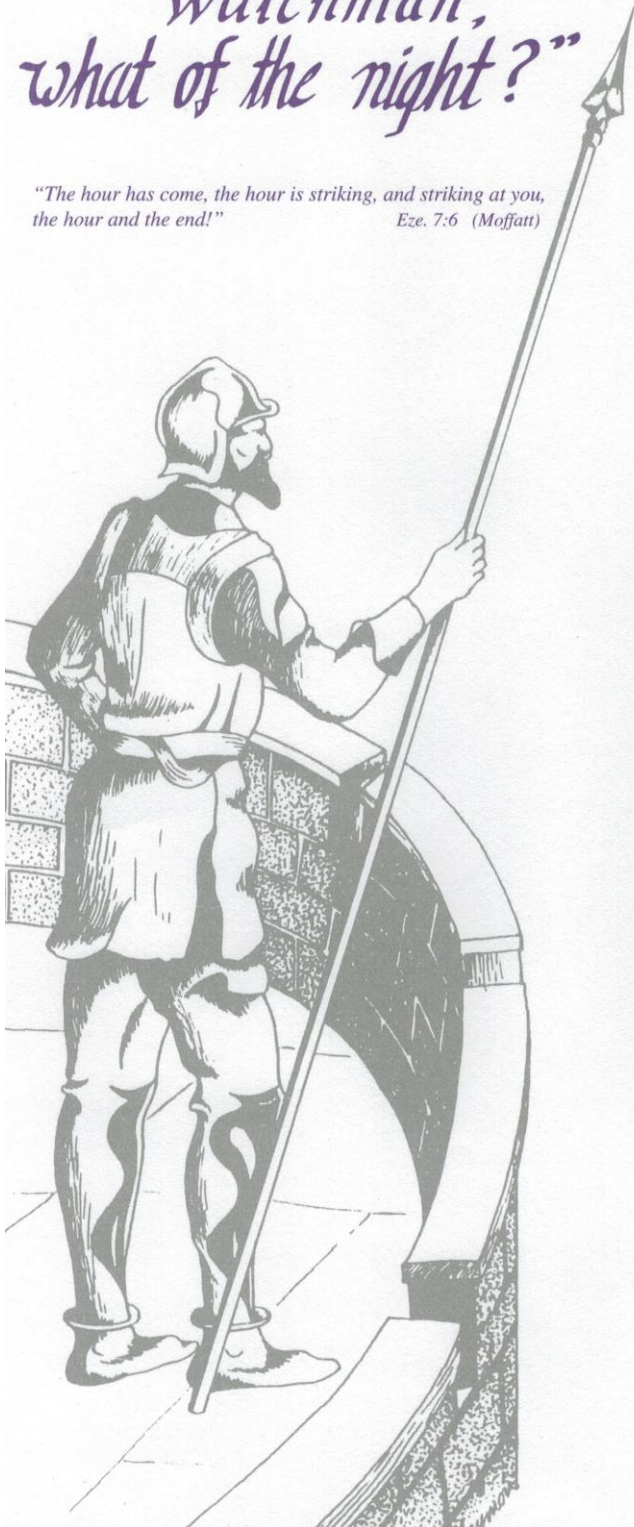


*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"*

Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)



An Inexhaustible Theme-

Melchisedec

Pg. 2

Editor's Preface

Originally, for the April issue we had planned to resume our Bible study on the importance of the Dual Atonement in the Book of Hebrews. However, in light of additional evidence regarding Melchisedec, we decided to cover this aspect further. Therefore, we will reschedule Hebrews till a later time.

As we take up again a contemplative examination as to the true identity of Melchisedec. We are going to first have a look at one of the ancient manuscripts that comprises part of the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is known as 11Q13, 11QMelch, or the Melchizedek document. And According to the sources, this manuscript on Melchizedek is a fragment of a text about Melchizedek that was found; in the mid 1940's, in Cave 11 located at Qumran, in the Israeli Dead Sea area. The sources indicate that it can be dated to the end of the second or start of the 1st century B.C.

Now it is not our aim to go into the details, historical background, or extensive research surrounding the Dead Sea Scrolls or the 11Q13 papyri manuscript itself. We simply hope to draw our reader's attention to the basic fundamental significance of what 11Q13 records concerning Melchizedek.

