

The Eternal Order of the King of Salem: A Narrative Defense of Melchizedek as the Preincarnate Christ

Introduction

Throughout the tapestry of the Old Testament, the eternal Son of God breaks through the veil of time and space to commune with humanity prior to His literal incarnation in Bethlehem. These divine manifestations, historically referred to as appearances of Christ before His birth, serve as living proof that Jesus Christ is 'Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty' (Revelation 1:8). While many recognize Him in the burning bush or walking amidst the fiery furnace of Babylon, His most profound preincarnate appearance is recorded in the Valley of Shaveh. Here, he manifests as Melchizedek, the enigmatic King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God. This encounter, documented in Genesis and systematically unveiled in the Epistle to the Hebrews, presents a theological truth: Melchizedek was not merely a historical shadow or a temporary human type, but the literal, preincarnate presentation of Jesus Christ officiating in His timeless, unchangeable priesthood.

To fully understand the necessity of Christ appearing before His birth, one must look at the structural symmetry of God's redemptive plan. Christ is the ultimate paradigm of authority, designed from the foundation of the world to hold absolute supremacy. As the Author and Finisher of our faith, He cannot occupy a secondary rank in any realm He governs. In the economy of the resurrection, scripture reveals that the saints of the First Resurrection—the firstfruits unto God—are explicitly ordained to rule alongside Him, inheriting the dual offices of kings and priests. If the redeemed are elevated to such a high estate, it demands that their Commander-in-Chief must occupy the highest possible position in each respective category. Thus, His manifestation as Melchizedek—the original King-Priest—is the early establishment of His unique, dual-crowned supremacy over all creation.

The Enigma of Salem: Without Descent or End of Life

The primary scriptural anchor for identifying Melchizedek as the preincarnate Christ is found in the literal, uncompromising testimony of Hebrews 7:1-3. The Holy Spirit declares: '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; 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; 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.' If language has meaning, these words cannot describe a mortal man born of Adam's fallen seed.

Every human king and priest in the Old Testament was bound by the laws of genealogy and mortality. The Levitical priesthood guarded its lineages with absolute precision, and every

ruler's birth and death were strictly recorded to validate their claim to the throne. Yet, Melchizedek stands completely outside of this human framework. He is explicitly defined as 'Without father, without mother, without descent.' To argue that he was simply a local Canaanite king whose family records were lost is to minimize the divine text. The scripture does not say his genealogy was merely unrecorded; it states as an absolute biological fact that he was without descent, possessing 'neither beginning of days, nor end of life.' There is only one Being in existence who possesses inherent eternality, who is 'from everlasting to everlasting' (Psalm 90:2)—Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

Furthermore, the titles ascribed to this mysterious figure are names reserved exclusively for deity. He is interpreted as the 'King of righteousness' and the 'King of peace.' The prophet Isaiah foretold the coming Messiah using these exact terms, proclaiming His name as the 'Prince of Peace' and declaring that 'of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end' (Isaiah 9:6-7). Jeremiah likewise prophesied of Christ, saying, 'and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS' (Jeremiah 23:6). For a literal human king to claim the titles of absolute Righteousness and absolute Peace would be blasphemy. Melchizedek could bear these titles safely because He was the very embodiment of the virtues they described—the preincarnate Son of God appearing to Abraham in the visual form of the ultimate King-Priest.

The Supremacy of the Order: Superior to Abraham and Levi

The historical encounter in Genesis 14:18-20 provides deep prophetic and covenantal evidence for Christ appearing before His birth. The text states: '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.' The actions performed here transcend typical ancient near-eastern diplomacy and enter directly into the realm of divine sacrament.

Long before the night of His betrayal in the Upper Room, where Jesus instituted the New Covenant using bread and wine, Melchizedek administered these exact elements to the father of the faithful. This was not a random act of hospitality; it was a preincarnate administration of the Passover symbols, confirming the covenant with Abraham through the physical symbols of Christ's future sacrifice. Following this meal, Melchizedek pronounces a blessing upon Abraham, and in return, Abraham tithes to him. The author of Hebrews reveals the monumental weight of this interaction: 'Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils... And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better' (Hebrews 7:4, 7).

