

Sonship
The Sons of God: A Royal Priesthood

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Sam Soleyn
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God makes a covenant with himself that He would have sons and begins the process of creating man with that specific intention fully in mind. In fact, God has already paid the price by which man would be the son of God. Adam therefore is created with that in mind and with that framework of a covenant—God reaching his hand down into the realm of man; God extending himself into the ranks of human kind when He makes man, designing a creature with the intention that this creature be like God. So God puts in dirt, formed in the shape of a man, God puts a spirit, the origins of which come out of the very person of God and God becomes the Father of our spirits. Man then is made in the image and the likeness of God and God intends from this original creation, to draw forth a race called the sons of God.

An ancient order of priests come into being, by whom God continues to speak to man even after man has rejected God and turned away. Man has learned to express his rejection of the nature of God in forms such as murder (Cain kills Abel) but God continues to pursue man because God has sworn on oath to himself that of this creation He is making, the sons of God will arise. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and after the flood God begins again with Noah. The sons of God are moving forward through human history and we encounter them in a very unique setting: in the form of a man who is a king and a priest—both at once. In the **14 chapter** of the book of **Genesis**, we encounter Melchizedek. **Verse 18** says, “**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.**” (Inserted – **Genesis 14:18-20**)

Now the occasion is that whereupon Abraham goes to rescue his nephew Lot. Abraham has become very wealthy;

Lot, his nephew, has departed from the household of Abraham and Abraham has shared a portion of his wealth with

Lot. Lot is captured by five kings and Abraham gathers the armed men of his household and goes out and rescues Lot. He is returning from the battle with these five kings, in which battle he has not only rescued Lot, but he has retaken the inheritance that he had given to Lot that originated with Abraham. Now at the end of this day of battle, this character, this person named Melchizedek, comes out from a city nearby that is Melchizedek's city. The city is called Salem—the ancient name for, the original name for Jerusalem. The word “Salem” being the ancient word for the modern Hebrew word “Shalom,” which is “peace.” So here you have the prince of “Peace,” who comes out to bless Abraham and he offers him bread and wine.

Abraham responded by giving him a tenth of the spoils of the battle, in short, out of Abraham's retrieval of his wealth, he tithes. Now some may say that this is the origin of the tithe. It is in fact *not* the origin of the tithe but it is the first place where it is specifically mentioned in the Scriptures, and we will come back to that. Now this Melchizedek is a fascinating character because God refers to him twice in the Scriptures... in the Old Testament and again in the New [Testament], and it is the New [Testament], once again, that explains the Old [Testament].

Now here is Melchizedek from the New Testament, and you will see him as one of these ancient priests called the sons of God. This is from the book of **Hebrews**, the **7th chapter**. In **Hebrews 7**, it says, right after the declaration had been made with which we began this series, that God had made a covenant with himself and Jesus became the mediator of that covenant when God declares, in **verse 20 of Hebrews 6**, **“Where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf.”** That is, Jesus entered this covenant with the Father in heaven and He entered on our behalf. **“He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”** That's where we run into Melchizedek for the first time in the New Testament.

It goes on to explain Melchizedek and references this passage in **Genesis 14** that we have just read, “This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High.” Now that we know. Then he says, “He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything.” Again, all of that we know, but what we haven't carefully looked at are the implications of this meeting between Abraham and Melchizedek. Now Melchizedek's name means “king of righteousness.” His city is Salem, which means “Peace,” so he is also a king or prince of Peace. Righteousness and peace... hmmm. The kingdom of God is made up of righteousness and peace, is it not? “For the kingdom of God is not food or drink, but it is righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Spirit.” **Romans 14:17**. (Inserted – actual verse—**“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”**)

Here is the first king and priest of a royal order: the sons of God. And his city, the name of the prince, and his standing is held in trust for the New Testament reality called the sons of God. It goes on to say some other things about him: namely, that he is, **“Without father or mother, he is without genealogy, without the beginning of days or the end of life, like the Son of God he...”** (Inserted – actual verse—**“Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever.”** – **Hebrews 7:3**) Melchizedek, has names, has conditions attending his life that put us in complete reminder of “the” Son of God. Melchizedek is not “the” Son of God; he is “a” son of God. “The” Son of God is the high priest of this order called the order of Melchizedek. Now this becomes quite extraordinary because finding him in the New Testament like this ties the Old [Testament] and the New [Testament], and allows us to look back with the wisdom and the revelation of the New [Testament] understanding the Old [Testament].

