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The High Priest Forever

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Hebrews 7:1-3, 19-28

Introduction: The **doctrine** of the **priestly office** of **Christ** is **so excellent** in itself, and so essential a part of the Christian faith, that the apostle loves to dwell upon it. Nothing made the Jews so fond of the Levitical dispensation as the high esteem they had of their **priesthood**, and it was doubtless a sacred and most excellent institution. It was a very severe threatening denounced against the Jews (Hosea 3:4), that the children of Israel should abide many days without a prince or priest, and without a sacrifice, and with an ephod, and without **teraphim** (household images). Now the apostle assures them that by receiving the Lord Jesus they would have a **much better HIGH PRIEST**, a priesthood of a higher order, and consequently a better dispensation or covenant, a **better LAW** and **testament**. This he shows in this chapter, where, **I.** We have a more particular account of Melchisedec, Hebrews 7:1-3. **II.** The **superiority** of his priesthood to that of Aaron, Hebrews 7:4-10. **III.** An accommodation of all to Christ, to show the **superior excellency** of **HIS** person, office, and **COVENANT**, Hebrews 7:11-28. (Source: <https://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/mhm/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:1-2, For this **Melchisedec**, **king of Salem**, **priest of the most high God** (Yahweh), who met **Abraham** returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also **Abraham** gave a **tenth part of all**; first being by interpretation **King of righteousness**, and after that also King of Salem, which is, **King of peace...**

NOTE: Who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings: After Abraham defeated the confederation of kings who took his nephew Lot captive, he met with a mysterious priest named Melchizedek, who was also king over the city of **Salem** (an ancient name for the city of **Jeru-salem**). (Source: <https://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/guz/hebrews-7.html>)

NOTE: MELCHIZEDEK AND JESUS The following **likenesses** in **type** (symbol, figure of something to come) and **antitype** (a figure corresponding to another figure; that of (from) which the type is the pattern or representation. Thus the paschal lamb, in scripture, is the **type** of which Christ is the **antitype**) are plain: **(1)** The word "Melchizedek" means "King of righteousness," thus the very name becomes a title of the Lord Jesus Christ. **(2)** "King of Salem" means "King of peace," and thus the title of Melchizedek is another appropriate title of our Lord (Isaiah 9:6ff; Psalms 72:7). **(3)** Melchizedek was both king and priest, a double dignity **NOT enjoyed by any illustrious Hebrew, NOT even Moses**, and startlingly typical of Jesus Christ who is both king and high priest. **(4)** Melchizedek **received tithes** of **Abraham**, even as **Christ receives gifts** of them that love and follow him. **(5)** Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine; and, although not specifically mentioned here because it was not germane (relevant) to the argument, the fact itself is a

strong suggestion of the Lord's institution of the **Lord's Supper**. (6) He blessed Abraham; Christ blesses his followers. (7) Melchizedek's priesthood encompassed service to **Gentiles** and **Jews** alike, as witnessed by his reception of Abraham; and Christ likewise is the **HIGH PRIEST** of **ALL mankind, having NO RACIAL** or **other limitation**.
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:3, Without father (of unrecorded paternity), without mother (of unknown maternity), without descent (unregistered as to birth), having neither beginning of days, nor END of life; but made LIKE unto the Son of God; abideth a priest CONTINUALLY.

NOTE: (8) The eighth **likeness** between Melchizedek and Christ is a little more difficult to understand because it is NOT founded on anything that Melchizedek did or said, and NOT even upon anything that is said about him in the Genesis narrative, this **eighth** similarity being made to depend upon the manner and form of the Genesis record, with special reference to what is **NOT said**. See below.

