

Hebrews 7:1-19 THE GREATEST

If you are a sports fan you have heard the banter-who is the greatest.

A)**Football Qbs** is it Joe Montana - 4 superbowls or Johnny Unitas or is it this new guy Peyton Manning.

B)**Baseball Greatest hitters** - Ted Williams last to hit 400 / The Babe – who hit for Power and average.

1)Or a local guy like Tony Gwynn – smooth swing

C)**Basketball- greatest player** ? Mj or Kobe.

D)The Sports buffs and historians will argue for days to prove their guy is the guy!.

Well the writer of Hebrews is building a case for the greatest minister of all time, the greatest person, in Jewish History.

A)But this is not meant to prove a trivial argument, no, it is a matter of life and death, it is a matter of freedom and bondage. It is EVERYTHING!

B)Eternity is at Stake: Jewish bros/sisters – Considering forsaking Jesus and going back into Judaism

C)Why **grab a hold of the shadows** when you can have the real thing –

1)Procedes to reveal the Superiority of Jesus over all the major Pp and aspects of OT Judaism.

Thus Far he has shown the superiority of Jesus over the Angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron.

A)Now as we come to ch.7 Takes on Abe and the whole levitical priesthood combined.

Read v1-19

B)The back drop for his argument is a great rescue, One that would make even Jack Bauer Proud.

If you asked a modern day Jewish person to describe the greatest rescue in Jewish History.

A)They would most likely tell you about June 27th 1976 – **Air france flight hijacked** from the airport in Tel-Aviv Israel.

Bb)After that day **El-Al beefed up** their airport security like no other airline in the world.

B) I will never forget being at LAX when our group was going to Israel.

1)Flying with El-Al – it was the first time I had gone flown with them. –

C)We are in line **and this El-Al official** who looked like and had the attitude of a Jewish Jack Bauer starts asking me questions about our group –

1)how long have I known the people in the group. – Large Church, some pp I know by name –but not much beyond that.

D)He is grilling me, where going, where staying, - Some of the info was in our packet but I didn't have it memorized.

1)And then I found out he had two other operatives who were asking some of the other 30 pp on our trip – the same questions, wanting to see if they matched.

E)So it was a little nerve racking and annoying at the same time.

Then all of a sudden two guys armed with Machine guns dressed in black come and move all of us out of line. THE PROBLEM –

A)Some guy who was in line ahead of us. {Not from our group -stepped away to use the restroom and left his bag in line.

B)So suddenly there was this unattended bag. They were there checking for a bomb. INTENSE!!!!– Why so strict & INTENSE?

June 27th 1976 when the world was stunned as an Air France - flight leaving the airport in Tel Aviv Israel was hijacked and flown to Idi Amin's Uganda.

There were 248 passengers, 113 were Jewish. They were the targets.

All the non Jewish passengers were let go at the airport in Entebbe, the rest of the 113 Jewish passengers were held hostage in the old Terminal, until they were rescued several days later July 4th 1976 – dramatic raid on Entebbe –

100 Israeli commandos loaded themselves into three C-3 cargo planes, landed at Entebbe, snuck into the airport, and rescued one hundred ten of the one hundred thirteen hostages, it was considered **to be the greatest covert military operation in history.**

But as great as that RESCUE was – It doesn't compare with the rescue that is the backdrop of our story. – Took place in Genesis 14 father Abraham.

A)The kidnapers in his day were a coalition of **four Canaanite kings headed by King Chedorlaomer**
{ **Chedder Cheese King**}

B)**Four kings and all their armies** combined forces and attacked the Transjordan area, defeating the city-states of Sodom and her neighbors and carrying off a large number of hostages,

1)including Abraham's nephew Lot (Genesis 14:5–12).

C)**Abraham recruited “318 trained men”** (v. 4)—**proto-commandos!**—**from his own household and took off in hot pursuit.**

1)he closed in on the kidnapers somewhere close to Damascus.

D)And there, under the cover of night, he deployed his small forces in a surprise attack.

1)His troops, riding camels and horses, bore down on the hijackers and their hostages.

