

引言 INTRODUCTION

Legends are fascinating stories that trigger our imagination. I grew up enjoying different legendary tales. In Scotland, there is a Loch Ness Monster. People believe that a dinosaur-like animal lives under a lake. There is the Bigfoot that hides somewhere in a forest in the U.S. People describe that it looks like an ape that walks with two legs similar to a human. It is said to be as tall as 9 feet. Witnesses cite evidence from blurry videos and photos to prove that those creatures do exist. Then there is a Bermuda Triangle in the Northern Atlantic Ocean where airplanes and ships are said to disappear mysteriously. The only thing scientists are certain is that hurricanes often form in that region. Some people call an Air Force base in Nevada Area 51. They claim that the government is covering secrets about aliens and spacecrafts over there. Perhaps those visitors from another planet have been helping our military develop new weapons. Fans and fanatics spend a lot of time and efforts to investigate those and other legends. They are confident that those stories are facts. Books and movies about them further generate interest from the public. Until the truths are out, they are only legends. In Hebrews chapter 7, the author talks about an apparently legendary character in the Old Testament called Melchizedek. Besides the Hebrews, his name can only be found in Genesis 14 and Psalm 110. Melchizedek seemed to come out from nowhere then just vanished. In this chapter, the author explains why Melchizedek played an important role in God's salvation plan.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 特別的相遇 Special Meeting

The author is quoting from Genesis 14 about a special meeting between Melchizedek and Abraham. Let us review some background that led to this encounter. When God called Abraham to leave his home country, he took his wife Sarah and his nephew Lot along with him. Later, there were some conflicts between the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot's because both men had many animals. They ran out of space to tend both flocks. Abraham determined that he and Lot should find their own territories. Lot chose to go east beyond the Jordan river. Gradually, Lot moved south until he settled in Sodom. Unfortunately, it turned out that he came to the wrong place at a wrong time. A war soon broke out in the region between two allies. Lot got into a battle that he had no part in. Lot and all that he had were taken away. Later, a messenger informed Abraham about it. He then directed his men to rescue Lot. In the end, they defeated the enemies and saved Lot. Genesis 14:18-20 tell us what happened on Abraham's return: **18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) 19 And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.** Abram was his original name, which means exalted father. God later gave him a new name Abraham,

meaning father of many. We can compare this passage with the Hebrews text and learn something about Melchizedek. In the Hebrew language, “melek” stands for king and “sadiq” means righteousness. Therefore, his name means king of righteousness. Melchizedek was also the king of the city of Salem. The word Salem is a variation of Shalom, which means peace. Salem is the original name for Jerusalem, which stands for the teaching of peace. The passage says that Melchizedek was also a priest of the God Most High. This God possesses the heaven and earth. Therefore, it refers to Jehovah. Melchizedek was both a king and a priest. In the ancient world, it was not unusual for the same person to serve a double-role in a pagan religion. In this case, Melchizedek worshipped the One and Only God. We do not know how God chose Melchizedek as a priest. But the key thing is that he served as a priest long before God set up the priesthood system in the Law. This king and priest came out to welcome Abraham from his victory. Genesis tells us that at that time Abraham lived in Hebron, which is about 10 miles from Salem. That may explain why Abraham and Melchizedek met. Perhaps Abraham and his men passed by the area. Melchizedek went out to check why there was a commotion. Subsequently, he blessed Abraham in God’s name. At that time, Jehovah was still a foreign God in Canaan. Abraham should be delighted to find someone who worshipped the same God as he did. It is more exciting than seeing a stranger who speaks your dialect or grew up in the same hometown as yours. Those similarities draw you closer to the person instantly. You will talk on and on about your childhood, attractions and food. Here, Melchizedek’s words affirmed that Abraham was blessed by God. Suppose God calls you to teaching ministry. You are not confident about it. Then someone gives you compliments: “I learned a lot the last time when you led Bible study. I believe God gives you the gift of teaching.” Then you realize that it is not just a gut feeling or that you are acting on impulse. The person verifies God’s blessing on you. The lesson for us is that we should not be stingy on recognizing people for their good work. A sincere commendation based on facts will build others up. Do not focus on people’s mistakes. Keep the criticism about others to yourself. But do not hesitate to praise each other openly. Melchizedek’s blessing encouraged Abraham. In return, he gave a tenth of his plunder to Melchizedek. We shall see later about the significance of this offering. Abraham gave a gift to thank Melchizedek. That was not unusual. The strange thing is in the background about Melchizedek in verse 3: **He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.** Where did Melchizedek come from? The lack of family history could mean that Melchizedek was an orphan or an illegitimate child. Some deities in ancient mythology were also said to be born without parents. But a literal understanding of the description is that the Bible says nothing about Melchizedek’s family. Genealogy is an important information to Jewish men. They want to make sure who their ancestors are. That will resolve a dispute about inheritance. There are quite a few genealogies in the Scriptures. Those chapters are not bedtime stories in case we cannot go to sleep. They help us trace the family history of Biblical characters. However, such record about Melchizedek is unknown. The second half of the verse sounds quite intriguing too. It implies that Melchizedek lived forever. Bible scholars speculate that Melchizedek could be an angel or the appearance of Jesus in the Old Testament. There is no proof that Melchizedek was an angel. Jesus’ earthly parents were Joseph and Mary. Jesus is also God’s only Son. Jesus’ genealogy is found in Matthew and Luke. The verse points out that Melchizedek resembled Jesus. He was not Jesus. Based on the limited evidence we have,

