

## Hebrews 7:15-28 – Jesus is a Better Priest

Chapter 7 resumed the topic of Jesus as a much better priest than Aaron and his descendants. Jesus was descended from the tribe of Judah and was not eligible to be a priest according to the law of Moses. Only those descended from the tribe of Levi and specifically descended from Aaron could be priests. But God declared in Psalm 110:4 that the Messiah was a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. In Genesis 14:17-20, Melchizedek blessed Abraham and Abraham gave him a tithe. From this the author concluded that Jesus, a priest after the order of Melchizedek, was superior to Abraham and Aaron and all other priests descended from Aaron. Hebrews is the only New Testament book that mentions Melchizedek. Hebrews is also the only NT book that explicitly calls Jesus a priest. The rest of Hebrews 7 explains how Jesus is a better priest than all the Aaronic priests.

### Read Hebrews 7:15-19.

Verse 14 said that it was evident that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah and that Moses said nothing about priests from the tribe of Judah. Verse 15 starts with “this becomes even more evident”. What is “even more evident”? How was Jesus like Melchizedek? (7:15)

Was there any requirement that Jesus had to be descended from Melchizedek in order for him to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek? What was the first requirement for someone to be a priest in accordance with the Mosaic law? 7:3 noted that Melchizedek had no genealogy and was a priest forever. Because of this, being a priest after the order of Melchizedek was not based on who your parents were. What requirement did Jesus meet for being a priest after the order of Melchizedek? The fulfillment of this requirement was confirmed in verse 17 by repeating the quote of Psalm 110:4. Verse 17 is the last mention of Melchizedek. (7:16-17)

In verse 18, what former commandment was set aside? Another translation for “set aside” is “annulled”. Why was the commandment set aside? (7:18)

In verse 19, ESV, KJV, NASB and NIV all have “for the law made nothing perfect”. The word “make perfect” occurs 9 times in the book of Hebrews. According to BDAG, it can mean “make perfect” or maybe “to complete an activity, complete, bring to an end, finish, accomplish”. Psalm 19:7 and James 1:25 call the law “perfect”. But they don’t say that the law makes someone or something perfect. What does the statement “the law made nothing perfect” mean? See Hebrews 10:1. What is the better hope through which we draw near to God? (7:19)

### **Read Hebrews 7:20-25.**

The rest of the chapter contrasts Jesus' priesthood with the Aaronic priesthood. Verses 20-22 form a unit. The first part of verse 20 goes with verse 22. The second part of verse 20 and all of verse 21 form a parenthetical statement. What accompanied Jesus' appointment as a priest? (7:20)

In verses 20-21, how was Jesus' priesthood superior to the Aaronic priests? How do we know that Jesus was appointed a priest by an oath? See Psalm 110:4. (7:20-21)

In verse 22, what is the result of Jesus being confirmed as high priest with an oath? Chapter 8 will detail the "better covenant". (7:22)

Verses 23-24 contain another contrast between Jesus' priesthood and the Aaronic priesthood. Based on these verses, how is Jesus' priesthood better than the Aaronic priesthood? (7:23-24)

In verse 25, what is the result of Jesus having a permanent, eternal priesthood? ESV and KJV have "save to the uttermost". NASB has "save forever". NIV has "save completely". BDAG says the meaning of "to the uttermost" can either refer to quality (ESV, KJV, NIV) or to unlimited duration (NASB). Which meaning do you think best fits the context? Which people are saved? Jesus saves us, but what else does he do based on this verse? (7:25)

### **Read Hebrews 7:26-28.**

In verse 26, what are the attributes of Jesus our high priest? "Separated from sinners" could refer backwards to Jesus' attributes or it could refer forward to Jesus' exaltation above the heavens. Which do you think the phrase refers to? Jesus' exaltation was also mentioned in 1:3. (7:26)

Verse 27 contains another contrast between Jesus' priesthood and the Aaronic priesthood. What did the Aaronic priest do daily that Jesus does not do? In contrast to the daily priestly activity, what did Jesus do once for all? BDAG says that in

this context the phrase “once for all” means “taking place once and to the exclusion of any further occurrence, once for all, once and never again”. (7:27)

Verse 28 contains another contrast between Jesus and the former priests. What was the contrast? The “word of oath” refers back to Psalm 110:4 where God swore that the Messiah was a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. God’s eternal priest is also the Son of God. What is the significance that the word of oath came after the law? Hebrews 2:10 says that Jesus was made perfect through suffering. (7:28)