“Those of the sons of Levi, when they  
are invested with the priesthood, receive  
commandment to tithe the people according to the law”), **that is, of their brethren, though** [**they be**] **come out of the loins of Abraham** (the meaning is very difficult to assign. I take this to be intended:  
by the first clause, **that is, of their brethren,** that the Levitical tithe right was  
all within the limits of one race, a privilege  
enjoyed by sons of Abraham over sons of  
Abraham, and therefore less to be wondered at, and involving less difference  
between man and man, than the tithe  
right of Melchisedec over Abraham, one  
of different race, and indeed over all his  
progeny with him. Then the second  
clause, **though they be come out of the  
loins of Abraham,** is inserted to shew the  
deep subjection of the ordinary Abrahamic  
to the Melchisedec priesthood, seeing that,  
notwithstanding his privilege of descent,  
he was subjected to his own priest, his  
brother, who in turn paid tithes in Abraham to Melchisedec).

**6.] But** (answers to *“indeed,”* ver. 5) **he whose  
pedigree is never** (sce below) **reckoned  
from them** (the sons of Levi, not, from  
*the sons of Israel*, nor, from *Levi and  
Abraham:* and it means “from them,”  
i.e. their line of descent) **hath taken  
tithes of Abraham** (not, *received*, as A.V.  
The sentence is cast into this form, because  
of the *enduring nature* of the office and  
priesthood of Melchisedec, which is given  
by the perfect tense), **and hath blessed  
the possessor of the promises** (some would  
urge the present sense,—*“him who mow  
possesses the promises;”* but there seems  
to be no necessity for this. I should  
rather take the words for a quasi-official designation of Abraham [see on ch. vi. 12], as the *possessor of* the promises). **And  
without all controversy the less is blessed  
by the better** (it is obvious that the axiom  
here laid down only holds good where the  
blessing is a solemn and official one, as  
of a father, or a priest: as was the case  
here. In such cases the blesser stands  
in the place of God, and as so standing is  
of superior dignity).

**8.]** *Second item of superiority,* in that Melchisedec’s is an  
*enduring*, the Levitical a *transitory* priesthood. **And here indeed** (the Levitical priesthood being still in existence in the  
Writer’s time) **men who die** (there is a  
secondary emphasis on **men**: *men*, who  
die) **receive tithes** (different sorts of  
tenths taken of different things); **but  
there** (i.e. in this matter concerning Melchisedec) **one, of whom it is testified** (**one**, no longer *“a man of whom.”* This is not  
again expressed, nor is it to be supplied.  
The mysterious character of Melchisedec  
is still before the Writer. The testimony  
meant is certainly that of *Scripture;*  
probably, that in Ps. cx. 4, where an  
eternal priesthood, and therefore duration, is predicated of Melchisedec. It cannot well be, as Calvin and others hold, the  
mere negative fact of his death not being  
recorded, which would not amount to a  
testimony that he lives: and it is improbable that in so express a statement  
as this the Writer should, as some imagine,  
intend to combine both the positive testimony and the inference from the omission) **that he liveth** (this clearly cannot be  
interpreted of the *priesthood* of Melchisedec enduring : for what is here said is eminently personal, and that Melchisedec  
himself is meant, is shewn by the historical