we can conclude that Melchizedek was a person like Jesus in certain ways. Melchizedek served as a priest forever.

2. 屬靈的含義 Spiritual Meaning

After studying the special meeting between Abraham and Melchizedek, we now look at the spiritual meaning behind their encounter. Melchizedek was superior to Abraham in two ways. Melchizedek blessed Abraham and he received a tenth of the spoil from Abraham. In verse 7, the author says it is customary for a person in a higher position to bless someone of a lower rank. In general, that is true in the ancient world. But there are exceptions. The word “bless” in both Hebrew and Greek can also mean praise. For example, Psalm 103 begins by: **Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!** Here, to bless God means to praise Him! We want God to bless us. But we should also bless Him. When Melchizedek blessed Abraham, he was hoping that God would give good fortune to Abraham. Blessing other people is common among the Jews. For instance, a father will bless his children. There are some well-known blessings in Genesis. Jacob cheated his twin brother Esau and stole his first-born right and their father’s blessing. Jacob blessed his sons when he realized that he might be dying soon. Those two speeches were more than good wishes hoping that the descendants would prosper. They prophesied about the future of certain people groups. God inspired those fathers to foretell what would happen to their sons. They were invoking God’s power to bless their offspring. Today, we wish people well casually. We say: “Good luck to your exam or job interview.” We say to people who are traveling: “Hope you have a safe trip.” During the Chinese New Year we wish people wealthy, healthy and happy. There is nothing wrong about those remarks. But as Christians, we know that God is in control of everything. He is also the ultimate source of all blessings. Therefore, when we bless others, we sincerely hope that God will show His favor to them. Our benediction at the end of every service serves the same purpose. The pastor is asking God to bless the congregation. There is no magical power in our words. But just like our prayer to God, our blessings should come from a clear heart. Besides his blessing, Melchizedek proved to be superior to Abraham by receiving Abraham’s tithe. At that time, people who won a battle would give a tenth of their plunder to deities as a thanksgiving gift. Abraham followed the same tradition. He was not obligated to give anything to this priest he had never met. He could have offered Melchizedek a few animals or invited him to a feast. But Abraham treated Melchizedek with great honor. From a man’s gift we can consider our money offering to God. I am sure you will have a bigger joy if you see offering as a thanksgiving gift instead of an obligation. Then there will be no more debate about what the right percentage should be. The amount will reflect your love for God. The author of Hebrews saw the spiritual meaning in that offering. The logic is quite interesting. In the Old Testament, God called the Levites to serve in ceremonial matters. They did not own any land. The other eleven tribes had to give a tenth of what they had to support the livelihood of the Levites. In turn, the Levites offered a tenth of what they received as a sacrifice to God. Now Melchizedek, who was not a Levite, obtained a tenth from Abraham. In doing so, Abraham contributed gifts on behalf of his future descendants to Melchizedek. That would include Levi, who was the coming great-grandson of Abraham. In other words, Levi paid tribute to Melchizedek through Abraham. It

