

BRIARCLIFF CHURCH

Small Group Study Guide: Hebrews

Week of October 12 (Week 6)

Hebrews: Jesus and Melchizedek (7:1–28)



CHAPTER 7 SUMMARY

Hebrews 7 unpacks the significance of Jesus' priesthood and shows that Jesus' prayers for stumbling sinners guaranteed their complete salvation in his hands. The writer of Hebrews begins by making two basic points. First, Melchizedek is superior to Abraham and to the Aaronic priest. This is proven by Abraham's respect for Melchizedek, by giving tithes. At the same time, Melchizedek is symbolically lacking in genealogy. He has neither beginning nor end. In the same way in which Christ's priesthood is without beginning or end, as Christ is without beginning or end. Second, the priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the priesthood of Aaron or the other Levitical priests. The system of the Law, established under Moses, was imperfect and only temporary. Jesus, on the other hand, is the High Priest of a perfect covenant, one which can completely save, and which never ends. To make this point, the author refers the two orders. Jesus is superior to the priests of the Old Covenant, since he is deathless, eternal and without sin. (BibleRef).

SERMON DISCUSSION

Topic:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

OBSERVING AND APPLYING THE TEXT

1. The writer of Hebrews picks up the topic of the priestly order of Melchizedek from chapter 6:13–20. According 7:1–3, how does the author's description of Melchizedek provide clues as to his identity?
2. How does the writer of Hebrews establish the greatness of Melchizedek in verses 4–10?

3. Hebrews 7:1 says that Melchizedek was “king of Salem, priest of the Most High God.” Jesus fulfills both the titles “king” and “priest.” What is attributed to Melchizedek—“king of righteousness” and “king of peace” is also fulfilled in Jesus. What does knowing Jesus as the righteous king who can give eternal peace speak to you in a time of chaos, injustice, and unrighteous acts all around?

Reflection: “True peace can be experienced only on the basis of righteousness. If we want to enjoy “peace with God” we must be “justified [declared righteous] by God (Rom. 5:1). Man cannot produce righteousness by keeping the Old Testament Law (Gal. 2:21). It is only through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross that righteousness and peace could have “kissed each other.”” ((Warren Wiersbe, *Be Confident*, 73).

In Heb. 7:11–19 the author continues his argument about the superiority of the priesthood of Melchizedek over that of Levi (or Aaron). In Heb. 7:11, the author notes that the old Levitical priesthood was inadequate, for it could not bring about perfection or salvation.

4. How does the writer of Hebrews show the inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood and the necessity of a new one in Heb. 7:11–14?
5. What are some situations or areas of life where the world tempts us with the deceptive notion of “better hope,” to which we might respond with the promise of “a better hope” as stated in Hebrews 7:19b?

Reflection: “From Hebrews’ perspective, the whole religious system of Israel, grounded in the Law, falls under indictment. The writer kept in mind the temptation his readers were facing to go back into the old system. This is why he reminded them (7:19) that Jesus Christ has accomplished what the Law could never accomplish: in Christ, God has provided a new way and “better hope, through which we approach God” (7:19).” (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Confident*, 77).

6. In 7:20–28, what is the argument for the superiority of the new priesthood of Christ?
7. How does the character and nature of Christ, our high priest, in Heb. 7:20–28 speak to you?

Reflection: “Change and impermanence are central realities of our lives that pervade our politics, economics, societies in general, and relationships in particular . . . What Hebrews announces, however, is that there is a permanent and unchanging reality on which we can rely: Jesus Christ, who, through resurrection, lives to represent our concerns before God forever!” (Frances T. Gench, *Hebrews and James*, 46).

PRAYER

PRAYER GUIDE

October 13-17, 2025

Read Hebrews 7

Monday: 7:15–16 “This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.” Meditate on the nature of Jesus’ high priesthood. He became “a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement . . . but by the power of an indestructible life.” Only the priest who has “life in Himself” (Jn. 5:26) and has “all power in heaven and in earth” (Mat. 28:18) can accomplish this.

Tuesday 7:18–19 “For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.” Reflect and thank God for the “better hope” that he has given us in Christ and through whom we can draw near to God daily.”

Wednesday: 7:25 “Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” Think about what Christ, as our high priest can do for us—“save [us] to the uttermost those who draw near to him,” and who “always intercedes” for us. Praise him for the privileges we enjoy! He is always available—always on call! Christ’s eternal ministry of intercession on our behalf can be a stabilizing “anchor of the soul” (Heb. 6:19).

Thursday: 7:26 “For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.” Consider the character of our high priest Jesus; with a high priest of this quality, believers have an unfailing supply of divine grace.

Friday: 7:27 “He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.” Jesus is not only our high priest but also our “perfect sacrifice” who died for us once and for all that we do not have to come back repeatedly to atone for our sins like how it is done through the Old Testament priest.