

THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

Chapter Five

The King of Righteousness

Shem, or Sem, is the patriarch of the Semites. The Semites continued to speak Hebrew after the confounding of tongues in Genesis 11:7. Most Bible scholars commonly believe that Hebrew was the original language spoken by Adam and Eve and that Hebrew was the language of the whole world before the Great Flood until Genesis 11:7. Scholars generally agree that the word Hebrew comes from the name of the great-grandson of Shem named Eber, or Heber (Genesis 11:14).

Therefore, Shem is undoubtedly the Patriarch of the Semites. As Genesis 11:10-11 tells us, Shem lived 500 years after the Great Flood. This is significant in that Shem actually outlived everyone listed in his genealogy in Genesis 11:10-32. In fact, Shem lived beyond the death of Abraham and beyond the births of Jacob and Esau in Genesis chapter twenty-five. Shem was alive during the call of Abram and the giving of the Abrahamic Covenant. Shem was alive at the time of the birth of Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael's descendents become part of the Arab nations. Shem lives during the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah along with the failure of Lot and the beginning of the Ammonite and Moabite nations from the two sons of Lot's incest with his two daughters. The descendants of Lot's two incestuous sons, Moab and Benammi, would become part of the Arab nations. Shem lived during the time when God asked Abraham to offer Isaac in sacrifice. Shem lived at the time of Jacob's and Esau's births to see the division between these two brothers as Esau sells his birthright for a bowl of pottage. Esau's descendants would become part of the Arab nations. The Arab nations eventually became the Nations of Islam. However, almost every generation of these Arab nations have been anti-Semite from their very beginnings. All of this is an intimate part of the Messianic prophecies going through the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Shem is undoubtedly one of the purest types of Messiah in the Messianic prophetic types. We have numerous extra-biblical historic testimonies¹ that Shem was the Melchisedec to whom Abraham brought tithes in Genesis 14:18. The scriptural testimony to the prophetic type of Christ then expands exponentially in numerous other Scriptures both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. The Melchisedecan typology in Shem is a type that transcends both the Abrahamic

¹ *Targum Jonathan*, *Targum Yerushalmi* (an Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Bible), and *Babylonian Talmud* (about half is in Hebrew with the balance in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic translation) all refer to Melchisedec as a nickname for Shem, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melchizedek>

Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant into the New Covenant even before God puts the New Covenant in place after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

“¹⁰ These *are* the generations of Shem: Shem *was* an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood: ¹¹ And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. ¹² And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah: ¹³ And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. ¹⁴ And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber: ¹⁵ And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. ¹⁶ And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg: ¹⁷ And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters. ¹⁸ And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu: ¹⁹ And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters. ²⁰ And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug: ²¹ And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters. ²² And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor: ²³ And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. ²⁴ And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah: ²⁵ And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. ²⁶ And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. ²⁷ Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. ²⁸ And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. ²⁹ And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram’s wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahor’s wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. ³⁰ But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child. ³¹ And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram’s wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. ³² And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran” (Genesis 11:10-32).

Shem lives about 50 years beyond the death of Terah and about 4 years beyond the death of Abraham. I cannot overemphasize the importance of Shem as a prophetic type of the Messiah in that his title of Melchisedec means the *King of Righteousness*. The type encompasses the whole of Scripture revelation regarding *King of kings* and *Lord of lords* in the eternal reign of the *last Adam* over the eternal lives of the Redeemed. The type transcends all Dispensations, including the Kingdom Age where Christ will rule the world as Prophet, High Priest, and King. We find this explanation of the type in the epistle to the Hebrews. The

prophetic type of Messiah in Melchisedec reveals the future failure of Israel in keeping the Mosaic Covenant. The prophetic type of Messiah in Melchisedec also reveals the future replacement of the Levitical Priesthood with a New Covenant Priesthood.

“¹⁰ Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. ¹¹ Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. ¹² For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. ¹³ For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:10-14).

