

Experiencing Christ in the Book of Hebrews (Part 2 – Hebrews 7-10)

Meeting 1

Jesus Christ - our Great, Heavenly High Priest
According to the Order of Melchizedek

The previous conference in South Korea was concerning Hebrews 1 to 6. Now we come to the second part, Hebrews 7 to 10, which is about our Lord Jesus Christ as our great, heavenly High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. In Hebrews 8:1 the writer says, *“Now **this is the main point** of the things we are saying: **We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.**”* This is the most important point of everything he had previously written! The first thing that comes to our mind about Jesus Christ is that He is our Savior who died on the cross to take away our sins, who resurrected and became the life-giving Spirit to come into us that we might be born again. Another thing we might say is that Christ is our life (Col. 3:4) and that for us, to live is Christ (Phil. 1:21). But I doubt that many Christians know Christ as the great, heavenly High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. How often, when you come to fellowship with the Lord, have you thought in your heart that you are talking with this heavenly, great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek? You just call Him, “Lord,” but have not addressed Him as, “O my great, heavenly High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.” We do not have the consciousness of Him as our heavenly High Priest because we have never come to this point. But Paul said that this is the main point!

Our Lord Jesus Christ is not just the King of kings sitting on the throne, but He is this wonderful, heavenly High Priest, whose function is so important, especially for us who know that we are the priesthood and

who are practicing the priestly service. If the Lord does not open our eyes to see that we Christians are priests serving Him as the priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5), that God's plan and goal is to have a kingdom of priests (Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9), to make each one of us a king and a priest unto His God and Father (Rev. 1:6; 5:10), then we will not realize the importance of Christ being this great, heavenly High Priest today. I hope that we will begin to appreciate and know Him as the great, heavenly High Priest. When we think of Christ who ascended on high, we think of Him sitting on the throne as the King. But we need to realize that as the King, He is the ruler over the kings of the earth; but to us, His people, He is the great, heavenly High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. This is a different aspect of the King.

Hebrews 6 says, *“where the forerunner has entered for us [into the true tabernacle], even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God...”* (Heb. 6:20-7:1a). So, our Lord Jesus ascended to the throne not only as our King, but also as our great, heavenly High Priest. Why did our Lord Jesus become a High Priest? Think back to the Scriptures concerning Aaron and his sons and the whole priesthood. You have to realize how important the priesthood is for God to fulfill His plan and purpose on this earth. The priesthood is so important!

The Importance of Melchizedek for the Priesthood

“For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him” (Heb. 7:1). This is the introduction the apostle wrote for Melchizedek. Already in Genesis 14:18-20, at the very beginning of the Bible, the Scripture reveals to us for the first time that there is a wonderful High Priest of the Most High God according to the order of Melchizedek, the king of Salem, who appeared to Abraham and brought him bread and wine and blessed him. Isn't that a wonderful picture? This is an amazing and a very important revelation in the Scripture given as early as in the time of Abraham, but no one pays attention to it. And it was mentioned in such a brief way, just three verses! Then, in the book of Hebrews, all of a sudden, the apostle brings us back to Genesis 14 and shows us how great our Lord Jesus is and what the main point is!

Of course, everything Christ accomplished is important, including His incarnation and His sacrifice on the cross as the sin offering, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Hebrews shows us that every high priest must offer gifts and sacrifices to God (Heb. 5:1-3). So, the Lord Jesus, when He died on the cross, was an offering brought as a sacrifice to fulfill God's plan; He was well-pleasing to God. We must see that whatever Christ did was related to His priesthood. This is why in Hebrews 7 and 8, Paul says: This is the main point - Melchizedek. He spent so much time in Chapter 7 introducing Christ as the Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God and showing us how great He is. Read these chapters many times and ask the Lord to open your eyes to see.