showed that Melchizedek was more superior to the Levitical priests. This idea of representation is not foreign in the Bible. For example, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:22 that: **For as in Adam all die ...** Adam died because of his sin. Since then, every person will also face death. Some people may protest: “It’s not fair! Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. I didn’t.” From God’s perspective, Adam represented the whole mankind when he rebelled against God. But here is the good news. The verse continues to say: **... so also in Christ shall all be made alive.** When Jesus died, He died on our behalf. As a result, all who identify with Jesus in His death will receive a new life. The big difference is whether you see Adam or Jesus as your representative. There is no middle ground. We are with Adam by birth. But God gives us such tremendous grace that we can be with Jesus. Here is the critical part: we will not identify with Jesus until we realize that we are participants in Adam’s sin. We do not think that we need the Savior unless we admit that we are sinners. Thanks to God for His mercy and grace. Melchizedek was superior to Abraham in his blessing and in receiving a tithe. Moreover, Melchizedek was superior to the Old Testament priests. Those Levites who received their tithes eventually died. In comparison, Melchizedek lived on. The Bible does not say anything about his death. Therefore, the author believes that Melchizedek continued his service as a priest. This is significant because the author will bring up the priestly duties of Jesus in the second half of the chapter. Jesus’ functions as a priest followed the order of Melchizedek, not Aaron’s order. Therefore, Jesus is also superior to the Old Testament priests because He lives forever just like Melchizedek did.

結論 CONCLUSION

Melchizedek was not a legendary character in a fabricated story. According to the author of Hebrews, Melchizedek was a real person just like Abraham. The identity and work of Melchizedek foreshadow Jesus. Abraham’s encounter with Melchizedek was not a random incident. God planted a deeper and spiritual significance in the story to the readers of Hebrews and to us. It is another evidence that shows the two testaments of the Bible are closely related. The New Testament reveals the truths that God concealed in the Old Testament. Melchizedek disclosed some characteristics that eventually appeared in Jesus. Our Lord is the ultimate King of Peace and King of Righteousness. Jesus reconciles us with the Father. In Jesus, we are no longer enemies of God but His beloved children. Jesus also grants us a righteous status that we can never achieve. Sinners who receive redemption in Jesus have become saints. Just like Melchizedek and Abraham, Jesus is a historical person. If we can believe in the existence of legendary creatures or aliens, then there are more evidence that proves Jesus was a real person. Jesus is not only a Biblical character to study and learn from. He is the only way to salvation that people should believe.

引言 INTRODUCTION

傳說是一些不可思議的故事，它們激發我們的想像力。我從小喜歡聽不同的傳說故事。在蘇格蘭，有一隻尼斯湖水怪。人們相信一種類似恐龍的動物生活在湖底。聽說在美國某處的森林有一隻大腳怪。人們形容它看起來像大猩猩，用兩條腿走路，與人類相似。據說它高達9英尺。目擊者根據一些模糊的錄象和照片證明這些生物的確存在。在北大西洋有一個百慕達三角，據說飛機和船會在那裡神秘地消失。科學家們唯一確定的是，颶風經常在該地區形成。有人稱內華達州一個空軍基地為51區。他們聲稱政府在那裡隱藏外星人和飛碟的秘密。也許那些外星人一直在幫助我們的軍隊開發新武器。粉絲和狂熱分子花大量的時間和精力來調查各樣傳說。他們相信這些故事是事實。有關不同傳說的書籍和電影進一步引起了公眾的興趣。在真相大白之前，它們只是傳說。在希伯來書第7章，作者談到舊約中一個看起來是傳說的人物，他名叫麥基洗德。除了希伯來書之外，他的名字只能在創世記14章和詩篇110篇找到。麥基洗德看來神秘地出現，然後一下子便消失了。在這一章中，作者解釋為何麥基洗德在神的救恩計劃中扮演重要的角色。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 特別的相遇 Special Meeting

