

Hebrews Chapter 7

• The Priestly Order of Melchizekek (1-10)

- 1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,
- 2 and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace.
- 3 He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.
- 4 See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!
- 5 And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham.

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• The Priestly Order of Melchizekek (1-10)

- 6 But this man who does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.
- 7 It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.
- 8 In the one case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives.
- 9 One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham,
- 10 for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

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- Hebrews 1:3
 - He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making ***purification for sins***, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
 - 1st mention in Hebrews of the priesthood of Jesus
- Hebrews 2:17
 - Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

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- Hebrews 4:14-15
 - [14](#) Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.
 - [15](#) For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

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- Hebrews 5:9-10
 - [9](#) And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,
 - [10](#) being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.
- Hebrews 6:19-20
 - [19](#) We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,
 - [20](#) where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

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- Genesis 14:17-20
 - [17](#) After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).
 - [18](#) And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.)
 - [19](#) And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;
 - [20](#) and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.
- This is the most we know of Melchizedek from history

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- King of Salem --- peace, from Hebrew “shalom”.
 - We know it as Jerusalem – city of peace or habitation of peace, though it has seldom known earthly peace for the past 2800 years.
 - Translation of Melchizedek is “king of righteousness”.
- Priest of the Most High God – a priest long before the law of Moses was given.
- Met Abraham returning from the slaughter of kings – in rescuing his nephew, Lot, who had been captured.

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- Melchizedek blessed Abraham - “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!”
- Abraham gave a tenth of everything to Melchizedek – long before the law of Moses was given.
- No genealogy for Melchizedek, and, therefore, no record of parents, birth, or death --- a priest forever.
 - This might have seemed very unusual to the Hebrews because of the meticulous genealogies they kept.
 - Resembling the son of God!

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- Therefore resembling the Son of God.
 - The names of Melchizedek – “king of peace” and “king of righteousness” – also are used of Christ.
 - Isaiah 9:6 --- Prince of Peace
 - Jeremiah 23:5 --- reign as king ... execute justice and righteous
- Curious to note that the king of Sodom went out to meet Abraham and wanted the people who were taken captive
 - Later, not even ten righteous people could be found in Sodom and Gomorrah .
 - Within about 17 years, and certainly during Lot’s lifetime, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed.
 - (Not particularly pertinent, but a point of curiosity)

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- See how great this man was ...
 - Abraham held in reverence as father of the Hebrew nation, but he gave a tithe to Melchizedek
 - Levitical priests received a tithe from the descendants of Abraham
 - Melchizedek received tithes and blessed Abraham
 - The superior, Melchizedek, gives a blessing to the inferior, Abraham.
 - Levitical priests were mortal – Melchizedek has no record of death – a priest forever.

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- See how great this man was ...
 - Though Levi had not been born at the time, Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek (Abraham was Levi's great-grandfather), it might be said that even Levi paid a tithe to Melchizedek through Abraham.
 - Melchizedek is superior to all the sons of Levi.
 - Numbers 18:21-32
 - People of Israel paid a tithe to the Levites, who served the priests.
 - The Levites paid a tithe to the priests.
 - All Israel, including the Levites, are descendants of Abraham, who gave a tithe to the greater, Melchizedek.

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- The main point of the foregoing is that Jesus is a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek, and is superior to the Levites and the Levitical priests.
- Some suggestions that have been made concerning Melchizedek:
 - Some have suggested that he was:
 - An angel (Origen, Didymus)
 - Enoch (Husius, Calmet)
 - Shem (Jerome, Luther)

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- Others have taken the statements in Hebrews 7 to suggest that Melchizedek was a "theophany" (a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ), for the following reasons:
 - The name Melchizedek, meaning "king of righteousness" (**v.2**)
 - The designation "king of peace" (**v.2**)
 - The possibility that the lack of recorded genealogy mentioned in **v.3** is due to actual lack of ancestors, rather than the mere absence of historical record
 - He is said to remain "a priest continually" (**v.3c**)
 - He is contrasted with "mortal men" (**v.8a**)
 - Of him "it is witnessed that he lives" (**v.8b**)

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- Most take that he was simply a man (note **v.4**), but because he appears suddenly in Scripture as a priest...
 - With no mention of parentage or genealogy
 - With no mention of his birth or death
 - With only a mention of him as a priest of "God Most High"
 - ...that he is a "type" of Christ, and what His priesthood would be like
- **Note: the “theophany” theory seems inconsistent since Jesus had not offered His perfect sacrifice for sin at that time.**

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- Melchizedek is more famous for what we do not know about him than for what we do know.

