

June 11, 2017

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (the 19th Anniversary Worship Service)

Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Jesus, Our High Priest"

—The True Intercessor—

Text: Hebrews 7:1~10

7:1 This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him,

7:2 and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace."

7:3 Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

7:4 Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder!

7:5 Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from fellow Israelites—even though they also are descended from Abraham.

7:6 This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.

7:7 And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater.

7:8 In the one case, the tenth is collected by those(people) who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living.

7:9 One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham,

7:10 because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

Introduction

- Today, we are very happy to celebrate the 19th Anniversary of KIBC. We give thanks to the Lord, our God, for His grace. I also pray His blessing on you.
Our KIBC is founded by the living God. Indeed, KIBC is the body of Christ that God Himself founded. Let's praise the God for giving a day of celebration.
- By the way, we listened to God's voice last time from the Epistle to the Hebrews, Chapter 6. The title of the message was, "Two Unchangeable Truths" (The subtitle was, "A Firm and Secure Anchor") The author of the Epistle taught *two unchangeable truths* to Jewish Christians. They are *the Word of promise* and *the Word of oath*. The saints who lead lives by trusting *the Word of promise* and *the Word of oath* are able to lead a firm and secure life.
- On the top of that, God promised to give a great hope to those who lead a firm and secure life.
6:19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain,
We learned two important things last week as below —
- Those who trust in *the two unchangeable truths*
 - ① are given a firm and secure *anchor*. Even though he goes through the raging waves, his boat has a *firm anchor* so that his life is secure.
 - ② are given the privilege to enter the inner sanctuary of the Temple of Jerusalem in heaven. This is the hope that we who trust in the living God have.

- Then, the author of the Epistle begins to teach in chapter 7 that those who trust in Christ are greatly blessed. Let's study the following two points according to today's Scripture.

Main Points

1 . Similarities Between the Priesthood of Jesus and Melchizedek

- **6:20 where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.**
- A priest mediates between God and human beings. It was impossible for human beings to restore a relationship with God without a priest. On top of that, human beings could not bring a sin offering to God without them. Now let's look the biblical view of human nature.

1) The Bible's View of Human Beings

- The Bible's view of human beings is different from the worldly one. Other religions except the Bible think that they can easily reach gods. On the contrary, the Bible teaches that people can't do this by themselves, because human beings are sinners and God is holy. If sinful human beings approach God who is Holy, they are surely destroyed by His judgment.
- The sinful human beings were only able to approach God through an animal offering that the priest brought to the Lord on behalf of them. The Law of the Old Testament teaches it. According to Leviticus, the Israelites must have laid their hand on a bull or a goat without defect for their sin that they had committed. Then the priest slaughtered the bull or the goat before God and they were able to worship Him.

Leviticus

1:2 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When anyone among you brings an offering to the LORD, bring as your offering an animal from either the herd or the flock.

1:3 "If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, you are to offer a male without defect. You must present it at the entrance to the tent of meeting so that you may be acceptable to the LORD

1:4 You are to lay your hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on your behalf to make atonement for you.

1:5 You are to slaughter the young bull before the LORD, and then Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and splash it against the sides of the altar at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

1:6 You are to skin the burnt offering and cut it into pieces.

1:7 The sons of Aaron the priest are to put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire.

1:8 Then Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, including the head and the fat, on the wood that is burning on the altar.

1:9 You are to wash the internal organs and the legs with water, and the priest is to burn all of it on the altar. It is a burnt offering, a food offering, an aroma pleasing to the LORD.

- According to the Old Testament, the priests must have been the descendants of Levi, who was one of Jacob's twelve children. They are often referred to as Aaron's sons. This is the Bible's view of human beings. The Scripture records as below.

2) Melchizedek the Priest and Jesus

7:1 This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him,

- Melchizedek was king and priest and had a several similarities with Jesus. He was referred to a model of Jesus.

7:2 and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.”

When Greeks in the ancient time had the victory over the enemy, they used to offer the best things of the plunder to their gods. Melchizedek means, “King of Righteousness” then also, “King of Salem” which means, “king of peace.”

- “King of Righteousness” = melchi (king) + zedek (righteousness)
“Salem” (Jerusalem) = shalom (peace)

The term above is used as a daily greeting. (It is still used today.)

- Jesus is also king who brought righteousness and peace to us. The Levitical priesthood was succeeded by the descendants of Levi. They were descendants of Aaron, who was brother of Moses. However, Melchizedek was given priesthood without such genealogy. The author of the Epistle recorded him as a priest like this.

7:3 Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

- Nothing was recorded about his birth or life. However, he was a priest who God directly sent to Jerusalem. He was a model of Jesus Christ. He remains a priest forever, not like Aaron who didn't serve as a priest forever.
- Equally, Jesus was appointed by God and remains as a priest forever. Jesus intercedes with God on behalf of us as our priest. We praise the name of Jesus because of peace and righteousness that was brought.
- Like this, the author of the Epistle draws similarities between Melchizedek and Jesus. He records more about Melchizedek as blow.

