

Christ Is Superior to the Levitical Priesthood

“There Ariseth Another Priest”

Hebrews 7:1-28

The title is taken from verse fifteen and states what the content and context of chapter seven concerns: our great High Priest, Jesus Christ.

One of the most intriguing figures in the Bible - both Old and New Testament is the one mentioned here: Melchisedec (we have seen his name three times before in Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20). As we study who he was and the content of Hebrews chapter 7, keep in mind that not everything was written down for us about every character in the Bible. There are things about Melchisedec that we simply will not know until we get to heaven. That said, there would have been more about him that the Hebrews to whom this book was written would have known. There were extent writings that predated this letter that had more to say about this mysterious figure and they would have more than likely been familiar with them.

However, all that matters to us today is what the Bible actually says, and that is all we will deal with in this study.

I. THE TYPE - VS. 1-3

A. A type is seen as:

1. A person, event, institution, or object in the Old Testament that serves as a pattern, symbol, or shadow of a greater reality to come.
2. Types are historically real and divinely intended to point forward to their fulfillment in Christ or in New Testament realities.

3. Examples of types in the Old Testament that have an antitype in the New:
 - a) According to the Bible, Adam, as the "first man" introduced sin into the world. In contrast, Jesus, as "the last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45), brings redemption by paying the ransom for man's sin.
 - b) The Passover Lamb from Exodus (12) is a type of Christ as the sacrificial Lamb for mankind (1 Cor. 5:7)
 - c) The Tabernacle/Temple, in every part, is a type of the work of redemption and God's presence in our lives and in the Church.
 - d) Jonah is clearly a type, with Christ the antitype, stated as such in Matt. 12:40: "For as Jonas (Jonah) was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

There are many more, but we also need to bear in mind that not everything that is called a type by pastors and teachers is one. It is best to only consider those people and things in the Old Testament as types if they are clearly given an antitype in the New.

- B. An antitype is seen as the fulfillment or reality to which the type points. It is seen as greater or more glorious than the type.**
- C. Melchisedec was clearly described as a type of Christ. Some consider Him to be a Christophany (appearance of Christ in human form before the Incarnation) but that is not likely, considering the phrase in Hebrews 7:3: "but made like unto the Son of God."**

There are several other people or beings that theologians of the past and of modern day consider Melchisedec to be: a Canaanite Priest-King; another name for Noah's son, Shem; an angelic redeemer; manifestation of the Logos (the Word); end-time priest; the Holy Spirit. None of these fit the Bible – some come from historical writings but since they are not part of the canon of Scripture, they do not carry much weight.

D. There are two references in the Old Testament to Melchisedec: Genesis 14 and Psalm 110.

1. Genesis 14:18-20 records the mention of Melchisedec and who he was. Abraham's nephew Lot was taken captive by the enemy kings that raided Sodom where he was living, so when Abraham received word Lot was taken, he took 318 of his own servants that he armed, and they delivered Lot as well as the women and the other people that were taken and all the goods.

As Abraham returned, Melchisedec met him, the events of which are presented in Genesis 14, as well as in Hebrews 7.

- a) The Hebrew word for "Melchizedek" is a compound of two words: מלך, the word for king; and ידע, the word for right, or righteous. This very definition is given in Hebrews 7:2 – "King of righteousness."

Considering the nuances of the way Hebrew names can be, and sometimes are, translated, the interpretation of "Melchizedek" can be seen as "my king is righteousness," demonstrating even more the type/antitype with Christ.

- b) The only thing mentioned in Genesis 14 that is not dealt with in Hebrews 7 is found in verse 18: "brought forth bread and wine..." There are some scholars and teachers that carry the type/antitype too far with this phrase. Some see it as the elements of what we call "communion," and try and show that this is Christ, but it is not showing that at all. Melchizedek does not offer them to God, he gives them to Abraham and his men. They were simply food and drink to supply a need for hungry and thirsty people. That is most likely why it's not mentioned in Hebrews 7.
2. Psalm 110 is a particularly important psalm, not just because of its mention of Melchizedek, but also because of its Messianic nature in general.
- a) Psalm 110 is the most quoted passage in the Old Testament: Matt. 22:41-45 (and parallel passages in Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44); Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 1:3; 5:6; 7:17; 1 Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:20-22.
 - b) This psalm shows the Messiah as King and Priest, something that no other Israelite king could claim.
 - c) An outline for the psalm:
 - (1) The Messiah will reign as King - vs. 1-3
 - (a) His position is indicative of authority - "sitting" - vs. 1
 - (b) His place is indicative of power - "at my right hand" - vs. 1
 - (c) His people is indicative of holiness and righteousness - vs. 2-3