Early now in human history, we find one specifically described as a royal priest. Why royalty? Well physically of course, he rules over the city of Jerusalem, or Salem—the ancient name prior to it being called Jerusalem—so he is the prince of peace. Why must the sons of God be royalty? The answer is quite simple: God is God. He is the King of all Kings, He is the Lord of all Lords, and sons of the King are sons who are themselves kings. Kingliness, in the kingdom of our God is not related to hereditary royalty because it is not a reference to our human aspects. We are not born in our bodies from God for God is a Spirit, but we are born in our spirits from God and so we take from God very kingly character.

It is interesting to observe how this works in practical fact. The first order of kingly rule is the well-being of those who are subject to our rule. When a man becomes a believer and because of that his circumstances change, he immediately begins to take on the characteristics normally associated with rule and kingliness. As an example, if a drug dealer becomes a believer how does he change? What is the noticeable change that comes? Well before, as a drug dealer, he is always afraid that people under his business organization—not withstanding the fact that it is a criminal enterprise—people under his business organization are always looking to steal from him and even to kill him, to interrupt his supplies, not to pay for them and the like.

So he lives a life of guarded entrance and he anticipates that he will have to defend himself by violence or other ways. Now you take such a man who may think nothing of killing an opponent in cold blood or enforcing a point by killing or maiming even one of his friends. If he becomes a believer, how does he change, and in what manner is it noticeable that he has taken on the characteristics of royalty in the sense that the way he views others changes dramatically? Well everyone knows that about the first thing he will try to do is lead people—whom he once exploited in this way—lead them to the Lord. Why? Because inherent in being a believer is the concept that you

are royalty and royalty then as I said, is not hereditary, it is in fact the way that you look at people.

What changes is his outlook because his nature has been changed. He will then, at great personal risk, try to lead others with whom he once engaged in criminal enterprise, to lead them to righteousness and peace. That, I would suggest to you is kingly character. We could use any number of examples of this but the bottom line is that even the vilest sinners, the most contemptible ways of life—when those people become believers they automatically are moved to go back into the situation and try to rescue people. Drug-addicted rock stars who become believers immediately think of turning their lives around and start recording Christian music. I'm not passing on the merits of whether or not that should be done; I'm merely indicating that the change that comes about is immediate and noticeable. That's because with kingly character one begins to think of one's relationship with others very differently because we are a royal priesthood.

The priesthood represents an attitude of service. The heirs are represented by Abraham. The character of our service to one another is represented by the priesthood of Melchizedek, so you serve by serving God. Later on we will come to a comparison between the priesthood of two covenants, the priesthood of Melchizedek vis-à-vis the priesthood of Levi and we will examine this issue more thoroughly at that point. But we are introduced to this royal priesthood and we see that in reference to this the New Testament speaks of Melchizedek in these terms: that he has no beginning of days or end of life, he has no mother or father and he has no genealogy, and in this sense he is like the Son of God. (Inserted— **Hebrews 7:3**) Well what does it mean? What do these things mean that he has no mother or father, he has no genealogy, he has no beginning of days or end of life?

These are the ways that you define an eternal creature in time. Precisely how do we do that? Well when someone is born again the Scriptures say that if any man be in Christ he is a new creation; the old has passed, the new has come. (Inserted – actual verse—“**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!**” – **II Corinthians 5:17**) All this from God who reconciled us to himself and has given us the ministry of reconciliation that God is *in* Christ reconciling the world to himself and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. What that tells us is this: Whoever you may be and regardless of your history, however debauched your history may have been, however sinful, lustful, idolatrous, in any way that your life opposed God—when you are born again, God gives you his Spirit to bring life to your spirit. And what happens then is that there is a change that occurs in your nature.

The nature changes from being self-interested, self-serving, self-preserving to being interested in the well-being of others: a new creature, as a new creation working in the old creature. You may still look the same, but everything

about you becomes different because your attitude with respect to everything changes because now you are in Christ. When you are born again, your natural parents are not the source from which you are born again. Jesus put it this way in his conversation with Nicodemus in **John 3:5**, he said, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” (Inserted – actual verse—“**Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.’” – John 3:5,6**) In other words, that which came from your mother and father, that’s your mother and father, but that which is born of Spirit is Spirit.

