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MELCHIZEDEK-

Recently, the Holy Spirit, who is our faithful Teacher, has been nudging me to write on the subject of Melchizedek. Jesus said, *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."* (Jn.14:26). It is the Holy Spirit who quickens our spirits and speaks to us, guides us, teaches us and reveals new truths to our hearts. Anointed teachers of the past and present speak or write the Word by the Spirit, but the life we receive from them, depends on the witness of the Spirit within each hearer. The most anointed teachings are of little or no value unless they are witnessed by the Holy Spirit in the hearer. When the Spirit quickens them to our hearts and minds, they live within us.

Most of us know, that the Lord Jesus is the High Priest of the order of Melchizedek, and that, as sons in Him, we are kings and priests of that same order. *"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron, (high priest of the Levitical order). So also Christ glorified not himself to be made high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."* (Heb.4-6) *"Seeing then, that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our profession, (our faith without wavering)."* (Heb.4:14) As sons, we are being trained and tested to become *"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."* (I Pet.2:9) Indeed, throughout the ages to come, as kings and priests, we will serve under the headship of our great High Priest Jesus Christ.

FROM ABRAM TO ABRAHAM- In the Old Testament, the meaning of names indicates the life's calling of a person. Abram lived 430 years before the Law, the Levitical priesthood and Moses, were ever in this world. God called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees, which was then a city located in what is now called Iraq. Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold, and he was not an ordinary man, for while the people worshiped many gods, Abram heard the voice of the true God, *"The Lord, (Jehovah), said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him..."* (Gen.12:1-4a) It was a extremely hard command, with an unbelievably great reward. Abram was quick to obey.

The faith of Abram was grounded in the voice that he heard in his heart and in his mind. There came a day when God cut a covenant with Abram and changed his name from Abram, (exalted father), to Abraham, (father of multitudes or many nations.) The covenant that God made with Abraham, was not as the one that He made with Israel through Moses. Abraham was never under the Law of the Levitical priesthood; he gave honor to the high priest of another order. Abraham did not need to follow the Law engraved on tables of stone or pages of paper, God's Word was written in his mind and in his heart, and he walked according to the voice of that Word. To have faith, one has to hear, *"So then faith cometh by hearing, (not only reading),*

and hearing by the **word of God.**" (Rom.10:17). Jesus gave teachers and tutors unto men, to teach them to hear the voice of God that speaks to them through the Spirit. Good teachers will lead the people to hear the voice of God. We all start out like young Samuel who heard God calling him, but ran to Eli the priest instead. When we are still immature, we turn to ministers for God's directions. If these are faithful, they will turn us over to the Spirit within. Jesus said, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."* (Jn.10:27) All the Lord's sheep hear His voice, but have to be awakened to it.

WHO IS THIS MELCHIZEDEK?-There was a time when Abram went to war against powerful kings who united their forces, and went down to Sodom to plunder and ransack the city and its inhabitants. Lot, Abram's nephew, had chosen to live there with his family, so when Abram heard that Lot had been taken captive, he set out with 318 of his trained servants, and went down to rescue Lot. These kings were powerful, and Abram was not a warrior, but he was led by the voice of courage and wisdom within. The battle was swift and thorough, and he returned victorious, having rescued Lot and all his goods. It was then that he was met, first by the king of Sodom who thanked him, then by an unfamiliar king whose name was "Melchizedek." *"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.14:18-20) This king had come to minister new life and restore inner strength to Abram, (bread and wine). And so Abram gave a tenth of all the spoils to Melchizedek, and returned the rest of the goods to the king of Sodom.

The New Testament has this to say about this mysterious figure, *"For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him. To whom Abraham also 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."* (Heb.7: 1-3) The next verse urges us to *"...consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."* (Vs.4) Bible scholars who have researched the identity of this mysterious figure have arrived to various conclusions.

WAS THIS KING, SHEM? One of the popular views presented is that this Melchizedek, who is introduced as the priest of the most high God is none other than Shem, one of Noah's three sons. Even if this view is correct, it still begs for more explanation for it is written that this unknown king, *"...was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God..."* In this same chapter of Hebrews, the writer clearly reminds us, that at that time, there were none greater than Abraham among men. *"Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."* (Heb.7:4) It was just unconceivable that a patriarch of Abraham's status, should pay tithes to this unknown king. Then the scripture clearly states that this mysterious man had no descent, no genealogy or familial ancestry, which leaves no doubt that this king was not actually Shem the son of Noah. His kingship was not found among men; this was not an earthly king, he was king of righteousness and king of peace, he was king of the Jerusalem from above, and he was in the image of the Son of God which abides forever.

WAS HE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST? Another popular view taught among Christians, is that because this Melchizedek was like unto the Son of God, he has to be Jesus Christ. But in that, we also find inconsistencies that should not be ignored. First and foremost, this Melchizedek was like unto the Son of God, yet, our Lord Jesus Christ is not "like unto" the Son of God. Jesus is not a copy or an image of the Son of God; Jesus Christ **is the only begotten Son of God**, born of Mary, begotten of God. *"But when the*

fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal.4:4-5) Jesus said to Philip, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father..." (Jn.14:7,9b) This is an honor that belongs only to Jesus; no other prophet or spiritual leader is able to claim this. So Jesus had a mother and a Father, and also many ancestors. The genealogies of Jesus Christ are clearly written in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. This Melchizedek had none of these, yet He was made like unto the Son of God!