(2) The Messiah will reign as Priest - vs. 4

(3) The Messiah will reign as Judge - vs. 5-7

E. What made Melchisedec a type of Christ according to Hebrews 7?

1. He was "a priest of the most high God" - vs. 1 - as will be seen as we study this chapter further, he was a priest of the most high God before Aaron became a priest, establishing the lineage of the priesthood of the Great High Priest: Jesus Christ.
2. He "blessed" Abraham - as verse seven points out, "the less [Abraham] is blessed of the better [Melchisedec, i.e., Christ]. When the readers of this letter to the Hebrews would have seen or heard this, they would have immediately understood the significance since they considered Abraham to be the patriarch of their people, and there was no one greater in position than him.
3. Abraham gave him "a tenth of all" - this points to his position of greatness and authority. "It was common to offer a tenth of the spoils to the gods. So Abraham recognized Melchizedek as a priest of God" (Robertson).
4. "King of righteousness" - as seen already, this is a literal interpretation of his name. This speaks of Christ's righteousness as the King of kings. Many texts of Scripture point to this but we will only consider one: Isaiah 11, which speaks to the Millennial Reign of Christ.

[Isaiah 11:4](#)

⁴ But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Isaiah 11:11

¹¹ And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

5. "King of Salem, which is, King of peace"

- a) Much has been made of the place called "Salem" here, but if we consider the only other time in the Old Testament this city is found (Psalm 76:2), it would refer to Jerusalem.

Psalm 76:1-2

¹ In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel.

² In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

The name "Jerusalem" is from two Hebrew words: **יָרָח**, - yarah - to see or provide; and **שָׁלֵם** - shalem - peace. The first part is used by Abraham in Gen. 22:14 after God provides a ram in place of Isaac, when he calls the place, "Jehovah-jireh" - The Lord will provide.

- b) The Bible defines what the name of the city means - "Peace" - and that's significant as it relates to the Messiah as "the Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6

⁶ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

- c) The Hebrew word for "Salem" (שָׁלֵם) and the Hebrew word for "Peace" (שָׁלוֹם) have the same root word and are deeply connected.
6. The most controversial and misunderstood part of any study of Melchisedec is what is said in verse three. The thing is, it should be controversial nor misunderstood.

Much is made out of this and most of it is to justify the interpretation that Melchisedec was a Christophany. This does not support that understanding in and of itself. This simply acknowledges that the Old Testament record from which this was taken makes no mention of Melchisedec's birth, death, or heritage. That point, however, is used here to show the type of Christ, specifically the Deity of Christ.

- a) "Without father, without mother, without descent" - no record of ancestry.

"The Levitical priesthood was validated by its ancestry. No intruder could serve. This would be the principal objection to the priesthood of Christ: he was no Levite. But Melchizedek was a 'priest of the most high God' and was without ancestry of any sort" (The Interpreter's Bible).

This point is developed further in this chapter.

- b) "Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" - no record of birth or death.

- c) "But made like unto the Son of God" - Melchisedec was that type of the Son of God in that there is no record of his birth and no record of his ancestry. Even though he was a man and would have been born and died, the fact there is no record, and that fact is pointed out here is the type that was set.

Jesus, as man, was born to Mary, and He died as man on the cross. But it has already been established in our study of Hebrews that Jesus was the Son of God - He was God the Son; He was God, and as such He is eternal with no beginning and no ending.

Revelation 1:8

⁸ I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

- d) "Abideth a priest continually" - This Greek word is only found in the book of Hebrews and its use here is one of continuity.

Hebrews 10:1

¹ For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

"It is not that he lived forever, but that the order of priesthood in which he ministered was forever...The fact that we have no biblical or other record of the beginning or end of Melchizedek's personal priesthood simply symbolizes the eternality of his priestly order. It is a type of Christ's truly eternal priesthood." (MacArthur)

II. THE TITHE - VS. 4-10

The tithe is used specifically in this example by the author of Hebrews as an illustration of the "better" priesthood of Christ over that of the Levitical system, or Aaronic priesthood.