“For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all [the best of all that he had], first being translated as ‘king of righteousness’ and then also king of Salem, meaning ‘king of peace’” (Heb. 7:1-2). Melchizedek means King of righteousness. And He is also King of Salem, King of peace. At that time, nobody knew where Salem was. Psalm 76:2 says, *“In Salem also is His tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion.”* Many people say that Salem is actually Jerusalem, the city of peace. Isaiah 9:6 says that when our Lord Jesus came on this earth, He came as the Prince of peace. Righteousness and peace belong together. You cannot have peace without righteousness. There is no peace in this world because there is no righteousness. That is why there is so much war and quarreling – even among us Christians. As the great, heavenly High Priest, He is the King of peace and the King of righteousness. Remember these two important words: peace and righteousness. In Malachi 2:4-5, God's covenant with Levi is a covenant of life and peace. In our practice of the priesthood there must be life, peace and righteousness.

This righteousness is not our own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ. Righteousness does not mean, “I am right.” Everybody thinks they are right, and others are wrong; that is why we fight and quarrel. The result is that there is no peace. That is our own righteousness. Paul said that he did not want to be found in his own righteousness (Phil. 3:9a). Even if we are right, we are wrong because our person is wrong.

Sin dwells in our flesh; our self, our natural man, is fallen. So, it is not a matter of whether we are right or wrong – none of us is right. Only the Lord Jesus is right. He has never committed any sin. If there are ten commandments, and you keep one commandment, but you break nine commandments, you break them all (Jam. 2:10; Matt. 5:19; Deut. 27:26). You cannot just say you are right in the second commandment but not fulfill the rest of the commandments. That means everything you have done is actually wrong. So, when Paul wrote that he did not want to be found in his own righteousness, he realized that none of us is righteous (Rom. 3:10; Gal. 2:16). We want to be found in Him, in the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ and from God by faith (Phil. 3:9b). I lack the utterance to explain to you how much we need this King of righteousness, Melchizedek. We need Him to be our righteousness. Without Him, none of us is righteous. What about peace? Who can say he is a peaceful person? Since none of us is righteous, there is no peace. Just a little thing will ignite a quarrel or an argument. We need the great, heavenly High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek's Connection to the Priesthood through Abraham

This Melchizedek is *“without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor the end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually”* (Heb. 7:3). I do not know how Paul (who is definitely the writer of Hebrews) found out all these things just from Genesis 14. It must be because Melchizedek came out of nowhere and because it is written that He is the priest of the most High God (Gen. 14:18). And He met Abraham, our father of faith. We are all of the seed of Abraham. We, the priesthood, are connected to Melchizedek through Abraham.

All twelve tribes of the nation of Israel came from Abraham. When Abraham met Melchizedek, that relationship had an influence over all twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. *“Now consider how great this man [Melchizedek] was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils”* (Heb. 7:4). Abraham gave the best of the spoils, the tenth, to Melchizedek. Now the following verses, which are more important, link this deed to the tribe of Levi: *“And indeed those who are of the sons*

of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren [the rest of the eleven tribes] though they have come from the loins of Abraham; but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises...Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him” (vv. 5-6, 9-10).

This is a revelation that is hard to explain. How do you explain that the tribe of Levi was already in the loins of Abraham. Abraham did not give birth to Levi. He gave birth to Isaac; Isaac gave birth to Jacob; and Jacob gave birth to Levi – three generations later. But the writer of Hebrew tells us that because of the relationship of the Levites with the priesthood, the Levites already paid tithes to Melchizedek when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. We do not understand that because it is not in our concept. But you can see that the priesthood was already related to the faith of our father Abraham. This means that from the very time that God called Abraham out of Ur of Chaldea to lead him into the good land, the goal was to have a kingdom of priests. The priesthood was already there! God already saw and planned the priesthood in our father of faith, Abraham. This is too deep for us to understand. It is hard to explain; but you just have to see that when God called out Abraham, He already saw the priesthood in Abraham.