THE WORD WAS GOD- What is it that this Melchizedek and Jesus have in common? We know that Jesus was the Word made flesh. And we also know that *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* (Jn.1:1) The "Word" is God, the One by whom all things were created. And it is this same God, who is the Word, who was also made flesh in Jesus. Thus Jesus could declare, *"... the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."* (Jn.6:63) The Word is God, and the Word was in Jesus the Son of God. It is the Word that overshadowed the body Mary who gave birth to Jesus. And it is the Word who was seen and touched in a body of flesh and blood. *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of God."* (I Jn.1:1) And it is by the Word of God that we are *"...being born again...by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever."* (I Pet.1:23)

Jesus was flesh and blood. At His baptism, the Holy Spirit who was with God from the beginning, descended in the form of a dove and remained. At that time, God the Father declared to the world, this is *"My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* (Matt.3:17) Jesus was flesh and blood and the Father was well pleased IN HIM. That same Holy Spirit who made His abode in Jesus, is the Word of God, the very Word who was and is God. That same Word who was God from the beginning *"...thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and **took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men;** and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* (Phil.2:6b-8) Jesus introduced us to the Word who is God and who is His Father and our Father, and He opened the way for us to enter into the kingdom of God **within us.**

It was the Word who was rejected, spit upon, afflicted, tortured and nailed to the cross. Jesus, who was the Word made flesh was the Lamb who took the Word to the cross. All who follow the Lamb will take the Word of truth to the cross. Through His death, Jesus revealed the power of the Word, as He was seen having triumphed over the grave, opening the doors of Hades, (eternal death), and setting all its captives free. Thus He led the Way for man to enter eternal life, and became the Savior of the world. The first harvest of His resurrection is soon to be manifested in all the sons who have stood for the Word, even unto death and who will lead the next harvest out of the captivity of death and the grave. It is the company of the Word of God, from both sides of the veil, who is raising up as the new Day. *"They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the Word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."* (Rev.12:11) These are God's witnesses, His lambs; who suffered rejection, some great persecutions, and some gave their lives, but all stood strong, in the truth of the Word that is alive within their beings.

THE MANY APPARITIONS OF THE WORD- The Word made flesh and is being made flesh in us, but throughout the history of the world, the Word appeared many times, in various forms, to speak to those chosen for a certain purpose. Many of these apparitions were in the form of messengers, called angels who spoke directly to those they were sent to. It was the Word in such a messenger who found Hagar in the wilderness and told her to return home and submit to Sarai, her mistress. (Gen.16:7-12) It was the Word in the form of a man who came to Manoah's wife to tell her that she would bear a son. She said, *"A man of God came unto*

me saying, and his countenance was like unto the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible, but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name." (Jud.13:6) It was the Word in the form of three men who came to announce to Abraham that Sarah would bear a son and name him Isaac. Two of these went to visit Sodom that same day. It was the Word who spoke to Moses from the burning bush, and it was the Word in the pillar of smoke by day, and the pillar of fire by night who led thousands of men and women through the harsh Arabian desert for forty years. It was the Word in the Rock that followed them. And **it was the Word who met Abram in the form of a king named Melchizedek!**

THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK is the order of the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The Levitical priesthood that was in place up to that time, had many flaws, and its priests had infirmities. Most of all, it could not produce sons of God or perfection in Christ for under the Levitical order, the people could only hear from God through the Law and the prophets. Through His death and resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ has become the first of a new creation of God, the "last Adam" creation. And He is the High Priest of a company of kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek, who will rule and reign with Christ throughout the ages to come, to deliver and restore the old creation from its darkness and death cycle. *"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."* (Rev.20:6) Melchizedek means "king of righteousness" and the priests of this order will judge by righteousness, and deliver creation by the power of the spoken Word of Truth. They are the mouths of the One *"...called The Word of God...And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations..."* (Rev.19:13,15) This sharp Word of God spoken with great power, will influence and change the hearts of man and turn them to repentance. The anticipated "Revival" that evangelical preachers have been predicting, cannot be compared to the Word that will change the hearts in that time. The awe inspiring teachings, healings and the raising from the dead that Jesus did as He walked the earth, cannot be compared to the "greater works" that will be accomplished in His name. *"Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father."* (Jn.14:12)

SEEING THROUGH TYPES AND SHADOWS opens a new and very beneficial connection to understanding the ways that the Spirit works in us to renew our hearts and minds, and to change us into the image of the Son of God. Types and symbols that we are acquainted with, are compared to the invisible, spiritual things that are strange to us. For instance, the tabernacle that Moses built in the wilderness is a type of the body, soul and spirit of humans. In the story of Lot's rescue, Abram is a type of our new quickened spirit in Christ, warring to deliver our souls, (Lot), from the captivity of the flesh, the world and the devil, (Sodom). In type, our redeemed spirit, (Abram), arises and fights against the united forces of the carnal mind, (the fierce kings), until our soul, (mind and heart) is released and free. Only after Abram defeats the kings, rescues Lot and brings him and all his possessions out of Sodom, does Melchizedek appear to Abram. This battle continues within us as we keep fighting against the sin that so easily besets us; mainly "unbelief". This is why we are called to be "overcomers in Christ," and leave behind all of the flesh and the world's attachments to which our souls have been in servitude. Jesus said, *"In your patience possess ye your souls."* (Lk.21:19) The Holy Spirit quickens and raises our spirits out of its darkness. Then He continues to train our redeemed spirits and daily strengthen them and leads them to do the work of renewing our minds and hearts, (souls), and to become lovers of the the will and good pleasure of our Father. As was Lot, our soul is vexed by the world, but not vexed enough to fully turn away. Peter writes, *"And he, (Abram), delivered just, (righteous), Lot, vexed by the filthy conversation, (behavior), of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.)"* (II Pet.2:7-8) Oh the wonder and wisdom of the powerful love of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ!

Because He is love, *Jackie Caporaso*