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Rekindle Your Faith

The Mystery of Melchizadek

For the non-believer; the atheist and agnostic, the idea that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord, and that He is God, is usually met with typical obstinance and ignorance. Should the Shroud of Turin remain unacceptable as convincing proof, even though it is the ultimate proof that Christ resurrected from the dead, the Bible is the one sure source that may further prove that the first coming of Jesus Christ was validated in the Old Testament: in the Book of Daniel and in Genesis 14. In John 8: 56-59, Jesus tells His disciples that He is *God*. God; the great “***I am,***” the alpha and the omega. He also informs His disciples that Abraham *had seen Him*.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.” 57 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” 58 Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. 59

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Jesus Christ confirmed for us that He is God, the great **I Am**, because Jesus tells us that Abraham met Him and that Abraham rejoiced. Yet, nowhere in the Old Testament is Jesus Christ mentioned. So how does the Old Testament validate the existence of Jesus if Our Lord is not given by name, nor did the birth of Jesus occur until hundreds of years later?

Genesis 14:1-24: *At this time Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). All these latter kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (the Salt Sea). For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaites in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emites in Shaveh Kiriathaim and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran near the desert. Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazezon Tamar. Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) marched out and drew up their battle lines in the Valley of Siddim against Kedorlaomer king of*

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Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar – four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills. The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. They also carried off Abram’s nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom. One who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshcol and Aner, all of whom were allied with Abram. When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan. During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people. After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley). 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.’ Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. The king of Sodom said to Abram, ‘Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself.’

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But Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, and have taken an oath that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the thong of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, "I made Abram rich" I will accept nothing but what my men have eaten and the share that belongs to the men who went with me – to Aner, Eshcol and Mamre. Let them have their share.'

Kings at war with each other and Abraham in their midst excels victorious.

Weary from battle, Abraham notices one more king riding up toward him, though unknown to him.

Melchizadek, the King of Salem, who offers no charge, no threat of battle, but who delights in sharing bread and wine, as in Holy Communion, with Abraham.

He then tells Abraham that he is the *"priest of God Most High."*

"...he [Melchizadek] blessed Abram, saying, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.'"

During the Offertory portion of the Liturgy in the Catholic Mass, following the Consecration, the priest recites from the Eucharistic Prayer 1, the Roman Canon:

"Look with favor on these offerings and accept them as once you accepted the

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gifts of your servant Abel, the sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith, and the bread and wine offered by your priest Melchizedech.” (contemporary version)

“Upon which be pleased to look with a favourable and serene countenance: and accept them, even as you were pleased to accept the gifts of your just child Abel, and the sacrifice of our patriarch Abraham: and that which your high priest Melchisedech offered to you, a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim.” (traditional version)

(Latin translation)

Supra quae propitio ac sereno vultu respicere digneris, et accepta habere sicut accepta habere dignatus es munera pueri tui justi Abel, et sacrificium patriarchae nostri Abrahae, et quod tibi obtulit summus sacerdos tuus Melchisedech, sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam. Your High Priest, Melchisedech/Melchizadek.

The faithful hear the name before the Consecration of the gifts, yet most are not aware of why the name of Melchizedek is mentioned at all or whom he was.

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The name of this “priest of God” is mentioned after the Consecration because Melchizedek was responsible for offering the first form of Holy Communion to Abraham, father of the Jewish people.

The name *Melchizedek* is mentioned in three books: Genesis, Psalms, and Hebrews. The most startling point here other than the appearance of Melchizedek as High Priest, but also as the King of Salem, is the name Salem...*Salem*? (pronounced Sha-lem) Salem, in general consensus among the Jews, comes from the name *Jerusalem*, as stated by Josephus (Ant., I, x, 2). Even more astonishing are the definitions of the names. The meaning of *Melchizedek* means “king of righteousness” while Salem (Shalem) is a word meaning “peace.” Thus, we have Melchizedek, king of righteousness, as the King of Salem (peace), whom appeared unknown to Abraham, but who knew Abraham.

The mystery of Melchizedek in the Old Testament may be a stunning and miraculous account of God’s omnipotence.

¹This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, ² and Abraham

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gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.”³ Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever. -Hebrews 7: 1-3

¹⁵ And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, ¹⁶ one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is declared: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

-Hebrews 7:15-17

***The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek. - Psalm 110: 6** (this Messianic Psalm was written by King David.)*

Proof of God's omnipotence is easily verified from a most reliable source, the Holy Bible, just as undeniable proof of Christ's Resurrection continues to surface in the Shroud of Turin, Jesus' burial cloth. As I have stated in previous pages, a true believer needs no proof of God/Jesus existence. The truth, however, is here for those who question, or for those who want to believe but require further

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proof. The Bible is God's Word...*period*, and in conclusion, all who believe in the Holy Bible, all who are Christian, should not question but *believe!*

***So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says , 'I repent,' forgive him."* - Luke 17:3-4**

It might be said that Melchizedek, as *God's* priest, was, then, the first Vicar of Christ on earth.

