

Hebrews

Chapter 7

Memory: 7:12

Theme: Priesthood of Melchizedek

The previous chapter closed by mentioning Jesus is a “High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” (6:20). The writer now expands on this thought. Melchizedek was a king and priest during the time of Abraham. The sum total of his life is found in Genesis 14:18-20. Abraham had been to battle to save his nephew, Lot (Genesis 14:1-17). On his way back from the fight, he met Melchizedek and paid tithes to him and was blessed by him (7:4-6). The Hebrew writer used this to show the superiority of Melchizedek to Abraham, and by inference the Levitical priesthood (7:7-10). Thus, since Jesus was after the order of Melchizedek, His priesthood is superior to the Levitical one. This was a shocking and sobering fact for the Hebrew, but extremely helpful in his proper view of the Old Law.

The next point made by the writer is that since the priesthood has changed, so has the law (7:12-14). Jesus could not be a priest under the Law of Moses because He was from Judah, not Levi. Yet, He is now the High Priest. Therefore, the law has changed. Notice also the argument that silence does not permit, but prohibits, with regard to specific authority (7:14). In other words, when God specifies something, everything else in the same class is excluded. When He specified Levi, all other tribes were excluded from the priesthood. When God told Noah to build an ark of gopherwood, all other types of wood were prohibited. God did not have to name every other tribe or every other type of wood and say, “thou shalt not...”

The rest of the chapter discusses the superiority of Christ’s priesthood as it is unchangeable (7:15-28). Included in this section is the idea of a “better hope” and “better covenant” (7:19, 22).

Questions & Discussion

Note Key Verses:

1. Parallel Melchizedek and Jesus (7:1-3).

Melchizedek	Jesus
King	King

2. Since the law has changed, what popular doctrines and practices are without authority (7:12)?

3. If silence prohibits, what popular doctrines and practices are without authority?

4. What does it mean that Jesus is “able to save to the uttermost” (7:25)?

5. List and discuss the descriptions of Jesus in 7:26.