It is obvious from Hebrews 5:10-14 that God expected the Hebrew believers in Jesus to have a much better grasp of the Melchisedecan type than they had. Their ignorance of the Messianic Melchisedecan type was the source of the reason why many of them were being deceived into returning to the Mosaic Covenant rather than completely abandoning it, as they should have. The misunderstanding of the Messianic Melchisedecan type by Church Age believers continues the same misplacing of faith and a delusion of salvation by those holding to Replacement Theology. Replacement Theologians cannot see the abrogation of the Mosaic Covenant so they replace the Mosaic Covenant priesthood with a clergy and they replace the Mosaic Covenant sacrifices with sacraments. The failure of Replacement Theology is equal to the failure of apostate Israel – all of their adherents end up misplacing their faith in Moralism and Ritualism and remain lost in their sin. Psalm 110 alone reveals the broad expense of meaning in the Messianic Melchisedecan type.

“¹ A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. ² The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. ³ Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. ⁴ The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. ⁵ The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. ⁶ He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. ⁷ He shall

drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head” (Psalm 110:1-7).

It ought to be obvious to us that if God expected the Jews and early Christians to fully grasp the significance of the meaning in the Messianic Melchisedecan type, that He certainly expects those of us who have all of the Scriptures to have a complete understanding of the type. God’s expectation of understanding this necessitates some in-depth study of the Messianic Melchisedecan type.

In the Messianic Melchisedecan type, God expects a believer to understand that a critical aspect of the New Covenant and the believer’s “so great salvation” is God’s calling/election of a New Covenant Priesthood. God would abrogate the Levitical/Aaronic Priesthood of the Old Covenant due to Israel’s rejection of God’s laws of separation and their rejection of Messiah. This new priesthood consists of Christ Jesus as High Priest and all New Covenant believers as His servants/priests. Although these believers serve mainly as “Ambassadors” for Christ (II Corinthians 5:12-21) during the Church Age dispensation, once glorified they will serve as Judges and Priests (under Christ) during the Millennial Kingdom on earth (Revelation 2:26-29). There is an overwhelming obligation that accompanies our understanding of Jesus’ fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type. “¹⁴ For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: ¹⁵ And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again” (II Corinthians 5:14-15). Anyone professing to understand Jesus’ fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type, but who does not live the way II Corinthians 5:14-15 describes is living under an illusion resulting in their delusion.

The Melchisedecan Priesthood of Jesus Christ and His present heavenly ministry at the “right hand” of the Father resulted in the abrogation of the earthly Levitical/Aaronic Priesthood of the Old Covenant. This was a drastic change for the Jewish culture at the time of Christ. However, God had already alerted those familiar with the prophecies of Malachi that the abrogation of the Old Covenant Priesthood would take place at the coming of Messiah.

“¹ And now, O ye priests, this commandment *is* for you. ² If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay *it* to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay *it* to heart. ³ Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and *one* shall take you away with it. ⁴ And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with

Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. ⁵ My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him *for* the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. ⁶ The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. ⁷ For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he *is* the messenger of the LORD of hosts. ⁸ But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. ⁹ Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law" (Malachi 2:1-9).

"¹ Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. ² But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he *is* like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: ³ And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. ⁴ Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years" (Malachi 3:1-4).

It is important that understanding God's curse upon the apostate spiritual leadership of Israel is to understand the context of why the "elders," "chief priests, and scribes" were so vehemently set against Jesus and why they sought to turn the people against Him to have Him killed. **They were trying to thwart God's prophecy against them.** They understood that the prophecy of Malachi regarding the abrogation of their positions from the operations of God referred to the time when Messiah would "suddenly come to His temple" (Malachi 3:1). Therefore, they believed Jesus was the Messiah. Their positions were so important to them that they were willing to try to kill Messiah rather than lose their positions.

"²¹ And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing; ²² Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day" (Luke 9:21-22).

"And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people" (Luke 22:2).

“And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him” (Luke 23:10).

