

HEBREWS 7:1–17

FIRST DAY: Introduction

Have you ever wished for someone who could read your heart, truly understand you, and was on your side? Look no further! Jesus, as your Great High Priest, thoroughly knows you. He knows the real you and the person your heart longs to be. Jesus understands your thoughts, actions, weaknesses, and hurts. Not only that, but Jesus is for you. He is on your side. He advocates for you and intercedes to God on your behalf, asking for the very best for you.

The Hebrew believers struggled with understanding and accepting the priesthood of Jesus. Their history included Levitical restrictions, rituals, and regulations concerning the priesthood. They wondered how Jesus, the Messiah, from the tribe of Judah could qualify as High Priest. The author of Hebrews took his readers into the depths of Scriptures and showed them a higher, superior ordination after the order of Melchizedek. Melchizedek's order preceded Moses and the law as seen when Abraham paid homage to his priesthood (Genesis 14:18–20). Furthermore, even after the law was given, God announced that the Messiah would be ordained by this higher priesthood (Psalm 110:4). As you study Hebrews 7, you will be taken deeper into the Scriptures to learn about the glory of this divine priesthood to which Jesus is called.

*Ask God to increase your confidence in Jesus,
your High Priest.*

SECOND DAY: Read Hebrews 7:1–3

1. The Hebrew believers were concerned that Jesus could not be their High Priest if He was not from the tribe of Levi, since this was the order of the priesthood according to the Law of Moses. To answer this concern, the author of Hebrews explained that Jesus is our High Priest *forever according to the order of Melchizedek* (Hebrews 6:20). Hebrews 7 explores the superiority of this priesthood. Use Hebrews 7:1–3 to describe and comment on the following concerning Melchizedek:

a. Who he was (verse 1a)

(1) *Salem* means *peace* and corresponds with the ancient name for Jerusalem. Why do you think this is significant?

(a) Link this with Isaiah 9:6. Why does this make Melchizedek so unique?

b. His encounter with Abraham (verses 1b–2a)

(1) Connect this with Genesis 14:18–20 and record your observations.

c. The *meaning* of his name (verse 2b)

- (1) What do these titles suggest to you? See also Psalm 85:10 and Isaiah 32:17.

d. His origin (verse 3)

- (1) In the Old Testament, a person's *genealogy* was significant; yet, intentionally, there is no record of the *genealogy* of Melchizedek. How does this indicate the eternity of his priesthood?

(a) Read John 8:56–58 and comment of Jesus' eternity.

2. From your study today, what stands out most to you about your High Priest?

THIRD DAY: Read Hebrews 7:4–10

1. The author desired that these Hebrew believers *consider* the superiority of Melchizedek’s priesthood, so that they would grasp the fact that Jesus was their High Priest. According to Hebrews 7:4, what was a key indicator of Melchizedek’s greatness?
 - a. The Greek word for *spoils* literally means *top of the heap, best of the spoils*. What does this imply?

2. The author went on to explain the superiority of Melchizedek and his priesthood over the Levitical priesthood instituted by the Law of Moses. Use Hebrews 7:5–8 (NLT) to fill in the chart below: ⁵*Now the law of Moses required that the priests, who are descendants of Levi, must collect a tithe from the rest of the people of Israel, who are also descendants of Abraham.* ⁶*But Melchizedek, who was not a descendant of Levi, collected a tenth from Abraham. And Melchizedek placed a blessing upon Abraham, the one who had already received the promises of God.* ⁷*And without question, the person who has the power to give a blessing is greater than the one who is blessed.* ⁸*The priests who collect tithes are men who die, so Melchizedek is greater than they are, because we are told that he lives on.*

HEBREWS 7:5-8	LEVITICAL PRIESTS	MELCHIZEDEK
Descent/ Ancestry	Verse 5a	Verse 6a
Task/Activity/ Actions	Verse 5b	Verse 6
Mortality	Verse 8a	Verse 8b

- a. What does this comparison reveal to you about Melchizedek?

- b. Note that *Melchizedek placed a blessing upon Abraham*. Verse 7 says, *Without question, the person who has the power to give a blessing is greater than the one who is blessed*. What does this demonstrate about Abraham's relationship to Melchizedek?
 - (1) Recall that the Jews greatly revered their forefather Abraham. How would this make the author's point concerning Melchizedek more compelling?

3. Hebrews 7:9–10 (NLT) says, *In addition, we might even say that these Levites—the ones who collect the tithe—paid a tithe to Melchizedek when their ancestor Abraham paid a tithe to him. For although Levi wasn't born yet, the seed from which he came was in Abraham's body when Melchizedek collected the tithe from him*. How does this further demonstrate the superiority of Melchizedek's priesthood to:
 - a. Abraham

 - b. The Levitical priesthood

4. What speaks to you as you *consider* the priesthood of Melchizedek?

FOURTH DAY: Read Hebrews 7:11–14

1. The author then explained the rationale for this priesthood. He demonstrated the need for a priesthood that was distinct from and superior to the Levitical one. Read Hebrews 7:11 (NLT), *So if the priesthood of Levi, on which the law was based, could have achieved the perfection God intended, why did God need to establish a different priesthood, with a priest in the order of Melchizedek instead of the order of Levi and Aaron? Why did God establish a different priesthood?*
 - a. Because a more perfect *priesthood* was necessary, what also needed to *change*? Hebrews 7:12
 - (1) Recall that perfection here means completion or fulfillment. What does this suggest to you about the law and the Levitical priesthood? See also Romans 8:3 and Hebrews 7:19a.
2. According to Hebrews 7:13–14, why didn't Jesus qualify as a Levitical priest?
 - a. How does this demonstrate why God established the priesthood under Melchizedek?

3. Pastor Chuck Smith said, *If the Levitical priesthood were perfect, if it could bring man into a perfect state, then why wouldn't God have said concerning the Messiah that, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Aaron"? It was because the Aaronic priesthood could not bring anything into perfection. Therefore, God reverts to an earlier priesthood and greater priesthood, "Thou are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."*⁷ Share why the priesthood of Melchizedek is superior to the priesthood of Levi.
- a. What confidence do you receive from having a High Priest after the *order of Melchizedek*?

FIFTH DAY: Read Hebrews 7:15–17

1. According to Hebrews 7:15 (NLT), *This change has been made very clear since a different priest, who is like Melchizedek, has appeared.* Use Hebrews 7:16 (NKJV) to fill in the blanks concerning this *priest*, Jesus:

*Who has come, not according to the _____ of a
_____, but according
to the _____ of an _____.*

- a. The *law* referred to here was the law of the priests' lineage through the tribe of Levi. Why is it significant that this law was merely *fleshly* (human)?

- (1) Contrast the *fleshly commandment* with the *power* of Jesus.
Hebrews 7:16b

- (a) Link this with Romans 6:9, 14:9, and Revelation 1:18 and share your thoughts.

2. The author quoted Psalm 110:4 for the third time to underscore his point concerning Jesus' priesthood. Use Hebrews 7:17 to record this prophetic word.

3. How does your study today highlight the fact that Jesus is a priest forever?
 - a. What assurance do you receive from this truth?

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. Melchizedek was an obscure Old Testament figure who was only seen once (Genesis 14). Yet Hebrews 7 revealed his great importance in the plans and purposes of God. How does this minister to you?

2. From your study this week, comment on the following concerning Jesus as a *priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek*:
 - a. His superiority to Abraham

 - b. His superiority to the Levitical priesthood

3. What does it mean to you that Jesus is your High Priest *forever*?

4. How does Jesus' priesthood increase your appreciation for *Our Great Faith*?