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THE MELCHISEDEC PRIESTHOOD

DIALOGUE

B. We have not had our usual talks of late, Brother A., and I called for one this evening. Suppose we drop our study of Revelation, tonight, and consider the Melchisedec Priesthood. I have a new idea concerning Melchisedec, viz.: that he was really Christ Jesus in another manifestation; the same person who was afterward born in Bethlehem. What do you think of it?

A. It may be a *new* thought to you, Brother B., but it certainly is an old one to most of the deep thinkers of the church; *i.e.*, they have usually thought of the question, but usually, also, have concluded that it is a mere random thought, suggested by the statement that he was “without beginning of days, nor end of years,” but upon close examination of the subject it has been dropped. This, however, is not an argument against your view, which you supposed new. If you have any good reasons, let me have them, and let us reason together, and let the new idea stand or fall accordingly. It is a thing we should always remember, however, that all new things are not, because new, true.

B. I may have been hasty in deciding on this subject. The text you refer to has been the one on which I built most—“Without beginning of days, nor end of years.” How would you understand this text unless by supposing that it refers to God, who is “from everlasting to everlasting”?

A. Well, to take your view of it would make Melchisedec the *Father*, and not our Lord Jesus, who is called the “first-begotten,” “only-begotten,” “the Son,” “the beginning of the *creation* of God.” We believe that Jesus had an existence before He came into the world, that it was in glory, and that He left the glory which He had with the Father “*before the world was.*” We believe the word to teach that since “His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross,” “God (the Father) hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name,” etc.; that now all power in heaven and earth is given unto Him.” We believe that “of His kingdom there is no end,” and that “His throne is forever and ever.” But we cannot suppose that He never had a beginning, since it is positively stated that He was “the beginning of the creation.” This, of course, involves the idea that the Heavenly Father and Son are no more one *person* than an earthly father and son could be one in person. There is a *one-ness*, however, a unity, existing between them, the one-ness of will, aim, &c., as it was written of Jesus, “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.” We remember further that

Jesus prayed for us, His church, that we might have the *same kind of unity*; not unity of person, but unity of purpose, aim, and interest. He prays “That they *all* may be ONE, even as Thou, Father, and I are one.” This shows us clearly the kind of one-ness existing between our Father and our Lord.

If, then, the text, “without beginning of days, nor end of years,” as applied to Melchisedec, means that he never had a beginning nor end of life, it would prove not that he was Jesus, but Jehovah. We think, however, that this is not its meaning, but—

B. Let me first explain my process of reasoning on the matter, that you may more fully answer. Paul says that Jesus was made a priest after the order of Melchisedec. Now, I reason that if of that order, He must have been the head or founder of it; that therefore Melchisedec was Christ. If Melchisedec was only a *man*, if he were not Christ, would it not imply that Jesus must be lower than him, and consequently not in as high honor as the *man* Melchisedec, who was the head of the order?

A. I do not think your reasoning sound. You seem to forget that men are sometimes used as types of Christ, and that the type is always inferior to the antitype. For instance: Adam was a type, as the head of the human family; David was the first king who ever “sat on the throne of the Lord;” Moses was a figure of Him that was to come, as it is written: “A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you *like unto me.*”

If Christ is a prophet like unto or after the order of Moses, does it prove that Moses was not a man—that Moses must have been Christ? If David (the name means the anointed—the Christ) was a type of Christ, and called “the Lord’s anointed,” does it prove that he was not a man? If Adam was the head of the race was he really not a man; was he Christ in some previous manifestation? By no means. Adam, David, Moses, Aaron, as well as Solomon, Isaac, Jacob, Melchisedec, &c., were but figures of the true *Head, King, Prophet, Priest*, and Melchisedec, as a type, showed how the kingly and priestly offices (separate under the law) would both unite in Him, so that He would be a “Priest upon His throne.” All the types are natural, representing things higher. First, the *natural* head, king, prophet and priest: afterward, the spiritual.

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B. This, I admit, seems to overturn my new ideas, but let me know how Melchisedec was without father or mother?

