

Melchizedek - King of Righteousness.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melchizedek> and <http://ad2004.com/Biblecodes/Hebrewmatrix/melchizedek.html>

Questions about Melchizedek that give the answer in just the asking (I forget the term for this).

1. Why did Abraham honour and acknowledge with a tithe of all he had gained in battle? (Genesis 14:18-20)
2. Why is the priesthood of Melchizedek last forever? (Psalm 110:4)
3. Why is there reference to Melchizedek in Hebrews (7) in the midst about our High priest, Jesus?
4. Why is there no lineage.
5. Who could be king of righteousness, but Yeshua our Messiah? Melchizedek was the king of Shalem, which is king of peace. Yeshua is known as the prince of peace.
6. Who could be king of peace over Yeshua? No one.
7. Melchizedek was without father or mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. Who could this be said of, other than God himself? No one.
8. Melchizedek has an indestructible life and abides a priest perpetually. No human could fit this bill. And could there be two who abide as a priest to God forever? No one but Jesus.

Definition:

- From the Hebrew מֶלְכִי־צְדָק (literally "righteousness is my king"). He is introduced as the king of Salem ("Salem" meaning "completeness" or "peace"), and priest of El Elyon ("The highest God"). He brings out bread and wine, blesses Abram, and receives tithes from him.
- Chazalic literature presents the name (מלכי־צדק) as a nickname title for Shem, the son of Noah. In the majority of Masoretic (Hebrew) text the name is written in as two words ("malki zedek") .
- Whereas in the Septuagint and the New Testament he appears as Μελχισεδέκ, and in the Latin Vulgate as Melchisedech. In the Authorised King James Version of 1611 he appeared as Melchizedek in the Old Testament and Melchisedec in the New Testament.
- The Epistle to the Hebrews, along with Philo and Josephus, interprets the name as meaning "the king of righteousness", all apparently based on the Hebrew words "melek", meaning "King", [8] and "tzedek" (or tzadik), meaning "righteous(ness)". This interpretation is held also by some modern scholars because in the Dead Sea Scroll 4QAmram 2.3 is found the opposite name Melchi-resha ("king of evil") for a chief angel of darkness.

References:

Melchizedek is mentioned twice in the Old Testament, the first in Genesis and the second in Psalms, and in Hebrews in the New Testament.

1. The first as part of the larger story of which tells how Abram returns from defeating king Chedorlaomer and meets with the king of Sodom, at which point:
"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.
—Genesis 14:18-20
2. The second is in Psalm 110:4, celebrating some victory or conquest of an unnamed king of the Davidic dynasty; the king is said to be a "priest forever" and a successor of Melchizedek, and the text is translated (KJV):
"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."
3. In the New Testament, references to Melchizedek appear in Hebrews though these are extensive: (Hebrews 5: 6, 10; 6: 20; 7: 1, 10, 11, 15, 17, 21).
 - Jesus is identified as a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek (quoting from Ps. 110:4) and so Jesus assumes the role of High Priest once and for all.
 - Abraham's transfer of goods to Melchizedek is seen to imply that Melchizedek is superior to Abraham, in that Abraham is tithing to him.

- In doing so Melchizedek's (Jesus') priesthood is superior to the Aaronic priesthood, and the Temple in Jerusalem is now unnecessary.

Some Observations:

Some modern scholars, based on the detail that the word "malki" contains a possessive pronoun, connoting a meaning of "my king", opine that the original name was likely "[the god] Sedeq is my king", based on the attested Canaanite/Phoenician god "Suduk" or "Sudek", or, less likely, "My king is righteous(ness)".

Hebrews 7:3 creates some confusion between denominations regarding Melchizedek's nature and background. This is how it stands in the KJV, describing Melchizedek as "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."

Different denominations interpret this in vastly different ways. Some say that Melchizedek is literally like the Son of God (or even is the Son of God) in that he has no father or mother. Others say that he has been adopted into Christ's lineage through the Lord's suffering, still others claim that the verse has been mistranslated, and that Melchizedek's priesthood is without lineage, not Melchizedek himself. Others claim that the verse merely represents Melchizedek's not being a priesthood holder because of lineage (in other words, "without descent" meaning not a descendant of Levi as required by Mosaic Law.)

Genesis 14 does not appear to be derived from any of the usual pentateuchal sources. It is additionally possible that verses 18-20 (in which Melchizedek appears) are themselves an insertion into chapter 14, as they interrupt the account of the meeting of Abraham with the king of Sodom.

Interestingly, there is a Dead Sea scroll that identifies Melchizedek as the one who will carry out the vengeance of God's judgments and the one who delivers the people from the hand of Belial and the spirits of his lot. Here is a translation for those who are interested.