The tithe mentioned here has no special significance nor relevance to giving to the Lord for the believer. This is a very specific use of a very specific law within the Levitical priesthood system as compared to the eternal priesthood of which Melchizedek was a type.

By way of reference, the tithe in the Old Testament was not just a single tenth of income as is taught today. It was considerably more than that - there were at least three separate tithes that the Israelites were bound by law to give. Much like our taxes today.

In all, the Israelites gave at least 20%, and every third year it would total approximately 23.3%.

1. The Levitical Tithe (first tithe)

- a. This was required to support the Levites who had no land inheritance in Israel and were responsible for temple service and religious instruction (Num. 18:21-24; Lev. 27:30-33).
- b. The Israelites gave one-tenth of their agricultural produce (grain, wine, oil, livestock) to the Levites.

2. The Festival Tithe (second tithe)

This was given to fund the religious festivals - Deut. 14:22-27. It was a second tenth of one's income set aside specifically for use during the annual festivals (feasts), as outlined in Deuteronomy 14:22-27. This tithe is meant to cover expenses related to attending the festivals, such as food, travel, and

lodging, allowing individuals to rejoice before the Lord.

3. The Poor Tithe (third-year tithe)
 - a. This was given to support the poor, widows, orphans, and strangers (foreigners) - Deut. 14:28-29; 26:12-15.
 - b. Every third year, instead of bringing the festival tithe to Jerusalem, the people were to store one-tenth of their produce in their local towns to be distributed to the needy, whoever they were. This was what we would consider as a form of welfare to ensure no one in Israel went hungry.

A. Tithing demonstrates authority and the status of the greater over the lesser - vs. 4, 6-7, 9-10.

1. In the days of Abraham and the culture from which he came, paying a tithe was a sign of submission to a higher authority.
2. The mention of Levi paying tithes through Abraham (vs. 9-10) recognizes this greater-over-lesser principle because it is a symbolic representation of how the Levitical priesthood recognized that a greater High Priest would come.

It would be safe to say that the Levitical priesthood would have been more than just vaguely aware of who Melchizedek was. It would have been a historical account handed down from generation to generation and the fact that it is mentioned in the Psalms emphasizes the point.

B. Tithing is directly connected to the priesthood.

1. The Levites were financially supported by tithes from the people, making it an integral part of the priestly system.

Numbers 18:21-26

²¹ And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. ²² Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die. ²³ But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance. ²⁴ But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. ²⁵ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ²⁶ Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithes.

2. Because Abraham tithed to Melchizedek, His priesthood is superior to the Levitical/Aaronic priesthood (vs. 6-7).

C. Abraham's tithes to Melchizedek was voluntary rather than compulsory (or by law) as was the Levitical Law tithes.

This helps show that Melchizedek's priesthood was not established by law but by Divine

appointment, as a type of Christ's priesthood.

III. THE TRIBE - VS. 11-14

A. The Levitical priesthood is so named because it was the descendants of the tribe of Levi that became the priests of Israel under the Mosaic Law.

B. These verses show that Jesus being a priest "after the order of Melchisedec" was not of the tribe of Levi but of Judah and therefore showed that the proper relationship with God could not be found in its "perfection" under the Levitical law but only through the Priesthood of Christ which was after a different source.

C. The argument is given in verse 11.

1. "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood" - by "perfection" is meant the bringing of man to his highest state (Alford) in his relationship with God and that is only possible through a proper relationship with Christ and faith in His work for our redemption.
2. "For under it the people received the law" - why it is called the Levitical Law.
3. "What further need was there that another priest should rise..." - legitimate question and is basically a rhetorical one - the answer would be "none."

However, the argument does not hold that perfection came through the tribe of Levi and the Levitical Law and Priesthood, so another Priest was necessary.

D. Vs. 12-14 - the answer to the argument of verse 11.

1. These three verses begin with the word "for." This is a causative particle - a word that introduces a reason or cause for something. It signals that what follows explains why something happens or is true.

This is not just a stylistic feature of the language but is a critical word of logical development as the author makes arguments for the need of another priest.