Jesus Christ, Himself, was considered a *priest*. Melchizedek, were he to be the person of God on earth *before God* returned on earth as Jesus Christ, appears in the Old Testament as both a king and priest, the first priest to be recognized in both the Old and New Testaments. Melchizedek, though a complete mystery and stranger to Abraham, was greeted by him in friendship and with open acceptance.

In his letter to Cecil, St. Cyprian of Carthage wrote this about Melchizedek:

"Also in the priest Melchizedek we see the Sacrament of the Sacrifice of the Lord refigured, in accord with that to which the Divine Scriptures testify, where

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it says: 'And Melchizedek, the King of Salem, brought out bread and wine, for he was a priest of the Most High God; and he blessed Abraham.' That Melchizedek is in fact a type of Christ is declared in the psalms by the Holy Spirit, saying to the Son, as it were from the Father: 'Before the daystar I begot You. You are a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.' The order certainly is that which comes from his sacrifice and which comes down from it: because Melchizedek was a priest of the Most High God; because he offered bread; and because he blessed Abraham. And who is more a priest of the Most High God than our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when He offered sacrifice to God the Father, offered the very same which Melchizedek had offered, namely bread and wine, which is in fact His Body and Blood."

The Church recognizes in its Catechism, that *"The Christian tradition considers Melchizedek, 'priest of God Most High,' as a prefiguration of the priesthood of Christ, the unique 'high priest after the order of Melchizedek'; 'holy, blameless, unstained,' 'by a single offering He has perfected for all time*

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those who are sanctified,' that is, by the unique sacrifice of the cross."

In considering Melchizedek, might he have been a "foreshadowing" of Christ, thus, could it be possible that Melchizedek was the omnipotent presence of God in His earliest form on earth? It could be possible.

According to a spokesperson for *Catholics United for Faith*, this statement, in excerpt, was made in response to a questioner of the identity of the King of Righteousness:

"Regarding the identity of Melchizedek, the short answer is that we don't definitively know. The Catholic Church does rule out that Melchizedek was a non-human person, e.g., an angel or manifestation of the Holy Spirit. However, the Biblical text does not provide clarity on Melchizedek's identity, and the Church does not provide a definitive pronouncement otherwise."

While the Holy Church has no definitive proof that Melchizedek was God incarnate as the King of Salem before He would become incarnate as Jesus Christ, this mysterious figure appeared out of nowhere, to compliment Abraham on his victory in battle and to share with the victor *bread and wine*,

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sacrificially offered in a form of Holy Communion, long before the institution of the Holy Eucharist by Jesus Christ during the Last Supper.

The Vatican, in its *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, details for the faithful the Holy Order of Priesthood: *"Everything that the priesthood of the Old Covenant prefigured finds its fulfillment in Christ Jesus, the "one mediator between God and men."¹⁵ The Christian tradition considers Melchizedek, "priest of God Most High," as a prefiguration of the priesthood of Christ, the unique "high priest after the order of Melchizedek";¹⁶ "holy, blameless, unstained,"¹⁷ "by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified,"¹⁸ that is, by the unique sacrifice of the cross."*

Catholics United for Faith, who run the website, *Catholic Exchange*, responded to the same questioner, previously, that: *"Jesus follows in the royal priestly line of Melchizedek and David (Mt. 1:1; 22:41-46), not Aaron's Levitical priesthood. Jesus, too, possesses His priesthood by nature, by virtue of His special relationship with the Father."*

From Hebrews 7:1-4 we read:

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This “Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High,” “met Abraham as he returned from his defeat of the kings” and “blessed him.” And Abraham apportioned to him “a tenth of everything.” His name first means righteous king, and he was also “king of Salem,” that is, king of peace. Without father, mother, or ancestry, without beginning of days or end of life, thus made to resemble the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

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The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) responds in the following manner to the above passage in Scripture which cites that Melchizedek has no known ancestry:

“Since Genesis gives no information on the parentage or the death of Melchizedek, he is seen here as a type of Christ, representing a priesthood that is unique and eternal (Heb 7:3).”

“[7:3] Without father, mother, or ancestry, without beginning of days or end of life: this is perhaps a quotation from a hymn about Melchizedek. The rabbis maintained that anything not mentioned in the Torah does not exist.

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Consequently, since the Old Testament nowhere mentions Melchizedek's ancestry, birth, or death, the conclusion can be drawn that e remains...forever."