Upon entering the good land, the eleven tribes had to give tithes to God, which was given to the priests, the Levites. Because of Abraham’s tithing, God said very clearly that the tribe of Levi, the priesthood, should not have any inheritance in the good land, because the Lord God said, *“I am... your inheritance”* (Num. 18:20; Deut. 18:2). He Himself was their inheritance! So in these short few verses, it is clear that the priesthood is very important – and it already started in the loins of Abraham! *“Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him”* (Heb. 7:9-10). You can see the connection of Melchizedek to Abraham, and through Abraham to the tribe of Levi. And in Malachi you can see God’s special covenant with Levi, a covenant of life and peace

with the priesthood (Mal. 2:4-5). How important is the priesthood to you today? Even more so, how important the priesthood is to God!

Melchizedek Is Both King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God –
God's Plan with Us Is to Make Us Kings and Priests to God

This Melchizedek has two wonderful positions. He is the King of Salem, the King of peace and righteousness; at the same time, He is also the Priest of the Most High God. He is both King and Priest! What about you? In Revelation 1:5-6 you can see that God's plan is not only to save you, but to save you with the goal of making you a king and a priest unto God, just like Melchizedek! Do you see the relationship? That is why it is very important to see Melchizedek! Aaron was not a king, he was just a high priest, but not according to the order of Melchizedek. The order of Melchizedek is a special, high order. It is an unchangeable priesthood. So, our destiny is to become kings and priests unto God, just like Melchizedek. Our real profession today is to be a king and a priest. That is why we are waiting for the Lord to come and are preparing ourselves for this destiny!

To further emphasize this wonderful point, let us go to Psalm 110. Psalm 110:1 says, *"The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"* In Hebrews 1, Paul quoted this verse when he wrote about our Lord Jesus who ascended to the heavens and is now sitting on the throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:3); His scepter is a scepter of righteousness (Heb. 1:8), and He will make all His enemies on this whole earth His footstool (Heb. 1:13).

"The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion" (Psa. 110:2a). Why out of Zion? We are Zion today. Hebrews 12:22 says, *"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem..."* Zion is the kingdom of God today – the unshakeable kingdom (Heb. 12:28). You must join all these verses together. A king must have a kingdom, otherwise he is powerless; and a kingdom without a king is full of chaos. Today, the Lord is the King, but where is His kingdom, His nation, Zion today? 1 Peter 2:5 and 9 say that we *"are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood"* and are Zion – *"a*

holy nation.” We cannot be a royal priesthood if there is no kingdom. All of 1 Peter 2 is speaking about Zion! You must see the big picture. *“Rule in the midst of Your enemies”* (Psa. 110:2b). Where are God’s enemies? The enemies are not just in the heavenly places, but here on this earth. How will the Lord rule over His enemies if His kingdom is not on this earth? That is why the reality of the church must be the kingdom today; and that is why the Lord said, *“I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom...”* (Matt. 16:18b-19a). So what are we building? Just a Sunday meeting where we listen to a message, sing a few songs, and then go home? Are Satan and the enemies afraid of that? No! Zion is an unshakeable kingdom; it is not of this creation. Anything else is of this creation and is made by man. Many of the churches today are man-made. But the Lord will subdue His enemies out of the real Zion, the city of the living God, whose architect is God Himself. He cannot subdue His enemies without Zion, His kingdom on the earth today. The Lord must open our eyes to see this!

We are His people, His army. Do not think that the Lord does not need an army! *“Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the due of Your youth”* (Psa. 110:3). We are not just saints, brothers and sisters, but we are the Lord’s army. This is why we must fight the battle described in Ephesians 6. Are you in the Lord’s army? Although the Lord has the right to draft you, He will not force you. He wants volunteers. Will you join the army voluntarily? Are you willing to give yourself, willing to be a martyr? Do you have the courage to speak the truth? In the Lord’s army, you should not be afraid. Speak the truth! You are fighting the battle, a spiritual warfare.

