

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 168

Melchizedek, Part 2

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In the previous two episodes on Melchizedek (1a, 1b) we covered the Old Testament data on this enigmatic figure. Jewish writers and readers in the Second Temple Period (ca. 500 BC – 70 AD) naturally had ideas on who Melchizedek was and how to understand him as a king-priest. This episode discusses important texts from the Second Temple Period that deal with Melchizedek. Primary attention is placed on texts that case Melchizedek as more than a man, in effect the divine messianic deliverer of Israel in the last days. These texts and the thinking behind them set the stage for how New Testament writers thought about Melchizedek and how they correlated him to Jesus.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 168: Melchizedek, Part 2. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike... I feel like I need a better intro. I feel like I need to say, like, "Heeeeere's... Dr. Michael Heiserrrrrrrrrr!" And then have like a laugh-track or clapping track, like they do...

MH: Let's just... I hope you're not recording this.

TS: I am recording this.

MH: (Big sigh) Nah, we're not going to do something dumb like that.

TS: Why?

MH: No. Whatever possessed you to think about that? (laughs)

TS: "Possession" might be the right word! Are we really going to...

MH: I'm thinking it is, you know?

TS: (laughing) All right, Mike. What's going on? You're going to be going on *Coast to Coast!*"

MH: Yeah, we should mention that. I'm scheduled to be on *Coast to Coast A.M.* what is for me the evening of July 24th. I'm actually going to be slated to go on at midnight, and then midnight until 2:00. Those are Pacific times, so if you're on the East Coast, you can do the math. It's three hours different, unless they do something to air *Coast to Coast* differently, I don't know. It'll be the evening of the 24th, Pacific time. I go on at midnight and I'm saying "evening" because for me it would be the evening of the 24th. It's for two hours. The topic is going to be the book of Enoch, *Reversing Hermon* stuff. So if anybody wants to listen to *Coast to Coast* for that, that's when it's scheduled.

TS: That sounds good. And real quick, don't forget to send me questions about Melchizedek *after* all the Melchizedek episodes are out, because we're going to be doing a Q&A over Melchizedek specifically. So the cut-off, again, is August 14. All right, Mike. We're out of the Old Testament and into some new literature.

MH: The Second Temple period, yep. Both the Old Testament stuff and then this episode today are going to be the necessary backdrop for the New Testament material. We're going to drift into the New Testament a little bit today, like we did a little bit earlier on (when talking about the Old Testament). But we're going to be talking about some things today that I think will perk up listeners' ears because some of this stuff is going to sound New Testament-y—more than even the Old Testament stuff.

By way of summary, I guess (a little bit of a recap of the Old Testament stuff, some of the summary statements that we had for that material)... I'm just going to try to re-summarize here, and then we'll jump into Second Temple literature. For those who may not be familiar with that term, Second Temple literature (Second Temple period) is what is more popularly referred to as the "Intertestamental" period—that period between Old Testament history and the beginning of the New Testament. There's lots of stuff going on there and lots of stuff being written, and some of that is devoted to Melchizedek.

Again, by way of summarizing where we've been, we have Melchizedek. His name could either be some sort of description ("my king is righteous") or it could be a theophoric name ("my king is *Tsedeq*"). We talked a lot about that. We have this guy with a title: the king of Salem. He was associated with some really important themes: kingship (obviously) and priesthood. Those are the two most apparent, but also Jerusalem. He was the king of Salem and we talked about how that was Jerusalem. Even if his name is theophoric—*Tsedeq* (who would be Yahweh in Israelite religion, anyway)—he is still associated with righteousness and peace because of the *Tsedeq* term and the *Salem* term, in those either proper names or topographic place-name. At no point in the Old Testament material (any of it) was there any sense that Melchizedek was more than a man.

5:00

We never run into anything that would indicate that he was portrayed in the Old Testament as a divine being. He just isn't. When we look at him, how we need to focus on him (at least to this point) is just as a human being. He is the chief royal and priestly representative of the Most High God. That's who he is in the Old Testament. The divinity aspect of Melchizedek is something that's going to begin in what we cover today—in the Second Temple period.

Think of it abstractly. Since he is the chief royal and priestly representative of the Most High God (think about the wording there—he's associated with kingship and priesthood and he's focused in Jerusalem, all these things)... Those items, terms, motifs, and symbols—all the theological baggage that goes with priesthood and kingship—is going to invariably get linked to messiah (to a messianic or deliverer figure). Once you're into messianic territory, then you start to be thinking a bit more abstractly, theologically. The way you think about those things is going to transcend normative time and place for a number of Jews. It's not an abnormal thing that people would be thinking of Melchizedek as some sort of divine figure later on because, again, if he's really the representative of the Most High God, then maybe God is going to be behind this person in a special way or is going to send him in a special way.

As people are speculating on who the messiah is going to be and what the messiah is going to be like... If you've read *Unseen Realm*, this is going to be familiar to you. But if we're thinking about the covenants and certain scenes in the Old Testament that involve the Second Yahweh figure (the visible form of Yahweh as a man—the angel of the Lord) and how that terminology and certain episodes in which the angel plays an important part—how those overlap with important themes of covenant and kingship and even priesthood, fighting Yahweh's battles... I use the phrase "matrix of ideas" a lot, and that's what we're dealing with here. Melchizedek becomes part of this matrix of ideas, and since that matrix contains not just kingship and priesthood but also this figure of the Second Yahweh at some point (depending on what passage you're in), all of those things get thrown into the blender. So when Jews in the Second Temple period look at all that—they look at the whole matrix (all these passages that are interconnected and the ideas that go along with them)—there's going to be a few of those Jews that start thinking about the messiah in divine terms. Since Melchizedek is connected to the Davidic dynasty that would produce the messiah (a la Psalm 110), they're going to be thinking about Melchizedek as a divine being, too—that maybe he is prototypical (a type) of the messiah. He's a prefigurement of the messiah. Once you start thinking those thoughts, it opens the door to viewing Melchizedek as more than just a normal guy—and that's what's going to happen.

