

Hebrews 7:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

Analysis

A remarkable claim: 'through Abraham even Levi paid tithes,' though Levi wasn't yet born. The logic is representative - Levi was 'in the loins of his father' Abraham, so Abraham's actions counted as Levi's. This establishes that the entire Levitical priesthood acknowledged Melchizedek's (and thus Christ's) superiority by paying tithes through their ancestor. Reformed federal theology sees similar representation in Adam (we fell in him) and Christ (we're redeemed in Him).

Historical Context

This argument would resonate with Jewish readers who valued genealogical continuity and representation. The idea that descendants were 'in' their ancestors was common in Hebrew thought (cf. Romans 5:12 regarding Adam).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the principle of representation in Adam and Christ help you understand salvation?
2. What does Levi's 'payment' of tithes to Melchizedek reveal about the temporary nature of the old covenant?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ὥς	ἔπος	εἶπεῖν	διὰ	Ἀβραὰμ	καὶ	Λευὶ	ὁ
And	as	I may so say	G2036	in	Abraham	And	Levi	who
G2532	G5613	G2031		G1223	G11	G2532	G3017	G3588
δεκάτας	λαμβάνων	δεδεκάτῳται·						
tithes	receiveth	payed tithes						
G1181	G2983	G1183						

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