The statement by the author of Hebrews that Melchizedek had **no father, no mother, no genealogy, no beginning of life, and no end of days**, simply means THAT HE HAD **NONE OF THOSE THINGS IN THE SCRIPTURAL RECORD**, and does NOT mean that he was actually born in a manner different from other men. Unlike the **Levites** who received their priestly offices through meticulously kept and **guarded genealogies, Melchizedek**, in his SINGLE glorious appearance in the sacred scriptures, flashes upon the holy record absolutely dissociated from everything either preceding or following that remarkable event. ...The author of Hebrews, through inspiration, saw that it was by God's purposeful design that the story of Melchizedek had been so deployed upon the sacred page in isolated splendor, and that purpose was to make Melchizedek's priesthood suggest the **ENDLESS priesthood of Jesus**. To be sure, Melchizedek's priesthood only gives an impression of being endless whereas that of Jesus is **actually SO**.

Who was this mysterious Melchizedek? And which Salem had him for king? Lenski noted some of the strange speculations on the identity of Melchizedek as follows:

Rabbi Ismael, about 135 B.C., thought him to be Shem, Noah's son; this opinion has been accepted by Luther and others. Philo ... did not regard Melchizedek as a historical person. Origen thought him to be an angel being. Hierakas, at the end of the third century, made him a temporary incarnation of the Holy Spirit, others a similar incarnation of the Logos.^[1]

Of course, these speculations are unconvincing, because there is not a word in the Genesis record to make Melchizedek any less historical than Abraham, Amraphel, Arioch, Chederlaomer, or Tidal.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:4, Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

NOTE: Now consider how GREAT this man was - The object of the apostle was to EXALT the rank and dignity of Melchizedek. The Jews had a profound veneration for Abraham, and **IF** it could be shown that **Melchizedek was superior to Abraham**, then it would be easy to demonstrate the superiority of Christ as a priest to ALL who descended from Abraham. Accordingly he argues, that he to whom even the patriarch Abraham **showed so much respect**, must have had an exalted rank. Abraham, according to the VIEWS of the EAST, the illustrious ancestor of the Jewish nation, was regarded as superior to any of his posterity (descendants), and of course was to be considered as of **higher rank** and **dignity** than the **Levitical priests** who were descended from him.

Even the patriarch Abraham - Gave the tenth of the spoils - see the notes, Hebrews 7:2. The argument here is, that **Abraham** acknowledged the SUPERIORITY of **Melchizedek** by thus devoting the usual part of the spoils of war, or of what was possessed, to God by his hands, as the priest of the **Most High**. Instead of making a direct consecration by

himself, he brought them to him as a minister of religion, and recognized in him one who had a higher official standing in the matter of religion than himself.

...The Greeks were accustomed, **after a battle**, to **collect the spoils** together, and throw them into a pile, and then, before they were distributed, to take off a portion from the top, and **devote it to the gods**; Xen. Cyro. 7,5,35; Herod. i. 86,90; 8:121,122; Dion. Hal. ii. In like manner it was customary to place the harvest in a heap, and as the first thing to take off a portion from the top to consecrate as a thank-offering to God. The word then came to denote the **“first-fruits”** which were offered to God, and then the **BEST** of the **spoils of battle**. It has that sense here, and denotes the spoils or plunder which Abraham had taken of (from) the discomfited (defeated; overthrown) kings.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:5-10, And verily they that are of the **sons of Levi**, who receive the OFFICE of the priesthood, have a commandment to take **tithes** of the people according to the **LAW**, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: But he whose descent is NOT counted from them received tithes of (from) Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction **the LESS** is **blessed of (BY) the BETTER**. And here men that **DIE receive tithes**; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, **payed tithes** IN Abraham. For he was **yet IN** the loins of **his father**, when **Melchisedec** met him.

NOTE: The reasoning here is, indeed, especially such as would be suited to IMPRESS a Jewish MIND, and perhaps more forcibly than it does ours. The **Jews valued** themselves on the dignity and honor of the Levitical priesthood, and it was important to show them on their own principles, and according to their own **sacred writings**, that the great ancestor of all the Levitical community had himself acknowledged his INFERIORITY to one who was declared also in their own writings Psalm 110:1-7 to be LIKE the **Messiah**, or who was of the same “order.” (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:11-17, If therefore **perfection** were by the **Levitical priesthood**, (for under it the people received the **law**,) what further NEED was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the **priesthood being changed**, there is **made of necessity** a **CHANGE** also of the **LAW**. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which **NO MAN** gave attendance at the ALTAR. For it is evident that our **Lord sprang out of Juda**; of which tribe Moses **spake nothing concerning priesthood**. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is MADE, NOT after the **law** of a **carnal commandment**, but after the **power of an ENDLESS life**.

