

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

Hebrew 7:1-3, 19-28

LESSON: THE HIGH PRIEST FOREVER — October 23, 2016

INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 6:16-20 ¹When people take an oath they call on someone greater than themselves to hold them to it. And without any question that oath is binding (**6:16**). God has also bound Himself with an oath, so that those who received His promise can be perfectly sure that He will never change His mind (**6:17**). This means that God has given us both His promise and His oath (two unchangeable things). It is impossible for God to lie, so these two things cannot change (**6:18**). Therefore, we who have fled to Him for refuge can take new courage, for we can hold on to His promise with confidence (**6:19**). Jesus has become our eternal High Priest in the line of Melchizedek (**6:20**).

The main point of this entire passage is that God's promise did not depend on anyone's faithfulness, but His own. It is unchangeable because of His promise and His pledge that cannot be turned around or altered. This means that when we come to Christ there is nothing to fear. Our security is not in our never letting go of God, but that He will never let go of us.

In chapter 7 the writer returns to the subject he introduced in chapter 5 the priesthood of Christ in the order of Melchizedek.

LESSON: I. THE GREATNESS OF MELCHIZEDEK Hebrews 7:1-3

7:1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;— "*For this*" signifies that when we look at Jesus as eternal High Priest in the line of Melchizedek, we now take a look at Melchizedek; we now see the greatness of "*Melchisedec*" or "*Melchizedek*." He is king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God. "*Melchizedek*", the Hebrew name means *king of righteousness* and "*Salem*" means *peace*; also later called Jerusalem. The story is told in Genesis 14:18-20 where after the battle to rescue Lot and his family Melchizedek appears out of nowhere and offers hospitality to Abraham and those with him and giving bread and wine, thereby, refreshing and pronouncing a blessing upon Abraham.

7:2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;— And in appreciation and thanksgiving Abraham gives a tenth of all the spoils from the battle to Melchizedek. This presents Melchizedek in a superior spiritual position by giving him tithe. There are two ways Melchizedek is a type or prefigurement (foreshadow) of Christ who was to come. Melchizedek is a type, and thereby is meant to portray the True "*King of Righteousness*"— Jesus Christ, and the "*King of Salem*", the King of Peace, who is also Jesus again.

7:3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/hebrews-616/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

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life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. Melchizedek arrives out of the blue. There is nothing about his life, his birth, his death or his descent (end of life) in the Bible, but is a true symbol of the Son of God. He simply arrives. He blesses Abraham and then vanishes. In that day and time it was important for a priest to have a record of his genealogy. If he had no record of a priestly genealogy, he could not serve as a priest. Melchizedek continues to be a priest without interruption. The point is: there is no record in Scripture of Melchizedek's roots, therefore, he stands as a type of the eternal priest who was to be sent into the world by God.

II. THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD Hebrews 7:19-28

7:19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. The Mosaic and Levitical system with its animal sacrifices could not permanently remove guilt, nor change the hearts of man where the sin problem lies. It made nothing perfect. The Law was only to point out sin and point toward Christ! There had to be a change by the way we draw near to God. A better hope comes and does not come by way of the Law. This hope is Christ who makes us acceptable to God by which we now can draw near to God.

7:20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:—Christ was made priest, not "made a priest" like the Levitical order of the human office of priesthood which was not forever, thereby they being temporary and fleshly. But Christ was "made priest" with an oath which is everlasting. The former priesthood presented a temporary hope only pointing to Christ, while the latter presented a better everlasting hope by which we are able to draw near to God.

7:21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)—Under the Levitical system men were appointed to priesthood on the basis of physical descent. Although God instituted the Levitical priesthood, He did not promise their eternal validity; did not make an oath. However, the oath with which He established the Melchisedec order certifies it as unending. "*The Lord swore and will not repent.*" This means that it will be exactly as God said it would be. His promise of Christ is immutable: "*Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*" There will never be a third system.

7:22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. Based on God's promise of Jesus' eternal high priesthood, Jesus Himself is made the surety (guarantor; security) of the better testament (new covenant). Jesus Christ guarantees the success of the New Covenant of Salvation. And we know that in order for us to receive from the testament or will, He has to die, for it to come into fruition, but in the meantime its saying that Jesus is the guarantor, but this guarantor is eternal. God has given a better covenant to man, the New Covenant that is based upon the love and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Under the New Covenant, men approach God through the love and the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ for them.

7:23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:—The mortality of the many Levitical priests is again contrasted with the eternity of Jesus as High Priest. They had a natural uncertainty due to death. Each generation faced this change. They did not know

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how to change the dying process. They could not continue by reason of death. They could not do what Christ did—take away sin nor live in the eternal office.

7:24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. By contrast, the New Covenant possesses a priesthood that is unchanging. The new priesthood needs no successor because Jesus Christ continues to be a better covenant forever.