作者引用了創世記14章關於麥基洗德和亞伯拉罕一次特別的相遇。讓我們回顧一下經文的背景。當神呼召亞伯拉罕離開他的家鄉時，他帶著妻子撒拉和侄子羅得一起。後來，亞伯拉罕和羅得的牧人之間發生了一些衝突，因為兩個人都有很多牲畜，沒有足夠的空間來容納兩批動物。亞伯拉罕認為他和羅得應該分開。羅得選擇向東去，過了約旦河。漸漸地，羅得向南遷移，最後在所多瑪定居。不幸的是，羅得在錯誤的時間來到了錯誤的地方。沒多久

兩個聯盟的軍隊在那裡打仗。羅得捲入了一場和他沒有關係的戰爭。羅得和他所有的一切都被奪走了。後來，一位使者通知亞伯拉罕。於是他帶領手下去救羅得。最終，他們打敗了敵人，拯救了羅得。創世記14:18-20告訴我們亞伯拉罕回來時發生的事情 **18 又有撒冷王麥基洗德帶著餅和酒出來迎接；他是至高神的祭司。19 他為亞伯蘭祝福，說：「願天地的主、至高的神賜**

福與亞伯蘭！20至高的神把敵人交在你手裡，是應當稱頌的！」亞伯蘭就把所得的拿出十分之一來，給麥基洗德。亞伯蘭是他的原名，意思是崇高的父親。神後來給他一個新名字亞伯拉罕，意思是眾人的父親。我們可以將這段經文與希伯來書作比較，了解一些關於麥基洗德的事情。在希伯來文中，「麥基」代表王，而「洗德」是指公義。因此，他名字的意思是公義的王。麥基洗德也是撒冷城的王。撒冷這個字是從Shalom演變而來，意思是平安 而耶路撒冷的意思教導平安。這段經文說麥基洗德也是至高神的祭司。這位神是天地的主。因此，它指的是耶和華。麥基洗德既是王又是祭司。在古代世界，一個人在異教中擔任雙重角色是很常見的 但麥基洗德敬拜的是獨一的神。我們不知道神如何揀選麥基洗德作為祭司。但關鍵是他在神設立祭司制度之前就已經擔任祭司了。這位王和祭司出來歡迎打勝仗的亞伯拉罕。創世紀告訴我們，當時亞伯拉罕住在希伯倫，距離撒冷大約 10 英里。這可以解釋為什麼亞伯拉罕和麥基洗德碰面。也許亞伯拉罕和他的手下經過該地區。麥基洗德出去看看為什麼會有一大群人路過。隨後，他奉神的名祝福亞伯拉罕。那時，耶和華在迦南地還是個陌生的神。亞伯拉罕應該很高興找到和他敬拜同一位神的人。就像你遇到一個說同樣方言或在同一個家鄉長大的人。這些共通點使你與對方的距離拉近。你們便會談論童年往事 名勝景點和家鄉的食物。在這裡，麥基洗德的話肯定了亞伯拉罕是蒙神祝福的。假設神呼召你去作教導事工。你沒有什麼自信心。然後有人誇獎你：「上次你帶領查經，我學到了很多。我相信神給了你教導的恩賜」然後你會明白你的願望並不是主觀的感覺，或者是一時衝動。那個人證實了神對你的祝福。從中我們可以學習到，我們不應該吝嗇於讚賞別人的優點 基於事實真誠的鼓勵能建立別人。不要只是抓別人的錯誤。把你的批評留給自己。但要毫不猶豫地公開讚賞對方。麥基洗德的祝福鼓勵了亞伯拉罕。作為回報，他將十分之一的財物給了麥基洗德。我們稍後會看到這個奉獻的含義。亞伯拉罕送禮物感謝麥基洗德 這並不稀奇。奇怪的是在第 3 節中關於麥基洗德的背景：**他無父，無母，無族譜，無生之始，無命之終，乃是與神的兒子相似。**麥基洗德是從哪裡冒出來的？缺乏家庭背景可能意味著麥基洗德是孤兒或私生子。古代神話中的一些神明也是無父母而生的。但若從字面上理解，這一節經文最直接的意思是聖經沒有提到麥基洗德的家庭。家譜對猶太男人來說是一個重要的信息。他們要確定自己的祖先 這便幫助解決繼承遺產的爭議。聖經中有不少家譜。這些章節不是你睡不著時才去看的故事。它們幫助我們追溯聖經人物的背景。然而，我們不知道關於麥基洗德這方面的記錄。經文的後半部分聽起來有點玄妙，暗示麥基洗德永遠活著。聖經學者推測麥基洗德可能