We also talked about in the Old Testament how the priesthood of Aaron was essentially a concession by God (plan B, if you will) in response to Moses' unbelief. That is not something we're necessarily going to return to until we get to the New Testament, when the priesthood of Melchizedek is compared to the

Aaronic priesthood. That's something we'll return to, not so much today, but in our New Testament episode we will. That's the mix that we're dealing with. Melchizedek is linked to Abraham, Abraham's seed, Elyon (the Most High), and Deuteronomy 32, which is linked to the divorce of the nations, which is, of course, linked to the reclaiming of those nations through the Abrahamic Covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant would produce a seed which, of course, takes us to David and the Davidic dynasty. Melchizedek is a priest, and once we start talking about the priesthood being considered more ideal than the priesthood of Aaron... you throw all that into the hopper, and this is the matrix of ideas that we're dealing with. The evidence in the text is that Melchizedek's kingship is connected to Abraham. It legitimizes the rule of Abraham's seed.

10:00

And, of course, the original Edenic king (Adam) was ruler and mediator. He was king and priest in a very broad, theological sense, on earth because he was the guy that sort of stood between God and the rest of humanity—the rest of what would be his descendants. He was put there in Eden to be a steward-king (ruler) of the earth, in a positive sense. That all continues through the patriarchs up to Moses, and at Moses it divides because of his unbelief. God makes a concession and brings the priesthood of Aaron into the picture. It would seem reasonable to think that having both those offices operate in one person was God's ideal because that, again, hearkens back to Adam and that is God's consistent plan. God is meeting with a person—a patriarch—and that patriarch is the go-between for God and the rest of the people in the picture, the rest of the people that are concerned. But that breaks apart when we get to Moses. So the ideal would have been to have them both in one. Since this Melchizedek figure is the oldest figure that continues the patriarchal idea better than Moses did, he gets referenced in Psalm 110 and connected to David's line and, ultimately, the messiah.

You have to be thinking about all these things at once and how they touch each other to make sense of how Melchizedek is portrayed in the Old Testament and, even more importantly, how he's thought about once these ideas are all in the blender. That brings us to the Second Temple period.

Today we want to get into the literature here. We're going to end up focusing mostly on Dead Sea Scroll material, but we'll hit a few other things. Melchizedek is mentioned in a number of Second Temple works (or at least works that scholars figure date back into the Second Temple period). I say it that way because of issues with books like 2 Enoch. I have no idea (if any of you have *Dictionary of New Testament Backgrounds*) why DNTB has 2 Enoch as "the earliest instance in the Second Temple literature of a mention of Melchizedek" because the text just doesn't date itself into the Second Temple period. I thought I'd throw that out in case one of you has that resource. It might just sound odd because it honestly does sound odd! The manuscript evidence for 2 Enoch is Slavonic, which is the 14th century. If you look at Charlesworth's Old Testament pseudepigrapha volume where he talks about 2 Enoch (volume 1), the guy who wrote the chapter on 2 Enoch is Frances Anderson. Anderson suggests that 2

Enoch was a Greek work no older than 1,000 A.D., which is well after the Second Temple period. Nevertheless, everybody figures, "Hey, it's Enochian material and there's a lot of that stuff that's really old" so 2 Enoch kind of becomes part of the picture here. I'll admit that 2 Enoch has things in it that are probably as old as the Second Temple period because that's where 1 Enoch is and there's going to be overlap there, but I'm not really going to spend time on 2 Enoch here. I'm going to go right to sources whose manuscript evidence place them firmly in the Second Temple period.

Let's start with Josephus. Melchizedek is mentioned in Josephus' sixth volume of his book about the wars (*The Wars of the Jews*). In my edition, that would be lines 435-438. I think the line numbering is pretty consistent. I'm just going to read you the passage from Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, Volume 6, beginning in line 435, he writes:

(435) And thus was Jerusalem taken, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, on the eighth day of the month Gorpheus [Elul]. It had been taken five times before, though this was the second time of its desolation; (436) for Shishak, the king of Egypt, and after him Antiochus, and after him Pompey, and after them Sossius and Herod took the city, but still preserved it; (437) but before all these, the king of Babylon [Nebuchadnezzar] conquered it and made it desolate, one thousand four hundred and sixty-eight years and six months after it was built. (438) But he who first built it was a potent man among the Canaanites, and is on our tongue called [Melchisedek], the Righteous King, for such he really was; on which account he was [there] the first priest of God, and first built a temple [there], and called the city Jerusalem, which was formerly called Salem.

15:00 That is the excerpt from Josephus where he mentions Melchizedek. Obviously (and kind of interestingly), Melchizedek is considered to be the person who built the first temple. You say, "That's kind of odd. I thought Solomon built the first temple in Jerusalem." Josephus would say that he built the first Israelite temple, but he's thinking, "Well, there was a temple there because Melchizedek was priest of the Most High God and there had to be a temple there." So he credits all that to Melchizedek. He credits Melchizedek with building the city. The Old Testament doesn't say any of that stuff, but that's what Josephus is thinking, and he's likely not alone. Notice that even despite all of that embellishment, Melchizedek is considered a historical human. There's no hint in what we just read that he's thought of as a divine being by Josephus. So here's a clear Second Temple period example where Melchizedek is mentioned and talked about and some things are added to the Old Testament, but he's not a divine person/being.

If we go to Philo (another really important writer in this period), Philo found room for both a literal historical interpretation of Melchizedek as a human being and a sort of more-than-literal interpretation of Melchizedek as the *logos*. Of course,

logos is the term in John 1 for the word—the word of God. Jesus, of course, was the word. If you've read *Unseen Realm*, you know that thinking is not just from Philo or some Platonic this-and-that. You have the word of the Lord being the visible human Yahweh in the Old Testament, and you have even more of those instances if you read the Targums (the Aramaic translations of the Old Testament). There's a lot of evidence and it doesn't force you to go out to Greco-Roman philosophy, which is what Philo was working in a lot. To get a *logos* doctrine, you don't need that stuff, but Philo certainly has his head in that. For him, Melchizedek gets sort of parsed as the *logos*—as a divine figure.

I'm going to read an excerpt here from DDD by Reiling. He has an entry on Melchizedek, and he goes into the Philo material a little bit. I kind of like his summary, as it's pretty convenient here. He writes:

Philo mentions Melchizedek in three places: *De Abr.* 235, *De Congr.* 99, and *Leg. All.* III 79–82. In *De Abr.* 235 the story of Gen 14:18–20 is retold and embellished. Melchizedek is called 'the great priest of the Most High God': thinking that Abraham's success was due to divine wisdom and help, he stretched his hands to heaven and honoured him with prayers and offered sacrifices on his behalf and entertained him and his men lavishly. In the subsequent allegorical interpretation of the story of Abraham's warfare (Gen 14:1–24) Melchizedek is not mentioned again: he acts as an historical person only. In *De Congr.* 99 Melchizedek is mentioned in an excursus on the number ten (89–120) with reference to the fact that Abraham gave him one tenth of everything (Gen 14:20).