A. It would scarcely be necessary to remind you that Christ was not without a Father. Call to mind His *words*—“*Father* forgive them;” “*Father*, glorify Thou me with the glory which I had with Thee

before the world was.” It could not then refer to Christ in His pre-existent state, nor, can it apply to Him as “the *man*, Christ Jesus,” for Jesus was “born of a woman.” Wakefield’s new version renders this (Heb. 7:3) “Of whose father, mother, pedigree, birth, and death, we have no account.” There was a strict record kept of parentage, birth, death, &c., of every Levite, so that any one claiming to be a priest or Levite could prove it by the records.

The Diaglott, renders this text, “without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither a beginning of days nor an end of life, but having been made like to the Son of God, remains a priest perpetually.” Some take the view (as does Wakefield, quoted above) that this text only means that no account was kept of his birth, death, &c. While we may feel sure that he had a father and mother and a beginning of days, we are not sure that he died. Verse 8 seems to imply that he, like Enoch and Elijah, did not die—“Here, indeed, men (the Levitical Priesthood) receive tithes, who die; but *there*, one (Melchisedec received tithes), of whom it is affirmed that he *lives*. This is a positive statement that Melchisedec did not die. We must suppose that he was translated.

B. Would not the fact that he was called a priest, and that he did not die, give strength to my suggestion that he was Christ?

A. No, the very reverse. It is testified of Melchisedec that he did not die, “that he lives,” but it is testified of Christ that He *did* die. This same Paul could say of Christ: “Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.” We conclude, then, that as Christ, on the spiritual plane of life, had a Father, and on the earthly plane a mother, and *did* “die for our sins,” “even the death of the cross,” therefore He was not the same person as Melchisedec.

B. Yes, now I see clearly that they are not the same, but can you show why the two priesthoods are given, and why they are contrasted?

A. Jesus fills up so large a work, and so varied, that many types are required to illustrate His work. David illustrated His kingly power—putting down all enemies. Solomon represented His peaceful reign (the millennium), and His wisdom. “In His day the righteous

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shall flourish.” But these were only imperfect types. Their kingdoms and lives had an end. A type was needed which would show that His kingdom would have no end.

Again, the Aaronic Priesthood was a type of the Christian priesthood, during the time Christ and His body suffer and die, down until they shall appear in the glory of the kingdom. Here the Aaronic type ceases, and where *it* ceases the Melchisedec type begins. The Melchisedec type shows no

death, no sacrifice, only the *reigning* and *blessing*—*king* and priest. How beautifully *it* illustrates *what we must shortly be*. With Jesus our head, we *soon* shall be “*kings and priests* unto God, and reign on the earth.” One of the most notable events of that reign will be the blessing of the natural descendants of Abraham, as shown in the type (Gen. 14:18-20): “And Melchisedec, king of Salem (type of Christ—head and body) ... blessed Abraham.” Then “the elder (natural Israel) shall serve the younger” (spiritual Israel), and pay them tribute and homage, as Abraham paid tribute and homage to Melchisedec.

“If He were on earth He could not be a priest,” says Paul. I am not trying to prove to you that Jesus’ claims as a priest are based upon titles of the law. No, we claim that He came of Judah, the kingly tribe. As a priest, He did not attempt to usurp your office. No, He was offered on the great altar—the earth itself, and when He went in with the real blood of sin-offering, He did not attempt to go into the holy places made with hands, but into the real ones, of which yours is only a type or shadow. Soon the sacrifice will all be over. He has left a measure of suffering and death to be filled up by us, His body. Soon all will be over, and we “shall appear with Him” to “bless the people” (as you do in symbol), but it will be with kingly power united to our priestly office. And then, too, when complete, our priesthood shall continue forever. See, God gave you a type of this higher priesthood in Melchisedec, “King of Peace” and “Priest of God,” of whom it is testified “*he lives.*” So when our priesthood reaches the plane typified by Melchisedec, we will never die, but abide a “Royal Priesthood” forever. How indispensable are both of these types, the Aaronic, showing how we must *die* with Him, and the Melchisedec, how we shall *live with Him* and be glorified together; “no cross, no crown.”

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