

A NEW KIND OF PRIEST

Hebrews 7

We've heard stories about defenders who get clients off easy.
When *WE*'re accused, we want best defender money can buy.
Jesus is best defender ever.

He's not best money can buy; He can't be bought.

He's not best because He's tricky or clever.

But He *is* the best defender.

That's the point Hebrews 7 wants to communicate.

When we stand before the Father,
we better have the best defender.

Don't settle for 2nd best. We want Jesus in throne room with us!

Early Hebrew believers, facing affliction because of their
faith in Christ, are thinking about going back to the old
system to escape the pain.

Life was easier "B.C."

"If we go back, maybe the problems will go away!"

Hebrews is an exhortation to continue growing in faith,
rather than turn back.

**Our High Priest has obtained a way to enter directly
into God's presence.**

To turn back now is useless. *What would that accomplish?*

Jesus is the solution to their problem—NOT priests, nor the priestly
system.

Majority of the book focuses on Christ's superiority to Judaism.

Superiority of Christ's person 1-7

He's superior to the great people of Israel's history.

Jesus is the Best Revelation of the Father 1-4:13

Jesus is the Best High Priest 4:14-7:28

He understands our weakness 4:14-16

He's qualified to serve as our High Priest 5:1-10

(Their inability to understand 5:11-6:20)

Problem explaining this doctrine because they aren't able to understand.

We can't understand what he's saying, because we're focused on problems,

NOT on One seated at Father's right hand.

He urges us to grow up.

Leave baby food—easy parts— & start developing muscles, by enduring pain, so we can move toward maturity.

They shouldn't turn back to Judaism to escape the pain, because of the public disgrace it would cause.

He's confident people who have real thing will demonstrate reality of our faith in Christ.

He urges us: continue to trust God & wait patiently.

God's promises are guaranteed.

Our hope won't be disappointed.

Since the basis for our confidence is Christ's intercession, he returns to theme of...

JESUS' SUPERIORITY AS HIGH PRIEST 7:1-28

Only adequate resource we can draw on in hard times is Jesus—our High Priest.

He's seated at right hand of the Father, interceding for us; we can call on Him for help when we're in trouble.

Jesus is better because His priesthood is of a superior order to Levi's.

He's same kind of priest as Melchizedek.

Which raises the question...

Who's "Melchizedek?" Intro. in Gen 14:18-20 *"Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread & wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) ¹⁹He blessed him [Abram] & said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven & earth; ²⁰& blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" & Abram gave him a 10th of everything.*

The city-states of Palestine were at war.

Two groups of kings are fighting, 4 against 5.

The five were taken captive by the four.

Lot was among the captives.

So Abraham took 318 servants and went after them.

He defeats kings & returns with captives & spoils.

He has right to all the spoils. He could have become rich!

On the way back, he's met by Melchizedek, king of Salem.

He's king-priest, who appears out of nowhere.

Melchizedek is identified as **"priest of the most high God,"**

—name Abraham uses to describe Yahweh, God of Israel (22)

At that time only few isolated individuals worship true God.

Abraham is one of those people; Melchizedek is another.

They have a common bond in worshiping the One true God.

Melchizedek comes out and blesses Abraham.

Abram gives tithe of all he's taken to king-priest, God's messenger,
as recognition most high God gave him victory.

He gives everything else back to the other kings.

He keeps nothing for himself!

Establishment of New Order 1-3 *"This Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings & blessed him, ²To him Abraham apportioned a 10th part of everything. He's 1st, by translation of his name, king of*

righteousness; he's also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. ³*He's 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."*

Hebrews: Jesus' priesthood is same kind as Melchizedek's.

Melchizedek's principal characteristics:

Melchizedek **blessed** *Abraham*!

Abraham **paid tithes to** *Melchizedek*!

His names indicate his superiority:

"King of righteousness" (<= "Melchizedek")

"King of peace. (<= King of Salem <= *shalom*)

Jesus is righteousness & peace

Jesus is source of *our* righteousness & peace.

His priesthood didn't depend on his genealogy.

"without father, without mother, without genealogy"

He's presented the same way as the Son of God is.

This isn't an affirmation that Melchizedek *is* the Son of God.

He's *presented* same way. Appears to be true of both.

Type only *resembles* & *prefigures* these characteristics;

the Son literally fulfills them.

