

# CHRIST: SUPERIOR TO THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD

## Hebrews 7:1-28

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We are covering the theme “superior” or “better” in the book of Hebrews

Outline of the Book of Hebrews By Dr. Gary M. Gulan, ©1983 (Rev. 92,01,09)			
Christ is “Superior” to:	Christ is a “Better”	Passage	Interlude (application)
Prophets	Revelator	1:1-3	
Angels	Name	1:4-2:18	(2:1-4)(2:10-18)
Moses	Household	3:1-13	(3:7-19)
Joshua	Rest	3:7-4:10	(4:11-16)
Aaron	High Priest	4:14-5:10	(5:11-6:3)(6:4-20)
Levitical System	Priesthood	7:1-28	

We are entering the core of the book (5:1-10:26), which deals with the major details of the Jewish religion and more details of the high priest. These are the deeper things, (6:11). These are the hard to explain things, (5:11). These things are the solid food of the mature, (5:14)

### 1. Melchizedek (5:6,10; 6:20; 7:1,10,11,15,17,21)

Melchizedek is mentioned 11 times in the Bible, 9 of them in the book of Hebrews. The writer of the book of Hebrews uses the other 2 references to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:8; Ps. 110:4).

#### Who Was Melchizedek?

- A. He was a “king,” (7:1)
- B. He was a “priest,” (7:1)
- C. He was in “Salem” (7:1)
- D. He was connected to the “Most High God,” (7:1)

#### Why is Melchizedek so important?

- A. Melchizedek’s name means “king of righteousness,” (7:2)  
“Melek” (Heb.) means “king” and “sedeq” (Heb.) means “righteousness.” (Guthrie, p. 253)
- B. Melchizedek was king over the “city of peace,” (7:2)  
“Salom” (Heb.) meaning “peace.” (Guthrie, p. 253)
- C. Melchizedek had no “listed” ancestry, birth or death (Gen. 14)(7:3)  
The absence of Melchizedek’s ancestry, birth and death in Genesis and now in Hebrews, is deliberate showing “his priesthood has neither the qualifications nor the parameters one finds concerning the Levitical priesthood in the Law of Moses. The Levities were priests by virtue of heritage and ceased from the office upon death. Scripture places no such limitations on Melchizedek’s priesthood.” (Guthrie, p. 254)
- D. Melchizedek was “made like the Son of God” (7:3)  
“Made like” (Gr. “aphomoiomenos” perfect passive participle) meaning “to produce a facsimile or copy.”  
“The likeness is in the picture drawn in Genesis, not in the man himself. Such artificial interpretation does not amount to proof, but only serves as a parallel or illustration.” (Robertson, p. 381)

### 2. The Greatness of Melchizedek (7:4-10)

There are three words calling us to the fact that Melchizedek is “great.”

- (1.) “Consider” (7:4, Gr. “theoreite,” imperative of command, 7:4)
- (2.) “great”(7:4, Gr. “pelikos”) is a word for “geometrical magnitude” rather than the word “great” (Gr. “posos”) meaning “arithmetical.” (Robertson, p. 381)
- (3.) “better” (7:7, Gr. “kreittomos”) meaning “more profitable, superior, better, more excellent.”

### ***What did Melchizedek do to give him this position?***

A. Melchizedek gave a blessing, (7:1)

Levi and his priestly offspring were through Abraham, but Melchizedek blessed Abraham. (7:6-7)

B. Melchizedek received tithes, (7:2)

Abraham (Gen. 14:17-20) returned from battling the invasion of five kings from Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela. Abraham recovered the booty and returned home. He paid tithes to Melchizedek. Levi and his priestly offspring receive tithes as a command and part of the Law, (7:5,8-10)

### **3. The Change of the Levitical/Aaronic Priesthood (7:11-15)**

Three statements show that Jesus Christ's priesthood did something to the Old Testament priesthood.

(1.) "If perfection" (Greek "ei men teleiosos" 7:11) A second class condition assuming falsehood. It stresses the act more than the quality or state. Should be translated "if there were perfection and there isn't." "The

Levitical priesthood failed to give man a perfectly adequate relationship to God." (Robertson, p. 383)

(2.) "Change" (Gr. "metatithemenes" 7:12) meaning "transferred." "God's choice of another kind of priesthood for His Son, left the Levitical line off to one side, forever discounted, passed by 'the order of Aaron.'"

(Robertson, p. 383)

(3.) "Set aside" (Gr. "athetesis" 7:18) meaning "disannulling, repealed, abrogated, cancelled."

Under the Old Order of the Levitical priesthood, Jesus would have no right to be priest. (Ellingworth, p. 375)

Thus, Jesus changed the Law, the covenant, and the priesthood.

This section is the reason many believe Paul wrote this section, because of his view of the Law. (Bruce, p. 145)

A. "Our author argues, the order of Aaron did not exhaust the mediatorial functions which in the divine purpose, were to be discharged between man and God." (Bruce, p. 143)

B. "The Aaronic priesthood was instituted for a temporary purpose to be brought to an end when the age of fulfillment dawned." (Bruce, p. 145)

C. "The Levitical priesthood was established centuries after that of Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20). God has not forgotten the priestly order of Melchizedek, for through David he spoke of this order again, (Ps. 110:4). No one can say that the order of Melchizedek was replaced by the Levitical priesthood." (Kistemaker, p. 193)

### **4. Superiority of the New Priesthood of Christ (7:14-28)**

Superiority of Christ under the Melchizedekian priesthood. (See my extra chart on the comparison of the Levitical priesthood to the Melchizedekian priesthood)

A. Under Melchizedek, an unending priesthood; under Levi "death" ended the priesthood, (7:3,17).

B. Under Melchizedek, a different tribe "Judah;" under Moses it was "Levi," (7:14).

C. Under Melchizedek, an endless life; under Levi priesthood ended at death, (7:16,21,24).

D. Under Melchizedek, a better hope of drawing near to God; under Levi the Law was not perfect, (7:18-19).

E. Under Melchizedek, made a priest with an oath; under Levi no oath (7:20-21).

F. Under Melchizedek, a better covenant; under Levi old imperfect covenant and law, (7:22).

G. Under Melchizedek, able to save to the uttermost; under Levi temporary sacrifice for sins, (7:25-27).

H. Under Melchizedek, perfection; under Levi, imperfection, (7:11,28)

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