

Yeshua's Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood Surpasses the Levitical ~ Part 1a

Messianic Jews 7:1-10

Letter to the Messianic Jews

In my last post, we concluded our study in the series **Lay Hold of Yeshua and His Redemption**. In this post, we begin a new mini-series on **Yeshua's Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood Surpasses the Levitical**. We'll explore **Messianic Jews 7:1-10** on the priority of the **Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood**. Once again, there is more meat here than meets the eye. To keep the post at a reasonable length, I will only cover verses 1-3 in this post.

The Priority of the Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood

¹ This Malki-Tzedek, king of Shalem, a cohen of God Ha'Elyon [the God Most High], met Avraham on his way back from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him; ² also Avraham gave him a tenth of everything. Now first of all, by translation of his name, he is "king of righteousness"; and then he is also king of Shalem, which means "king of peace." ³ There is no record of his father, mother, ancestry, birth or death; rather, like the Son of God, he continues as a cohen for all time. ⁴ Just think how great he was! Even the Patriarch Avraham gave him a tenth of the choicest spoils. ⁵ Now the descendants of Levi who became cohanim have a commandment in the Torah to take a tenth of the income of the people, that is, from their own brothers, despite the fact that they too are descended from Avraham. ⁶ But Malki-Tzedek, even though he was not descended from Levi, took a tenth from Avraham. Also, he blessed Avraham, the man who received God's promises; ⁷ and it is beyond all dispute that the one who blesses has higher status than the one who receives the blessing. ⁸ Moreover, in the case of the cohanim, the tenth is received by men who die; while in the case of Malki-Tzedek, it is received by someone who is testified to be still alive. ⁹ One might go even further and say that Levi, who himself receives tenths, paid a tenth through Avraham; ¹⁰ inasmuch as he was still in his ancestor Avraham's body when Malki-Tzedek met him." ~

Hebrews 7:1-10 (CJB)

As we have seen, the two passages on which the writer to the **Messianic Jews** relies on are Psalm 110:4 and B'resheet 14:18-20. The story of **Malki-Tzedek** is a strange and almost eerie one. He arrives out of the blue; there is nothing about his birth, his life, his death or his descendants. He just arrives on the scene. He gives **Avraham** bread and wine, and after Avraham gives him a tenth of the spoils from his battle, then **Malki-Tzedek** vanishes from the stage of history with the same unexplained suddenness as he arrived. There is little wonder that in the mystery of this story the writer to the Hebrews found a symbol of **Yeshua**.

Shalem is akin in Hebrew to the word **shalom**, which means not only **peace** but also tranquility, safety, well-being, welfare, health, contentment, success, comfort, wholeness, and integrity. **Shalem** is the city of Jerusalem. This is clear both from Psalm 76:3(2), where parallel lines of poetry identify Shalem (Salem) with Zion, and from traditional Jewish sources. **King of peace**. In Isaiah 9:5-6(6-7), one of the essential **Tanakh** prophecies of the Messiah, **Yeshua** is called "**the prince of peace**" (*sar-shalom*).

It's not that **Malki-Tzedek** had no **father, mother, ancestry, birth or death**, but that the **Tanakh** contains no record of them. This fact enables the author to develop the **midrash** that **Malki-Tzedek continues as a cohen for all time, like the Son of God, Yeshua**, who had no human father (Matthew 1:18-25) and who existed as the **Word** before his birth (Yochanan 1:1, 14) and continues to exist after His death. The **midrash** may be stated thus: the **Tanakh** presents **Malki-Tzedek** in no other way than as a **cohen**; and since the **Tanakh** is eternally true, **Malki-Tzedek's** existence as a **cohen** may be thought of as eternal. Such **midrash** making is altogether Jewish; so that it is irrelevant to point out, as do literal-minded critics, that **Malki-Tzedek** surely was born of parents and died like other men. The one thing that we can probably all agree on is that **Malki-Tzedek** is genuinely unique.

As a side note in passing, a parallel the author does not use, presumably because it does not touch on his purpose: the use of bread and wine both by **Malki-Tzedek** and by **Yeshua** and all believers in communion.

In my next post, we'll continue in our mini-series on **Yeshua's Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood Surpasses the Levitical Part ~ Part 1b.**