

Hebrews: Chapter 7

Heb 7:1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

- See Gen 14:1-20. King- Gk.935- *sovereign*; of righteousness- Gk.1343- equity; of Salem- Gk.4532- [Heb.8004] *peaceful*; *Shalem*, an early name for Jerusalem.

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Heb 7:3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

- Without father- Gk.540- *of unrecorded paternity*; without mother- Gk.282- *of unknown maternity*. Melchisedec was *unregistered* as to birth and thus there is no record of his existence in any of the genealogies recorded in Scripture. In all that, his ministry still *assimilated* closely to that of Christ's in that he was before Aaron (*thus not based on the Law of Moses*) and was not of the tribe of Levi (*v. 14*), both (*Christ physically and Aaron*) at that time yet still in the loins of their father Abraham (*v. 10*).

- abideth a priest continually- i.e., there is no record of his death. In that way it can be said that his priesthood resembles Christ's even though Christ is eternal "Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty" (*Rev 1:8*).

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Heb 7:4 Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

- The Jews had such an affinity toward Abraham as though he was of such preeminence that he outranked anyone who came after him, even among his own posterity (*of which Christ is according to the flesh- Rom 1:3*). It seemed the writer felt these converts from Judaism were still under that impression or he wouldn't have chosen Melchizedek, as he resembled Christ, as being superior to Abraham to prove a point. If they understood that Melchisedec could be shown as above Abraham in rank, then the writer was able to substantiate Christ's preeminence.

- tenth- Gk.1181- (technically) *tithe*. This was an offering to an individual whose priesthood is a mystery, were it not for the fact that he was called "priest of God Most High" in Gen 14:18. Therefore the priesthood did not begin with Aaron and the Mosaic Law (*and was thus preeminent to it*) just as Christ's priesthood, even though His baptism was "to fulfill every righteous ordinance" (*Mat 3:15*) under the Law so as to establish Himself as our High Priest. When asked by "the chief priests and elders of the people" from whence He received His authority, Jesus questioned them on where John received his authority to baptize (*Mat 21:24-25*). Obviously, both came from Heaven and understanding this shows that both Jesus and Melchizedek received their authority from above (*Melchizedek to receive tithes and Jesus to become "a Priest forever" after his order- v. 17*).

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Heb 7:5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the Law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

- The office of the Levitical priesthood (*not all Levites were priests*) received its commandment from the Mosaic Law to take tithes of the people, the other eleven tribes of Israel, their brethren. (*Because of Melchisedec's preeminence over Abraham, as descendants of Abraham, the Levites, along with their priesthood, were thus inferior to him.*) That Law "was put in place through angels by an Intermediary" (*Gal 3:19*) Who is "Christ Jesus" (*1 Tim 2:5*). He has earned the right to be "the Mediator of a New Covenant" (*9:15*) since He "offered Himself without blemish to God" (*9:14*). Thus said, any and all tithes received from either Melchisedec or the Levitical priests were authorized by Deity.

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Heb 7:6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

- Neither Melchisedec nor Christ came from the priestly tribe of Levi. Melchisedec, in this context, *congratulated* Abraham (*v. 1*) after he received tithes from him, Abraham recognizing his office as priest.

- promises- Abraham would not only possess the land of Canaan (*Ex 6:8*) but have a near unlimited posterity and that through his "Seed... which is Christ" (*Gal 3:16- KJV*) "all the nations of the earth [would] be blessed" because he obeyed the voice of God (*Gen 22:17-18*).

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Heb 7:7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

- It cannot be argued where the less (*Gk.1640- Thayer- "less in rank" [Abraham]*) is blessed by (*Gk.Gk.2127- [thank or invoke a benediction upon]*), i.e., approved by, the better (*Gk.2909- Thayer- "more excellent" [Melchisedec]*).

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Heb 7:8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

- men- As mortals, priests were subject to death and not able to continue in that office "forever" (*v. 3*) thus another point of reason for their inferiority to Melchisedec (*besides was the fact that the most a Levite could serve was 25 years as priest- Num 8:23-26*). That there is a record of Abraham's death and not one of Melchisedec's is also to show which the inferior is and which the superior is.
- The Scripture here states that he (Melchisedec) liveth, i.e., there is no record that he passed his baton on, as it were, to any that would come after him due to a recorded death. His 'incumbency' is thus still in tack, and as his comparison to Christ (*or vice versa*) states, none succeeded him, and his priesthood is therefore "forever". As Christ is considered a High Priest and Melchisedec's priesthood has been compared to His, and only at death was the high priest to be replaced (*Num 35:28, 32; Jos 20:6*), it can be a witness that Melchisedec's **office** (*he himself being only human*) has not suffered the same mortality.

