

News and Notes

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Jo Ann McLerran** - COPD. She is not doing well.
- Glenda Marble** - Faithful Christian at Lexington, Okla. Heart problems.
- Debbie Post** - Wife of Doug Post, preacher in Salisbury, MD. Her cancer has returned.
- David Brown** - Spring, Texas preacher. Serious blood pressure problems and asthma.
- Sissy Craig** - For spiritual and emotional strength.
- Sandy Craig** - Health and other issues.
- Charles and Linda Pogue** - Congestive heart failure.
- Nancy Verkist** - Ellensburg, Washington. Suffering from Von Hippel Lindau disease.
- Don Smith** - Faithful brother in Christ persecuted for teaching fellow inmates in an Ohio prison.

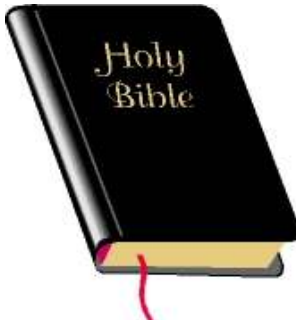
KENYA REPORT - Benard has been in gospel meetings in Uganda and with the church at Lighodo in recent days. He has also been distributing Bibles in the Kalenjins tribal language in the Rift Valley, and begun a preaching school there at Momet. He reports that a number of those who have fallen away because of false doctrine are now returning to the faith in the Rift Valley. Contributing to the Kenya Fund this week was Ron Skinner, Lexington, Okla. We are grateful to all of our faithful brethren who have fellowship with us in the great work of preaching in Kenya.

SPRING LECTURESHIP - Jerry and Sherlene are at the Annual Spring, Texas Contending For The Faith Lectureship this week, Feb. 26-28. Jerry will speak on "The Church in Sardis" on Saturday, and "Attempts To Justify Fellowship With Those In Error" on Sunday. The lectures may be seen live at Spring's website, located at www.churchesofchrist.com.

GUEST PREACHER THIS WEEK - Pat Craig, preacher for the Eastside church in Lexington, Okla., will speak at both worship periods this Lord's Day while the Brewers are at the Spring lectures. Northeast will meet at regular morning times, eat a meal together after morning worship, then immediately conduct the afternoon worship.

INTERNET PREACHING - Our weekly sermons are posted on You Tube at this link: www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCNx52ouOrXoQ and we urge you to visit our website at www.necocec.org, and our Face Book Page at www.facebook.com/nchurchofchristecok.

<p>Those Who Serve Sunday Morning, Feb. 26, 2017 First Prayer - Patrick King Closing Prayer - Landry Brewer Communion - Earl Reed Offering - Dylan Brewer Sunday Afternoon, Feb. 26, 2017 First Prayer - Earl Reed Closing Prayer - Dylan Brewer</p>	<p>Records - Feb. 19 Attendance Bible Class.....15 Morning Worship.....17 Afternoon Worship.....15 Contribution.....\$.19500</p>
<p>Weekly Meeting Times</p>	
<p>Sunday Morning Bible Classes.....9:30 Sunday Morning Worship.....10:30 Sunday Afternoon Worship.....5:00</p>	



Sound Doctrine

“But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1)

Published Weekly By The Northeast church of Christ
 P. O. Box 267, Elk City, Oklahoma 73648

Volume 11, No. 51
Feb. 26, 2017

“The Order Of Melchizedek”

Jerry C. Brewer

The book of Hebrews, in which is found the phrase, “the order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17), was written to Jewish Christians who were in danger of forsaking Christ and returning to Moses’ law because of persecution. The thesis of Hebrews is that the covenant of Christ is superior to the covenant God made with Israel, which was the Law of Moses, and to forsake Christ for Moses’ law would leave them without hope. The following points are among those set forth in the book to prove that thesis:

1. Christ is a superior law giver to Moses (Heb. 1:1-3:6).
2. Jesus Christ’s priesthood is superior to Aaron’s. (Heb. 4-7).
3. A *new* and better covenant was prophesied (Heb. 8:8; cf Jer. 31-31-34).
4. The blood of Christ is superior to the blood of animals under the Law (Heb. 9).
5. The Law of Moses was a shadow of the new covenant and was never intended to be permanent (Heb. 10).

