

## The Superior Priesthood 2021-01-24

### Hebrews 7:11-17

*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. 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, 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.”*

Verses 1-24 complex and difficult Gentiles to understand. Give history lesson.

- Jesus Christ's superior priesthood guarantees salvation for all who draw near to God thru Him. Genesis 14:15-20

Melchizedek probably title not proper name. Means “King of Righteousness.”

- Genealogy customary in Genesis but no reference to parents, birth/death ever given.
  - Speculate: angel or theophany but unlikely.
- King of Salem was also God's priest (first time in Bible but not told how) gave Abram bread/wine and blessing.

In response: Holy Spirit led Abram give Melchizedek a tenth of all bounty.

- Not tithe because Mosaic law not yet exist
  - Was customary give gift recognizing dignity/position of a superior.
- sometimes not grasp significance of event until years later.

500 years *after* Melchizedek met Abraham, Lord established Law and Levite priesthood. Numbers 18

- Law= 10 Commandments and ceremonial rituals of Israel.
  - Law taught about sin, holiness/wrath of God. Romans 5:20
- Lord determined ONLY Levite priests be bridges between men/God.
  - Only cover sin not give access to God; temporary relationship.

This reason God predicted another GREATER, better priesthood. James 7:4-11, Psalm 110:4

- *another* priest = “another of a different kind.”
- Melchizedek priest FOREVER.....before Levite priesthood or Aaron existed.
- Greater than Abraham....Abraham paid Melchizedek tithes and Melchizedek blessed him.
- He both king and priest (not allowed) foreshadowed greater future King/priest.

Jesus’ priesthood not based on law of Moses, Levite descent but on indestructibility of His life and oath Father swore to Him (priest Forever). James:12, 15-16, 20-22

- Law/Old Covenant and priesthood linked, so when priesthood changed, covenant changed.
  - “set aside” = removing what established. i.e. annulling treaty, law.
- not doing away God’s moral law but ceremonial law, sacrifices. Romans 7:12 1<sup>st</sup> (covenant Old Covenant) not bad.....“better” is a comparative term.... Old Covenant very good.
- Where Old Covenant failed to give access to holy God, New Covenant succeeded.
  - God decided way of saving men from His wrath is through priesthood.
    - Jesus’ priesthood provides permanent and perfect way draw near to God..... made Levite priesthood obsolete.
      - God lovingly rescues us from His *wrath* by sending Jesus as our perfect priest and sacrifice for sin. James:22-24

Jesus superior priesthood guarantees salvation for all who draw near to God through Him.

- Salvation thru faith in Jesus Christ anchors us in God’s presence and holds us there forever because He eternal, perfect High Priest.
  - Jesus Himself is the guarantee of new, better, eternal covenant of grace.

Salvation secure as Jesus Christ’s indestructible life/eternal priesthood and Father’s promise.