For he testifieth, **Thou art a priest FOR EVER** after the ORDER of **Melchisedec**.

Psalm 110:1, 4, The **LORD (the self-Existent or Eternal; Jehovah [Yahweh])** said unto my **Lord (master [HEAD, RULER])**, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

...The **LORD (the self-Existent or Eternal; Jehovah [Yahweh])** hath **sworn**, and will NOT repent, Thou art a priest FOR EVER after the ORDER of **Melchizedek**.

Hebrews 7:18-19, For there is verily a **disannulling (cancellation [the act, process, or result of canceling; as, the cancellation of certain words in a contract, or of the CONTRACT itself])** of the **commandment** going before for the **WEAKNESS** and **unprofitableness** thereof. For the **LAW** made NOTHING perfect, but the bringing in of a BETTER HOPE did; by the which **WE** draw NIGH unto God.

NOTE: It was NOT of caprice (a sudden change of opinion) that God **annulled** (repealed) the OLD COVENANT, for it deserved to be annulled because of its **WEAKNESS** and **unprofitableness**. God had never considered the **Levitical system** to be complete, final or

efficacious (effective) in itself; but "it **was added** because of transgression, UNTIL the **SEED** should COME to whom the promise hath been made") Gal. 3:19).

Galatians 3:19, Wherefore then **serveth** the **LAW**? It was **added** because of transgressions, TILL the **SEED** should COME to whom the promise was made...

The **LAW EXPIRED**, therefore, by limitation, when Jesus was revealed as that "seed" so long anticipated. The weakness and unprofitableness of that foregoing commandment refers to the **WHOLE system of Moses...**

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:20-25, And inasmuch as **NOT** without an **OATH** he was made priest: (For those priests were made **without an oath**; but **THIS WITH an oath** by him that said unto him, The Lord (Yahweh) sware and will **NOT** repent, **Thou art a PRIEST FOR EVER** after the **order of Melchisedec**;) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a **BETTER** testament.

And they truly were many priests, because they were **NOT** suffered to continue **by reason of death**: But **this MAN**, because he continueth ever, hath an UNCHANGABLE priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that **come unto God by him**, seeing he **ever liveth** to **make intercession** (solicitation to one party in favor of another) **FOR THEM**.

NOTE: Implicit also in such a changeable priesthood, due to death, was its ineffectiveness. Beloved associations and emotions associated with one holder of the office did **NOT** pertain to his successor. Even elementary righteousness was lacking in many of them. **Evil and corrupt men** occupied **even the office of the high priest** and **changed** the very house of God into a "**den of thieves and robbers**" in the time of our Lord's ministry. Due to **human nature** and the imperfections of the system, there were many occasions of grief and sorrow associated with it.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:26, For such an **HIGH PRIEST** became us, who is **holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners**, and made higher than the heavens;

NOTE: Here is the ultimate superiority of Christ, his **sinless and perfect character**; all the other arguments are true, but this is the **climax**. The use of the words "became us" is a reference to our human sense of what is fitting and appropriate and indicates that, even from a human point of view, Christ is **NOT** lacking in any quality that is either needed or desirable in his incomparable office as our high priest. "**Separated from sinners**" means that Christ is no longer vexed by the **presence** of evil men; he has ascended where they cannot go. The Levitical priest **dwelt apart** in a **separate house** for a **week prior to the day of atonement**; and there may be a reference here to the fact that Christ is separated from sinners, **NOT** for merely a week but for all eternity.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/hebrews-7.html>)

NOTE: **And made higher than the heavens** - Exalted above the visible heavens; that is, at the right hand of God; see the Ephesians 1:21 note; Philemon 2:9 note. **We needed a high priest** who is thus exalted that he may manage our cause before the throne of God.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:27, Who **needeth NOT** daily, as THOSE high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his **OWN SINS**, and then for the people's: for this he **did ONCE**, when he **offered up himself**.

