



The Book of Hebrews

Melchizedek

The Priestly Order...

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent,

Thou art a priest for ever

After the order of Melchizedek.

Psalm 110:4 KJV

A. Melchizedek and Jesus 7:1-3

These three verses help us answer the question: “Was Jesus Melchizedek?”

1. Type and antitype: Melchizedek is a ‘type’ of the Son of God. In typological interpretation the ‘antitype’ [here Jesus] always determines the type [here Melchizedek]. It was NOT Christ who was made similar to Melchizedek, but Melchizedek who was made by God [or His Word] to resemble the Son of God (see vs 3).

2. How to read verse 3: The characteristics in the first part of the verse have reference to Melchizedek **NOT needing** father, mother, genealogy, a beginning and an end to ‘qualify’ to be a priest. This priesthood did NOT need the qualifications of the Levitical priesthood.

B. Melchizedek and Aaron 7:4-10

This section shows Melchizedek as greater than Abraham and also greater than Aaron and the Levitical Priesthood. The key thought here is that the lack of a Levitical genealogy did not prevent Melchizedek from collecting a tithe from Abraham, it cannot disqualify Jesus from serving as a priest!

1. Collection of tithes: While the Levitical Priesthood collected tithes from their ‘brothers,’ Melchizedek collected tithes from the patriarch, Father Abraham.

2. Promise versus Command: Abraham has the ‘promises’ while the Levites have only a ‘command.’ In *Heb 8:6* these ‘greater promises’ are contrasted with the law. The ‘promise’ supersedes the law.

3. Living versus dying: [:8-10] The Levitical priests died and had to be replaced. That is not true of Melchizedek. There is no record of his death or need to replace him. He represents (typology) the living—Jesus died but rose again and lives to make intercession for us. (vs :25). Levi, the great grandson of Abraham, though unborn is seen here as paying tithes to Melchizedek. (:9-10)

C. Levitical Priesthood and the Priesthood of Jesus 7:11-25

(See back of handout for the text...)

1. The Levitical Priesthood 7:11-19

a. Changeable: Verse :12 is the key verse in this section. According to verse :11 and :18 the Levitical Priesthood and the law could NOT bring about ‘perfection’ or righteousness in and of itself. A change was needed for this to happen. The change was announced by God in Psalm 110:4...Jesus, from the tribe of Judah (not Levi) would be a priest FOREVER according to the order of Melchizedek.

b. The law set aside: [:18-19] Before the better hope can be experienced the lesser hope must be set aside. Verse :18 uses a strong word for this, “annulling.” Heb 10:25 says that anyone who changes the law will die on the basis of two or three witnesses. We have here another ‘contrariety.’ God’s law can’t be changed but God does change it. Because God gave the law...the book of Hebrews assumes that He has the right to annul it. Paul said the law was a ‘schoolmaster’ Gal 3:24...to bring us to Christ. Heb 7:18 says the law was ‘weak.’

c. The better hope: [:19] This better hope is based on its effectiveness. It is grounded on better promises (*Heb 8:6-13; 7:27; 10:24*) and accomplishes what the law and the priesthood failed to achieve for us: **A direct and lasting access to God.** “...through which we draw near to God.”

Hebrews 7:1-28 (NKJV)

1 For this Melchizedek, 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 translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” **3** without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but **made like the Son** of God, remains a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. **5** And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a **commandment** to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; **6** but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him **who had the promises.** **7** Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. **8** Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. **9** Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, **10** for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Passage continued on the back...

C. Levitical Priesthood and the Priesthood of Jesus 7:11-25 Continued....

1. The Levitical Priesthood 7:11-19

See the front page...

2. The Priesthood of Jesus 7:20-25

So if God could annul the law: How could the Hebrews be confident that this new arrangement would be permanent?

a. Sealed with an oath: Again, Psalm 110:4 reveals that the Lord has ‘sworn’ [made an oath.] God cannot break His oath. The Aaronic Priesthood rested on a divine command (*Ex 28:10*) the priesthood of Jesus on an oath of God.

b. Jesus the guarantor: Verse :22 says that Jesus is the ‘surety’ [a sure thing—guaranteed] of a BETTER covenant (this will be expanded in Chapter 8).

c. Unchangeable priesthood: From verse :23 we learn that the Levitical Priesthood ended in death. Specifically after the temple was destroyed in A.D. 70. In verses :24-25 Jesus lives forever and His Priesthood does NOT change...he continues to make intercession for us.

D. Our High Priest: Jesus 7:26-28

This last section of Hebrews starts out by declaring that this high priest Jesus, meets all of our needs. The KJV says simply, “He became us.”

1. His character: [:26] The first three adjectives describe His sinlessness. In contrast the Levitical High Priest had to go through the rites of ritual purity before he could minister at the altar. The next two phrases refer to Christ’s mission and accession to the right hand of God.

2. Perfected forever: The last two verses summarize the entire chapter. The need for a Levitical Priesthood has ended and been replaced with a new and better priesthood. Christ satisfied the law by His substitutionary death on the cross and ascended to heaven to fulfill His High Priest role in the order of Melchizedek.

He now lives to make intercession for us...you and me...every day every moment.

Hebrews 7:1-28 (NKJV) Continued...

11 Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? **12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.** **13** For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. **14** For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. **15** And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest **16** who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. **17** For He testifies:

“You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek.”

18 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, **19** for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

20 And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath **21** (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him:

“The Lord has sworn

And will not relent,

‘You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek’ ”),

22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. **23** Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing.

24 But He, because He continues forever, has an **unchangeable priesthood.** **25** Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, **who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,** and has become higher than the heavens; **27** who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. **28** For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.