2. Vs. 12 - there is a change in the priesthood.

The first point of the answer introduces the reason a change in the law is necessary: because there is a change in the priesthood, there must also be a change in the law.

- a) The Levitical priesthood was established by the law, and the law depended on that priesthood for the sacrifices needed to atone for the sins of the people. The Bible clearly states this was insufficient and a better sacrifice was needed - that Perfect sacrifice was Christ (a truth developed later in the book of Hebrews).

[Galatians 3:19-24](#)

¹⁹ Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. ²⁰ Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. ²¹ Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have

been by the law. ²² But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. ²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. ²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

- b) The word for “change” here (μετατίθημι) is one that means to put one thing in place of another. He uses a stronger word in verse 18 - “disannulling” - to carry the idea further that the change that was needed and that took place was a permanent and final one.
- c) This does not mean that God’s moral law is abolished or changed, but that the old covenant’s legal structure, centered on the Levitical Law, is no longer the means by which people approach God.

3. Vs. 13 - there is a difference in the tribe.

The second point of the answer further supports the previous claim by explaining that Jesus (“another priest”) is from a different tribe (Judah) rather than Levi, reinforcing the argument that the old priesthood is being replaced.

- a) The only tribe allowed to serve in the priesthood were the descendants of Levi (Num. 3:10; Deut. 18:1-5).

Numbers 3:10

¹⁰ And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest’s office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to

death.

Deuteronomy 18:1-5

¹ The priests the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance. ² Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren: the LORD is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them. ³ And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep; and they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw. ⁴ The firstfruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him. ⁵ For the LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

- b) Since Jesus was from the tribe of Judah and not Levi reinforces the necessity of a different order of priesthood that would satisfy all the requirements for provision of a means for a right relationship with God.
4. Vs. 14 - there is evidence for both the previous points.

The final point of the answer introduces further evidence that supports the necessity of a legal shift.

- a) The Mosaic Law never authorized anyone from the tribe of Judah to be a priest. Yet, Christ, who is from Judah, is declared to be the High Priest. This signals that His priesthood transcends and supersedes the Mosaic system.

- b) The use of this final “for” serves as a conclusion - tying the argument together by showing that since Jesus is clearly from Judah, the old law cannot apply to Him, meaning that the law must have changed.
- c) This anticipates the broader argument in Hebrews 8-10 that Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant, one that fulfills and surpasses the old covenant.

IV. THE TESTIMONY - VS. 15-19

A. The testimony is given in verses 15-16 - that “of an endless life.” This testimony is supported in a logical manner in the next three verses, similar to the way the argument in the previous point was made.

1. “And it is yet far more evident” - the previous verse points to obvious, provable evidence that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah and not Levi. If it is plainly evident that Jesus came from the tribe of Judah, it is even more obvious, more clearly manifest, and provable, that His priesthood is indisputably superior to the Levitical priesthood.
2. “Who is made” - who is become “another priest.”
3. “Not after the law of a carnal commandment” - this is speaking of the fitness for office being largely determined by physical or fleshly (“carnal”) considerations. He must have been a descendant of Levi, without bodily blemish, and ceremonially pure.

4. "But after the power of an endless life"

- a) The word for "endless" - ἀκατάλυτος - is the word translated "dissolved" in 2 Cor. 5:1 with alpha privative (the letter indicating negation), literally translated as incapable of dissolution, indissoluble. It speaks to the enduring, endless nature of the eternal priesthood of Christ. He died on the cross but His intercessory work as our Great High Priest is eternal.

2 Corinthians 5:1

¹ For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

This is in stark contrast to the temporary nature of the Levitical priesthood.

- b) The "power" spoken of is the power residing in Christ Himself as the eternal God.

Revelation 1:8

⁸ I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Revelation 1:17-18

¹⁷ And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, **Fear not; I am the first and the last: ¹⁸ I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.**

B. Vs. 17 - the first support given for the argument of verses 15 and 16 is the testimony of Scripture that validates the eternal priesthood of Christ. This is that quote we have seen already from Psalm

110:4.