NOTE: ...for this he did once for all, when he offered up himself. Some commentators see a difficulty in this verse because of its reference to the priest's daily offering for his own sins, whereas it appears that this was done only by the **HIGH PRIEST** on the **day of atonement**.

Some have even dared to ascribe **ignorance** to the author of **Hebrews**; but as Lenski says, These critics do NOT have much ground to stand on, for it can readily be observed that the writer says "**once a year**" (Heb. 9:7), "**year by year**" (Heb. 10:1); and that he knows Leviticus 16:2 ("not at all times"), and Leviticus 16:29, and also has "**once a year**" (Leviticus 16:34).^[27]

It should be noted that this is a comparison between **Christ** who "**daily**" **intercedes** with us, coupled with the hypothetical implication that "**IF**" he had been sinful, he would therefore have had to offer "daily" for his own sins and the sins of others; but, since **he is NOT sinful**, he "**needeth NOT daily**" to offer, etc. To have done so would have made him like those priests, which he is NOT. Another possible explanation of the meaning is that the daily sacrifices of the Levitical system was as much founded on the **constant, daily sins** of the **Levites** as it was on the sins of the **people**; and, in that view, every sacrifice, day by day, was made with a view to the sins of the Levites, and then for the sins of all the people as well. These were needed every day because the people sinned every day, the priests being no exception.

Those multiple daily sacrifices are here contrasted with the sacrifice offered by Christ, which was NOT for his sins but for the sins of others; and which was **NOT OFFERED repeatedly** at **daily, yearly, or other intervals**, but "**ONCE FOR ALL**," finally, and FOREVER. Another difference is seen in the place of the offering, theirs being in an earthly temple, Christ's being in heaven itself. Significantly, **Christ's blood was shed on earth but OFFERED in heaven**, thus fulfilling the type of the lamb's being slain in the outer court and his blood BEING OFFERED **within** the **HOLY of holies**.

Once for all is the translation of the Greek word [*@hapax*] which means "ONCE, without NEED or possibility of repetition." **It means "ONCE, finally."** This word is of immense significance and is used in several KEY statements in the New Testament.

- (1) Christ has been manifested in **human form ONCE** for all (Hebrews 9:26).
- (2) He suffered for man's sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, **ONCE** for all (1 Pet. 3:18).
- (3) Christ died **ONCE** for all (Hebrews 9:28). (4) The faith was **ONCE** for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:1:3).
- (5) Christ offered his blood in heaven **ONCE** for all (Heb. 9:12,26).
- (6) It is appointed unto man to die **ONCE** for all (Hebrews 9:27). (7) **ONCE** for all God will shake the earth and the heavens, that is, remove them (Hebrews 12:27).

In the verse at hand, the finality and completeness of Christ's offering his blood in heaven for people is contrasted with the repeated daily sacrifices of the Levitical priests. The doctrinal import of this is extremely important, because here is the **SURE authority** for **rejecting any such** things as a **sacrifice of the mass**, or the **sacrifice** of anything else that a human worshiper might have to offer. Not any gift that people have or might acquire could avail; **NOR can people offer the blood of Christ** (what a presumption!), seeing that Christ himself has already done so "ONCE FOR ALL," and that in a place where alone it could do any good, and where none can enter except Christ, that is, in heaven. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/hebrews-7.html>)

Hebrews 7:28, For the **LAW** maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the **OATH**, which was SINCE the law, maketh the **SON**, who is consecrated **for evermore**.

NOTE: It is still paramount in the author's mind that the oath by which God swore to bring in a Messiah Priest after the order of Melchizedek came such a long, long time **after** the **LAW** had been in operation; thus he reiterates here, "**which was AFTER the law.**" It is the vast implications of this which he has just been discussing at such length. The verse is a recapitulation of what had already been said - that the Levitical priests were WEAK, MORTAL, SINFUL PEOPLE; but that the SON of God, the **glorious priest FOREVER** after the **order of Melchizedek** is **perfected forevermore**.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/hebrews-7.html>)