2 . Greatness of Jesus' Priesthood

1) Melchizedek the priest

- **7:4 Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder!**

• Abraham who was a great chief of a tribe and father of faith brought an offering to Melchizedek. He was that great a priest! A chief of a tribe means here that Abraham was the source of God's blessing to all humans. **Genesis 12**

12:2 “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

- The offering that Abraham brought was not for tribute when they were defeated nor the offering for fellowship. ⇒ Abraham brought the offering to worship God. Melchizedek the priest blessed Abraham by responding to his conduct.
- **7:5 Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from fellow Israelites—even though they also are descended from Abraham.**
- The Levites were making living by offerings from the Israelites. Therefore, they were not allowed to have their own land as a possession among twelve tribes of

Israel. Other tribes except the Levites had to offer the tithe to God. The Levites received it and they also had to offer a tenth of that tithe as the Lord's offering.

Numbers

18:25 The LORD said to Moses,

18:26 "Speak to the Levites and say to them: 'When you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, you must present a tenth of that tithe as the LORD's offering.'

- Like this, the Israelites went to meet God through a priest and received forgiveness and blessings from God. Nowadays, we have Jesus Christ our High Priest who is in the order of Melchizedek. Jesus is the High Priest who offered Himself, not an animal. He is our real intercessor with God the Father in heaven.
- Nowadays, we are allowed to come close to Jesus Christ without hesitation. On top of that, we are not asked to offer *the tithe* according to the Law. We are made free from the Law. Therefore, we call our days, *the time of the grace*. We willingly give *an offering to God* with thanks. How blessed we are! This is the grace of God, indeed.

2) God's secret (His grace)

- **7:6 This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.**

The Scripture above violates the Law of Moses, because he who was not a descendant from Levi was not allowed to do such a thing. Therefore, we come to understand that Melchizedek is the quite exceptional person.

7:7 And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater.

- The lesser refers to Abraham, the chief of the tribe, and the greater refers to Melchizedek who was a priest forever. Jesus Christ is the greater. When we glorify and worship Him, He blesses us too and we receive His blessing. It is just like Abraham who was blessed by Melchizedek. How thankful!

{Illustration} He Who Made a Boy to Meet the Queen

- **A long time ago, Queen Victoria went on a trip. A certain boy wanted to meet her just for a second. He decided to go to a castle that she stayed and asked to meet her.**
- **As he approached the castle, a guard asked him, "What do you want to do?" He said, "I want to meet the Queen." Sneering at the boy, the guard hit him with his rifle and threatened, "Get out of here, or I'll shoot you!"**
- **The boy was discouraged and scared. He went back home weeping. Having walked for some time, he happened to meet the crown prince. He asked the boy, "Why are you crying?" He answered, "I wanted to meet the Queen, but the guard got rid of me." The crown prince told him, "I see. Follow me. I'll take you to the Queen."**
- **The boy went in the castle with the crown prince and met the Queen. The Queen asked him, my son, "Who is he?" Knowing what happened, the Queen spoke to a little visitor with smile. Surprisingly enough, the Queen gave him a little money. It is a beautiful and heart warming story, isn't it?**
- My friends. This story reminds me of our good old days. However, we can't believe such a story today. Terrorist attacks are very common around us so the places are strictly guarded inside and out. Jesus Christ guides us to God the Father like the crown prince who took the boy to the Queen. Let's Give thanks to God!
- I also had an similar experience in the United States like that boy. As you know, I was invited to the "World Summit". The purpose of the summit was for considering Christian churches and

saints who were under persecution and hardships. It was an impressive international conference. Delegates were invited from 165 countries. It was a greatly blessed international summit.

- It was toward to the highest point of the summit. I met Vice President Mike Pence, who is the number two of the United States, the largest country in the world. He is a committed Christian who fears God. I never expected to join the summit, however, Rev. Viktor Hamm who is my friend and the vice president of BGEA (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association) invited me to that blessed summit. It was an unbelievable experience.
- It was a miraculous event. Rev. Viktor Hamm became my intercessor to meet Vice President Pence. If I was not a friend of Rev. Viktor Hamm, I, just like the small Japanese, and I couldn't meet the Vice President. God gave a precious gift to me.
- My friends! Jesus Christ is the intercessor between God and human beings. We are allowed to meet God the Father in heaven through Jesus. What a great privilege and grace God has given! Let's give thanks to God for His amazing grace and worship Him.

Conclusion

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—The True Intercessor—

- We are allowed to meet Jesus Christ who is the true intercessor like Melchizedek. It is given through only God's grace, not according to the Law. We are given the time of the grace that makes us free. We should not receive God's grace in vain. Let's give thanks to God!
- Let's read the following Scripture as today's conclusion.

6:20 where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. :

- Then, what life should we lead?
 1. To accept the Word of God and trust in it.
 2. To give thanks to God and follow Him faithfully.

* God bless you!