

Prayer:

Context:

In this chapter the author is going into deep water about Jesus as a high priest like Melchizedek. In the previous verses the author was very carefully stating that Abraham submitted to Melchizedek and in Abraham's loins was Levi. So, Levi who was the family line of priests submitted to Melchizedek and now Jesus is a priest in the order of Melchizedek. Jesus is a great high priest.

Hebrews 7:11-19:

Why Jesus is the High Priest

¹¹ Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? ¹² For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. ¹³ For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. ¹⁵ And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is attested of Him,

*"You are a priest forever
According to the order of Melchizedek."*

¹⁸ For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹ (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

Verse by verse:

Verse 11:

- This verse begins with "If." This is a subordinating, conditional conjunction. This is a subordinating conjunction meaning that it connects two unequal grammatical units together. It is conditional which means it is stating a certain condition. We must read further for this.
- The question is if perfection or completion can come by the Levitical priesthood.
- Remember the Levitical Priesthood came through Levi.
- Notice the parentheses: imagine the preacher adding this little comment in while he was making his case.
 - The people were given the law on the conditions of the Levitical Priesthood

- This was a pretty big deal. This means the Levitical Priesthood was a big deal.
- So, then, why do we need another priest? This is the real question. This other necessary priest was not in the order of Aaron and the Levites but Melchizedek.
 - →It seems the preacher assumes that we agree there is a need for another priest. Whether we agree or not the next few verses will state that need.
 - Heb 8:7: for if the first covenant had been faultless there would have been no need for a second.
 - Heb 10:1: the law is just a shadow of the things to come and can't make things perfect
- **NIV Study Note:** half way through the law comes the Psalm 104 quote which makes it clear that we will need a priest in the order of Melchizedek
 - The Melchizedek priesthood will be forever
 - This priesthood is needed because the current priests die and are fallible

ESV Study Note:

Heb. 7:11–12 *In Hebrews, several reasons are presented for why the Mosaic law could not bring people to **perfection** (vv. 18–19; 9:9; 10:1; cf. the work of Jesus in 10:14; 11:40; 12:23). Here, the fact that there existed a priestly order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4) shows that the **Levitical priesthood** (and its high priesthood reserved for the Aaronic line; see Ex. 28:1; 29:1–46) was insufficient to the task. **change in the law.** The establishment of a better priesthood (Christ's) shows Christians that there also has been a change from the Mosaic law, since that law required a succession of priests, all descended from Levi (Heb. 7:18–19). Thus, Jesus' role as a non-Levitical high priest is strong evidence that the Mosaic covenant (the “old covenant”) is no longer in effect.*

Heb. 7:11–28 *Jesus Compared to Melchizedek. The Mosaic law was unable to make men perfect, since it was administered by a succession of sinful, mortal priests. Jesus, however, is by God's oath established forever as the holy priest/Son, permitting his followers to draw near to God on the basis of his person and work.*

Verse 12:

- Why does the priesthood change? Necessity. Why? Death.
- This means in some form there is a change of law as well.

Verse 13:

- “He” of whom these things are written... I believe this is Jesus. He is not from the tribe of Levi

Wednesday Night Bible Study on Hebrews, prepared and facilitated by Rev. Steve Rhodes
Wednesday, January 12, 2010. Heb 7:11-19

- Apparently, no one from the Tribe of Judah as officiated at the altar. Only the Levites were to officiate at the altar.
- Verse 14 gives further explanation and clues about this.
- John MacArthur points out that in each instance of verse 13 and 15 the word translated “another” to refer to Jesus’ tribe implies that He is a totally different kind of person.

Verse 14:

- I notice in this verse and the previous two verses they are short simple statements. Short simple verses.
- Jesus is our Lord
- Jesus descended from Judah and the author says this is “clear.” No argument
- Moses said nothing about Judah and priests
- Num 24:17; Is 11:1; Mic 5:2; Matt 2:6; Rev 5:5: verses about Jesus and Judah

ESV Study Note:

Heb. 7:13–14 *Jesus was from the tribe of **Judah** rather than the priestly tribe of Levi. Yet he qualifies as the eternal high priest because he is the Davidic Messiah, called both Lord and a priest after the messianic priestly order of Melchizedek ([Ps. 110:1, 4](#)).*

The Bible Knowledge Commentary:

7:13-14. *Levitical priesthood was superseded by the fact that **our Lord descended from Judah. That tribe had no role in the Levitical institutions, and the things God had said about the new Priest applied to One from Judah, which is proof that a change was made.***¹

Verse 15-18:

- These three verses clearly go together
- They are “if” statements, conditional statements.
- The author is still making an analytical case for why Jesus is the priest.
- If another priest like Melchizedek appears...
- Verse 16 is kind of like a parenthetical clause: this priest has become priest not because of family, but indestructible life
 - Heb 9:10 the law is about ceremonial things

¹Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:798). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Wednesday Night Bible Study on Hebrews, prepared and facilitated by Rev. Steve Rhodes
Wednesday, January 12, 2010. Heb 7:11-19

- Heb 9:14: how much more can the blood of Jesus help you
 - Basically, if the law could cleanse sin, how much more Jesus
- Verse 17 is from Psalm 110:4 and quoted in Heb 5:4
- The other side of this “If” statement or conditional clause comes in verse 18
 - The former regulation is now set aside, it was weak and useless
 - Compared to what we can have in Jesus, in a priest in the order of Melchizedek, the other regulation was weak.

ESV study notes:

Heb. 7:15–17 the power of an indestructible life. *Jesus' resurrection from the dead indicates his eternal priesthood (Ps. 110:4; see Heb. 5:6). Death could not conquer Jesus; therefore, his priesthood lasts forever (see 7:23–24).*

Verse 19:

- This is a contrasting comment with the law
- It made nothing perfect
 - Paul said in Romans the law shows us we are sinners
 - See Romans 3:20, 7:7, 8:3 and Gal 3:21
 - Also: Acts 13:39; Rom 3:20; 7:7f; Gal 2:16; 3:21; Heb 9:9; 10:1²
- So we now have a better hope
- The case is made for Jesus

Other passages about drawing near to God: Lam 3:57; Heb 4:16; 7:25; 10:1, 22; James 4:8

ESV Study Notes:

Heb. 7:18–19 former commandment. *The institution of the Levitical priesthood is **set aside** and thus so is the Mosaic law (see v. 12), since it was not able to accomplish God's saving purpose (hence its **weakness and uselessness**). In other words, only Jesus' work on the cross brought people to perfection (see v. 11; also 9:9; 10:1). **better hope.** That is, the hope of salvation and perfection through Jesus' high priesthood (7:25–28; on hope, see 3:6; 6:11, 18; 10:23). **draw near to God.** Jesus' work permits true interpersonal fellowship with God (see note on 4:16; also 7:25; 10:22; 11:6).*

²New American Standard Bible : 1995 update. 1995 (Ge 1:1). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

Wednesday Night Bible Study on Hebrews, prepared and facilitated by Rev. Steve Rhodes
Wednesday, January 12, 2010. Heb 7:11-19