So Philo reads that Abraham gives ten percent to Melchizedek and then he goes off on some excursus about the meaning of the number ten. That's the context of him discussing Melchizedek in that particular book.

This [tenth of everything] is interpreted metaphorically: 'everything' comprises the things of sense, speech and thought. Melchizedek is identified as the man who obtained the self-learned and self-taught priesthood, probably because no priest is mentioned before him in the Bible and later priesthood is not derived from him. In *Leg. All.* III 79–82 Melchizedek is presented as an example of people who are honoured by God without having done beforehand something to please Him. He was made king by God and he was the first to be worthy to be his priest... In Philo's perspective Melchizedek as a king and priest does not cease to be an historical person but at the same time serves as the embodiment of the divine *orthos logos* and transcends history.

20:00

You say, "How does that work? I'm trying to follow Philo's thinking here. What in the world is he...?" Look, your guess is as good as anybody else's. This is what Philo's writing is like. Philo will go off on these riffs of allegorical interpretation/speculation about the meaning of numbers and things like this and

you just wonder, "What set him off? What put him on that path? What suggested these things to him?" Again, the honest answer is that sometimes you can sort of figure that out because of the mass of material he might be discussing at some other place, but other times it's just really dense and obtuse and, honestly, even specialists on Philo have no idea why he went in this or that direction. It's a little bit up in the air. Sometimes Philo's thinking is discernable—you can track with him and know why he's saying what he's saying—and other times you just can't. This is where he's at. He associates Melchizedek with the *logos*, so he's an important resource in the Second Temple period that is beginning to think about Melchizedek about something not unhistorical, but more than a man. That's why we want to mention him.

Our third resource is Qumran literature—the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is where we're going to spend the lion's share of our time because there's a specific text here that's really important. Melchizedek is mentioned twice in the Dead Sea Scrolls. There's the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen) in the 22nd column. Just look at the title: *Genesis Apocryphon*. This is a retelling of the story of Genesis, so naturally, you're going to hit Genesis 14:18-20. In this Dead Sea Scroll, that passage from the Old Testament is translated more or less literally. There are a few little minor additions to the story, but nothing really spectacular. Melchizedek is presented pretty straightforwardly as a historical person, and there's no real speculation about that or about his name or, as in Philo's case, what "tenth" means. There's none of that. It's just a straightforward translation. This particular Dead Sea Scroll is in Aramaic. So it's put into Aramaic, and on we go. We move on through other material in Genesis. So there isn't that much that's added that would be speculative, which is quite different than Philo and other texts, as well.

The big one—the big deal for Second Temple literature (I had to go through this text a lot for my dissertation—is something called 11QMelchizedek, also known as 11Q13. As the title suggests, this is from Cave 11. That's what the numbers are for—11 Qumran, or Qumran Cave 11. It gets its name "Melchizedek" because of the content. The 13 would refer to the number of the manuscripts. These are all fragmentary, but column two (though still fragmentary) has a lot of content in it, and since column two is drawing on Old Testament texts, even when there are some holes they can be filled in. If they're citing Old Testament verses, you can just go look at what the content was.

What I'm going to do is I'm going to read a translation of this text. When there is an Old Testament verse referenced, I will tell you what the verse is, and then we'll discuss it. I'm going to share the research of some scholars who specialize on this text and Second Temple literature and on into the New Testament, just generally. But I'm going to read through this text. The translation is from García Martínez and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar: *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. If you have that, you can follow along. If you can read Hebrew, there are going to be a couple of places where you might want to check the Hebrew. At any rate, here's what it says. Again, this is Column 2 of 11QMelchizedek, and I think you're going

to find it really interesting. This is pre-New Testament. There's no question about the dating of the manuscript. So line 1 is fragmentary and it can't be read. In line 2, we get into text, and it says [scripture quotations are between « » with passage references in bold]:

Col. II

1 [...] ... [...]

2 [...] And as for what he said: **Lev 25:13** «In [this] year of jubilee, [you shall return, each one, to his respective property», concerning it he said: **Deut 15:2** «Th]is is

3 [the manner of the release:] every creditor shall release what he lent [to his neighbour. He shall not coerce his neighbour or his brother, for it has been proclaimed] a release

4 for G[od]. Its interpretation]...

25:00

In Hebrew or Aramaic, *pishro*... When you see this *pishro* in a text, you can tell right away that it's what scholars call "Midrash." It's an explanation. It's sort of like a commentary, even though it's not official. There are commentaries in the Qumran literature that are verse-by-verse commentaries on Old Testament books. This text is going to actually combine a bunch of different verses and then offer commentary on the combination thereof. It's not verse-by-verse in one text but it is, nevertheless, a commentary—it's an interpretation. Back to Line 4:

...Its interpretation] for the last days refers to the captives...

He's saying, "Here's why I quoted Leviticus 25:13 and Deuteronomy 15:2 and this whole thing about Jubilee and returning the property and everything like that. The reason I did that is because it's in the last days and is referring to captives."

... who [...] and whose

5 teachers have been hidden and kept secret, and from the inheritance of Melchizedek, fo[r ...] ... and they are the inherita[nce of Melchize]dek, who

6 will make them return. And liberty will be proclaimed for them, to free them from [the debt of] all their iniquities. And this [wil]l [happen]

7 in the first week of the jubilee which follows the ni[ne] jubilees. And the d[ay of aton]ement is the e[nd of] the tenth [ju]bilee

8 in which atonement shall be made for all the sons of [light and] for the men [of] the lot of Mel[chi]zedek. [...] ... over [the]m ... [...] accor[d]ing to a[ll] their [wor]ks, for

9 it is the time for the «year of grace» of Melchizedek, and of [his] arm[ies, the nat]ion of the holy ones of God, of the rule of judgment...

