

Jesus Greater than Melchizedek

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Heb. 7:11-28

II. Biblical Context

This chapter reveals the identity of the One who Psalms 110 was predicting. The author of Hebrews highlights the significance of Melchizedek, and the Old Testament promises of another priest after his order (1-18). He then connects the Old Testament promises concerning another priest after the order of Melchizedek to Jesus Christ (a prototype). The greatness and uniqueness of Melchizedek is only matched by the mystery that surrounds him. In the historical account of his one appearance, that is recorded in Genesis 14:17-24 was very short. He entered the story very briefly and exited just as quick. For generations it has been debated about who this person was and what is his connection to Christ. Hebrews 7:1-3 sums up the account found in Genesis 14 and begins to develop Melchizedek uniqueness.

The entire book of Hebrews is meant to reassure persecuted Christians that Christ and not the Mosaic Law, was God's ultimate plan for our salvation. The Old Covenant was good but not perfect. It was limited and imperfect. Its purpose was to show mankind their need for a Savior, who is Jesus Christ (Gal.3:19; 4:7).

II. Lesson: Jesus Greater than Melchizedek Focus Verse: v.22-28

V.11-19. Jesus is the High Priest of a higher order (Ps.110:4) than the Levitical priest. Six times the writer of this book cited Psalms 110, when stating that Jesus is a priest "after the order of Melchizedek (5:6,10;6:20;7:11,17,21). If Jesus was Melchizedek, it would not been said that he would be after or similar. If the Jewish priest and the Law were able to save people, there would not have been a need for God to send Christ as priest. Christ came not from the tribe of Levi but through the line of Judah. He was physically ineligible to become High Priest, but spiritually as the mediator of the New Covenant, he was first in a new line of the priesthood in the order of Melchizedek. Meaning that He was like Melchizedek because He (Jesus) was made a Priest not by human rules or regulations, but through the power of a life which has no end (Heb.7:16). This point to the fact that Jesus is superior to the priests of Aaron and of Melchizedek. When we look at this Psalms, we can see that David is expressing that God is talking to Jesus in verse one. God goes on in the proceeding verses to tell the Lord what will happen in the days to come when He will rule (V.2-3). In verse 4, The Lord made an oath and will not change His mind concerning His forever priest who is in the order or manner of Melchizedek. Notice that God did not make an oath to Melchizedek, but to the Lord. He resembled the Son of God, who remains priest forever (Heb2:17;4:14) ;(Heb.7:3). Christ was the Promised Messiah, (Heb.7:11). The animal's sacrifices had to be repeated and they only offered temporary forgiveness; but Christ's sacrifice was offered once for all; it offered total and permanent forgiveness. Under the New Covenant, the Levitical priesthood was canceled because Christ is our High Priest (Heb.4:14-16). When the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also (v.12). Jesus' priesthood did not come to Him being in line according to the Mosaics Law, but an oath that God made centuries before in Psalms 110. Jesus is a forever priest unlike the Levitical or Aaronic priests, who served until their death. Jesus will be a priest on His throne, and a counsel (mediator) of peace will be

between the two offices (Zech.6:13). The foundations for a greater priest were laid in the Old Testament, however, it was not until the New Testament that the greater priest is revealed. Because Christ is our High Priest, we need to focus on Him. No minister leader or Christian friend can substitute for Christ's work and His role in our salvation (Rom.8:3).

The Law was not intended to save people, but to point out sin (Rom.5:20) and to point to Christ for salvation (Gal.3:24-25). Salvation comes through Christ, whose sacrifice brings forgiveness for our sins. V.18 The law made nothing perfect, and a better hope is introduced by which we draw near to God. The Way, the Truth and the Life was born in a stable and became our Living Hope, for a people born in sin, and a world damaged by sin, there simply could not be any other source of hope. Jesus is better because He became our Redeemer. Unlike the Levitical priest and Melchizedek, Jesus came to be the sacrifice. The priests had the privilege and responsibility of representing God to the people and ministering to the needs of the people. With Jesus as our Great High Priest who died on the cross, the veil in the temple that separated the Holy of Holies was torn down. Because of Christ there was no longer a barrier and no more waiting for the priest to purify themselves, because He is unblemished.