7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. *"Therefore, He is able also to save them to the uttermost"* (completely and forever) all who come to God through Him. First of all, Jesus lives forever and this truth is proclaimed;

- He has *"an endless life"* (7:16).
- He *"continues forever"* (7:24).
- He *"has an unchangeable priesthood"* (7:24).
- He *"ever lives"*—lives forever and ever (7:25).
- He is *"consecrated for evermore"* (7:28).

Since He ever lives, secondly, He will always be there making Intercession (reminding God that He has paid the price for our sins with His blood) for us. This is a picture of Jesus Christ as High Priest before God. But, He is not begging and pleading with outstretched arms for God to receive man. It means that He presents us to God as perfect. He presents us in His righteousness as perfected forever. This is only for those who come to God through Him.

- He saves us from sin, death, and condemnation (Jh.5:24; Rom.8:34).
- He saves us to live with God eternally (Jh.6:16; Rom.8:39).
- He saves us to be the citizens of the New Heaven and earth (2Pt.3:10-13; Rev.21:1).
- He saves us to rule and reign over the universe right along with Him throughout all of eternity (Lk.12:42-44; 22:28-29; 1Cor.6:2-3).

We are to come to God by Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ alone can make intercession for man.

7:26 For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;—The passage can be rendered more forcefully as *"such a high priest meets our need"* (NIV), or *"such a high priest does indeed fit our condition"* (NEB). He meets our needs so well because of His qualities.

1. Jesus Christ is *"holy."* He is set apart and separated to God; separated from sin and from all evil.
2. Jesus Christ is *"harmless."* He is blameless not evil, free from all guile, deception, envy, and all malice against anyone.
3. Jesus Christ is *"undefiled."* He is unstained by sin; absolutely free from all moral impurity, uncleanness, and defilement.
4. Jesus Christ is *"separate from sinners."* He never sinned or caved in to sin. He was tempted just as all men are, but He never yielded to temptation. Therefore, He stands apart completely separated and different from all other men.
5. Jesus Christ is *"made higher than the heavens."*
 - a. Jesus Christ alone was raised from the dead never to die again. Other people had been raised from the dead, but they all were to die again. But not Jesus Christ, He alone was raised never to die again.
 - b. Jesus Christ alone was taken up into heaven in bodily form. He ascended in bodily form to remain forever in the presence of God.

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- c. Jesus Christ alone was exalted to the right hand of God. He was exalted to never leave the position of sovereignty as the Supreme and Majestic Lord of the universe.

7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. Jesus Christ never needed the daily blood of animal sacrifices as the other high priests did. The Levitical priests offered sacrifices time and time again for his own sins to God, and then he could offer up the sins of the people to God. Jesus Christ had no sin, but, offered Himself once as the sacrifice for the sin of man to God. The sacrificial work of Christ never needed to be repeated unlike the Old Testament priestly sacrifices.

7:28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore. Men—mere men are appointed to be priests by the Law. The Law can appoint no one else but men with infirmities and weaknesses; men who are imperfect, frail, sinful, and dying. But God made an oath promising an eternal priest. This oath through David came after the Mosaic Law and sets aside the previous Mosaic priesthood appointing the Messianic Son of God as eternal high priest made perfect. The point is: the Old Testament sacrifices merely provided a focus for people's faith until the real, effective sacrifice should appear. The oath is greater than the law, and the priest appointed by the oath is greater than those appointed by the law.

SUMMARY:

²Melchizedek was "*king of Salem and priest of God Most High.*" He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him. Abraham gave him a tenth of all that he had. Melchizedek's name means '*king of what is right*'. It also means '*king of Salem*', that is, '*king of peace*'. There is no reference to his father or mother or family. There is no record of his birth or death. He is like the Son of God, because he always remains a priest (**7:1-3**) (EEV).

The old law did not make anything right. God brought in a better hope by which we can approach Him. Moreover, this hope came with a vow from God. By the old law, men became priests without a vow. Jesus became a priest with a vow. God said to Him, '*The Lord has made a vow and will not change his mind. You are a priest always.*' So Jesus has been able to make a better and a more certain agreement with God on our behalf. Now there have been many priests of the old law. They could not continue to be priests when they died. But Jesus lives always, and so He will always be a priest. Therefore, He is able to make perfect all who come to God by Him. This is because He always lives to pray for them. We need such a chief priest as Jesus. He is holy, pure, and has no shame, for He has never sinned. God took Him away from those who sin and He is now above the heavens. Jesus does not need to make sacrifices every day as the other chief priests did. They had to do so, first for their own sins and then for the sins of the people. Jesus did this once for all time when he sacrificed himself for us. He did not need to do this on his own behalf, for he was perfect and without sin. The law makes men chief priests, but they are weak. The vow of God, which came later than the law, makes the Son the chief priest. He is perfect and lives always (**7:19-28**) (EEV).

² <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/hebrews-lbw.htm>