That's the end of Line 9. I'm going to stop there because of something that happens in Line 10. But you see what's going on here. He takes the concept of the Jubilee and slavery and captives, and you can tell already that he's thinking

that in the end times or the latter days there's something about the release of the captives. If you're a Jew and you're still under Roman dominion, this is something that you expect the messiah to do. You expect the messiah to come back and get rid of Rome and make you free and everybody goes back to the land. You restore the Levitical system. But he's also throwing in sort of chronological marks here about the Jubilee and the Day of Atonement.

If you remember back to when we discussed this kind of language in relationship to the book of Ezekiel... Even in the last episode we did, which was the second episode on Ezekiel 40-48, we made the comment that over sixty times in Ezekiel 40-48, you have Jubilee language. I made the comment that this was not coincidental, and we need to interpret Ezekiel 40-48 as something more than a literal temple being rebuilt. We talked about all the problems with that view. But if you look at it abstractly and connect it with the Jubilee, there were all sorts of ways you could connect Ezekiel 40-48 with New Testament talk about the Messiah's body being the temple and his followers being the temple and associating the messiah with the Jubilee release. This is what the writer of 11QMelchizedek is thinking. He's thinking along the same lines—connecting the end of days or last times with this Jubilee release or Jubilee cycles. Just to quote him again, we have here:

7 in the first week of the jubilee which follows the ni[ne] jubilees. And the d[ay of aton]ement is the e[nd of] the tenth [ju]bilee

Again, you get these Jubilee year cycles. So he's associating that with this release. You might be thinking already, "Boy, that passage about setting the captives free... where have I heard that before?" Well, you've heard that in Jesus' first sermon when he launches his ministry in Nazareth. He quotes Isaiah 61 about the release of the captives—the whole Jubilee concept. It's really interesting that here you have a Jew (one or two hundred years before the New Testament period) thinking about the end of days in terms of a Jubilee year release. And he associates it with Melchizedek for some reason. In our Old Testament discussions, we've talked about what those reasons might be because Melchizedek is this idea of king-priest. He is tied to the Davidic dynasty, from which the messiah will come (a la Psalm 110). So this guy here is tracking on Melchizedek. I'll read Line 9 again:

9 it is the time for the «year of grace» of Melchizedek, and of [his] arm[ies, the nat]ion of the holy ones of God, of the rule of judgment, as is written...

30:00

Now let's go into Line 10. This is going to be kind of mind-blowing here. So he's talking about Melchizedek and his armies—the nation of the holy ones of God. He's already talked about the sons of light, and obviously their enemies are going to be the sons of the darkness and all that sort of stuff. But here we go with Line 9 again:

9 it is the time for the «year of grace» of Melchizedek, and of [his] arm[ies, the
 nat]ion of the holy ones of God, of the rule of judgment, as is written,
 10 about him in the songs of David, who said: **Ps 82:1** «Elohim will [st]and in the
 assem[bly of God,] in the midst of the gods he judges». And about him he sai[d: **Ps**
7:8–9 «And] above [it,]
 11 to the heights, return: God will judge the peoples». As for what he sa[id: **Ps**
82:2 «How long will you] judge unjustly and show partia[lity] to the wicked?
 [Se]lah.»
 12 Its interpretation [MH: *pishro*—this is what it means] concerns Belial [Satan
 figure] and the spirits of his lot, wh[o ...] turn[ing aside] from the commandments
 of God to [commit evil.]

The writer of 11QMelchizedek associates Melchizedek with being God. Psalm 82:1—the capital G-o-d in Psalm 82, he thinks is Melchizedek, who is standing in the assembly of God in the midst of the gods and judging them. Just think about that! If you've read *Unseen Realm*, you know all about Psalm 82. You also know all about the whole Two Yahwehs idea—there were two Yahweh figures in Old Testament thinking, and this is the foundation for the later ancient Jewish doctrine of Two Powers in heaven—two good guys/Yahweh figures. I've mentioned in many cases (and some of you have either seen me lecture on this on YouTube or maybe live at some place) that there was lots of speculation in the Second Temple period about who the Second Yahweh figure was. We know in the Old Testament that he shows up as a man—he's visible. But who is that? What's his identity? I've made a comment before that some thought he was an exalted Old Testament figure, like David or Abraham or Moses or, in this case, Melchizedek. Melchizedek is one of the Two Powers candidates that get floated in Jewish writings of the Second Temple period. It's very clear here that he associates Melchizedek with being the one who is judging the gods in Psalm 82. Again, he associates *that* with the release of people in bondage to the kind of misery that the gods are inflicting upon them.

At this point, you have to suspend what you know a little bit. Some of you are probably thinking, "He's wrong because Psalm 82 is about the gods of nations and those are Gentiles. It has nothing to do with the release and the Jubilees and..." Okay, we get that. We're just reading through a text that explains what this particular Jewish writer was thinking. He is associating Melchizedek with the Lord of the Council. And I've done the same thing with Jesus, where in John 10 Jesus quotes Psalm 82. We did a whole episode on that. You get the idea—these sorts of connections of identifying particular individuals... Christians are going to do this with Jesus, obviously, and isn't it a coincidence that Jesus gets compared and analogized to Melchizedek in the New Testament? We'll get there. But there are Jews that were there before. They're thinking of Melchizedek as being more than a man, and they're associating him here, believe it or not, with Psalm 82:1. And Melchizedek is the leader. Remember Line 9, "his armies?"

He's the leader of armies that are going to liberate the peoples of the earth. He's going to liberate them and he's going to go to war with Belial—the Satan figure—and the spirits of his lot.

If you know anything about Dead Sea Scroll stuff, there's a very famous scroll called the *War Scroll* (1QM, as memory serves) that describes the apocalyptic end of days battle, and it's a war between gods and men. On both sides you have human combatants and divine combatants fighting it out in heaven and on earth for, basically, all the marbles. This is the kind of thing that this text is alluding to—this same idea, where you have this warfare going on. Let's go back to the text now. I'll pick it up in verse 12. This is interpretation—what he thinks it means.

35:00

12 Its interpretation concerns Belial and the spirits of his lot, wh[o ...] turn[ing aside] from the commandments of God to [commit evil.] [MH: it drops off there]
 13 But, Melchizedek will carry out the vengeance of Go[d's] judgments, [and on that day he will fr]e[e them from the hand of] Belial and from the hand of all the sp[irits of his lot.]
 14 To his aid (shall come) all «the gods of [justice]; and h]e is the one w[ho ...] all the sons of God, and ... [...]

