

I. Review

A. The writer is expounding on the theme of Jesus, our great high priest, in the order of Melchizedek. He has laid out the foundational comparisons between Jesus and Melchizedek in order for us to understand the beautiful truths to be gazed upon concerning Jesus in His identity as our 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. God instituted the new covenant through the high priestly work of Jesus' death and resurrection on our behalf. He did this in light of the inability of the old covenant to truly save us. Jesus, in His identity and work as our high priest, instantly and fully legally saves us as it pertains to our guilt and penalty for sins committed. In addition, He has positioned us to be fully saved from our sin nature and given us a new nature through His continual ministry to us by the Spirit.

1. Lives to make intercession - In both our legal position and living condition, He is unique as our high priest in His eternal merit, compassion, and commitment to save us completely or to the uttermost. (Heb. 7:25)

II. Verse by Verse (Heb. 7:26-28)

A. Fitting for us (Heb. 7:26-27) - The author is going to show us two perspectives concerning how Jesus in His identity and work as our high priest is fitting for us. He is fitting for us in light of our condition and need. He is also fitting for us in light of the lack of the old covenant priesthood. The author goes on to list six different ways He is fitting for humanity.

1. Holy - There are a few different meanings or applications of the idea of holiness. Here in this verse, the aspect of holiness that is in view is blamelessness or perfection in righteousness. All that He does is perfect and right as our high priest. His sacrifice, ministry, actions, and intentions as our high priest are without fault and exactly what we need. (Rom. 8:28)
2. Harmless - The original word translated “harmless” means “without guile or fraud”. He has no hidden selfish agenda through which He is using His role as our High Priest for His own gain or to benefit Himself in some way. This also means that He is not fraudulent or unable in His commitment and work to save us to the utmost. He will finish the work and come through on every promise of salvation in us and to us as our faithful High Priest. (Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 2:4-7; Phil. 1:6)
3. Undefiled - This word means pure or free from sin. The idea is that He was, is, and will remain incorruptible even when exposed to sin. This theme goes along with the truth previously visited in this letter. That is, though he was tempted in every way that we are, He remained without sin.
4. Separate from sinners - Unlike the priests who need to offer sacrifice for their own sins--as well as for the sins of the people--the great high priest of the new covenant has no need to offer sacrifice for His own sins. The original language suggests that the author intends to show us that Jesus is in a totally different category of human than that of the rest of humanity. I believe that this speaks of His humanity being free of sin nature, and is offering us hope beyond overcoming sin and into the reality of being totally free of the sin nature. (Rom. 5:9-21, 8:29-30; 1 Cor. 15:49; Phil. 3:17-21; 1 Jn. 3:1-3)
5. Become Higher than the heavens - This statement refers to the ascension of Christ, the proof that His sacrifice of Himself was accepted on our behalf, proving the unique characteristics of His nature as our High Priest that the writer just touched upon. (Rom. 1:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:13-17)
6. Offered Himself once for all - Unlike the priests of the old covenant, who had to offer sacrifices constantly for sins committed, the quality of the priest and the offering so completely surpassed the priesthood and sacrifices of the old covenant that His offering was offered one time, for all of humanity's sins past, present and future. (Ex. 29:38-46; Lev. 4:3-12; Is. 53:10-12; Rom. 6:10; Titus 2:14)

This is totally unique. A priest may bring a sacrifice and offer it on the altar. But Jesus was both the priest and the sacrifice. This is the best sacrifice brought to God the Father by the best priest.
- David Guzik

When He offered up Himself it was a willing offering. "Oh, this makes the sacrifice of Christ so blessed and glorious! They dragged the bulls and they drove the sheep to the altar; they bound the calves with cords, even with cords to the altar's horn; but not so was it with the Christ of God. None did compel him to die; he laid down his life voluntarily, for he had power to lay it down, and to take it again." - Charles Spurgeon

B. The Superiority of the New Covenant Priest and Sacrifice versus the Old (Heb. 7:28)

1. Weakness of the Law - Earlier in this chapter, the writer explained that God intended to annul or change the old covenant because of its weakness or unprofitability to the people who were under it. This weakness was the old covenant's priesthood and sacrificial system's inability to deal with future sins and humanity's sin nature. This was due, in part, to the weakness of the priests themselves being unfitting in the "kind" of priest needed to deal with humanity's fallenness. (Heb. 7:17)
 - a. Under the law, you were a priest based upon birthright, not merit.
2. Power of the Oath - The oath of the Father to appoint the Son as the high priest of the new covenant was given because this priest has no weaknesses when it comes to the work of salvation necessary for redemption. He has been made our priest by oath, specifically because of His unmatched and incomprehensible merit of perfection of His character, compassion, and commitment as priest of our salvation. (1 Jn 2:1-2)
 - a. Perfected Forever - The surpassing perfection of Jesus in His ability, character, compassion, and commitment to save us to the uttermost is an unchangeable reality. He has been made our high priest forever according to the oath of the Father. The oath of the Father guarantees that the reality of the new covenant with Jesus as the captain and great high priest of our salvation will never end. (Lk. 13:31-33)