E)Deadly arrows flew in the night, & bloody swords were raised gleaming in the dusty moonlight—

1)and the four kings were put to flight- all the hostages were rescued.

The Genesis account gives this Entebbe-like summary of Abraham’s success: “He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women *and the other people*” (Genesis 14 v. 16).

A)TOTAL SUCCESS

B)And when Abraham returned to his home after the slaughter of the kings, he was a hero..

C)Picture the scene – He comes riding in on his Camel- silver J

1)smearing with the dirt and blood of battle, leading his 318 proud men plus Lot and all the captives / families

D)It was then that Genesis record says: Abraham was met by the Mysterious OT Character named Melchizedek

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram, saying,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.

And blessed be God Most High

who delivered your enemies into your hand.” (Genesis 14:18–20)

Now think of this—this is the only historical mention of Melchizedek in the OT. What we have just read is all we know of him!

A)Yet Abraham allowed Melchizedek to bless him and then Abraham gave Melchizedek a 10th of everything.

B)That event takes place around 2000 b.c., and for a millennium there is no mention at all of Melchizedek, not even in retrospect.

C)But in the tenth century b.c., when the Psalmist David was King of Israel, the Holy Spirit inspired him to write this prophetic word: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek’ ” (Psalm 110:4).

D)There God declared that he was going to do something new. A new order of Priest.

1)His intention was to bring into history one who would be a priest like Melchizedek.

E)We have noted in our study in the book of Hebrews that Jesus is the fulfillment of that Prophecy. –

F)A new High priest – after the order....

1)Significance – A King and a Priest - / A priest forever. His priestly ministry does not end.

Ancient History but what is the Significance to Us – Me today N. county San Diego 2011?

Answer three Questions:

#1 Who was Melchizedek?

#2 What is the Significance of this meeting?

#3 How does it relate to us today?

#1 Who was Melchizedek?

A)Notice the description given in these first few verses of Ch.7

Aa)According to v.3 , he doesn't have a father or a mother; he doesn't have a beginning or an end.

1)He seems to come out of no where – Mysterious

B)Now some will say, this idea of not having a father or mother simply means that there's no genealogical record of his parents."

C)I don't argue that point, but I take this literally, for, in addition to his unique genealogy, I see Abraham bowing before Melchizedek and giving tithes to him.

D)We also read here – that He is like the Son of God, and abiding a priest continually.

So I personally believe Melchizedek of Genesis 14 is none other than Jesus Christ—a Christophany!

A)an appearance of Jesus in the Old Testament before He appeared as Jesus of Nazareth.

B)Joshua 5 Commander of the Army of the Lord.

1)We know that is Jesus and not an Angel because – Worship was accepted.

Four reasons why I believe this is Jesus

1st He is called the King of Peace and the King of Righteousness.

A)There's only One who truly can be called King of Peace—that is the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

B)And there's only One whose name shall be called the Lord our Righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6)—Jesus Christ.

2nd - Made like Son of God - something special - Neb, Shad, Meshack, Abendigo - **4th - like Son of God = Jesus!**

3rd He Remains Priest continually - Priest forever - if he was actual person who died - how could he remain a priest?

4th - John 8:56 - Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad! When?

A)Most think – Gen. 18 visit before destruction of S&G / The Lord & two angels

Aa)But there was no rejoicing that day. - I believe possible Gen 14 -

B) Saw His day – Saw Jesus in His Future Role : King & Priest

C)So I believe without a shadow of a doubt that this man Melchizedek was a Christophony. -

#2 What is the significance of this meeting Abraham had with this Man MELCHIZEDEK?

A)This meeting supports the idea of THE SUPERIORITY OF Jesus, a Priest after the order of MELCHIZEDEK, over Abraham and the whole Levitical Priesthood.

B)Melchizedek's superiority is presented through two occurrences in his meeting with Abraham—tithing and blessing.

C)In the ancient world, paying tithes to another was recognition of the other's superiority and a sign of subjection to that person.

When this event occurs Abraham is in his Prime – Pinnacle of his greatness as a leader. – High Point in his life.