In the ancient world, and within the framework of biblical covenant, the greater always blesses the lesser, and the lesser always pays tithes to the greater. By receiving tithes from Abraham, Melchizedek established His absolute supremacy not only over Abraham himself, but

over the entire unborn Levitical priesthood that rested within Abraham's loins. 'And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him' (Hebrews 7:9-10). If Melchizedek were merely a human contemporary of Abraham, this hierarchy would violate God's chosen covenant structure, which positioned Abraham as the earthly root of promise. Melchizedek could only be superior to Abraham if Melchizedek was God Himself, manifest in human form to receive the honor due to His name.

The Highest Position: Absolute Supremacy Over Kings and Priests

To comprehend the complete theological necessity of Melchizedek being the preincarnate Christ, one must look forward to the ultimate fulfillment of the Kingdom of God, specifically regarding the First Resurrection. The scripture outlines a marvelous promise for the saints who remain faithful unto death. In Revelation 20:6, it is written: 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.' Furthermore, Revelation 5:10 echoes this destiny, declaring that Christ 'hath made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.'

The firstfruits of the resurrection—the redeemed church—are explicitly designated to hold a dual office. They are not merely subjects; they are kings. They are not merely worshippers; they are priests. This elevation creates a profound theological demand. If the glorified saints are to operate as kings and priests in the coming age, then Jesus Christ must hold the absolute highest position in both categories to preserve His divine preeminence. As the Apostle Paul writes, '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 1:18).

Jesus cannot simply be a King over ordinary citizens; He must be the 'KING OF KINGS' (Revelation 19:16). He cannot simply be a Priest over regular supplicants; He must be the 'great high priest, that is passed into the heavens' (Hebrews 4:14). Because Christ holds the apex position in each category, the earthly offices of king and priest must find their perfect, unified origin in Him. Under the Mosaic Law, these two offices were strictly divided: kings came from the tribe of Judah, and priests came from the tribe of Levi. King Uzziah was struck with leprosy simply for attempting to cross that boundary and burn incense in the temple (2 Chronicles 26:16-21). Therefore, the only way for Christ to legally combine these offices without violating the law was to establish a priesthood that predated and bypassed the law entirely—the order of Melchizedek.

This reality is prophesied beautifully in Zechariah 6:13: 'Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.' The counsel of peace is the perfect integration of the scepter and the censer, the crown and the altar. By appearing to Abraham as Melchizedek, Christ was not adopting a temporary disguise; He was

actively demonstrating His supreme right to hold the highest position as both King and Priest. He showed that His authority was not derived from human lineage or fleshly commandment, but from an unchangeable, eternal right of possession. The resurrected saints will rule as kings and priests only because they are anchored into the supreme, overarching identity of the ultimate King-Priest, Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

In evaluating the scriptural evidence, the identity of Melchizedek transforms from a mysterious historical footnote into a grand revelation of the preincarnate Christ. The mechanical constraints of a literal human identity fail to satisfy the divine descriptors set forth in the King James Bible. A man who is literally 'without father, without mother,' possessing 'neither beginning of days, nor end of life,' and executing a priesthood that 'abideth continually' can be none other than the eternal Son of God. He stepped into human history ahead of His time to comfort Abraham, establish the sacrament of bread and wine, and anchor the legal framework of a superior covenant.

Christ's appearance before His birth guarantees that the priesthood of believers is safe under His supreme leadership. Because the firstfruits of the resurrection are destined to serve as kings and priests during the millennial reign, it is structurally essential that Christ occupies the absolute zenith of both roles. He is the supreme source from which all true authority flows. As the eternal King of Righteousness and King of Peace, He fulfills the sworn oath of the Father recorded in Psalm 110:4: 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' By recognizing Melchizedek as the preincarnate Christ, the believer sees a beautifully unified scriptural harmony: the same Savior who died on the cross and reigns from the heavenly throne is the very same King-Priest who stepped into the Valley of Shaveh to bless Abraham, demonstrating that His sovereign lordship spans across all ages, priesthoods, and kingdoms.