Psalm 110:4

⁴ The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

C. Vs. 18 - the second support is the testimony of the "weakness and unprofitableness" of the Old Testament Law.

1. "A disannulling of the commandment going before" - the "commandment going before" is speaking of the Old Testament Levitical Law and the system of sacrifices it taught. This "commandment" is being set aside, annulled, cancelled for something better. It does not mean that the Law is of no value for we know that the New Testament says otherwise. It just means that the sacrifices and offerings are no longer needed.
2. "For the weakness and unprofitableness thereof"
 - a) "Weakness" - ἀσθενής - literally translated as without strength. "It had no energy; it communicated none; it had no Spirit to minister; it required perfect obedience but furnished no assistance to those who were under it." (Clarke)
 - b) "Unprofitableness" - ανωφελής - serving no purpose. Again, Dr. Clarke states: "No man was benefited by the mere observance of its precepts: it pardoned no sin, changed no heart, reformed no life; it found men dead in trespasses and sins, and it consigned them to eternal death. It was therefore weak in itself, and unprofitable to men."

D. Vs. 19 - The third support is the testimony of a "better hope."

1. "For the law made nothing perfect" - goes back to the previous verse and explains the weakness and unprofitability of the Law. It could never provide a way for man to be perfectly justified before God. It was just a foreshadow of things to come - of the "better hope."
2. "But the bringing in of a better hope did" - as we saw in the text from Galatians chapter three, the Law was our "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."
3. "By the which we draw nigh unto God" - if it were not for the grace of God and the faith to trust that grace, we would have no hope and we would never be able to "draw nigh to God" for salvation. The whole of the Old Testament Levitical system was a type of what Christ would do - but it was always and will always be Christ.

V. THE TESTAMENT - VS. 20-25

The use of the word "testament" here by the King James translators seems to be connected with Heb. 9:16-22 where the word "testament" is connected with the death of our Saviour to pay the sin debt of mankind and to satisfy the requirements of the Old Testament.

Although the death of Christ is not as much in view in the text in chapter seven (7), it is the primary view of verse 25 where the recognition of His resurrection and eternity is the focus.

The term "covenant" is seen by many, including Scofield, as the primary meaning of this word

translated "testament" and "covenant," sometimes interchangeably in the book of Hebrews.

It is my view that both aspects of the Greek word translated "testament" and "covenant" are in view.

The definition of "testament" is a legal disposition of property or an inheritance, effective upon the death of the testator (Heb. 9:16-22). Our inheritance in Christ is guaranteed by His sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection, and the indwelling Holy Spirit of God in our lives as the "earnest of our inheritance" (Eph. 1 :14). The text in Hebrews seven (7) under review carries that idea.

The definition of "covenant" is a binding agreement or divine arrangement between God and His people. This is also in view in Hebrews seven (7).

The word is translated "covenant," or "covenants," twenty (20) times, and "testament" thirteen (13) times.

There are several things about the testament or covenant spoken of here that will be helpful for us in understanding what we have in Christ as our Great High Priest.

A. It's guaranteed by an uncompromising oath - vs. 20-21

1. These verses go back to Hebrews 6:13-18 and reference the oath that was explained there so there isn't much we can add to what we covered from that text.
2. Verse twenty-one (21) is a parenthetical to explain that the Levitical priests were not made by an oath from the Lord but were priests by heredity, an inferior priesthood.

"But this" - the priesthood after the order of Melchisedec - this Jesus, was confirmed by an uncompromising oath: "The Lord sware and will not repent..." (Psalm 110:4).

B. It's guaranteed by an unmatched Jesus - vs. 22

1. This is seen in the first three words: "By so much" (specifically the words "so much").
 - a) We saw these two words used in Hebrews 1:4 relating to our Saviour. We spent two Sunday evenings explaining how He is "so much better."

[Hebrews 1:4](#)

⁴ Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.
 - b) The "so much" is referencing the oath in verse twenty (20) and is saying that the oath God swore by (Himself) was vastly better than and greater than anything the Levitical priesthood could attain through their human intervention.
2. The unmatched Jesus was the oath God made TO US, not us to Him. That's why He's called "a surety of a better testament."
 - a) This is the only time this Greek word is used in the New Testament and is one that is similar to a bail in our society. It's a pledge of security that is put up to guarantee that the person will appear where he is supposed to appear: that he will keep His promise.
 - b) The resurrection from the dead by Jesus and His eternal nature is the "surety" that the oath God made to confirm His priesthood would hold

“forever.”