是天使或耶穌在舊約中的出現 但是沒有證據表明麥基洗德是個天使。耶穌在地上的父母是約瑟和馬利亞。耶穌也是神的獨生子 祂的家譜記載在馬太福音和路加福音。這節經文指出麥基洗德與耶穌相似 但他不是耶穌。根據我們有限的資料，我們的結論是，麥基洗德在某些方面與耶穌相似。麥基洗德永遠擔任祭司。

2. 屬靈的含義 Spiritual Meaning

看完了亞伯拉罕和麥基洗德的特別相遇之後，我們現在來理解他們會面背後的屬靈含義。麥基洗德在兩方面比亞伯拉罕更優勝：麥基洗德祝福亞伯拉罕，並且他從亞伯拉罕得到了十分之一的戰利品。在第 7 節中，作者說通常是地位尊貴的人祝福地位較低的人。這是在古代世界的一般情況。但當然也有例外。希伯來文和希臘文中的「祝福」這個字也可以表示讚美。例如，詩篇 103 的第一句是：**我的心哪，你要稱頌耶和華！凡在我裡面的，也要稱頌他的聖名！**這裡，「稱頌」這個字和「祝福」就是同一個字。我們當然希望神祝福我們 但我們更應該讚美祂。當麥基洗德祝福亞伯拉罕時，他是希望神賜福給亞伯拉罕。祝福別人在猶太人中很常見。例如，父親會祝福他的孩子。創世記中有一些熟悉的祝福。雅各欺騙了他雙胞胎哥哥以掃，並奪走了他長子的名份和他們父親的祝福。當雅各意識到自己快要去世時，他祝福他的兒子們。這兩段話不只是祝願子孫興旺。它們預言了一些民族的將來。神啟示那些父親預告他們的後代會發生什麼事 因此他們是借用神的力量來祝福他們的子孫。今天，我們隨意地祝人們好運。我們說：「祝你考試或工作面試順利」我們對遠行的人說：「希望你旅途平安」新年期間 我們祝別人財源廣進、身體健康、幸福快樂。這些話並沒有錯。但作為基督徒，我們知道神掌管一切。祂也是所有祝福的終極源頭。所以，我們在祝福別人的時候，我們應該是誠心地希望神賜恩典給他們。我們在每次崇拜結束時的祝福也是為了同樣的目的。牧師祈求神保佑會眾。人講的話沒有任何神奇的力量。但就像我們向神禱告一樣，我們的祝福應該來自一顆真誠的心。除了他的祝福，麥基洗德通過接受亞伯拉罕的十分之一證明他比亞伯拉罕更尊貴。那時，打勝仗的人會將他們掠奪的十分之一作為感恩禮物獻給神明。亞伯拉罕遵循同樣的傳統。他沒有義務送東西給這位他素未謀面的祭司。他本可以給麥基洗德一些動物或請他吃飯。但亞伯拉罕非常尊敬麥基洗德。從人的禮物我們可以想到對神的金錢奉獻。如果你將奉獻視為向神感恩的禮物而不是義務，我相信你會更加喜樂 如此便不用爭論奉獻的正確百分比了。你所奉獻的