Our concern in this lesson is the meaning of the phrase, “the order of Melchizedek.” The first mention of Melchizedek is upon Abraham’s return from rescuing Lot from captivity (Gen. 14:14-20).

And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king’s dale. And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all

(Gen. 14:17-20).

Melchizedek is next mentioned in Hebrews 5:6, where the writer quotes Psalms 110:4, referring to Christ's priesthood in the *new* covenant: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." The same phrase is found in Hebrews 5:10 and 6:20. In Hebrews 7, the writer presents a contrast between the priesthood of Melchizedek and the Levitical priesthood and, in a series of logical arguments, proves that Christ's priesthood is superior to Aaron's. He argues that with a change of the priesthood, came also a change of the law which established it. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). The phrase, "the order of Melchizedek," is one of the proofs offered that Christ is God's High Priest instead of Aaron.

Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of the most high God (Gen. 14:18). Under the Law of Moses, no man served in that dual capacity. The priests under the law were from the tribe of Levi (Exodus 8) and, with the exception of Saul, the kings of Israel were all from the tribe of Judah. As king of Salem and priest of God, Melchizedek was a type of Jesus Christ who is, today, both Priest and King on His throne. As king of Salem, Melchizedek ruled a kingdom whose name meant "peace." He is a further type of Christ in that Christ's kingdom brought peace between God and man (Luke 2:14; Rom. 5:1).

Melchizedek is *not* a mysterious character, though men have thought him to be so because of what is said of him in Hebrews 7:3: "...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." That nothing is known of his parentage or offspring, is true. But the same could be said for the king of Sodom.

"Without father, without mother, without descent" was not said of Melchizedek as a person. Certainly he had parents. And, though we are not told, he may have had children. "...having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" could not possibly have been said of any person but God (Psa. 90:1-2). This man, Melchizedek, who met Abraham, brought forth bread and wine, blessed him, and took tithes of him was a *man* like all others.

What was said of Melchizedek in Hebrews 7:3 is descriptive of the priesthood of Christ. Melchizedek had no predecessor in his priestly office ("without father, without mother"). Nor did he have a successor ("without descent"), and the phrase, "...having neither beginning of days, nor end of life," is a Hebraism. That is a term describing the practice in Hebrew literature—specifically the Old Testament—that states something in two different ways. An example of that is found in the prophecy of the gospel's beginning at Jerusalem in Isaiah 2:3: "...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." "The law" that would "go forth out of Zion" and "the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" mean the same thing. "...having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." is a Hebraism. Like Christ, no one preceded or succeeded Melchizedek in his priesthood and, like Christ, "abideth a priest continually." There was none like Melchizedek before him, or after him.

Therefore, he is, "made *like* unto the Son of God." He is a *type* of Christ in the unique office of high priest. Remember that the Hebrews writer is making arguments about Melchizedek's *priesthood*, not his fleshly genealogy.

It is further argued that Christ's priesthood, typified by Melchizedek's, was superior to Aaron's in Two ways. 1) Abraham's (and, by extension, Aaron's) payment of tithes to Melchizedek and, 2) Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham.

Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are the sons of Levi who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him (Heb. 7:4-10).

The lesser (Aaron in the above passage) pays tithes to the greater. The argument is that this typified Christ's priesthood as superior to Aaron's. The writer then concludes that perfection was not meant to come by the Levitical priesthood. That being the case, he says, a change of law was made and, therefore, the priesthood was changed (Heb. 7:11-12). Furthermore, these things could not have been said of Christ under the Law of Moses. "For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" (Heb. 7:13-14). Then, in logical progression, the writer argues that, "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 7:15-17).

The entire argument concerning Melchizedek as a type of Christ is not about a "mysterious" Old Testament figure who had no parents, but as one who had neither predecessor, nor successor in the *office of priest*. The word, "similitude," means "resemblance" and the resemblance is not physical, but in the priestly office. *That* is the point made concerning the priesthood of Christ. His priesthood is superior to the priesthood of Aaron because Aaron was made a priest by the Law of Moses and had successors in that office. Christ was made our Priest by His endless life and the oath of God. "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity, but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated forevermore" (Heb. 7:28).

The conclusion drawn by the Hebrews writer is that the law has been fulfilled and taken away and he showed that by his argument of Melchizedek's priesthood as a type of Christ's.