Secondly, we are going to briefly analyse other various writings on Melchizedek contained in the Nag Hammadi library. This library was found in Egypt in 1945. It contains a tractate also relating to Melchizedek.

Thirdly, we are going to look at certain things that the children of Ishmael have to say about Melchizedek.

And lastly, we are going to have a brief look at an ancient people called the Athinganoi. And what they had to say about Melchizedek.

*"Review, and then Review again, and Review all that
you've Reviewed"*

An Inexhaustible Theme-

Melchisedec

As we noted in the March issue, there are many speculations as to the true identity of Melchisedec. However, these speculations all fail to take into account what the Apostle Paul wrote in Hebrews chapter seven concerning Melchisedec.

Once again it reads: *“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. Now consider how great this man was...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.”* (Heb. 7:1-8, emp. add. =ea.)

The simple facts that reveal who Paul is actually talking about here, is that, during the time of this writing, Paul and the other Apostles were witnessing to the death and most importantly the resurrection of Christ—the true Messiah. They were giving a testimony that *“witnessed that he liveth.”*

For again there was no testimony or reference in the Old Testament, that testified that Melchisedec (if He was anyone other than Christ) was *“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... of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.”*

For when one reads through the Book of Hebrews carefully, beginning with chapters one through six. The reader will unmistakably find the Apostle Paul directing his reader’s attention to Christ.

Then when the reader reaches chapter seven, he or she is not simply being introduced to a new identity. No. The readers are still having their attention directed to Christ who is their *“Great High Priest”* *“after the order of Melchisedec”*. (4:14; 5:10)

And the reason for this is because Paul; in not so many words, is telling the readers, that the reason why Christ is after the order of Melchisedec—is because He is Melchisedec—who is King of righteousness—King of peace. Known to Isaiah as *“Wonderful, Counsellor, The*

mighty God, The Father of eternity, the Prince of Peace.” (9:6, Heb.) [Please review the March 2017 edition of this thought paper for Bible evidence that Melchizedek was Christ.]

Please observe, that Christ *“liveth”* (7:8), Christ *“continueth ever...an unchangeable priesthood”* (v. 24), *“He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”* (v.25) This is He, of whom Paul wrote concerning Melchizedek *“abideth a priest continually”* (v. 3), Christ being *“after the order of Melchisedec”* (v. 21), who *“met Abraham”* (v. 1) in Gen. 14 as the pre-incarnate Logos.

Therefore, Melchisedec in Hebrews 7 is that same Divine Logos—the *“Word”* in Jn. 1:1. The difference lays in the fact that the present Melchizedek has a glorified humanity; while the Genesis 14 manifestation did not.

We are now going to have a look at the various ancient manuscripts. But the conclusions must ultimately be drawn based solely on the *“WORD”* of God—a *“Thus saith the Lord”*. Do the manuscripts therefore confirm or deny The Logos was Melchisedec?

11Q13

The following information is taken from Wikipedia and represents what was found in the Cave in Qumran: (All emphases throughout are those of this Editor.)

“11Q13, also 11QMelch or the Melchizedek document, is a fragmentary manuscript among the Dead Sea Scrolls which mentions Melchizedek as leader of God's angels in a war in Heaven against the angels of darkness instead of the more familiar Archangel Michael...The Dead Sea Scrolls contain texts in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, the language of 11Q13 is Hebrew, date of composition is circa 100 BCE.

In the fragmentary passage the term "Elohim" appears a dozen times, mainly referring to the God of Israel, but in commentary on "who says to Zion "Your Elohim reigns" (Isa. 52:7) 11Q13 states that Zion is the congregation of all the sons of righteousness, while Melchizedek is "Your Elohim" who will deliver the sons of righteousness from Belial.

And it will be proclaimed at the end of days concerning the captives as He said, To proclaim liberty to the captives (Isa. 61.1). Its interpretation is that He will assign them to the Sons of Heaven and to the inheritance of Melchizedek; for He will cast their lot amid the portions of Melchizedek, who will return them there and will proclaim to them liberty, forgiving them the wrong-doings of all their iniquities.