Genealogies are important—everybody important has genlgy.

Out of nowhere, Melchizedek shows up without one!

Why doesn't God give his?

Because Melchizedek is a *type* of the **eternal priest!**

Levitical priest had to have **authenticated genealogy**

—traced back to Aaron. The pedigree was essential.

But *no one knows* where Melchizedek comes from!

—yet Abraham acknowledges his superiority to his family.

Neither Melchizedek nor Jesus authenticate claim to priesthood based on genealogy.

Both base priesthood on God's call.

Yet it's clear God put him there—true of Jesus too!

Though neither authenticates lineage normal way,
God's call is sure!

He is *presented*, in the story, as *eternal*.

No mention is made of his beginning or end.

His sudden appearance & departure give feeling of someone who simply *is*—no beginning or end.

What Melchizedek provides figuratively,
Jesus provides literally as the Eternal One.

He remains a priest forever

He comes on scene as king-priest.

As far as the story knows, he's still a king-priest.

His priesthood never ends—as far as story goes. It just *is*!

This is kind of priesthood Jesus serves.

While it's true that Jesus *died*,

Hebrews is devoted to showing that He's still *alive*.

He *lives* to make intercession for us.

He's our High Priest *forever*.

Inferiority of Old Order 4-28

5 demonstrations of inferiority of Levitical priesthood
to Melchizedekan priesthood.

1. Because of tithes given 4-10 “See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave 10th of the spoils! ⁵Those descendants of Levi who receive 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. ⁶But this man who

does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham & blessed him who had the promises.⁷ It's beyond dispute that inferior is blessed by superior.⁸ In the 1 case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives.⁹ I might even say Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham,¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him."

Abraham gave HIM a tithe –NOT other way around!

Father of tithe collector acknowledges his superiority

–HE paid. 4-6a

Melchizedek blessed Abraham

–lesser blessed by greater 6b-7

Levi's sons are mortal;

Melchizedek is depicted as living.

No end is ever recognized 8

So, Levi acknowledges him 9-10

Since Levi comes from Abraham,

inferiority implied in Abraham's act.

2. Because of establishing new priesthood 11-22 "If perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than 1 named after the order of Aaron?¹² For when there's a change in priesthood, there's necessarily a change in law as well.¹³ For the 1 of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no 1 has ever served at the altar.¹⁴ It's evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, & in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.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. ¹⁷For it's witnessed of him, "You're a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." ¹⁸For on 1 hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness & 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. ²⁰It wasn't without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, ²¹but this 1 was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn & will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever.'" ²²This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant."

Promise of new priesthood demonstrates old is temporary.

Jewish people accept Ps. 110 as Messianic.

No descendant of Levi could be king;

No descendant of Judah could be priest.

Ps. 110:4 & Zch. 6:13 speak of King established as priest.

King who rules from Zion with mighty scepter
is appointed a priest forever.

God's oath demonstrates that this is a new priesthood.

When God announces future priesthood, it should have told
Levitical priests there'd be *end* to their priesthood.

God's authentication of a new priesthood argues for the inadequacy of the old 7:11

<u>Old Priesthood</u>		<u>New Priesthood</u>
Weak <u>18</u>	<=>	Power of indestructible life <u>16</u>
Ineffective		Better hope <u>19</u>
Perfected nothing <u>19</u>		Better covenant <u>22</u>

Old priesthood bound with law; law can't produce perfection.

If law could get us there, we wouldn't need *another* priesthood. (11)

New priesthood accomplishes what the old couldn't.

Jesus is different kind of priest. **15**

Old system was based on physical issues: physical ancestry, marriage, health, diet, and ceremonial performance.

New priesthood is based on a different principle.

–not external, physical issues but power inherent in His life.

Jesus can do what law & its priesthood couldn't do

–it's weak & useless.

Because of His indestructible life, we have H.P. forever **18-19**

In O.T. system, the veil kept people separated from the presence of a Holy God.

In Christ we're able to draw near to Him.

The veil has been torn apart and removed.

3. Because of death 23-25 *"The former priests were many in #, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,²⁴ but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.²⁵ Consequently, he's able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them."*

3rd evidence of inferiority: **priests die.**

There were more than 300 High Priests. *None* survived.

About time people got used to 1 High Priest, he would die.