This was a difficult time of transition even for the Jewish believers in Jesus. The Levitical/Aaronic Priesthood had been a dominant part of their culture for thousands of years. Nonetheless, the Aaronic Priesthood had no place or part in the New Covenant. Sacerdotalism had ended. For a people steeped in a culture of external, visual religious rituals, sacrifices and this formal priesthood, the transition to a total operation of grace without all of these externals was difficult, to say the least; no more animals to sacrifice, no more ritualistic liturgies, and no more pomp and circumstance of a formal priesthood. All of this was cast aside as a failure.

Now in the epistle to the Hebrews, all the way through chapter eight, God is going to teach believers (especially the early Jewish believers) about the superiority of the new Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec; a Gentile King/Priest typical of Christ. These chapters will also detail the practical worthlessness and ineffectiveness of the old Aaronic priesthood.

God is going to take a straight forward, direct to the point, no holds barred, no punches pulled approach to the abrogation of the *old* and the establishment of the *new*. Before God goes into depth about this new Melchisedecan Priesthood, He gives a rebuke and warning in Hebrews 5:11 through 6:12. It is a warning and rebuke that every professing Christian should take seriously. God says in Hebrews 5:11, “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.” Here God is referring to the fact that what He was about to say would be very difficult, not because of the difficulty in understanding what was to be said, but because the people He was going to teach it to were “dull of hearing.”

The word “dull” is from the Greek word *nothros* (no-thros’). It means *slow* or *sluggish*. It does not imply a lack of intelligence or even ignorance. It represents an attitude of apathy or listlessness; an *I could care less* attitude about what was being said. In other words, the Jews had become content with the way things were. They really did not care if it was right or wrong doctrinally, or even if God had changed the way things were supposed to function. They had closed their minds to what God was saying.

I find this true within modern professing *Christianity* as well. God has said He hates the clergy/laity division (Revelation 2:6 and 15) that evolved into *Christianity* during the first few centuries, yet the vast majority of professing *Christianity* just doesn’t think this is important enough to leave a church over.

According to Hebrews 5:11, Paul had “many things to say” about this; things that **needed** to be said regardless of how inflammatory and contradictory it was. He was under divine orders to teach this. All Scripture comes to every believer with that responsibility attached to it. It does not matter if people want to hear

what God has to say. It is the responsibility of the *Ambassador for Christ* to proclaim the message without editing or abbreviation. What we must see here is that God has given us a responsibility that goes far beyond *Christianizing* people. That is all that is happening in the vast majority of *Ecumenical Evangelicalism*. This is the same failure of Judaism. They created religious people with misplaced faith who were still lost, but who thought they were right with God. When a believer properly understands Jesus' fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type, he immediately escapes all the nonsense of *Sacerdotalism* and *Sacramentalism* to understand that he rests (Hebrews 4:1 and 11) in a finished work of redemption in the *once for all* sacrifice of Jesus Christ our New Melchisedecan High Priest (Hebrews 10:10, 12, 14, and 18).

When Paul says, "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14), he is rebuking them in that they should have been "teaching" truth and ministering truth instead of needing to be ministered to more and more. He had already taught them the basic truths of the New Covenant.

¹ Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, ² Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment" (Hebrews 6:1-2).

Here is the problem with the kind of professing *Christianity* that does not take God's commandments and doctrine seriously. They do not see that God has one acceptable and defined way He wants things done, so they just continue doing things any way they find acceptable. Therefore, instead of becoming teachers they remained students. They had not learned the very first, preliminary and elementary principle of truth; **WHAT GOD SAYS, GOD MEANS!** If you do not study, work, and strive to keep dark things plain, it will not be long before plain things become dark. The explanation and understanding of Jesus' fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type is critical to everything the Christian does.

The lack of concern among these early Jewish believers regarding this covenantal transition from Sacerdotalism to the priesthood of every believer kept them in a very low spiritual state, which created a very serious spiritual problem. The new priesthood was to be God's *hands* and *feet*. The members of this New Covenant priesthood were God's human agents to do His work on earth. They needed to know that, understand that, and take their responsibilities seriously. Due to this dullness of "hearing," this apathy and indifference to this dispensational

transition, the whole of God's New Covenant (Church Age) plan for reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ stood in jeopardy.