And the Day of Atonement is the end of the tenth Jubilee, when all the Sons of Light and the men of the lot of Melchizedek will be atoned for. And a statute concerns them to provide them with their rewards. For this is the moment of the Year of Grace for Melchizedek. And he will, by his strength, judge the holy ones of God, executing judgement as

it is written concerning him in the Songs of David, who said, ELOHIM has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgement [Ps 82:1] ...

And Melchizedek will avenge the vengeance of the judgements of God... and he will drag them from the hand of Belial... Psalm 110 alludes to Melchizedek as a prototype of the messiah.

Philo identifies Melchizedek with the Logos as priest of God, and honoured as an untutored priesthood.”

Sourced: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/11Q13>

Conclusion: These ancient writings tell of a Melchizedek being as Elohim, associated with the Day of Atonement. Paul stated Christ is our Great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; who abides and lives continually as Melchizedek, is engaged in a Heavenly High Priestly Ministration.

He will bring an At-one-ment between the ‘sons of light’ or the “saints” of (Rev. 14:12) and their “Heavenly Father” (Matt. 6:26) and this cleansing is by Christ, their “Great High Priest”. (Heb. 4:14) The same purposeful prayer for such an At-one-ment to take place is noted in John 17.

The Bible states these saints will bare record and testify. Overcoming the Dragon by the “blood of the Lamb” that cleanses them during this time of Final Atonement, and by the “word of their testimony” (Rev. 12:11).

John is suggesting this is a special and definitive “testimony of Jesus” (1:2) and alluded to in 11Q13. It must be asked - How can a “testimony of Jesus”, and the “word of their testimony” not include His Ministration as Great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec – a ministration that actually resolves the sin problem in sinful flesh?

The saints testify how God resolves the sin problem in sinful flesh and John confirms this special testimony of Jesus concerning Christ’s Dual Atonements; the “necessity” & “necessary” (Heb. 8:3; 9:23). This is Biblical sanctification “in obeying the truth through the Spirit” (1 Pet. 1:22) who “keep (and not who are trying to—or professing to keep) the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (14:12). This can never be boasting or the wayward theology of perfectionism.

With the fact that Melchizedek was “priest of the most high God” (Gen. 14:18), is the reason why you cannot have Melchizedek named as Priest, without the aspect of a Sanctuary Service ministry in the Heavens which was for to come. This is nothing other than the “Everlasting Gospel”, which was “preached before...unto Abraham” (Gal. 3:8) by “Melchizedek”.

Paul knew this aspect about the theology of Melchisedec. Jesus said ‘salvation is of the Jews’ (Jn. 4:22) and the “sum” of the “Everlasting Gospel”, is the Sanctuary Doctrine that was given to ancient Israel as the “root and fatness of the olive tree”. (Rom. 11:17)

Nag Hammadi

Another interesting document sourced from ancient writings relating to Melchisedec is as follows:

“A collection of early Gnostic scripts dating on or before the 4th century, discovered in 1945 and known as the Nag Hammadi library, contains a tractate pertaining to Melchizedek. Here it is proposed that Melchizedek is Jesus Christ. Melchizedek, as Jesus Christ, lives, preaches, dies and is resurrected, in a gnostic perspective. The Coming of the Son of God Melchizedek speaks of his return to bring peace, supported by the gods, and he is a priest-king who dispenses justice.”

Sourced: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nag_Hammadi_library

“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.”

Sourced: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melchizedek#In_Nag_Hammadi_Library

Within the link is a Complete list of codices found in Nag Hammadi. Note the content of codex IX which lists Melchizedek — “Codex IX: Melchizedek”

Sourced: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nag_Hammadi_library

Ismailism

Let us consider another viewpoint relating to Melchisedec in Ismailism:

“There is no mention of Melchizedek in the Qur'an or in early Islamic exegesis or literature. Some later commentators, including Abdullah Yusuf Ali, however, did suggest a link between Melchizedek and Khidr. They referred to St. Paul's allegory of Melchizedek in his Epistle to the Hebrews as a parallel to the Muslim view of Khidr. In Ismailism, however, Melchizedek is of greater importance as one of the ‘Permanent Imams’; that is those who guide people through the ages of history. There appears to have been no mention made of Melchizedek in either the writings of the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh. However, ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, the eldest son of Baha'u'llah, and Shoghi Effendi, both recognised Melchizedek as a Manifestation of God (prophet). Abdu'l-Bahá recognised his prophethood based on the fact that Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham according to Genesis 14:20. Furthermore, a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, the great grandson of Baha'u'llah, states that Melchizedek was certainly a prophet, though it acknowledges that little is known about the prophet.”