Those gaps in the text are frustrating! Isn't that interesting—"gods of justice" (gods of *Tsedeq*)? We've talked a lot about Melchizedek in the last two episodes, but here we have this line, "to his aid shall come all the gods of *Tsedeq*"—in other words, the rest of Yahweh's heavenly host army is going to come help Melchizedek win this battle.

15 This [...] is the day of [peace about whi]ch he said [... through Isa]iah the prophet, who said: [Isa 52:7 «How] beautiful
 16 upon the mountains are the feet [of] the messen[ger who] announces peace, the mess[enger of good who announces salvati]on, [sa]ying to Zion: your God [reigns. »]
 17 Its interpretation: The mountains [are] the prophet[s ...] [MH: Before you think that's odd, bear with him. He's a Second Temple Jewish guy, and this is what they're thinking.] ... [...] for all ... [...]
 18 And the messenger i[s] the anointed of the spir[it] as Dan[iel] said [about him: **Dan 9:25** «Until an anointed, a prince, it is seven weeks.» And the messenger of]
 19 good who announ[ces salvation] is the one about whom it is written that [...]
 20 «To comfo[rt] the [afflicted]», its interpretation:] to instruct them in all the ages of the wo[rld ...]
 21 in truth ... [...] ... [...]
 22 [...] has turned away from Belial and will re[turn ...] ... [...]
 23 [...] in the judgment[s of] God, as is written about him: [Isa 52:7 «Saying to Zi]on: your God rules.» [«Zi]on» i[s]

24 [the congregation of all the sons of justice, those] who establish the covenant,
 those who avoid walking [on the pa]th of the people. And «your God» is
 25 [... Melchizedek, who will fr]e[e them from the ha]nd of Belial. And as for what
 he said: Lev 25:9 «You shall blow the hor[n in] all the [l]and of

And then it breaks off. That's Column 2 of 11QMelchizedek. There's a lot of strange stuff in there. For our purposes, what I want you to store away as we continue in our discussion here is that you very clearly have a Second Temple Jew that is thinking of a divine being when he thinks of Melchizedek. I would say they're thinking about the Second Yahweh figure. This is a candidate who is at the head of the armies of God himself. This Jew views Melchizedek as being the *elohim* who is going to judge the gods over the nations, otherwise known to him as the spirits of Belial's lot—those who are under the power and influence of Satan and are in league with him, essentially. The way scholars (myself included) parse Psalm 82 is a little bit different, and that's fine. It's just that 11QMelchizedek tells you what one author was thinking, and that it's very clear that Melchizedek is more than just a man. He even brings in verses—concepts—to talk about Melchizedek in ways that the New Testament writers will talk about Jesus.

Melchizedek's name is also mentioned in 11Q17. That's really all you get—just the name. There's another fragment (the 4Q401, fragment 11) that has three lines and only a few words:

1 [...] ... priest[s of ...]
 2 [... g]ods of knowledge and [...]
 3 [... Melchi]zedek, priest in the assem[bly of God ...]

40:00 (laughs) Again, it's hearkening back to Psalm 82. So that's what you get with 11QMelchizedek, otherwise known as 11Q13. What I want to do at this point is I want to read you some excerpts from a couple of papers. One is published in the *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*. It's by Delcor and the title is "Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews." And then a little bit from Jim Davila's SBL Seminar paper back in 1996. His article was written in 1971, but twenty years later in 1996, Davila gave an SBL paper entitled, "Melchizedek, Michael, and the War in Heaven." I want to quote a few things from both of those papers. We'll start with Delcor, and this is on pages 124 and 125. Just reading his commentary on what we just read. He's talking about 11QMelchizedek. He writes:

The character Melchizedek appears in an incomplete text of Cave XI of Qumran published by A.S. Van Der Woude. In this fragment, written in Hebrew, Melchizedek appears as an eschatological savior who has a heritage. His mission is to bring back at the end of days the exiles to announce to them their liberation and the expiation of their sins. The fragment here takes up in part Isaiah 61:1,

which Luke applies to Jesus (cf. Luke 4, 18), Melchizedek appears also as a celestial being who stands in the assembly of God and on this occasion will judge among the heavenly ones. He participates in the vengeance of the judgment of God. Here we find (though with some modifications) taken up Psalm 82:1 and Isaiah 61:2. Melchizedek is thus apparently identified with Michael who also appears in Qumran as a celestial being (1 QM XVII, 8). In fact, Melchizedek is helped by the celestial armies in his struggle against Belial and his angels. We will see later the interest of these speculations on the person of Melchizedek as a celestial being for a better understanding of the Epistle to the Hebrews. As the Scriptures speak neither of the birth nor of the death of this personage, it was easy to imagine him to be eternal and therefore that this priest should be present in the heavens. The author of the Qumran fragment did not hesitate to indulge in these speculations.

Davila writes this:

The theme of the eschatological “war in heaven” between the angelic forces of good and the demonic forces of evil was a topic of great interest in early Jewish and Christian literature. The focus of this paper is the reflexes of this story which name the angel Michael or Melchizedek as the leader of the heavenly army...

When a leader of the battling angels is mentioned in the texts, he is almost always either Michael or Melchizedek. It seems clear that the two were identified at least in some circles. In Qumran sectarian literature, each appears as the head of the angelic hosts at the eschatological battle in different texts. Based on this fact, as well as contextual considerations, J.T. Milik has suggested that a fragmentary passage in the Visions of Amram (4Q544) originally listed them together as names of the angel of light. In addition, at least one medieval Hebrew text also identified Melchizedek with Michael.

What Davila is saying is that Michael and Melchizedek might be names for that particular angel because the texts have related content. Here's the third paragraph of Davila:

The relationship of these two angels [MH: Michael and Melchizedek or Michael and the angel of light—it's not very clear who Davila is referring to there. The prose is a little bit obscure], and how they came to be associated with one another, is one of the issues to be considered in this study.

And he spends a lot of time trying to explicate this. Moving on, he says:

The narrative of col. 2 describes the eschatological conflict fought by the divine being Melchizedek and his angelic allies against Belial and the evil spirits of his lot.

The battle is set in “the tenth Jubilee” and is associated with the Day of Atonement.

