

## ONE BIBLE, ONE STORY:

# THE EPISTLE to the HEBREWS

## Chapter 7 — A High Priest Forever in the Order of Melchizedek

### Last Week's Main Points

- We can be confident that God's perfect, redemptive purposes and plans are unchanging.
- We can be confident that Jesus has already entered the heavenly sanctuary to which he is currently leading us.
- We can be confident that our present hope is an objective reality, that reaches beyond our own circumstances and is anchored in the concrete reality of our future in Christ's presence.

### I. Introduction

"How did people know God before there were Levitical priests, before Moses and the Law, and before Abraham himself?" Did God only reveal himself to a small handful of people between creation and Abraham?

### II. The theme of Lesser to Greater in this passage

- High priests were made so by the Law, which is lesser, but Jesus is made high priest by a direct oath from God in Psalm 110:4.
- High Priests are elected, serve and die, but Jesus is a "high priest forever."
- High priests must continue to offer sacrifices, but Jesus' one sacrifice is sufficient.

### III. The theme of Legal Precedent in this passage

- Jesus can be king because he is descended from the line of David, but can he really be the High Priest if he is not descended from Levi through Moses' brother Aaron?
- Yes he can. There is a precedent in the priesthood of Melchizedek, which pre-dates Aaron, and Jesus' selection is similar to the selection of Melchizedek.

→ Read Genesis 14:11-20

### IV. Who was Melchizedek?

A. Vv. 1-3 — Who Melchizedek was:

1. Blessed Abraham
2. Received a tithe
3. Was given no genealogy, birth story, death, descendants, or lineage

B. Vv. 4-10 — Melchizedek superior to Abraham

→Question: What does it mean that Melchizedek doesn't have a genealogy?

→ Read Psalm 110:1-4

## V. The Two Priesthoods

- A. Vv. 11-13 Imperfect versus Perfect
  - 1. The need for a new Priesthood shows us the first was only provisional
  - 2. New Priesthood implies new law
- B. Vv. 14-21 Appointed by the Law versus Elected by God
  - 1. Descent versus Appointment
  - 2. Mortality versus Indestructibility
  - 3. No oath from God versus a direct oath
- C. Vv. 22-28
  - 1. A better covenant
  - 2. No human frailty means he can "Save to the uttermost"
  - 3. Human weakness replaced by perfect holiness

## VI. Table Discussion

- 1) A Jewish friend once explained the importance of Yom Kippur to me saying that where Christians could ask for forgiveness for wrongdoing any time and in any place, the Jewish faith only really offered that once per year and, as a result, the Jewish faith is less prone to cheap grace when it comes to repentance. We should be cautious of attitudes that cheapen grace, but we should also rejoice that our High Priest's atonement is constant and constantly available. What are some ways we live differently knowing we don't need to wait for a specific day of the year to ask forgiveness?
- 2) How does Jesus' relation to Melchizedek help us see that God was always concerned for the Gentiles?
- 3) How should Christ's selection by God as High Priest inform our understanding of what it means to be part of "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9) under him?

## VII. Application

As we are invited to the Lord's table, meditate on the High Priestly language in the Eucharist and think about how this passage informs our understanding of what it means for Jesus to be our High Priest.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

→For Next Week: Read Hebrews 8:1 - 9:10