金額便能反映出你對神的愛。希伯來書的作者看到了那個奉獻的屬靈含義。他的邏輯挺有意思的。在舊約中，神呼召利未人負責禮儀的事務。他們沒有任何土地。因此其他十一個支派必須獻上十分之一來維持利未人的生計。然後利未人拿出他們收到的十分之一作為祭物獻給神。現在，這位非利未人的麥基洗德從亞伯拉罕得到了十分之一。如此，亞伯拉罕代表他的後代向麥基洗德貢獻禮物。這包括了利未這個人，他是亞伯拉罕的玄孫。換句話說，亞伯拉罕代表了利未向麥基洗德致敬。這表明麥基洗德比利未人的祭司更超越。這種代表的觀念在聖經中並不陌生。例如，保羅在哥林多前書 15:22 說：**在亞當裡眾人都死了...** 亞當因他的罪而死。從此，每一個人也將面臨死亡。有人可能會抗議：「這不公平！亞當和夏娃吃了禁果。我沒有吃。」從神的角度來看，亞當背叛神的時候代表了全人類。但是有一個好消息。這節經文繼續說：**...照樣，在基督裡眾人都要復活。** 當耶穌死之時，祂是為我們而死。結果，凡認同耶穌的死的人都獲得新的生命。重點是你把亞當還是耶穌視為你的代表。沒有中立的餘地。我們生來就是和亞當一伙的。但是神給了我們如此重大的恩典，使我們可以與耶穌認同。關鍵是：我們必須意識到我們是參與在亞當的罪中，然後我們才會願意和耶穌認同。除非我們承認自己是罪人，否則我們不會認為我們需要救主。感謝神的憐憫和恩典。麥基洗德在祝福亞伯拉罕和接受十分之一的禮物兩方面顯得更超越。此外，麥基洗德也勝過舊約的祭司。那些收到十分之一的利未人最終也一一離世。相比之下，麥基洗德繼續活著。聖經沒有提到他的死。因此，作者相信麥基洗德繼續擔任祭司。這很重要，因為作者將在本章後半部份提到耶穌的祭司職責。耶穌作為祭司的職責是按照麥基洗德的等次，而不是亞倫的等次。因此，耶穌也比舊約的祭司超越，因為他像麥基洗德一樣永遠活著。

結論 CONCLUSION

麥基洗德不是虛構故事中的傳說人物。根據希伯來書的作者，麥基洗德是一個真實存在的人，就像亞伯拉罕一樣。麥基洗德的身份和工作預告了耶穌的出現。亞伯拉罕與麥基洗德的相遇並非偶然。神在這個故事中為希伯來書的讀者和我們埋下了更深的屬靈意義。這是另一個證據表明聖經的兩個約是密切相關的。新約揭示了神在舊約中隱藏的真理。麥基洗德啟示了一些最終出現在耶穌身上的特徵。我們的主是終極的平安之王和公義之王。耶穌使我們與天父和好。在耶穌裡，我們不再是神的敵人，而是祂鍾愛的孩子。耶穌也賜下我們永遠無法達到的公義地位。在耶穌裡得到救贖的罪人能夠成為聖徒

。就像麥基洗德和亞伯拉罕一樣，耶穌是一個歷史人物。如果我們能相信傳說中的怪物或外星人的存在，那麼就有更多的證據證明耶穌是一個真實的人。耶穌不僅是一個值得學習和效法的聖經人物。祂是人們應該接受唯一的得救之道。