Then Davila goes on to compare the language of 11QMelchizedek with the War Scroll and some other things where Michael is in the picture. Basically, what his article is going to be about (at least this section) is how Michael and Melchizedek play the same role and they're in this battle that's described the same way in various texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

45:00 I don't believe that Michael was the Second Power (in other words, the Second Yahweh figure or the angel of the Lord). Now, some do. Seventh Day Adventists, in particular, take that position. They're not the only ones, but they certainly take it. I think the idea is contradicted, actually, by two places in Daniel. That's kind of material for another episode, but just so that you know, I don't think Michael is the angel of the Lord. I think there's problems with that. The point for our purposes here is that some Jews made that equation. Some Jews thought that. I think, personally, that this thinking is tied to the Second Power in heaven (Second Yahweh figure), that we have here an exalted angel cast as the Second Power in heaven. The most obvious candidate is Michael, but some Jews thought this was Melchizedek exalted to some sort of heavenly state (he becomes glorified or something like that).

Michael is Israel's prince. Melchizedek was a priest-king. I think, in part, the way they're thought about together is because the captain of the Lord's host (in Joshua 5) is clearly divine. If you remember Joshua 5, Joshua encounters the captain or commander of the Lord's host. He says, "Who are you, dude? What side are you on?" And he says, "I'm the commander of the Lord's host." And then he says, "Hey—the place where you're standing is holy ground; take off your sandals." It's the same language that you get in Exodus 3 with the burning bush. It's exactly the same. So the commander of the Lord's host is a divine being, and since we have this connection back to Exodus 3, I think he's the angel of the Lord. I think he's the angel of the Lord for a different reason (I discuss all this in *Unseen Realm*), because the description of the commander of the Lord's army there in Joshua 5 describes the commander there as "having a drawn sword in his hand." The exact Hebrew phrase for that occurs only two other times in the Hebrew Bible. One is in 1 Chronicles 20:16 and the other one is in Numbers 22:31. But they both explicitly (in those two other passages) say that the person with the drawn sword in his hand is the angel of the Lord. I think there's a really, really powerful case here to identify the commander of Yahweh's host in Joshua 25 as the *malak adonai*—as the angel of the Lord.

If that's the case, it kind of makes sense (at least to some Jews) to think of that angel of the Lord figure as Michael because he's the commander of Yahweh's armies on behalf of Israel, and Michael is called Israel's prince. They sort of conflate those two things. That's how people argue that Michael is the angel of

the Lord. I think there are problems with that when you get to some passages in Daniel, but I just wanted you to know how the thinking would go to get there.

If you're the prince of Israel, that sounds kind of messianic. It's messiah-talk: "prince of Israel." So once you go there, then you do start thinking about Melchizedek. Why? Because the Davidic king in Psalm 110 is declared to be after the order of Melchizedek. This is how, if you're a Jew, you could justify thinking, "Okay, angel of the Lord, Michael, Melchizedek... they're all the same guy." This is how you would get there and argue that. And, of course, the messiah is your leader at the great eschatological battle. I mean, who else would it be? Again, you have these ideas that are pretty easy to see how Jews would have conflated all of these things into one figure.

So when you have Jews writing in the Second Temple period, some of them use Melchizedek, some of them use Michael, you have that one that says "angel of light" (maybe he's just the oddball out here), but everybody else is just talking about Melchizedek or Michael. If you're thinking of that figure in those terms—tying it back to Joshua 5 being the guy in charge of Yahweh's armies—then you could look at Psalm 82 and say that what's being described here in Psalm 82 (judgment of the nations)... this particular Jew who wrote 11QMelchizedek associates the reclaiming of the nations in a final eschatological sense and the death of the gods in a final sense with the release of the captives. Israel is released from exile. The separation from God is over. "Our captivity is over and we're forgiven and the messiah is here."

50:00 You have to get rid of the New Testament in your head. None of that has happened yet! So this is your vision as a Jew of what's going to happen when the messiah returns. "Of course we're going to be liberated! Everything's going to be set right." It's the Day of the Lord kind of thinking. They're not thinking about, "Oh, he's going to come, he's going to go die on a cross and he's going to rise again." We've discussed this at length in *Unseen Realm* and at length on this podcast, how the plan of redemption was cryptic. They weren't supposed to know. What they're thinking is messianic deliverance—the restoration of the kingdom. Quite frankly, that's what the powers of darkness were thinking, too, because it's like, "Well, the Son of the Most High is back here to reclaim his turf and there's this silly talk about restoring Eden. This is our turf... we're going to kill the guy!" This is what they were expecting. This is what they knew. The redemptive aspect to it—the salvific aspect—is fragmented in lots of places. *It's never spelled out.* And they miss it. And here you have Second Temple texts that are tracking along the militaristic theme, and if you're doing that and you see (going back to Joshua 5) that here you have the commander of the Lord's host, who is obviously a divine being, "Michael's the prince so these two guys must be the same. And who else would lead the battle in the Last Day but the messiah, so Michael and this guy must be the messiah as well. And, hey, if it's the messiah, we've got to bring Melchizedek into the question because the Messiah—the son of David—in Psalm 110 is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." So you can put all these

things together and that's what they do. They don't have any of the stuff that is probably lurking around in our heads about the New Testament, because we're not even at the New Testament. This is pre-Jesus stuff in the Second Temple period. But this is how you get the portrait, that a guy who's writing in 11QMelchizedek—this is how he would get there.

From *Reversing Hermon*... I want to read a little bit that relates to this, just to bring that material into this discussion. This is from chapter 10. It's talking about how another element to getting to this portrait is to focus on who the enemy is—the Belial figure and the bad guys on the other side of the apocalyptic war. What I'm doing here is I'm just fleshing out for you how a Jew would have been thinking about this material and how they get to this profile where Michael and Melchizedek and messiah are all the same guy and they're fighting the sons of Belial and the big bad guy on the other side and all that. So here's another element to it, from *Reversing Hermon*, chapter 10:

... in a pseudepigraphical work known as the *Assumption of Moses*, a work whose content shows up in the New Testament book of Jude, we read the following passage (*Ass. Moses* 8):

¹ “And there will come upon them ... punishment and wrath such as has never happened to them from the creation till that time when he stirs up against them a king of the kings of the earth who, having supreme authority, will crucify those who confess their circumcision.

The interesting line here is the reference to “a king of the kings of the earth” (v. 1). The writer is clearly citing Psa 2:2, a messianic psalm about how the kings of the Gentile nations will rise up against the messiah, and transforms the verse to point to a *great leader* of those kings.