Sourced: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melchizedek#In_Nag_Hammadi_Library

Again, the reason why little is known about Melchisedec, is because of the failure to recognise what the Book of Hebrews is teaching about the “Everlasting Gospel”.

Athinganoi

The ancient people, known as the “untouchables”:

“The **Athinganoi** or **Athingani**, Ancient Greek: Αθιγγανοί, plural of **Athinganos** (Αθιγγανος), were a 9th-century sect of Monarchians located in Phrygia, founded by Theodotus the banker. The etymology of the word is not certain, but a common determination is a derivation in Greek for “(the) untouchables” derived from a privative alpha prefix and the verb *thingano* (θιγγάνειν, “to touch”). It is uncertain whether the sect survived beyond the 9th century. They were probably scattered across Anatolia and the Balkans following the destruction of the Paulician capital Tephrike in the 870s.

An earlier, and probably quite distinct, sect with the same name is refuted by Marcus Eremita, who seems to have been a disciple of St. John Chrysostom. His book *Eis ton Melchisedek*, or according to Photius “Against the Melchisedekites”, speaks of these new teachers as making **Melchisedech an incarnation of the Logos (divine Word)**. They were anathematized by the bishops, but would not cease to preach. They seem to have been otherwise orthodox.

St. Jerome (Ep. 73) refutes an anonymous work which identified Melchisedech with the Holy Ghost. About AD 600, Timotheus, Presbyter of Constantinople, in his book *De receptione Haereticorum* adds at the end of his list of heretics who need rebaptism the Melchisedechians, now called Athingani. They live in Phrygia, and are neither Hebrews nor Gentiles. They keep the Sabbath, but are not circumcised. They will not touch any man. If food is offered to them, they ask for it to be placed on the ground; then they come and take it. They give to others with the same precautions.

The name *athinganoi*, later variant form of which is *atsinganoi*, came to be associated with the Romani people who first appeared in the Byzantine Empire at the time and is the root word for “cigano”, “çingene”, “zigeuner”, “tzigan”, “tigan”, and “zingari”, words used to describe members of the Romani people. Today many of these words are still used in a derogatory sense, albeit others are the most common exonym for them in a given language. It is still not clear if the athinganoi who were present in the 9th century in Europe are related to the Romani people of today.”

Sourced: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athinganoi>

The question remains why were they anathematized by the Bishops for teaching that Melchisedec was the Logos! Which did not stop them from preaching. The ancient materials are very interesting and enlightening and all alluding to Melchisedec as being The Word, ho Logos of John 1.

Hebrews 7:3

Paul makes an informative and emphatic comparative fact of Christ’s Eternal Divine Identity. For example, the Phillips Bible translation renders Heb. 7:3 as follows:

“*Melchizedek means “king of righteousness,” and his other title is “king of peace”, for Salem means peace. He had no father*

or mother and no family tree. He was not born nor did he die, but, being like the Son of God, is a perpetual priest.”) (underscore added)

The Moffatt translation states concerning Melchisedec:

“*He has neither father nor mother nor genealogy, neither a beginning to his days nor an end of his life, but, resembling the Son of God, continues to be priest permanently. Mark the dignity of this man...of whom the witness is that ‘he lives.’*” (Heb. 7:3, 8, ea., c.f. Acts 2:24; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 37; 17:31)

What Paul is fundamentally pointing out, is that Melchizedek had no beginning—no ending. Therefore, in the very least or most minimal point of view, Melchisedec has an Eternal Identity being that of the same description of Christ’s Eternal Identity.

