some within the church: and Ambrose, from his remarks, vol. i. p.288, seems to have held this: though, as above, he expressly states him to have been merely a holy man, a type of Christ. This last view  
was ever the prevalent one in the church  
Cyril of Alexandria combats the two opinions that Melchisedec was a vision of  
the Holy Spirit, and that he was a great angel.

In later times the idea that he was the  
Son of God has been revived. The theory  
that he was *Shem* has found many advocates: among others, Luther [on Gen. xv.]  
and Melanchthon. Jurieu believes him to have been *Ham;* Hulse and Calmet to have been *Enoch* reappearing on earth), **having neither beginning of days, nor end of life** (these words are again taken by most Commentators to mean, that of Melchisedec, neither beginning of days nor end of life are related in Scripture. Some take **beginning** for that of his sacredotal life: other take **end** also for that of his priestly life: “for that no one preceded him in the priesthood to which he succeeded, and no one is related to have succeeded him in his priesthood, in which thing he was a type of Christ.” Camero. But however the **end** of his life may be legitimately thus referred, seeing that his priesthood and his life would expire together, his **beginning of days** can hardly be understood of any thing but his *natural life*, especially as following his being without father or mother, and in the presence of the general biblical usage of the **days** of any one as a man’s lifetime. Accordingly most expositors take the words in this their  
natural sense and interpret them as above,  
Again however, no one, I think, can help  
feeling that such an interpretation is in  
fact no worthy acceptation of these solemn  
words of the sacred Writer. The expressions become incomparably more natural, as Bleek says, if the Writer really mean that  
Melchisedec had not, as mortal men, a definite beginning and end of his life. It really would seem to me almost childish, to say  
thus solemnly of any whose acts were related in the Old Test., but whose birth and death were not related, that *they had neither beginning of days nor end of life*. Suppose e.g. such a thing were said of  
Hobab, father-in-law of Moses. Here again  
Delitzsch, who takes strongly the other view, quotes from Philo an expression respecting Cain which he supposes analogous:  
Cain, the symbol of evil, shall not die, because evil must always live among the mortal race of men.” But surely it is hardly legitimate to conclude that, because Philo means only thus much, the Writer of  
the Epistle to the Hebrews means no more); **but** (yea, rather) **likened to the Son of God** (this clause stands alone and pendent, like  
the preceding, and must not be taken with  
*“abideth a priest for ever.”* To this there  
are three objections: 1) it would be extremely unnatural to say that from a text where it is said that the Son of God is a  
Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,  
Melchisedec himself derives the character   
of remaining priest for ever: 2) it would  
be but a poor way of proving the eternal  
priesthood of Christ, to shew that He is a  
priest after the order of one who only appeared to have, but really had not, such eternal priesthood: and 3) it is clearly not  
in respect of *priesthood* that the *being made  
like* is here meant, but in respect of the  
foregoing predicates: for it is as to these  
only that the Son of God would be an archetype for Melchisedec, seeing that, in respect of priesthood, Melchisedec, was chronologically prior to our Lord, The sense is then that Melchisedec, in being *“without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days,  
nor end of life,”* personally, not typically,  
resembles the Son of God—in his personal  
attributes, as the Son of God subsequently  
in His incarnation, resembled *him* in His  
priesthood); **remaineth priest for ever**(the expression is one which must be interpreted in each case by the context in which it occurs. There is no reason why  
here, where an eternal priesthood is in  
question, it should mean *for life:* indeed  
such meaning would be absurd, seeing that  
all were priests for life. All kinds of ways  
have been devised to escape the plain assertion of these words. Most Commentators have had recourse to the same as before,  
viz, that *no end of his priesthood is related  
to us in Scripture:* so Œcumenius, Theophylact, Cyril of Alexandria, Epiphanius, and many moderns. Schlichting takes it,  
that as our Lord’s High Priesthood, which:  
is said to be eternal, will endure to that  
time when the high-priestly office will  
cease, so Melchisedec’s priesthood is said