

## Handout Lesson #4: SHEM AND MELCHIZEDEK

*Blessed be Yahweh, God of Shem, let Canaan be his slave! May God make space for Japheth, may he live in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his slave! Genesis 9:26-27*

According to the Jewish Oral Tradition and to Catholic theologians like St. Nicholas of Lira, Shem is the King of Righteousness [Melchizedek in Hebrew] to whom Abraham pays a tithe in Genesis 14:18-20. Shem was the righteous firstborn son of Noah in whom the covenant with Yahweh and the line of the “promised seed” of Genesis 3:15 continues. Shem is the first man in Sacred Scripture who is identified as Yahweh’s man [see quotation above from Genesis 9:26]. Abraham is Shem’s descendant according to the Biblical genealogy of Genesis 11:10-26.

Shem's age	Descendants
100 years	Birth of Arpachshad
135 years	Birth of Shelah
165 years	Birth of Eber
199 years	Birth of Peleg
229 years	Birth of Reu
261 years	Birth of Serug
291 years	Birth of Nahor
320 years	Birth of Terah
390 years	Birth of Abraham
489 years	Birth of Ishmael
565 years old	Death of Abraham
<b>600 years old</b>	<b>Death of Shem</b>

### Shem outlived Abraham

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**Question:** The Fathers of the Church saw Melchizedek as a type of Christ. What parallels can you see between this righteous King of Salem and Jesus of Nazareth?

**Answer:** Both Melchizedek and Jesus serve Yahweh as:

1. A righteous firstborn son.
2. Serves Yahweh as priest and king.
3. Melchizedek rules in Salem /Jerusalem, and Jesus rules in the heavenly Jerusalem
4. Priestly offering of bread and wine; Jesus = Eucharist
5. Receives tithes & offerings
6. Higher order of priesthood than the Sinai Covenant Levitical priesthood: Melchizedek's priesthood, like Jesus' priesthood, is based on his firstborn son-ship.

Biblical references to Melchizedek: Psalms 110:4; Hebrews 5:5-10; 6:20; 7:1-17

Prophecy of Genesis chapter 15

- ◆ Abram's descendants will be exiles in a foreign land = Egypt. [Genesis 15:13-14]
- ◆ They will be enslaved and oppressed for 400 years [Exodus 12:40]
- ◆ God will bring judgment on the nation that enslaved these sons of Abram and they will leave with many possessions [Exodus 12:35-36]
- ◆ In the fourth generation Abram's descendants will return to Canaan [four generations after entering Egypt from the time of Jacob/ Israel = Levi, son (1) =Kohath, grandson (2)=Amran , great-grandson (3)- Moses (4) great-great-grandson
- ◆ Abram will die a happy old age; he was 175 years old [Genesis 25:7-8]

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