The Meyer’s New Testament Commentary states the following:

“Hebrews 7:3. Απάτωρ, ἀμήτωρ, ἀγενεαλόγητος] without father, without mother, without pedigree, i.e. of whom neither father, nor mother, nor pedigree stands recorded in Holy Scripture. This is the usual interpretation of the words, which has been the prevalent one in the church from early times to the present. Less natural, and only in repute here and there, is the explanation: who possessed neither father nor mother, etc., according to which the sacred writer must have recognised in Melchisedec a higher, superhuman being, who had only for a time assumed a human form.” [Meyers New Testament Commentary — <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/hebrews/7-3.htm>]

Meyer states: “The expression ἀγενεαλόγητος only here in all Greek literature.” [ibid.]

Paul says He was— “*Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like* [ἀγενεαλόγητος] *unto the Son of God*”.

The comparison seems to be rather between two manifestations of the same identity. Melchizedek—the Logos prior to Bethlehem. And Melchisedec—the Logos in the flesh. A manifestation of God as Melchizedek, like unto the manifestation of the “Word of life” (1 Jn. 1:1, c.f. Jn. 1:1), the Son of God to those who heard Him, saw Him and handled Him. “(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)” (1 Jn. 1:2).

With the previously mentioned facts regarding the ancient manuscripts, identifying Melchizedek as a Divine Identity, what must not be lost is the very fact that the Final Atonement was also discussed by the writers of the Dead Sea scrolls. And they considered the Final

Atonement a part of the scriptural Gospel. (These are non-Gnostic teachings).

And the interesting part is the relationship that the above statement shares with Hebrews 7's Great High Priest after the Order of Melchisedec; which according to Romans 5:10 is the second round of services associated with the imparting of Eternal life.

The first ministrations facet being reconciliation, which was a non-High Priestly work. Namely, the common priest in the type also could bring about reconciliation. (See Lev. 4:26, 31 – With v. 20 being the anointed priest.)

To borrow Paul's language, the "sum" of it all is as follows: The High Priest of God "after the order of Melchizedek", He has no genealogy no Father or Mother, no beginning of days nor end of life.

The mystery however, that remains is how the Logos emptied Himself and took the slave form of man. And this is where we are not going to go, (using a borrowed term) to "peep behind the wall of eternity".

In review:

Moses wrote concerning Melchisedec: "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, ea.)

The Apostle Paul wrote: "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. Now consider (c.f. 3:1; 12:3) how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils." (Heb. 7:1-4, ea.)

"For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec 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 for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 7:14-17, ea.)

"And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order

of Melchisedec:) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them... 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 for evermore." (Heb. 7:20-28, ea.)

If Melchisedec's identity consists of a mere earthly "priest of the most high God" (Gen. 14:18); a man, he would not have been "suffered to continue by reason of death" (Heb. 7:23).

This would place Paul's entire Epistle in an untrustworthy position, making Paul very naughty for stating "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. 7:3, ea.) "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5:6, emp. added)

The "sum" or chief point:

The Book of Hebrews testifies that we have a "great High Priest", a "Mediator", a "Forerunner", who "of necessity" "offered up himself" "once for all" on the cross. "But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself".

Who "for us entered" to "cleanse" "our hearts from an evil conscience", even the "necessary" "intercession", so that He can "appear the second time without sin unto salvation". This has been signified by the "Holy Spirit", the "man clothed in linen", and "God" the Father. (Heb. 8:1; 4:14; 8:6; 6:20; 8:3; 7:27; 10:10; 9:26; *ibid*; 9:14 margin; 10:22; 9:23; 7:25; 9:28; 9:8; Dan. 8:14; Heb. 1:1-2)

Conclusion:

Melchisedec is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who "abideth a Priest continually" as our "Great High Priest" "after the order of Melchisedec".

Therefore, it is with those who do not accept Melchisedec as the Divine Logos, with whom the burden rests for a more accurate explanation for Melchisedec.

However, it will have to agree with the WORD of God – the whole WORD of God – and nothing but the WORD of God. This uplifts Christ crucified and Christ as our "Great High Priest" "after the order of Melchisedec" – "two immutable things"; which none of the other explanations seem to be able to do on any true theological or linguistic fronts in Laodicea or mainstream Christianity.

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Email: maninlinen@protonmail.com

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