The volunteers are *“in the beauties of holiness”* (Psa. 110:3b). The Lord’s army in Revelation does not have a uniform like the worldly armies do – fatigues made for camouflage so no one can see them. In the Lord’s army, the uniform is made of fine linen, white and clean (Rev. 19:14), without spot or wrinkle. No other army has this kind of uniform! This special army with this special uniform is in the beauty of holiness. Are you a person pursuing holiness? You should put on Christ. Christ is the holy garment for the priestly service. He is the wonderful fine linen, the

garment for the wedding feast. The bride also wears a garment made of fine linen, clean and bright, which is the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:8), the righteousness of Christ. These are the ones who live Christ and put on the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This wedding garment eventually becomes the army uniform for the army riding on white horses, coming to fight the final battle of Armageddon with Christ. This army was already mentioned in Psalm 110! As the King on the throne, He is the ruler over the kings of earth and wants to make all of His enemies His footstool. Wonderful! So do not worry, because the Lord will subdue all the enemies. Today, we are living in a world of lies and confusion, and terrible things are happening worldwide, on a global scale. The Lord will subdue all the enemies according to Hebrews 1:13. But that is only one aspect of the ascension of Christ as the King.

Psalm 110:4 shows the second aspect of the Lord's ascension: *"The Lord has sworn and will not relent [He will not take it back], 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.'"* In one Psalm, you have the two aspects of the ascended Christ! In the first three verses, the Lord is the King, the ruler over the kings of the earth, sitting on the throne with a scepter of righteousness. Then in Psalm 110:4, He is the Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek for us in things pertaining to God (Heb. 2:17). God has a marvelous purpose with us, with the priesthood! This is why these two aspects of the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ on high are already so wonderfully described in Psalm 110.

These verses show us that the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ is the main thing! For His death on the cross, He suffered for about three hours, then it was finished – the redemption work was done very quickly. But His heavenly ministry as the great, heavenly High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek was not done in three hours. It is a difficult job, and it is still not done, even after 2,000 years – it is still going on today! He is the Priest forever, and we will also be priests forever to serve Him. So, we better start now – don't wait! Now you know why the writer of Hebrews says, *"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens"* (Heb. 8:1). The rest of Psalm 110 ends with the coming judgment: *"The Lord is at Your*

right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; therefore He shall lift up the head” (Psa. 110:5-7).

The Special Priestly Order of Melchizedek

The priesthood of the Lord is very special, because He is not only a man, but the Son of God. He has a dual status: He is the Son of God as God, and He is the Son of Man as man. It may seem that, as a man, He has a beginning, but actually, the Lord told the Jews that He saw Abraham: *“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.’ Then the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM”* (John 8:56-58). That means the Lord was before Abraham. In Revelation, it says that the Lord is *“the Root and the Offspring of David”* (Rev. 22:16b). As the Root, He is before David, even before Jesse, the father of David. And yet He is also the Offspring of David. He is both! He is too wonderful! It is impossible to systematize the Lord Jesus. Micah 5:2 tells us that the very source (beginning) of the Lord Jesus, the One who was supposed to be born and was born in Bethlehem, is *“from of old, from everlasting,”* that is from long ago, from eternity past. He is the only One who is qualified to be according to this order of Melchizedek because He is both the Son of God and the Son of Man, *“without father, without mother, without genealogy”* (Heb. 7:3a). He is without genealogy because He is the Son of God. At the same time, as a man, He must have that genealogy according to Matthew 1 to fulfill God’s plan. But as the great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek, He is *“without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually”* (Heb. 7:3).

Why must He remain a Priest continually? This is an amazing point. The book of Hebrews emphasizes this point *“continually.”* First, the high priests according to the order of Aaron were *“mortal men”* (Heb. 7:8) who did not live forever. So, there was always a change when the high priest died. How the priesthood was, depended on who the next high

priest was. It is just like when a whole country changes due to a change in the presidency. It is the same when it comes to the priesthood according to the order of Aaron – there was no consistency. Second, Aaron was not perfect – he made the golden calf that caused God and all the people of Israel a lot of problems. The priesthood at the time of Eli was so fallen and corrupted that the Lord just left the tabernacle. His two sons were more corrupt than the unbelievers. Imagine you had a fallen high priest; it would be terrible if he continued forever. We must be thankful that no one lives forever – imagine if Hitler had lived forever. This is God’s wisdom, and it was man’s choice to be deceived by Satan to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. So, it is a very important point that the Lord as the great High Priest is from a different order of the priesthood than Aaron. He is a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek; and He lives forever. In Revelation 1:18, the Lord said, *“I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.”* That means His position, His priesthood remains forever. It is unchangeable. This is very important. Can you imagine if the Lord would not live forever? No one could replace Him. He remains a Priest continually and is able to save us to the uttermost.