People under the sacerdotal system of the Old Covenant became accustomed to having a Priesthood that did all the spiritual things for them. This was the spiritual infancy of the Old Covenant. This is the analogy of Hebrews 5:12, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." The analogy is that of a baby that had not yet been weaned. The New Covenant was intent upon placing ALL believers as mature, adult children before God with the spiritual responsibilities of adults. Jesus' fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type created a new order of servant priests giving every Church Age believer –RESPONSIBILITY.

Now, because of neglect and laziness, these early Christians were allowing the Church to slip back into the Old Covenant Sacerdotalism. In order to rescue the Church from this, they once again needed to hear "the first principles of the oracles of God" regarding their New Covenant responsibilities. They should have been Professors in the spiritual college called the Church. Instead, they remained in spiritual elementary school as students spending most of their time at recess.

The word "oracles" is from the Greek word *logion* (log'-ee-on). It is a derivative of the Greek word *logos* (log'-os). *Logos* is used of Jesus Christ as the incarnate Word of God. The word "first" refers to that which is a *beginning* or is *elementary*. **The comparison is the difference in responsibility between New Covenant believers and Old Covenant believers.**

¹ Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; ² But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. ³ Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: ⁴ But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, ⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. ⁶ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. ⁷ Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:1-7).

With the coming of the New Covenant, now the believer is no longer viewed as a *child* needing to be led around by the hand (Galatians 3:24-25). The words "adoption of son" in Galatians 4:5 is from the Greek word *huiiothesia* (hwee-oth-es-ee'-ah). It does not refer to taking someone else's child into your home and raising that child as your own. It refers to what happens in being "born again" (regeneration). The believer is removed from the family of Adam and spiritually

reborn as an adult child of God with all the responsibilities of an adult. In the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit indwells all believers. Therefore, there is no excuse for living in carnality or spiritual immaturity.

“¹ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, ² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; ³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ One Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all. ⁷ But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ” (Ephesians 4:1-7).

God has given gifts of men to local churches to perfect believers “for the work of the ministry.” God gave local churches the moral obligation that every Christian was to be brought to spiritual maturity and equipped with doctrinal definitiveness in order to be a “minister of reconciliation.” This is the central purpose of the local church assemblies. Therefore, there is attached to this a moral obligation to every believer to study and learn to be brought to moral and spiritual maturity “for the work of the ministry.” Failure to study and learn so you can be effective in “the work of the ministry” is an overwhelming failure in the life of any believer.

“¹¹ And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: ¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: ¹⁴ That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; ¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: ¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Until all Christians see this dispensational transition regarding their new position as believer priests before God, they will never see, own, and fulfill their new responsibilities. They continue to live in the *shadows* of Sacerdotalism when

the Son of a new day has risen on their lives and given them a new position with overwhelming new responsibilities in Christ for which we all will one-day answer to God - RESPONSIBILITIES EQUAL CULPABILITY!

Christians that do not see and understand all of this, completely lose the central purpose of the church assembly. The assembling of the church is to equip believers with the doctrinal tools they need to inform the world of God's message of redemption and His expectation of perfect holiness. The person *involved* in this ministry as a believer priest before God listens to sermons differently. Such a person is more concerned about his relationship with God, because he understands that consecration and sanctification are essential before God can bless the ministry of any of His priests.

Many "hard to be uttered" things would be said that would clearly separate those that professed faith in Christ and the New Covenant, but continued to believe and practice under the Sacerdotalism of the Old Covenant. The truth that is "hard to be uttered" is that continuing to live under the Sacerdotalism of the Old Covenant really manifests unbelief in the truths of the New Covenant in "Christ's blood." From Hebrews 5:10 through Hebrews chapter twelve, God begins to divide true New Covenant believers from the false by their own beliefs and practices.

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Hebrews 10:29).

¹ For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; ² To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; ³ Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually" (Hebrews 7:1-3).