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Heb 7:9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

- After building up Melchisedec as being superior to Abraham, the writer here sort of softens his remarks (*knowing some of these converts may still have had high regards*

for Abraham as being descendants of him) by stating, in a sense, that Abraham's descendant Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec through him. Therefore, if both Abraham and Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec then it was obvious who the superior was. All this happened (*Gen 14*) long before Levi was born.

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Heb 7:11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the Law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

- under- Gk.1909- as a relation of *distribution*. The Levite priests oversaw the administration of the Law to the Israelite nation. The writer makes known in verse 19 that "the Law made nothing perfect" (*even though "the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good"* - *Rom 7:12*) since it was "weakened by the flesh" (*Rom 8:3*). So this verse was meant as a rhetorical question. If the O.T. priesthood could have made reconciliation for the people, it would not have been necessary that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec. But since the Levitical priesthood could not produce perfection, i.e., could not reconcile man back to his God, another priest would have to arise but not one called after the order of Aaron since Aaron was its predecessor. Melchisedec is thus said to have begun the unending priesthood 422 years before the Law was given and Christ is said to be continuing it once He came 476 years after Moses received it. Priests under the New Covenant, even though not physical descendants of Aaron and thus the Levitical priesthood, make up the remnant of spiritual Israel (*N.T. priesthood*) under the Gospel dispensation. It is this eternal priesthood of believers, that God promised to Aaron and his sons that continues to exist as "a statute forever" (*Ex 29:9*). Christians make up that priesthood with Christ serving as our High Priest.

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Heb 7:12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the Law.

- The Aaronic order had been "nailed to the cross" with the Law that sustained it (*Col 2:14*). This being set aside made way for the priesthood that it heralded, of which was the order of Melchisedec. His priesthood being before the Law gave it preeminence and thus once the Law was satisfied, i.e., with the body of Christ (*Mat 5:17; Lk 24:44; Heb 10:5*), a new Law (*Gk.3551-of the Gospel*) was established with Christ as High Priest.

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Heb 7:13 For He of Whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

- Referring to Ps 110:4. Jesus' physical lineage (*Mat 1:1-16; Lk 3:23-38*) was *obviously* from the tribe of Judah of which tribe no one had ever offered sacrifices, neither was the inspired Moses given any instructions about the priesthood as it would have applied to any other than Levi.

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Heb 7:15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another Priest,

- From what has been thus far stated, it became clearer when Christ came on the scene that His priesthood resembled Melchisedec's in that both were not only priests but also kings. No other Levite priest could make that claim.

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Heb 7:16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

- Christ's office was not according to the Law (*as neither was Melchisedec's*), nor was it through the lineage of Aaron (*or Levi*).

- power- Gk.1411- Thayer- "*inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth*". Christ said He had "power to lay [His life] down, and... power to take it again" (*Jn 10:18*). The gloss for 'power' (*Gk.1849*) is "...of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases"- Thayer. It was His *choice* to use His miraculous ability that He received at His baptism to raise Himself up. At His baptism is where He followed the "righteous ordinance" (*Mat 3:15*) to be qualified for the priesthood (*Lev 16:4*). It was there when Holy Spirit "descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him" (*v. 16*) that Jesus first received the ability to perform miracles being "full of the Holy Spirit" (*Lk 4:1*).

- endless- Gk.179- *indissoluble*, that is, (figuratively) *permanent*. Since Christ is now immortal (*He came in the flesh as 100% mortal and died in the flesh*), although always having been eternal (*as 100% Deity*), it is evident that His office of High Priest then would follow suite.

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Heb 7:17 For He testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

- Again, referring to what was written in Psa 110:4 as if to emphasize the point that Jesus' priesthood received the approval of the Father (*see notes on 5:6*).

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Heb 7:18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and un-profitableness thereof.

- Because of the change in the priesthood (*v. 12*) the O.T. Law was set aside because of its weakness and un-profitableness (*not of God's but of man's weakness in giving in to his rebellious human nature- Rom 8:3; Col 2:14*). It was useless in that it was never intended to produce salvation for mankind. Its purpose was that "through the commandment [sin] might become sinful beyond measure" (*Rom 7:13*) thus showing its destructive nature, man's weakness in disobeying it and his ultimate need for a Savior.