The reason that the genealogy of Melchizedek was not recorded is that God wanted—using the physical life of Melchizedek and by failing to record his genealogy God—wanted to convey to us how someone may be born of God, a child of God, and not have as it were, human parents from whom this result has sprung because when you are born again you are born of your Father who is God. You are born from above, you are a heavenly being, you are an eternal being in time and God gives you that grace from the time you are born again. So in truth you do not have a mother or father and you do not have a genealogy. You have a Father, who is God, but He is not the father of your flesh and when you are born in this fashion everything about you is new. So if your enemy attacks you with some reference to your past conduct and failings it is appropriate for you to respond to your enemy by suggesting that he has got the wrong person because the one he is accusing and the one who may be properly accused, citing the references of previous conduct, that person has died.

The reason that you are required to die and to be resurrected is that this is a basic rule of adoption. The way that you become a son of God, once having been born of your own natural parents is... the only way you may become a son is a) if your parents gave up any natural rights to you or b) if their rights to you naturally ended. Well as long as you are not born again you are in Adam and Adam never gives up his right to identify you according to the flesh so the way that Adam is required to give up his rights in you thereby making you eligible for adoption, is you are brought to death.

So **Romans**, the **6th chapter**, speaking of it says, **Romans 6:4**, “Don’t you know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death so that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we should walk in the newness of life because if we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection knowing this: that the old man of sin,” the old self, “has been crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed so that from now on we would not serve sin because he who is dead is freed from

sin.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.” – Romans 6:3-7)**

So in order to become a son of God we are brought to death and baptism is part of the recognition that we’ve been freed from an identification with the old and now we are available to be identified with the new and in that condition then, the Spirit of our God and Father comes into us and brings life to our human spirits. When that happens a new creation issues forth from the earth that doesn’t have a genealogy related to your past and doesn’t have a mother or father related to your present because as Jesus said to Nicodemus, when Nicodemus said, “How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus said, “No, no, no. That which is born of flesh is flesh but that which is born of Spirit is spirit so don’t marvel that I say to you that you must be born again.” (Inserted – **John 3:4-6)**)

Sons of God are all born and they are born not of the flesh, they are born again of the Spirit. While you are dead, according to Romans **8:9-14**, God sends his Spirit to you and the Spirit himself testifies with your spirits that you are a child of God and in this fashion you are resurrected to walk in the newness of life by the Spirit of God. (Inserted – actual verse—**“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” – Romans 8:9-14)**)

Now that creature has never previously existed but what is also true is that creature has no end of life because when you are resurrected you are put into the body of Christ by the Spirit of God according to **Romans 12: 12** and following, you are assembled into the body of Christ and when that happens the result is that in Christ—you who are in Christ—you can never die. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one**

body, and each member belongs to all the others.” – Romans 12:4,5)

Jesus said, “If you live in me, and if you believe in me you will never die.” This is **John 11, verse 25-35**. In [verse] **25**, Jesus had said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He that believes in me, though he were dead—he was dead in trespasses and sin, I have resurrected him—though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoever lives in me and believes in me shall never die.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?’” – John 11:25,26)** So you have no end of life. Your body dies, but that is created with obsolescence to it, but your spirit—being filled with the Spirit of God—never dies.

In that sense, Melchizedek is the perfect representation in type, in the flesh, of all the sons of God and he holds the place in trust for “the” Son of God. Melchizedek has no beginning of days, end of life, mother or father; his name is king of righteousness, and he is the prince of Peace and he serves the heir—who is Abraham—he serves him bread and wine. From the New Testament, what is bread and wine except a reference to the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ? This is the nature of the sons of God: born from above, born again not of flesh but of spirit, filled with the Spirit of God who is also to them the spirit of adoption and it is by the spirit of adoption, **Romans 8:14**, that we cry out, “Father, Father.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’” – Romans 8:14,15)** We were created to be the sons of God. When that happens, the eternal purpose of God has been fulfilled. We are sons of God. I’m Sam Soleyn. We’ll continue our discussion. Bless you.

Scripture References:

Genesis 14:18-20

Romans 6:3-7

Hebrews 6:20

Romans 8:9-14

Romans 14:17

Romans 12:4,5

Hebrews 7:3

John 11:25,26

II Corinthians 5:17

Romans 8:14,15

John 3:5,6