The last book of the Old Testament is the book of Malachi. Malachi is a critical book to understanding the Church and God's eschatological purposes in the Church Age. Malachi is God's message to the Priesthood of Israel casting them away from their exalted position in the Nation of Israel and the loss of their future position in the Kingdom on earth. All faithful believers of the Church Age (from Pentecost through the Tribulation) will be the New Priesthood that will rule and reign with Christ on earth during the Kingdom Age. If you do not understand this,

we will not be able to understand much of Jesus' teachings on the Kingdom in the Gospels. It is necessary to look carefully at God's condemnation of the Levitical priesthood in the prophecies of Malachi in order to understand the responsibilities of all believers as priests after the order of Melchisedec. This understanding is necessary lest we fail where they failed.

“⁶ A son honoureth *his* father, and a servant his master: if then I *be* a father, where *is* mine honour? and if I *be* a master, where *is* my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?⁷ Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD *is* contemptible.⁸ And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.⁹ And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.¹⁰ Who *is there* even among you that would shut the doors *for nought*? neither do ye kindle *fire* on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand” (Malachi 1:6-10).

“¹ And now, O ye priests, this commandment *is* for you.² If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay *it* to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay *it* to heart.³ Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and *one* shall take you away with it.⁴ And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.⁵ My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him *for* the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.⁶ The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.⁷ For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he *is* the messenger of the LORD of hosts.⁸ But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.⁹ Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law” (Malachi 2:1-9).

“¹¹ Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. ¹² The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 2:11-12).

“² But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he *is* like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: ³ And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. ⁴ Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years” (Malachi 3:2-4).

The Melchisedecan Priesthood is the fulfillment of Malachi 3:3 in the purifying of “the sons of Levi.” This new priesthood is a critical part of the New Covenant in that the abrogation of the Aaronic Priesthood is part of the abrogation of the Mosaic Covenant. This truth of the Melchisedecan priesthood of Christ is central and essential to our understanding of the order and function of believers in the New Covenant. Because of the failure to understand this truth, tremendous distortions and abuses exist in “Christianity,” which misunderstanding becomes a contradiction to the whole foundation of the New Covenant. Every New Covenant believer is an aspect of fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type.

“¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. ¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14-16).

We should not take these verses out of the context of the priesthood of the believer. Christ is the High Priest of that priesthood. All believer priests have access to the “throne of grace” in their High Priest, Jesus Christ. The High Priesthood of Christ is unique and eternal. The High Priesthood of Christ transcends to no other man. Jesus retains this Melchisedecan High Priest position eternally. It is a unique aspect of His eternal incarnation.

“⁶ As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. ⁷ Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; ⁸ Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; ⁹ And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; ¹⁰ Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec” (Hebrews 5:6-10).

The word “order” is from the Greek word *taxis* (tax’-is). It usually denotes a fixed succession observing a fixed time. The idea is that one generation would die and another generation would replace them. This was the “order” of the Aaronic priesthood (Hebrews 7:11). That is not the case with the Melchisedecan Priesthood. The Melchisedecan Priesthood will be composed of the eternal Son of God in a glorified human body as High Priest along with glorified believers of the Church Age. Therefore, the word “order” in this context denotes *character of being* and *an office that has no succession* in that those that occupy these positions do so eternally.

The words “for ever” in Hebrews 5:6 do not just denote eternity future, but also eternity past (Hebrews 7:8). Christ as the promised Messiah (Revelation 13:8) has always been the High Priest after the “order” of Melchisedec. The eternity of the priesthood of Christ is the central essence of the superiority of the New Covenant in the “blood of Christ.” The eternity of this Priesthood completely denies the so called “priesthood” or clergy/laity division of modern day apostate Christianity. Jesus fulfills the eternal promise of the “Lamb slain” through the fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type. Jesus is both the perfect *Offerer* and the perfect *Offering*.