V.20-23. Christ has become the guarantee of a better covenant because of this oath (God's oath). No vow was made to any other priest like it was made or prophesized about Christ (Ps.110:4). It is new and better because it allows us to go directly to God through Christ. We no longer need to rely on sacrificed animals and priests to be our mediator to obtain God's forgiveness. The new covenant is better because all the human priests all died, Christ lives forever. We have access to God through Christ and is available to us and we can go to him with our needs. How? Because of the blood that He willingly shed (Heb.10.19-25). Matt.27:51

Jesus paid our sin debt in full. Sin comes with a cost. However, it's not a cost we are responsible for paying. Instead, Jesus came down to us, and took us from a sinful state and paid our debt. He didn't pay just part of the debt. His last words on the cross was a declaration that our debt had been paid in full. He is the surety for our debt. Like Paul says in Philemon 1:18-19 of Onesimus, "If he has done any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to my account". In like manner Jesus Christ Himself, is a willing participant as the guarantor for us and says to the Father, Charge to my account whatever my people do, and I will fully pay their debts, whatever they owe. We can maintain our covenant with God, because Jesus is our Guarantor or Surety (v.22) of the new and better covenant. Our covenant with God cannot be broken, because as soon as a debt exists, Christ pays it. There is no surety in the Old Testament for sins to be fully satisfied. When one blew it, they had to crawl back by themselves and wait for the priests to cleanse themselves daily; wait for you to offer your best sacrifice; the sprinkling of the blood and that only covered the sin and not wash it away. Jesus is greater than the prophets because He was always Holy and 1 Pt.3:18: ...Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. It was a finality when the Levitical or Aaronic priests died. New priests had to be appointed daily and some of them weren't as godly as they should have been. What God wanted His people to understand is the OT priests were always being buried and, never to live again or they were not perfect to save them. Christ priesthood is sinless, perfect, unending and decreed by God.

V.24-25. Jesus lives forever and his work as priest do not pass to anyone else. Jesus is not limited by death because he conquered death (Rev.1:18; Heb.2:14*). Our High Priest never dies. That is why as the KJV states, He can save us to the uttermost, because it's never broken. There is no stopping His salvation. It goes all the way to access us to God (Eph.2:18), anchors us there, and holds us forever because he our forever Priest (unchangeable). There is no possibility that He will ever be succeeded by anyone who could measure up to Him. He is indissoluble—unable to be destroyed; lasting.

Jesus will be our Priest for eternity and unlike those in the Old Testament, we do not need to let our hearts be sadden because of death of our priest and be wondering what the next one will be like, He lives forever, and he has a permanent priesthood (V.24). Also, in verse 25 which is the main theme of the Bible, the doctrine of salvation. It tells us (1) He is able to save them. From what? The wrath of God (Rom.3:25); (2) to the uttermost (forever, completely, perfectly, for eternity) and (3) Who? Those who come to God through Him (Jesus) (Jn.14:6); (4) He lives to intercede and intervene on their behalf with God (Rom.8:34); (Jn.17:11-17).

Salvation is another word for deliverance. The kind that Christ provides is spiritual and eternal deliverance. He is able to save in the fullest sense, the past, the present and the future (Tit.2:11-14*). Jesus is not just willing, but He is able do all that we need, as repeated in Heb. 2:18. As our Great High Priest unlike Aaron, who may had been willing, Jesus is able to hold us forever. And unlike Melchizedek, who did not have the oath from God and did not experience the human side as Christ did. Christ shed blood, was tempted and understand what we are going through.

V.26-28. The writer tells us in v.26 about the sinlessness of Jesus: he is perfect, holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners and exalted above the heavens. The only priest in the Old Testament who could go before God had to be holy. The only way for him to obtain that was to offer sacrifices to render himself holy. Everyday killing animals, the business of spreading the blood and burning flesh and seeking forgiveness for sins. Only to wake up the next morning to do it all over again. But Jesus brought in the new and better system and God gave us a peek at it in Gen. Christ does not need to offer his blood day after day, because it not only offers forgiveness of sin, but also sanctify us (Heb.13:12; Jn.1:7). He offered himself (v.27).

He became the propitiation for sins (Rom.2:5), which means that the payment that should have been ours, was poured out on Jesus at Calvary. Christ died for you because you were the object of God's wrath! Melchizedek didn't die for sin. Christ rose on the 3rd day, and he is seated at the right of the Father interceding on our behalf. We have a living Savior, who offers to you the priceless gift with God (Rom.5:1); Rom.5:6;8;10.

III. **Conclusion:** The writer conclusion is found in verse 25 as to why Jesus is better than Melchizedek: "Therefore, He is able also to save forever (completely, perfectly, for eternity, to uttermost), those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede and intervene on their behalf (with God).

Melchizedek was the prototype of Christ, but not the Alpha and Omega.