So Psalm 2:2 talks about the Gentiles rising up against the messiah, but the writer of the *Assumption of Moses* turns that phrase into a “king of the kings of the earth.” So you have a great end-times enemy who is in view in the *Assumption of Moses* here. Horbury (a New Testament scholar) writes [quoting within *Reversing Hermon*]:

Horbury continues:

Jewish sources from the end of the Second Temple period which describe an Antichrist-like figure without using this term, naming him rather as the wicked one, Gog, or Beliar. These sources can be said to bridge the gap

between the biblical passages already noted, which attest the expectations of messianic victory and of a final arch-enemy of Israel.

Horbury's point is that, while a developed doctrine of antichrist is indeed of Christian origin, the component of that Christian teaching that had the antichrist as an imperial tyrant bent on opposing the rule of messiah is pre-Christian and of Jewish origin.

Horbury's reference to "the wicked one, Gog, or Beliar" brings us to a third background element for this chapter's discussion of the beast (antichrist) of Revelation. Belial (also spelled Beliar in some Dead Sea Scrolls) is the leader of the powers of darkness and, as such, a parallel to both Satan and the antichrist in New Testament theology.

I quote a fellow here named Torleif Elgvin, and he summarizes how this works with the great end-times enemy in Jewish expectation.

Torleif Elgvin provides an adequate summary:

The NT concepts of Satan and his host are closely related to ideas that develop in the intertestamental period and are found in early Jewish literature. In their interpretation of OT passages, various books among the Pseudepigrapha and Qumran literature give different explanations to the presence of evil in the world. Some writings describe the struggle between good and evil as a cosmic-spiritual struggle and anticipate the ultimate annihilation of evil and the evil powers. In some texts, the evil powers have an angelic leader named Semihaza, Mastema, Belial or the Prince of Darkness...

The earliest postbiblical source that elaborates on evil angelic forces is probably the Enochic Book of Watchers (1 Enoch 6–16; 17–36) . . . These chapters interpret Genesis 6:1–5: the angelic watchers cohabit with earthly women and bring magic, sin and violence to the earth. Enoch is shown the coming judgment on the angels, who in vain ask him to intercede for them. Their leader is Semihaza, but he is not portrayed as a cosmic opponent to God or the elect... [MH: In that text, but later on he will be. People will take that name and apply it to the great end-times enemy who will oppose, confront, and battle with messiah.]

Elgvin's overview of the data shows that, for Second Temple Period Jewish theology, the leader of the Watchers went by different names: Semihaza, Mastema, Belial or the Prince of Darkness. The last title has obvious overlap with

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the way the New Testament speaks of Satan (cp. Eph 2:2 with Eph 6:12; John 12:31).

On the flip side, this is how Jews were thinking. This is why you have this final war described the way it is. When you see in these texts Belial, Beliar, Mastema, Semihaza... in the minds of certain Jewish writers, these are all other words for Satan. Naturally, at the end of days his opponent will be the messiah. You have this messianic profile that has messiah as a warrior. Well, that's the captain of the Lord's host in Joshua 5. And he's a son of David and that brings Melchizedek into the equation because of Psalm 110. And, of course, Michael is the prince of Israel. So it must be all the same guy. This is how you get the end-times eschatology (or at least the apocalyptic battle)—who the characters are and what's happening and why. This is how you get there in Second Temple Jewish thinking.

I'm not going to take all those positions. I think there's a problem with the Michael-Melchizedek equation and Michael as the angel of the Lord, etc. We'll hit that at another time (maybe I'll bring some of that in when we hit the New Testament or we'll do an episode of its own on that).

But if we go back to 11QMelchizedek with all this thing, we've got the good guy (who goes by various names) and we've got the bad guy (who goes by various names), and in 11QMelchizedek the good guy—the leader, the chief combatant, the elohim of Psalm 82—is Melchizedek, who is also for Second Temple Jews the angel of the Lord, who is also Michael. Again, this is how they're thinking when they get to that passage.

Now 11QMelchizedek brings other passages into the profile. The Jubilee chronology is a big deal. And you've got Isaiah 52, Isaiah 61, and that is connected, of course, with the Day of Atonement because the Day of Atonement comes after the end of the Jubilee cycle, and so on. That's interesting, obviously (and I've already alluded to it), because of what happens in Luke 4. Isn't it odd (or interesting or fascinating) that when Jesus starts his ministry, he's there in Nazareth, he goes into the synagogue, and he takes the scroll from Isaiah. I'm going to go to Isaiah 61. A lot of you will know this, but I think it's just more effective if I actually read it and you get to hear what's left out. But he goes to the synagogue there in Luke 4 and this is what we read here.

¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, [MH: He's doing this intentionally!]

**¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives**

**and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."**

**²⁰And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down.
And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹And he began to say
to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."**

1:00:00

And he gets a mixed reaction. But he says, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Look at this: he references the poor, he references the captives, he references the oppressed. He's quoting Isaiah 61, but some of those terms are in Psalm 82! The writer of 11QMelchizedek understood that. They knew that. I think Jesus knew it, too, because later when we get to the episode in John, he's going to quote Psalm 82.

I don't want to rabbit-trail back into that, but here's the point: Isn't it kind of fascinating that Jesus chooses this passage? If you're familiar with Isaiah 61, he stops with the "set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." What he leaves out... The next line in Isaiah 61 (right after "to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor," which is where Jesus stops) is "and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, to grant to those who mourn in Zion, to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes..." and so on and so forth. But he leaves out the Day of the Lord line. Why? Well, it's kind of obvious. He knows why he's there, and it is not for conquest. He's there to die. But that's what they don't know!

If you're comparing what Jesus does... Let's just imagine that you've got a few people that are in Nazareth that day who have read 11QMelchizedek, or they think of the same thing. They're expecting (by virtue of that text and the quotation of Isaiah 61) a deliverer. They're expecting military conquest. They're expecting the final battle. Because that's just the picture that's in their heads! And here you have this guy from Nazareth show up in your synagogue and he says, "*Today this is fulfilled in your hearing.*" And what's he going to do? He's going to go out from that point and start doing those things. He's going to heal people, preach the gospel, talk about the Kingdom of God, and all this kind of stuff. And eventually he's going to die and provide redemption and atonement, which is associated with the Jubilee cycle, is it not? You just look at that picture and you get both a "holy cow!" moment out of the people in the room there in Nazareth, and you also get, "Why did he stop there? Doesn't he know the scripture? Or maybe he's a pretender. He's not going to deliver us." You get all these sorts of thought patterns going.