That leads to the next two points:

C. It's guaranteed by an unchangeable priesthood - vs. 23-24

1. Verse 23 reiterates the limitations of the Levitical priesthood because of the death of the priest. The priesthood was constantly changing because of that.
2. “But this man” - Jesus as our Great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec is shown in stark contrast to the limitations of the Levitical/Aaronic priesthood.
3. “Because he continueth ever” - again, speaking of Jesus Christ and His eternity. The principal idea of the word for “continueth” here is that of remaining or abiding. Because He is eternal, so also is His priesthood - His redemptive work for us as our sacrifice is the guarantee for us of heaven and our eternity there with Him is guaranteed forever because He “continues” in that position forever.

Hebrews 13:8

⁸ Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Romans 6:9

⁹ Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

Revelation 1:18

¹⁸ I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of

hell and of death.

4. Because He continues forever, His priesthood is "unchangeable." Death is what changed it in the Levitical system and since our Saviour cannot and will not die, His priesthood cannot and will not change.
 - a) This is the only time this Greek word (ἀπαράβατος) is used in the Bible. It's a compound word with the alpha privative prefixed to a word that means to go beyond or transgress. Literally, unable to go beyond or not stepping across, or in this use, untransferable.
 - b) The priesthood of Christ cannot be given to another because He is eternal.
 - c) An interesting point here - since the priesthood of Christ is eternal and "unchangeable" (untransferable to another) then the idea of an earthly so-called apostolic succession of priests as His vicegerent (what the Pope of Rome is called). Christ's authority as our Great High Priest cannot be given to another.

D. It's guaranteed by an unending intercession - vs. 25

1. "Wherefore" - "as a natural consequence, something else, flowing from and accompanying the last: but with a slightly characteristic force: a new and higher thing follows" (Alford).

What follows is because His priesthood is unchangeable, untransferable.

2. "He is able to save them"

- a) "He is able" - δύναμαι - power residing in Himself to save. Points to the unchangeableness of His priesthood - He needs no help.
- b) "To save" - used in its normal New Testament usage, to rescue from sin and condemnation.
- c) "Them" - this is the "whosoever will" spoken of in the Bible. No matter who the "them" are, He is able to save.

Revelation 22:17

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

3. "To the uttermost that come unto God by him"

- a) "To the uttermost" - this is an awesome word! In its old-world use, it meant to the farthest limits both of time and space.

Our salvation is "to the uttermost": we are saved in totality, both body, soul, and spirit; and we are saved to the point of termination or end, and since there is no end, no limits on time or space, in eternity, we are eternally saved.

This word, as many others do, speaks of the eternal security of the believer.

- b) "That come unto God by Him" - simply put, there is no other way to fellowship with the Father either now in this life or in eternity future in heaven than to come by way of faith in the sacrificial work of our Saviour as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**

Romans 5:1-2

¹ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

² By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Ephesians 2:18

¹⁸ For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Ephesians 3:12

¹² In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

1 John 2:1-2

¹ My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

c) "Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"

(1) "Seeing he ever" - all one word in the Greek (πάντοτε"), meaning always, at all times. Another wonderful picture of what we have in Christ. There is never a time now, nor will there ever be a time that He isn't our intercessor. As pointed out earlier, our eternity is always going to be secured because His redemptive work is eternal.

(2) "Liveth to make intercession for us"

- (a) The English definition of “intercede” means, in the sense used here, to act between parties with a view to reconcile those who differ or contend.
- (b) The Greek word used here (ἐντυγχάνω) carries the idea of both intercession and intervention, which Christ does as our “advocate” (1 John 2:1-2).

1 John 2:1-2

¹ My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

- (c) Christ eternally lives, in part, to act as our mediator, as our advocate, and as our intercessor with the Father - a position He will always have.

1 Timothy 2:5

⁵ For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

Romans 8:34

³⁴ Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Conclusion to this point: The testimony given of Christ and the testament that guarantees us an eternity in heaven with Him is only possible because of His

substitutionary work for our redemption.

Isaac Watts, a prolific hymn writer as well as a pastor, theologian, and author, wrote the following poem/hymn entitled "Not All the Blood." It's a fitting conclusion to this point.

Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they.

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see
The burden Thou didst bear,
When hanging on th'accurs'd tree,
And knows her guilt was there.

Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing His dying love.