This High Priest is also great (Heb. 7:4)! The writer brings out the simple point that *“the lesser is blessed by the greater”* (Heb. 7:7b) to show that the order of Melchizedek is much greater than the order of Aaron. If He is greater than Abraham, then He is greater than the whole nation of Israel and greater than Aaron. The greater one blessed the lesser, and the lesser gave the best of the gifts (tithes) to the greater one. You may think that this is not an important point, but it is a very important point to prove that the priestly order of Melchizedek is much greater than the order according to Aaron. Even such a small point shows us a great truth concerning the greatness of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is why He is called the great High Priest and not just the heavenly High Priest who ascended to the heavenly places. His greatness is just because He is great!

The Scripture tells us that there are two types of priesthoods – one according to the order of Aaron and another according to the order of Melchizedek. To show how special the order of Melchizedek is, the writer of Hebrews tells us that the Lord did not come from the tribe of

Levi, but from the tribe of Judah (Heb. 7:14) whose blessing was the kingship (Gen. 49:10)! Moses spoke nothing about the priesthood with regards to the tribe of Judah (Heb. 7:14). But now there is someone from the tribe of Judah who is a priest! It is a very special order!

To see how special the joining of the kingship with the priesthood is, let us go to Zechariah 6: *“Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown, and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest”* (Zech. 6:11). There were two people used by God to lead His people back from Babylon to Jerusalem: Zerubbabel, the governor, representing the kingship, and Joshua, the high priest. According to our human understanding, the crown should go to Zerubbabel because he represents the kingship. But strangely enough, the Lord said to put the elaborate crown on Joshua’s head! According to our understanding it is not logical. But when it comes to God’s word, we should not understand it according to our logic, but according to God’s plan and purpose with our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, in the light of the book of Hebrews, Zechariah 6 makes sense. We read on, *“Then speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: “Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, and He shall build the temple of the LORD”’”* (Zech. 6:12). The Lord Jesus is the Branch! And when He came to this earth, He said, *“I will build My church”* (Matt. 16:18). The priestly King or the kingly Priest is the One who can build the church – not you and me. Without this great, heavenly High Priest and us as the priesthood, no one can build the church. That is why up to this day, 2,000 years after the Lord came to this earth and ascended to the throne, the church is not yet built. Where is the church? Where is the royal priesthood? Where is the kingdom of priests? And who is building it – the pastor, the teacher, the apostles? Even Paul said that all the churches in Asia Minor left him (2 Tim. 1:15). The pope is building a satanic kingdom in the Vatican. What are we building? Without this great, heavenly High Priest helping us, and our cooperating with Him, how can the church be built? Even if God wants to build, but we do not want to cooperate to practice the priestly service, how can God’s temple be built? There is no other way. That is why every other way in the history of the church has failed.

“Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on His throne...” (Zech. 6:13a) – all the glory will go to Him and no one else! “...He shall be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zech. 6:13b). “Both” means the kingship and the priesthood joined together as one. “The elaborate crown shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD...even those from afar [even the Gentile nations] shall come and build the temple of the LORD...” (Zech 6:14-15a). This elaborate crown should always be in the temple of the Lord to remind us all that we need this heavenly, great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. If we do not see this crown as a memorial in the church, we will be in trouble. If we see this crown, we will give honor to God and will not misbehave or do anything we like in His kingdom. It is not like the kingdom of the Philippines where people can do whatever they like. The kingdom of priests is very different. Unfortunately, we have neglected this important, main point: having Christ as the great, heavenly High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek, King of righteousness and King of peace. “...And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God” (Zech. 6:15b) – obey Him, not just once in a while if you feel like it, but diligently!

Note: The above content has not been reviewed by the speaker.