Dead Sea Scroll 11Q13 (11QMelch) is a fragment (that can be dated to the end of the 2nd or start of the 1st century BC) of a text about Melchizedek found in Cave 11 at Qumran in the Israeli Dead Sea area and which comprises part of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In this eschatological text, Melchizedek is seen as a divine being and Hebrew titles as Elohim are applied to him. According to this text Melchizedek will proclaim the "Day of Atonement" and he will atone for the people who are predestined to him. He also will judge the peoples.

Beliefs:

Evangelical Christian

Christians use Psalm 110:4 as a proof text that Jesus had a right to a priesthood pre-dating the Jewish Aaronic priesthood. This "proof texting" centers on the translation of the word על-דְּבָרָתִי in verse 4. The KJV translation of על-דְּבָרָתִי as "after the order of," is fitting, when "order" is taken as the English word meaning, "an authoritative direction or instruction," דְּבָרָתִי has its root in דבר, and is most plainly "utterance" or "speech," with an implication of authority or leadership. Translations vary in how they interpret this. The New Living Translation gives the meaning as "in the line of," the Amplified Bible gives, "after the manner and order of," the Contemporary English Version prints it as, "just like," and The Message Bible omits the word.

Many Evangelical Christian denominations teach that Melchizedek was actually a pre-incarnate Christophany, meaning a premonition or earlier manifestation before the virgin birth. Others teach that he was an Angel sent by God as a representative. Both viewpoints emphasize that Melchizedek was a type and shadow of Christ, who is referred to throughout scripture as "King of Righteousness", the "Prince of Peace" and as the "High Priest" and emphasize the teachings on the matter from Hebrews Ch5 - Ch8.

Islamic

There is no mention of Melchizedek in the Qur'an or on early Islamic exegesis or literature. Commentator Abdullah Yusuf Ali has suggested a link between Melchizedek and Khidr, and refers to St. Paul's allegory of Melchizedek in his Epistle to the Hebrews as a parallel to the Muslim view of Khidr.

Latter-Day Saints

The Book of Mormon of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints describes the work of Melchizedek in Salem in Alma 13:17-19. According to Alma, Melchizedek was King over the wicked people of Salem, but because of his righteousness, his people repented of their wickedness and became a peaceful city in accordance with the meaning of that name. With respect to Old Testament prophets, Alma declares that "there were many before [Melchizedek], and also there were many afterwards, but none were greater."

Date Of the Letter To The Hebrews:

The letter was quoted by Clement of Rome in his Letter to the Corinthians, which he wrote in A.D. 96. Thus the Letter to the Hebrews must have been written prior to A.D. 96.

The recipients of the letter were brought to faith by the teaching of the disciples who had personally been with and had heard the Word of God taught by the Lord Jesus himself (cf. Hebrews 2:3). The years of Jesus' public ministry were about A.D. 27-30. The letter was obviously written some years later.

From the time the recipients were brought to faith by the disciples to the time the letter was written a substantial amount of time must have passed.

For they had had the time to grow spiritually in their knowledge of the Word of God but had not. Thus the writer admonished those Jewish Christians for their failing to have progressed to the point where they could teach others instead of their still needing to be taught the basic teachings of God's Word themselves (cf. Hebrews 5:12,13).

A sufficient amount of time had also passed since they were gathered as a Christian congregation for some of their initial pastors and leaders to have died (cf. Hebrews 13:7). This passage of time suggests the letter may have been written to the Jewish Christians in Rome after A.D. 50.

The recipients had already endured a severe persecution. One of the reasons they had been persecuted was for sympathizing with other Christians who had been imprisoned (cf. Hebrews 10:32-36), some of whom may have been put to death (cf. Hebrews 12:4).

The Jewish Christians in Rome who received the letter were subject to further persecution and possibly their own martyrdom as well (cf. Hebrews 10:36; 12:4). Such open persecution, imprisonment, and killing of Christians in Rome was started by the Roman Emperor Nero in A.D. 64. He blamed the Christians for the burning of Rome. This information suggests a date for the letter of some time after A.D. 64.

In the letter the author wrote at some length about the Jewish priesthood, bloody sacrifices, and the tabernacle. The Jewish temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70. With its destruction the Jewish priesthood and bloody sacrifices were brought to an end permanently. Yet the author made no mention of this historic end to these Jewish forms of worship which had been practiced throughout the Old Testament era up to that time. His failure to speak of this suggests the author wrote the Letter to the Hebrews prior to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and before A.D. 70.

Taking into account all of the preceding information, it seems very probable that the Letter to the Hebrews was written after A.D. 64 and before A.D. 70. This would make the date of the letter sometime between A.D. 65 and 69.