I'm going to end on this note because we are drifting into New Testament territory and I think we've said enough about how you could conceptually go from Melchizedek of the Old Testament and come out thinking of him as a divine

being because of this matrix of ideas. And here you have a classic example in 11QMelchizedek of Jews doing this very thing and how they get there. I think we've said enough about that. But back when we did Ezekiel 40-48, Part 2 (when we talked about New Testament temple talk associated with the body of the messiah, Jesus' body as the temple, his followers were the temple, the church is the temple...), we were basically arguing in favor of a more-than-literal approach. We did two episodes on Ezekiel 40-48. In the first part, we talked about the problems that a literal approach brings, but fundamentally, a literal approach ignores over sixty references to Jubilee language and Jubilee concepts, as well as other concepts that have to do with cosmic geography and associated ideas in those chapters. You can look to the New Testament and you can see how those things play out abstractly.

1:05:00

Somebody emailed me after we did that and asked this question: "Hey, with all this Jubilee stuff... was the day of Jesus' birth (the September 11, 3 B.C. thing) a Jubilee year?" I went and asked Mantello (my astronomer) and he said no, it wasn't a Jubilee year, but he gave me the math on how to calculate from that date when the Jubilee year fell. Believe it or not, the Jubilee year fell in the year that Jesus began his ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth when he quotes Isaiah 61! This is really stunning. If you're an educated, literate Jew and you're tracking on all this stuff, and maybe you've heard the birth traditions or something like that... certainly if you're toward the end of the first century, where you'd have this information and you can look back on it... You're going to have all of the Gospels written by that time. You have this episode in the synagogue and you have this citation of Isaiah 61 and you know the Jewish tradition about the messiah and you know what Jesus did and all this sort of stuff... That kind of thing is really remarkable in all the good sense of the word. Jesus is so calculated. He walks into that synagogue in the Jubilee year and he takes the scroll and he finds the place (laughing)... He finds Isaiah 61 and he quotes it, but he doesn't include the Day of the Lord stuff. And he just rolls it back up, hands it off, sits down, and says, "Today all this stuff is fulfilled in your hearing." And he *knows* the range of reactions that's going to draw, in part because of the way people thought about not only messiah, but Melchizedek.

Later on when whoever wrote the book of Hebrews connects Jesus to Melchizedek, this is all part of a consistent picture. This is not novel when it comes to Jewish thinking. Jews were mentally there. The book of Hebrews (*Hebrews*) is written to a Jewish audience, okay? They understand because they have these categories in their thinking already. When you can show what Jesus did theologically (what the result of the crucifixion was) and you can show in hindsight how the chronology of his life was intentional in certain ways... We're given certain pieces of information, like the birth (I talk about this in *Reversing Hermon*) and like the genealogy, and we've got all this material out at this point... When whoever writes Hebrews and writes to that Jewish audience of people who are either struggling with their acceptance of Jesus as the messiah or they're teetering on the edge of doing that and they're under persecution and all this

stuff, these are not random things that the writers pull out because they don't know what else to put on the piece of papyrus or the animal skin. They're building an intelligent profile that shows what Jesus did with intention, how God had this planned, how Jesus acted according to plan, and how it's consistent with their own reading (in many cases) of the Old Testament. It's not novel. It's like, "The only thing missing for you people is who the Second Power really was. You have all of the boxes to put these things in. You've got all the file drawers. You understand the concepts. But it wasn't some other guy, it was *this* guy. It was Jesus of Nazareth who did these things. Here's the playing out of his life chronologically, historically, and here are the theological concepts—the file drawers—that you've already got open in your head. You need to believe. In the case of the book of Hebrews, you need to not forsake the faith. You need to not surrender your belief. You need to not drift back into unbelief."

Again, there's just a lot of intentionality going on here. I'm going to stop here because we'll pick up some of the thoughts again in our next episode when we focus on the New Testament. We'll get into the book of Hebrews. But again, the purpose of this episode is to help you see that what the New Testament says and what you've been taught and what you've heard at some point (probably in preaching) is not a contrivance. Jews thought these ways about this person—Melchizedek. And hopefully it makes sense to you now how they could get there and how it would make sense to think this way—what dots they would connect to wind up where they did. Again, it works if there's legitimately a Second Power in heaven who fits this profile. And there was! That's what we'll get into next time.

TS: More pieces to the puzzle, Mike.

MH: Yep. More dots, more pieces, more points of the mosaic (laughing). Whatever metaphor helps... or hurts! Or hurts less!

TS: Maybe you answered some people's questions out there. Just a quick reminder, don't forget to be gathering your thoughts because after Part 3 airs, you'll have about a week to send me any questions you have because we're going to do an entire Q&A dedicated to your questions about Melchizedek. Also, go vote for the next book that we're going to cover. Mike, the poll is live as we speak. I had to sit there and hit refresh, refresh just to see what the status is. (laughter)

MH: I shouldn't laugh. I'll do that a couple times, too!

1:10:00

TS: I hear ya. Well, next week we're going to take a break from Melchizedek and we've got an interview lined up. You want to tell us about it?

MH: We have the authors (there's two of them) of the book *Surviving and Thriving in Seminary: An Academic and Spiritual Handbook*. I know the authors (Danny Zacharias and Benjamin Forrest). We're not doing this book because I

think everybody who listens to the podcast is going to run out and take a seminary class. We're doing this book because I really like the way it offers really good advice on how to be a good student. Secondly (not because it's less important, just the number two thought here), it talks about how to... not really how to maintain your faith while you've got your head in all this academic stuff, even though there's an aspect to that, but just how to be thinking in terms of application. Both Danny and Benjamin have a mind to serve the layperson with content. This is why we pick the things we do on this podcast. We are interested in promoting the work and the effort (rewarding the effort) of people who try to help all of you out there in the audience be good students of scripture and then transmit that to somebody else (apply it to your own life and help people apply it to their lives). So this is a nice little handbook. Yeah, it's got "seminary" in the title, but don't be put off by that. They just have good advice in both of these areas.

TS: Sounds good, Mike. Looking forward to that. And after that, don't forget Melchizedek, Part 3 is coming your way. Again, I just want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God bless.