A)And yet when he encounters Melch. He recognizes the greatness of this Kingly High Priest

Aa)Notice again v.4

4 Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.

B)The paying of the tithe was Abraham's way of saying – You are greater than I – I am under you.

C)The other principle he uses to establish Melchizedek's superiority is that in a formal Biblical blessing the superior always blesses the inferior.

D)Just as Abraham knew he should present a tithe to Melchizedek, he also knew he must bow and receive His prayer of blessing.

But then the writer of the book of Hebrews takes it one step further explaining by appealing to the common belief that an ancestor contains all his descendants within himself.

A)Thus he argues, 9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, 10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

B)In other words Even the Levitical priesthood acknowledges the superiority of Melchizedek's priesthood—because it paid tithes to Melchizedek in advance – THROUGH ABRAHAM.

#2 That is the Significance of this meeting – Proves the superiority of Jesus over Abe & the Levitical priesthood

#3 How does this Story relate to us? 2 things 1st It teaches us principles about tithing.

A) We learn from this that the principle of the tithe – giving a tenth of income – first fruits to the Lord Precedes the law.

B) Not a Law thing – seen here before Before the law. Also in the NT after the law, not just a law thing.

We also learn from Abraham's example! He gave the best – not the left overs.

A) In Hebrews 7:4 “tenth of the plunder” is literally, “the top of the heap”), the choicest spoils of war.

B) This was a calculated recognition by Abraham that he was in the presence of one greater than himself.

C) That is Why tithing is attached to worship on the 1st day of the week in the NT. 1 Corinthians 16

“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper.”

It is attached to worship because it is about recognizing that there is one greater than you.

A) His kingdom, His work is greater than anything in our lives.

B) People get all uncomfortable when the subject of tithing comes up – Big Negative.

1) Nothing can be further from the truth – BLESSING

C) He who is above us and beyond us and so much greater than us – allows us to be involved in what He is doing in and through **His body the Church – through our GIVING!**

D) Recognize that and tithing becomes this incredible privilege.

Giving to the Lord puts everything into perspective!

A) We are told in the Genesis 14 account of this story that after Abraham met with Melch.

B) After he **gave the tithe and was blessed** by Melch, we are told in Genesis that the King of Sodom came out to meet with Abe

C) He wanted to bless Abraham by giving to Abe of his riches.

1) But Abe refused the gift. Wasn't interested

Here is the point- Sodom is a picture of the world, because Abe had already given to Melch/ Jesus - and had received a blessing from Him.

Abraham was not interested in what the World had to offer him.

So too When we recognize that Jesus is greater than we are – We exist for Him – not He for us.

A)His work is greater than anything going on in our lives – anything we have ever done and will do.

**B)Then we realize it is a privilege to Give!
To partner with him.**

C)Anything that this world has to offer us suddenly pails in comparison.

So this story teaches us some principles about giving.

2nd This story reminds us of the Powerful impact that Jesus our Kingly High Priest Ministry has on our lives.

A)Notice again that Melchizedek is referred to as the King of Righteousness and the King of Peace.

B)Notice that righteousness is mentioned first. – The reason – It is His righteousness that gives us Peace.

2 Corinthians 5:21

“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

“Jesus the sinless one became sin filled, so that those who were sin filled could be sin free!”

C)The great transfer – Our sins are transferred to Him – His righteousness to us.

The result: Peace! Peace with God! – Cleansed – guilt free – Accepted in the Beloved.

**A)Peace with in ! – My sins many forgiven/ forgotten
1)They continue to be forgiven –**

B)This you see is the whole point of v.11-18 – A new priest was needed because the old priesthood couldn’t make us Righteous.

C)It Couldn’t bring real – Peace.

D)Always the need of more Sacrifices –

11 Therefore, if perfection {Righteous}were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek,

Then he says it was changed of necessity because the ministry of the Old priesthood was temporary.

Not saved and made right with God thru religious ritual – but only through the blood of Jesus.

New Covenant – Get into that next time.

You today – In Sin or Righteous

Peace or Guilt ridden