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- Abraham was the forefather of the Jewish nation.
- Promises were given to Abraham (Heb 7:6)
- Abraham was considered great, the greatest of all Hebrews.
 - But, on two counts, Melchizedek is considered greater than Abraham
 - Abraham paid a tithe to Melchizedek
 - Melchizedek blessed Abraham
 - The lesser is always blessed by the greater (Hebrews 7:7).

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- The point being made is:
 - Any priesthood that descends from the “order of Melchizedek” is greater than any priesthood that descended from Abraham.
 - Jesus is a priest forever, after the “order of Melchizedek”.

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- **A Change in the Priesthood (7:11-17)**
- **11** Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?
- **12** For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well.
- **13** For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.
- **14** For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

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- **A Change in the Priesthood (7:11-17) (cont)**
- **15** This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek,
- **16** who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.
- **17** For it is witnessed of him, “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

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- Why was there still need for another priest?
 - Perfection was not attainable through the Levitical priesthood.
 - Therefore a new priesthood had to be appointed so that worshippers could be made perfect.
- New priesthood is not based on genealogy.
- Levitical priests could not continue forever, because they died.
- Jesus does not need a genealogical successor because He is not subject to death.

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- A new priesthood requires a change in the law.
 - Jesus was of the tribe of Judah, so he could not have been a priest under the Law of Moses.
- Therefore a new priesthood had to be appointed so that worshippers could be made perfect.
- The priesthood of Israel existed before the Law (Exodus 19:21-25 – next slide)

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- Exodus 19:21-25
 - [21](#) And the Lord said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the Lord to look and many of them perish.
 - [22](#) Also **let the priests who come near to the Lord consecrate themselves**, lest the Lord break out against them.”
 - [23](#) And Moses said to the Lord, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, ‘Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.’”
 - [24](#) And the Lord said to him, “Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But **do not let the priests and the people break through** to come up to the Lord, lest he break out against them.”
 - [25](#) So Moses went down to the people and told them.
- (Giving of the Law began in Exodus 20)

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- The one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.
- In connection with Judah, Moses said nothing about priests.
- The Law said priests had to be from Levi.
- Jesus was not from Levi, so there had to be a change in law.
 - Being from the “order of Melchizedek” disqualified Jesus from being a priest under the Law.

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Levitical Priests	Jesus
Descended from Aaron	Of the order of Melchizedek
Appointed under the Law	Appointed by God, sworn by oath, which came later than the Law
Based on genealogy	Based on the power of an indestructible life
Death prevented them from continuing in office	Ever lives to make intercession
Temporary priest	A permanent priest
Had to make sacrifices for their own sins	Without sin

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- **The Superior High Priest (7:18-28)**
- 18 For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness
- 19 (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.
- 20 And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath,

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- **The Superior High Priest (7:18-28) (cont)**
- **21** but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever.’”
- **22** This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.
- **23** The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,

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- **The Superior High Priest (7:18-28) (cont)**
- [24](#) but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.
- [25](#) Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.
- [26](#) For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

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- **The Superior High Priest (7:18-28) (cont)**
- **27** He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.
- **28** For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

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Law	Better Covenant
Weak and useless	Better hope
Made nothing perfect	Saves to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him
Priests could draw near to God	We draw near to God
Appoints men to serve as priests in their weakness	Appointed by word of oath; Appoints a son who has been made perfect forever

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- **The Superiority of Christ's Priesthood**

	Priests of the Law	Christ
Superior as to regulation	7:19 for the law made nothing perfect	10:14 by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified
Superior as to oath	7:20 those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath,	7:21 this one was made a priest with an oath
Superior as to permanency	7:23 former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office	7:24 he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever
Superior as to effectiveness	7:18 former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness	7:25 he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

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- The Nature and Qualifications of Jesus as High Priest

holy	7:26 For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy,
innocent	innocent,
unstained	unstained,
separated from sinners	separated from sinners,
Exalted above the heavens	and exalted above the heavens
No need to offer sacrifice for his own sin	7:27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.
Perfect forever	7:28 but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

We do have such a high priest!

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- **To summarize the first seven chapter of Hebrews**
 - The superiority of Christ
 - To the prophets - [He 1:1-3](#)
 - To angels - [He 1:4-2:18](#)
 - To Moses - [He 3:1-5](#)
 - To Aaron and his Levitical priesthood - [He 5:1-10](#); [7:1-28](#)
 - the superiority of Jesus' priesthood
 - Jesus is qualified to be a priest by virtue of His calling by God and His suffering - [He 5:1-8](#)
 - He has been called to be "a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" - [He 5:9-10](#)
 - The priestly order of Melchizedek is shown to be superior by comparing Abraham and Melchizedek - [He 7:1-10](#)
 - The Levitical priesthood could not make one perfect before God
 - The Law upon which the Levitical priesthood was based has been annulled
 - Christ now provides "a better hope, through which we draw near to God"