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Heb 7:19 For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

- By itself, the Law did not *accomplish* anything that would atone for man's sin. What it did do was introduce a system (*the Gospel*) whereby such could be accomplished, a system that would redeem man back to his former state of innocence and fellowship with his Maker.

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Heb 7:20 And inasmuch as not without an oath *He was made Priest*:

- The Levitical priesthood was obtained by birthright into the tribe of Levi. No oath or swearing in ceremony was involved. Christ became High Priest having been 'sworn in' by none higher than God Himself at His baptism after fulfilling the ordinance that made Him such (*Mat 3:15-17*).

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Heb 7:21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou *art* a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

- Once again; Psa 110:4. To not repent is the negative of “to *care afterwards*” (Gk.3338). After swearing Jesus in God would have no regrets about making Christ a Priest forever.

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Heb 7:22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

- God’s oath trumps any appointment obtained by mere birth.
- surety- Gk.1450- Thayer- “(*sponsor*), He by Whom we get full assurance of the more excellent covenant made by God with us, and of the truth and stability of the promises connected with it”.

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Heb 7:23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

- Gk.2409- a *priest*: (high) priest. Since priests were only to serve from the age of 25 until they turned 50 (Num 8:23-26), the context here suggests that this particular group being prevented by reason of death would suggest ‘high’ priests.

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Heb 7:24 But this *Man*, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood.

- Christ’s High Priesthood is *untransferable* because He is not physically subject to “corruption” (Gk.1312- *decay*. -Act 2:27).

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Heb 7:25 Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

- Because of Christ’s *untransferable* office He is continually making intercession (Gk.1793- *to entreat*) on behalf of those who *worship God by Him* (*as opposed to through the Mosaic Law*). Also, He is able to save (Gk.4982- *deliver or protect*) to the uttermost (Gk.3838- *full ended, that is, entire*) this same group (11:6). Christ is still able to save since He still lives as High Priest.

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Heb 7:26 For such an High Priest became us, *Who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

- Mankind’s sinful state required that his redemption be obtained by One such as only this High Priest could deliver.
- holy- Gk.3741- properly *right* (by divine character).
- harmless- Gk.172- *not bad*, that is, (objectively) *innocent*.
- undefiled- Gk.283- *unsoiled*, that is, (figuratively) *pure*.

- separate- Gk.5563- *to place room between. from sinners*- Even though Jesus was accused for being as if like those He associated with, His character separated Him from participating, whether in thought or in deed, in the earthly passions that His associates were susceptible to.

- higher- Gk.5308- *lofty* (in character): -high (-ly) (esteemed). (*Eph 1:21; Phil 2:9*)

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Heb 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself.

- Not only did the Mosaic high priests offer sacrifices for the sins of the people daily, because they too were of the same sinful character, they had to offer for themselves just as often. But with reference to Christ as the sinless* High Priest of the New Covenant, along with His eternal nature, He only had to offer His sacrifice once (*Gk.2178- upon one occasion [only]*) when He offered up Himself since “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (*Heb 10:4*).

*2Co 5:21 For our sake He made Him to be sin Who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

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Heb 7:28 For the Law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the Law, maketh the Son, Who is consecrated for evermore.

- The Mosaic Law *designated men high priests which have infirmity* (*Gk.769- moral frailty*) under it. On the other hand, the word of the oath (*the Gospel*), which was since the Law (*came on Pentecost*) regulated the spiritual office of high priest and appointed Christ as the only High Priest Who accomplished His duty in making “propitiation” (*Gk.2433- atonement*) for the sins of the people” (*2:17*) long into *perpetuity* (i.e., forever).

Worksheet

Hebrews: Chapter 7

1. What is the significance of Melchizedek being “without father or mother or genealogy”?
2. How can it be said that “he continues a priest forever”?
3. Why did the writer state that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek?
4. What was the significance of Melchizedek receiving tithes from Abraham?
5. Define the “perfection” that was not attainable “through the Levitical priesthood”.
6. Explain the eternal priesthood that God promised Aaron and his sons (*Ex 29:9*).
7. Since “there is a change in the priesthood”, what Law replaced the Law of Moses?
8. Even though Christ did not serve legally in the office of High Priest as a descendant from Levi, how else did He resemble Melchizedek?
9. How does “indestructible” describe Christ’s High Priesthood?
10. Explain the Law’s “weakness and uselessness” and what is the system that replaced it.
11. What does an oath have anything to do with becoming a priest under either Covenants?
12. Define “Guarantor” as it applies to Christ.

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