Christ as *eternal* H.P. continues forever—no successors!

His priesthood is permanent—you can count on it!

Term describing the permanence of Jesus' priesthood means *unalterable*.

Galen, medical writer, uses it to describe absolute scientific law which can never be violated, principles on which universe is built.

Jesus' priesthood is lasting as laws which hold universe together!
We don't have to worry about some young priest, straight out of seminary, blowing it, leaving us all messed up with God.

Eternal H.P., knows all about us & God, intercedes for us.

He's able to save completely those who come to God through Him,
because He lives forever & continues to intercede for us **25**

4. Because of sin 26-27a *"It was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, & exalted above the heavens. ²⁷He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people"*

4th evidence of inferiority: **priests had to offer for selves** 1st.

Levitical sacrifices begin with sacrifice for sins of High Priest.

They're sinful people making sacrifices for sinful people.

He's *sinless* Son of God, offering *Himself* for sin of all people.

Jesus is superior because **He's *sinless* High Priest.**

He's holy, harmless, undefiled (without blemish)

He needs no offering for His own sin.

5. Because of repetition 27b-28 "He did this once for all when he offered up himself. ²⁸For law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than law, appoints a Son who's been made perfect forever.

Final evidence of inferiority: Priests offered sacrifices **daily**
because of weakness.

Christ offered **1 sacrifice forever.**

Nothing can be added to it. It is complete.

It provides everything we need to come boldly into God's presence.

Since we have such a H.P., we approach Him in confidence.

Jesus is a better High Priest
because He's like Melchizedek,
who is *greater* than Levi.

3 Points to Ponder: vs. 25 & 26 introduce **3 conclusions:**

1. Salvation has been offered through our priest 25

"He's able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him"

He's bridge—only way by which we can come near to God.

Jesus alone is able to save us completely,

when we come to God, through Him.

We don't come by our own efforts.

He's *"the way, the truth & the life.*

No one comes to the Father, but by HIM!"

2. Now we can draw near to God 19, 25

"We draw near to God"

"We draw near to God through Him"

When we face hard times, we can come directly to God,

because our High Priest is forever in God's presence

to intervene on our behalf.

Now we can come boldly into the throne room of the King.

3. Jesus, our High Priest, meets our need. 26

"It was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest"

Lit., *"such a High Priest is fitting (appropriate) for us."*

He's a "perfect fit" for us.

He corresponds exactly to what we need!

DO WE WANT TO BE NEAR TO GOD?

We don't need a priestly pedigree.

We need a life that's indestructible—the great High Priest, who continues forever.

Jesus is the best High Priest.

Jesus stands before the Father as our advocate.

Professor at small college was asked to contact a wealthy man on behalf of the school. Funds were needed for expansion. As he walked in, he was greeted by a young man he recognized as a former student. When the student learned why he was there, he said, "Come in. My father's in here." The son introduced the professor: "Dad, this is a friend of mine. He's come on behalf of the college I attended." The father looked up at the visitor, reached for his checkbook, and said, "How much do you need?" The professor walked out with a generous contribution. His mission was secured by the intercession of the son.

That's what our advocate does for us.

He intercedes before His Father in our behalf.

"My Advocate" Martha Snell Nicholson

I sinned.

And straightway, posthaste, Satan flew before the presence of the most High God, & made a railing accusation there.

He said, "This soul, this thing of clay & sod, Has sinned.

'Tis true that he has named Thy Name, But I demand his death, for Thou hast said, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.'

Shall not Thy sentence be fulfilled? Is justice dead?

Send now this wretched sinner to his doom.

What other thing can a righteous ruler do?"

& thus he did accuse me day & night,

& every word he spoke, O God, was true!

Then quickly One rose up from God's right hand,

Before whose glory angels veiled their eyes.

He spoke, "Each jot & tittle of the law

Must be fulfilled; –the guilty sinner dies!
But wait—suppose his guilt were all transferred To Me,
& that I paid his penalty!
Behold My hands, My side, My feet!
One day I was made sin for him, & died
that he Might be presented faultless at Thy throne!"
And Satan fled away.

Full well he knew That he could not prevail against such love,
For every word my dear Lord spoke was true!

***We have such a High Priest, Who is able to save
completely those who come to God through Him,
because He ever lives to make intercession for US!***