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HEBREWS

JESUS IS BETTER



A TALE OF
TWO CITIES
CHARLES DICKENS

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The Structure of Hebrews 7

The pattern of Christ's priesthood (1-10)

→ Main point: Jesus is a priest like Melchizedek

The superiority of Christ's priesthood (11-22)

→ Main point: Jesus's priesthood is better than the priesthood in the old covenant

The necessity and sufficiency of Christ's priesthood (23-28)

→ Main point: Jesus's priesthood is both necessary and perfect

Hebrews 7

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace.

Hebrews 7

³ He is 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. ⁴ See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!



Melchizedek > Abraham > Levi > OT priests

Hebrews 7

⁵ And those descendants of Levi who receive the 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. ⁶ But this man who does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.

Hebrews 7

⁷ It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. ⁸ In the one case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. ⁹ One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, ¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

Focus of verses 11-22:

Jesus was appointed a better priest,
introduced a better hope,
and is the guarantor of a better covenant.

Hebrews 7

¹¹ Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? ¹² For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well.

Hebrews 7

¹³ For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and 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,

Hebrews 7

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. ¹⁷ For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." ¹⁸ For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness

Hebrews 7

¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. ²⁰ And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, ²¹ but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever.'" ²² This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

Focus of verses 11-22:

Jesus was appointed a better priest,
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Why we need Christ's better priesthood:

Four reasons:

1. Salvation (23-25)
2. Intercession (25)
3. Communion (25)
4. Perfection (26-28)

1. Salvation

Hebrews 7:23-25

Hebrews 7:23-25

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



The word may have a double sense: for it may respect the *perfection* of the work or its *duration*... He is able to save completely as to all parts, fully as to all causes, and for ever in duration... Whatever hindrances and difficulties lie in the way of the salvation of believers, whatever oppositions rise against it, the Lord Christ is able, by virtue and in exercise of his priestly office to carry the work through all difficulties to eternal perfection.

—John Owen

1. Salvation

Application

→ Are you more focused on your failures than Christ's finished work?

2. Intercession

Hebrews 7:25: "he always lives to make intercession for them"

Romans 8:34

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—
more than that, who was raised—who is at the right
hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

2. Intercession

Application

→ Does your prayer life reflect the confidence of knowing that Jesus prays for you?

3. Communion

Hebrews 7:25: "drawing near" (see also v. 19)



“Drawing nigh [near] to God” is the most comprehensive expression to describe the soul’s attitude toward God. Prayer is the culminating point of this attitude... “Drawing nigh to God” describes the character of the Christian’s life. In the meditation of our hearts, in the desires of our soul, in the activities and enjoyments of our daily path, we approach God; for we wish to live before Him, conscious of His presence, in constant dependence and in constant enjoyment of His grace.

—Adolph Saphir

3. Communion

Application

→ Have you learned to draw near to God, or do you keep him at arms length?



4. Perfection

Hebrews 7:26-28

Hebrews 7:11, 28

Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? . . . ²⁸ For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

Hebrews 7:26-27

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

Hebrews 10:14

¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

4. Perfection

Application

→ Does your self-talk reflect the twin truths that you are both (1) in process of being sanctified and (2) already perfect (complete) in Christ?



Arise, my soul, arise
Shake off thy guilty fears.
The bleeding Sacrifice
In my behalf appears.
Before the throne my Surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.



He ever lives above
For me to intercede;
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood to plead,
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.



Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly plead for me.
"Forgive him, O, forgive," they cry,
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"



The Father hears Him pray
His dear Anointed One;
He cannot turn away
The presence of His Son.
His Spirit answers to the blood,
and tells me I am born of God.



My God is reconciled,
His pard'ning voice I hear;
He owns me for a child,
I can no longer fear.
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And, "Father, Abba, Father," cry.

—Charles Wesley

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