First, Christ is head of the priesthood in the New Covenant of which all believers are members with equal responsibility and accountability as priests before God. There is no division amongst believers regarding *clergy* or *laity* (Rev. 2:6 and 15). All believers are priests before God and all have equal responsibilities in their roles as priests. This is the New Testament (covenant) priesthood.

“⁴ To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, ⁵ Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. ⁶ Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. ⁷ Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the

same is made the head of the corner,⁸ And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.⁹ But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:¹⁰ Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy” (I Peter 2:4-10).

“⁴ John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; ⁵ And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶ And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:4-6).

According to Exodus 19:6 God intended for the nation of Israel to be “a kingdom of priests.” Israel continued to live in violation of the law and so God selected one tribe of separated individuals to represent the *first-born* of Israel as God’s possession. In Malachi, God casts off this priesthood as apostate.

Secondly, Jesus is the sole and eternal Possessor of the Melchisedecan High Priest position without any order of succession (Hebrews 7:3; “abideth a priest continually”). The important significance of this for the Church Age is that there is no room here for the idea of apostolic succession in Papalism or in any other way such as the ability to confer grace through the *Sacrament of Orders*². Jesus is the One and only High Priest of the Church Age and the only Mediator between God and men today.

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 2:5).

What does this say to the order of *Papal succession*? What does this say to the *Medatrix of Mary*? What does this say to a priestly cleric’s ability to forgive sin? This single verse condemns all of these practices as heretical.

Thirdly, the High Priesthood of Christ ministers from the basis of a completed sacrifice. Anything that denies that completed sacrifice, whether by doctrine or sacrament, is a denial of the priesthood of Christ and of the New

² *New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia*- *Sacrament of Orders*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11279a.htm>

Covenant. This is the eternal testimony of the Melchisedecan priesthood and the highest significance of Jesus' fulfillment of the Messianic Melchisedecan type.

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he *was* the priest of the most high God” (Genesis 14:18).

“Bread and wine” in the Bible are the elements of completed sacrifice. They are the elements we use in the memorial/testimonial service of the Lord's Supper. In John chapter 6, Christ called his *body* is food or bread indeed and His *blood* is drink indeed, signifying that personal approbation of these things, and what they accomplished, would provide eternal life to those trusting in the accomplished reality of His sacrifice on Calvary. Here lies the central difference between Old Covenant priesthood and the eternal New Covenant priesthood. This difference is central to enabling New Covenant believers to discern spiritually those with true New Covenant faith from those with false or misplaced faith.

“²⁵ Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; ²⁶ For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: ²⁸ So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:25-28).

The real and New Covenant Melchisedecan priesthood functions from the position of a completed, *once for all*, sacrifice. Anything else is apostate!

Fourthly, Christ is the sole “head of the church.” There is no other Head. This refers to His High Priest position. The Church is an eternal Priesthood of which Jesus is the only and eternal High Priest.

“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church” (Ephesians 5:23; compare Colossians 1:12-18).

This establishes a superiority of Melchisedec over Abraham, the father of Israel, over Aaron, the priestly order of Israel, and over the Old (Mosaic) Covenant. Therefore, it also establishes clear the superiority of Jesus over Moses, Aaron, and all else connected with the Old Covenant.

Another important area of contradiction between the Old Covenant priesthood and the Melchisedecan priesthood of Christ was that the Law did not

allow the dual capacities of priesthood and kingship in the Aaronic order. These two positions were to remain separate. Melchisedec was both High Priest and King, as is Christ. Melchisedec was also a Gentile. Although Christ was a Jew, His Melchisedecan priestly office transcends Judaism. The “whosoever will” of Romans 10:13 is an invitation to Gentile and Jew equally to receive the free-gift of salvation AND the exalted position of being ruling priests with Christ during the Kingdom Age. This is all part of the New Covenant believer’s “so great salvation.”

“¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: ¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: ¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: ¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:12-18).

“¹⁸ For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, ¹⁹ And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: ²⁰ (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: ²¹ And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) ²² But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. ²⁵ See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven: ²⁶ Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. ²⁷ And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Wherefore we receiving a

kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: ²⁹ For our God *is* a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:18-29).