

I. Review

A. The author has brought us full circle back to the theme of Jesus as the merciful and faithful great high priest in the order of Melchizedek. As pointed out in chapter 5, the author has “much to say” concerning Jesus as the High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. In fact, the writer is going to spend over three of our next chapters expounding upon this reality. Understanding the roles and function of Melchizedek and how Abraham related to him is key to understanding the role and function of Jesus as our great High Priest. (Heb. 7:1-10)

1. Abraham’s High Priest
2. Melchizedek - Name means Righteous
3. King of Jerusalem and of Peace
4. Was unique as King and Priest
5. Was appointed by God not by lineage
6. No record of death; therefore, continues as Priest and King
7. Abraham gave him Tithes
8. Melchizedek blessed Abraham

B. The author is now going to zero in on these truths as it applies to understanding the person and work of Jesus as our great High Priest over the next two and one-half chapters.

II. Verse-by-Verse (7:11-19)

A. The author will now focus upon the beauties and implications of the fact that Jesus was appointed sovereignly by the Father as the great high priest of humanity.

1. The inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood - The writer wants us to focus upon the fact that God promised the Messiah would be a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. The implication immediately realized is that God intended to terminate or change the Levitical priesthood. If the Levitical priesthood was perfect, then the Messiah would have been a priest in the order of Levi.
2. Changed priesthood necessitates change in law - Notice the writer uses the term “Levitical” referring to the entire book of Leviticus, not just simply the priesthood title according to the tribe of Levi. This has massive

implications due to the fact that the Levitical system is central to the old covenant that is laid out in the Torah (the first 5 books).

3. Jesus from the line of Judah, not Levi - The writer points out Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, not the tribe of Levi. If Jesus were to take on the role of high priest according to the Torah or law, He would clearly be in rebellion against God. This verse is possibly one of the clearest single statements in the scripture that mandates a major change of the status or place of the old covenant to the people of God after the work of Jesus's sacrificial death and resurrection.

"If Christ is our high priest today, then there has to be a change or annulment of the law, since He could not qualify as a priest under the Levitical arrangement. If the law has not been changed or annulled then neither has the Levitical priesthood. Therefore if Christ is our high priest of our covenant with God then we by necessity are under a different covenant all together." - Ryrice

4. Even more evident - If there was a promise or expectation of a change in the priesthood given in the Psalms, it is even more evident now that the Messiah has come and--contrary to the law--has accomplished the sacrificial work of the high priest on our behalf. In this, we have undeniable evidence and confidence that there has been a change or an annulment of the old covenant. This change or annulment is eternal since the high priest of the new covenant exists and functions eternally outside of the old covenant.

B. Two realities of the change in the law - The writer has presented undeniable evidence that demands a shift in the Hebrew's understanding of the old covenant law and how they are to relate to it. The writer points out two dynamic shifts or reasons why God changed it. These two realities insist a change in how they are to understand and relate to the old covenant versus the new. He uses the language of "on one hand" (1st reality shift), and "on the other hand" (2nd reality shift).

1. One one Hand - The first reason for the annulment and change is because of the old covenant's weakness and unprofitableness concerning its power to produce completeness or perfection in us. The old covenant had no power to transform the heart and mind to real righteousness and godliness; it only had the power to provide atonement for sins committed and to attempt to hold back wicked actions through adherence to it. (Have the appearance of Godliness but no power.)

- a. The promise of transformation through the New Covenant - The singular overarching promise of the new covenant is the effective power transformation of our hearts through the Spirit.
 2. One the other Hand - The second reason for the change is to secure us in the hope of our inheritance of all the promises of God. The restoration of all things depends upon an eternally righteous humanity. This is a critical understanding concerning why there had to be two advents of our Savior. In His first coming, through His substitutionary work, He set us free from the bondage to sin and death and secured the regeneration of our hearts. The eternal reuniting of the dwelling place of God to the earth would be futile unless humanity was first saved from their own wickedness.
- C. High priest of eternal existence and divine oath - Just as the Father made an unbreakable, unchangeable oath to Abraham, so, too, He made a divine oath to His Son that His position and function as our great high priest would continue eternally. The oath to Abraham that he would inherit the fullness of salvation through faith is guaranteed by the oath of declaring and commissioning Jesus as our eternal great high priest.
1. The Levitical priests are without oath - The Levites were commissioned by birthright, not by individual recognition of merit or authenticity. Therefore, hundreds of priests were men who had no desire to be priests and used the priesthood for their own gain or despised the task. There were countless others who were sincere in heart concerning their role as priest but were limited by their fallen nature.
 2. The Levitical priests are limited by death - Even if you had a truly sincere and godly priest in the line of Levi, that priest was limited by death, thus ending their term and function as priest on behalf of God's people.
 3. His priesthood is eternally effective - Jesus took on our frame in order to sympathize with our weakness and become our compassionate great high priest. In the weakness of our frame, He endured and defeated death forever. He now lives victoriously over death, eternally immune to its power, yet retains His compassionate sympathy as our human high priest. Unlike the Levitical priest, He is unlimited in His heart towards you, in His tenure, and in his effectiveness as your great high priest.
 - a. His role and unparalleled priesthood in both merit and effectiveness is happening right now towards you and in you and

will continue forever. Day in and day out, night after night, even now and forever unto forever, He lives with a burning compassion and effective power to save you to the uttermost.