

Hebrews 7:13-28

In lesson one; we noted that the priesthood of Jesus is in the order of Melchisedec and superior to the Levitical priesthood. We closed that lesson by noting that Jesus brought in a new superior priesthood. A new priesthood required several changes. In this lesson we will observe 6 changes in the Priesthood of Christ.

For this priesthood to be changed there must of necessity be (1) a change of the law; having such a close relation between the priesthood and the law, a new priesthood must be under a new set of rules and regulations. ***Hebrews 7:13-14 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. (14) For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.*** The old priesthood that could not bring perfection was abolished and a new priest has arisen, and a new dispensation (called the Christian age) is now set up, by which true believers may be made perfect. This new priesthood comes from a new tribe. Before, it was the tribe of Levi; but our great high priest sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning the priesthood. This change shows a real change of the law of the priesthood.

2. There is a change in the form and order of making the priests. ***Hebrews 7:15-17 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, (16) Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. (17) For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*** Before, in the Levitical priesthood, priest were made after *the law of a carnal commandment*; but our great high priest was made *after the power of an endless life*. In the former law, the office would descend from to father his eldest son – thus there was an order of carnal or natural generation. None of the high priests under the law were without father or mother, or without descent. They had both beginning of days and end of life; and so the carnal commandment directed their succession. But the law by which Christ becomes a priest, after the order of Melchisedec, was by *the power of an endless life*; it has no end nor is it passed on to any descendent.

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3. There is a change in the benefit of the priesthood seen in v19. **Hebrews 7:18** *For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. (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 former priesthood was weak and unprofitable; it made nothing perfect. However, the latter brought in *a better hope, by which we draw near to God.* The Levitical priesthood brought nothing to perfection: it could not justify men's personal guilt; it could not sanctify them from inward pollution; it could not cleanse the consciences of the worshippers from dead works; all it could do was to *lead them to a better hope.*

This better hope is found in the priesthood of Christ. It shows us the true foundation of all the hope we have towards God for pardon and salvation. By this hope we are encouraged to draw nigh unto God as stated in James 4:8. The former priesthood kept men at a distance under a spirit of bondage.

4. There is a change in God's way of acting in this priesthood. **Hebrews 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:)* He has taken an oath to Christ, which he never did to any of the order of Aaron. God never gave them any such assurance of their continuance, never engaged himself by oath or promise that theirs should be an everlasting priesthood, but rather to look upon it as a temporary law. But Christ was made a priest with the oath of God: *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,* Here God has upon oath declared the excellency and eternity of the priesthood of Christ.

5. There is a change in the dispensation of that covenant. **Hebrews 7:23** *And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: (24) But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.* There is a remarkable change in the number of the priests under these different orders. In that of Aaron there was a multitude of priests, of high priests over time. But in this of Christ, there is but one. The reason

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is plain, The Levitical priests were many, because *they were not suffered to continue by reason of death*. Their office, how high and honorable, could not secure them from dying; and, as one died, another must succeed, and after a while must give place to a third, till the number had become very great. But this our high priest continues for ever, and his priesthood is *an unchangeable one*, that does not pass from one to another, as the former did. There can be no vacancy in this priesthood, no hour nor moment in which the people are without a priest to negotiate their spiritual concerns in heaven. Such a vacancy might be very dangerous but Jesus is an ever-living high who is able to save to the utmost - in all times, in all cases, in every juncture of life. V25 tells us that he can save all who come to God by him. **(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.***

Finally we see a remarkable difference in the moral qualifications of the priests. Those who were of the order of Aaron were not only mortal men, but sinful men who had their faults. they needed to offer up sacrifices first for their own sins and then for the people. But our high priest, who was consecrated by *the word of the oath*, needed only to offer up once for the people, never at all for himself; for he has not only an immutable consecration to his office, but an immutable sanctity in his person. He is *such a high priest as became us, holy, harmless, and undefiled*, etc. **(26) *For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; (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.* (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.****

Observe the description we have of the personal holiness of Christ expressed in various terms, all of which some learned something relating to his perfect purity.

[1.] **He is holy**, perfectly free from all sin. No sin dwells in him as it in the best of Christians. Holy was all the characteristics of Jesus which made him the Son of God. He was a man, but he was different from all other men being the

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divine Son of God

[2.] **He is harmless**, perfectly free from all violence nor is there any deceit in his mouth. He never did the least wrong to God or man. Jesus was without ill will or malice toward anyone.

[3.] **He is undefiled**, he was never an accessory to other men's sins. He was tempted in all points like men are; however, he was completely without sin. Jesus always did what God wanted him to do. He never violated God's law in any way. He was without spot and blemished. It is a difficult thing to keep ourselves pure, so as not to partake in the guilt of other men's sins, by contributing in some way towards them, or not doing what we ought to prevent them. Christ was undefiled; though he took upon him the guilt of our sins, yet he never involved himself in the fact and fault of them.

[4.] **He is separate from sinners**. He was tempted in all points like men are; however, he was completely without sin. Jesus always did what God wanted him to do. He never violated God's law in any way. He was without spot and blemished. Sin comes upon us by virtue of lineage back to Adam, but Christ was, by his miraculous conception to the virgin was separate from sinners and the legacy of sinners.

[5.] **He is made higher than the heavens**. Most understand this concerning his state of exaltation in heaven, at the right hand of God, to perfect the design of his priesthood.

Chapter 7 makes the argument that the priesthood of Christ is far superior to the Levitical priesthood. It is built on better promises and can remove sin. It offers a way of salvation. Have you accepted the terms offered to mankind today?