"[7:20–25] As was the case with the promise to Abraham (Heb 6:13), though not with the levitical priesthood, the eternal priesthood of the order of Melchizedek was confirmed by God's oath (Heb 7:20–21); cf. Ps 110:4." Here they are summarizing the following:

In Hebrews 7:17-21: For it is testified: You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." On the one hand, a former commandment is annulled because of its weakness and uselessness, for the law brought nothing to perfection; on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. And to the degree that this happened not without the taking of an oath—for others became priests without an oath, but he with an oath, through the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn, and he will not repent: 'You are a priest forever'"

The LORD has sworn and will not waver: 'Like Melchizedek you are a priest

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forever.” - Psalm 110

The Order of Melchizedek refers to the priesthood NOT inherited from one's father but from God. It is referred to in the Ordination Prayer for those being ordained as priests in the Roman Catholic faith. The New Testament's Letter to the Hebrews, references Melchizedek as a priest and as a model for Christian priests all of eight times: (5:6, 5:10, 6:20, 7:1, 7:10, 7:11, 7:15 and 7:17).

“The 1911 Catholic Encyclopedia article (citing Hebrews 7:3) notes that he was a prototype of our Lord Jesus. It adds: The silence of Scripture about the facts of Melchisedech's birth and death was part of the divine plan to make him prefigure more strikingly the mysteries of Christ's generation, the eternity of His priesthood. But why did the ancient Jews (who would, of course, reject the Christian messianic interpretation) give him such prominence in the first place? The 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia gives us a good idea:

To the Jewish propagandists of Alexandria, who were eager to win proselytes for Judaism without submitting them to the rite of circumcision, Melchizedek appealed with especial force as a type of the monotheist of the pre-Abrahamic time or of non-Jewish race, like Enoch. Like Enoch, too, he was apotheosized. He was placed in the same category with Elijah, the Messiah ben Joseph, and the Messiah ben David . . . The singular feature of supernatural origin is ascribed to all four, . . .”¹

The traditional Jewish Rabbinc explanation on Melchizedek, according to the

¹ **National Catholic Register**, DAVE ARMSTRONG, Jan. 15, 2018

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Jewish Encyclopedia (1906), rests on Shem, the oldest son of Noah. The belief was that Shem, in actuality, appeared to Abraham as Melchizedek.

“Shem, as a priest, came to Jerusalem (with which Salem is identified by the Rabbis), of which city he became king, it being the proper place for the establishment of the cult of Yhwh. He went to meet Abraham to show him that he was not angry with him for having killed the Elamites, his descendants.”

According to the Vatican: *“Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time: thus it is the sacrament of apostolic ministry. It includes three degrees: episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate.”*

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We accept, then, that the sacrament of Holy Orders, the priesthood, was established by God, His Son on earth becoming *a priest forever* in the Order of Melchizedek, and, thus, Melchizedek, by virtue of his priesthood and sacramental offertory and Blessing to Abraham, though still a mystery as to his true identity and origin, was sent by God to establish the order of the priesthood.

There is still one issue, however, that remains overlooked in discussions concerning Melchizedek, one seemingly unanswered also by the Vatican, adding further questions to the mystery.

56Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and

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was glad.” 57 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” 58 Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. 59 - John 8: 56-59

So, then, by Jesus stating to his Apostles that ***Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad,*** was He telling them that He was *there* with Abraham... that very day when Melchizedek appeared to Abraham out of nowhere? Jesus had given a specific clue confirming to His followers that He is God: ***Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.***

Many faithful in Christ believe Jesus implied that He was not only God, but, that as God, He had first come to earth in the time of Abraham, in the form of the High Priest, *Melchizedek*.

“Melchizedek is an old Canaanite name meaning “My King Is [the god] Sedek” or “My King Is Righteousness” (the meaning of the similar Hebrew cognate). Salem, of which he is said to be king, is very probably Jerusalem.”²

Whoever Melchizedek was, he was someone out of the ordinary, a very special

² [Brittanica.com/biography/Melchizedek](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Melchizedek)

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entity, who came to bestow a blessing and give out bread and wine as an offering long before Holy Communion existed. This “King of Righteousness” came from a place unheard of, and spoke of no lineage. The Jews being devout followers of their ancestry, stood perplexed as to how a king and high priest did not boast of a royal heritage. That Melchizedek knew Abraham and what he had done, and Abraham, not knowing of a King of Salem, felt comfortable enough at their meeting to offer Melchizedek “a tenth of everything” he possessed, is genuinely curious.

One day we will know this truth. For now, the mystery of Melchizedek remains as such in the realm of Mysteries belonging to the Holy Catholic Church.