of Melchizedek.” So who is this mysterious character Melchizedek, and what is his priestly order? (*Sacrifices of Abel, Melchizedek, and Abraham; 7th century, mosaic, Basilica of Sant'Appolinare, Ravenna, Italy*)

Sermon Text: Heb 7:1-10 (NIV)

1 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.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- c. What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

2. Sunday questions

- a. Bernard's introduction was focused on giving. If you are willing to share, when the giving portion of our Sunday service happens, what do you think about? Has not passing the plates on Sundays changed how you think about giving or the way you do your giving?
- b. The writer of Hebrews repeatedly encourages his readers to "draw near" to Jesus. How, practically, are you drawing near to Jesus right now? What would it look like to "draw near" to Him this week?
- c. After meeting Melchizedek, God assured Abraham that he didn't need the spoils of the war because He, God, was his greatest treasure, his greatest gift. Is God, Himself, your greatest gift such that He is all you need (and therefore, you don't need the new car, the new house, the new _____)? Why or why not?
- d. Bernard said this, "What we don't do is give in order to be blessed. We give out of gratitude because it is all about Jesus, our great high priest." Would you say that you typically give out of gratitude? Why or why not?
- e. Finish this sentence: Jesus is so great because _____ . Why do you finish the sentence this way?