VI. THE THRONE - VS. 26-28

Our Great High Priest is seated “on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb. 8:1) and is interceding for us with the Father. That is what is meant in the phrase “became us” in verse twenty-six (26) – the “us” is emphatic here. It is necessary for us that we have “such an high priest” to intercede because we are still sinners – saved by grace but still in the flesh and struggling with the old nature. As our intercessor, He makes it possible for us to stand justified in the eyes of the Father.

The reason He is able to be that intercessor, that Great High Priest, is outlined for us in these verses.

A. Because He was perfect - vs. 26

1. Perfectly “holy”

- a) There is a title in Psalm 16:10 that is given to the Son of God as “The Holy One,” (קֹדֶשׁ) which corresponds to this Greek word (ὅσιος). This verse is quoted in Acts 2:27 in Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost.

Psalm 16:10

¹⁰ For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Acts 2:26–27

²⁶ Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

²⁷ Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

- b) He is called “The Holy One of God” by an unclean spirit in a man that confronted Jesus as

recorded in Mark 1:24.

Mark 1:24

²⁴ Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

- c) The word used here for “holy,” when used of God (here, in the Person of the Son as our Great High Priest), it means the personification of holiness and purity. It speaks of personal holiness as “that state of a person who is undefiled by sin, free from wickedness” (Wuest).

Revelation 15:4

⁴ Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

- d) As “such an high priest” that was necessary for mankind (“us”) to provide sacrifice sufficient for us to be justified with God, He had to be perfectly holy and the only One that could be was the Son of God.

2. Perfectly “harmless”

- a) A word that means free from evil, innocent, and blameless.
- b) “Without any [depravity] in his nature, without guile in his mouth, or malice in his heart; doing no injury to any man's person or property: the character chiefly regards the innocence and holiness of his life and conversation; and in which he exceeded the priests under the law; and is a suitable one for us, for hereby he was fit to be made sin, and to take it away” (Gill).

3. Perfectly undefiled - there is nothing in "such an high priest" that defiles. It means He "is unpolluted, unstained, unsoiled, undefiled by sin" (Zodhiates).
4. Perfectly "separate from sinners"
 - a) This doesn't just speak of Him being the sinless and perfect sacrifice for sinners because He had no sin, but this speaks of Him being perfectly separated from sinners, literally, in heaven where He can be that continuous intercessor and mediator for mankind.

"The Messiah is separated from sinners in that in His service as High Priest, He is void of all contact and commerce with sinners, removed far away in His glorified state and body, into God's Holy of Holies." (Wuest)
 - b) This points to Heb. 1:3 and 8:1 and the reference to our High Priest being set on the right hand of the Majesty on high "in the heavens."
5. Perfectly "higher than the heavens" - this points to the place just mentioned in the previous comment - "ascended up far above all heavens" (Eph. 4:10)

[Ephesians 4:10](#)

¹⁰ He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

B. Because of His position as the perfect sacrifice - vs. 27

1. This was mentioned in Heb. 5:3 and I made a

few comments on it then, but it is dealt with for a different purpose here.

2. Our Great High Priest, because He is perfect as stated in the previous verse, "needeth not daily, as those high priests [the Levitical priesthood], to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's" because He had no sin. That's what made Him, and still makes Him, the perfect sacrifice for mankind.
3. "For this He did once" - this is viewed as once for all (all people and all time). It is in direct contrast to the "daily" offerings of the Levitical priesthood. There is really no other legitimate way to view this word with that contrast in mind.

Romans 6:10

¹⁰ For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Hebrews 9:12

¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews 10:10

¹⁰ By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

4. "When he offered up himself" - no greater gift could ever be given, and no words in any language could ever be sufficient to describe what this means!!

This is the first time in the book of Hebrews that mention is made of Christ offering up Himself. There have been references to the sacrifice of

Christ, but this is the first mention of Him doing the offering. From this point forward, it becomes a more and more familiar point. "Once struck, the note sounds louder and louder" (as found in Alford's commentary).

C. Because His priesthood is permanent - vs. 28

1. There's no need for another priesthood because the priesthood of the Son of God never ends.
2. We've seen the point of this verse come up previously as well - this is just a confirmation of the eternal priesthood of Christ as opposed to the Levitical priesthood that was once plagued with "infirmity."
3. It was the law that made the priests of the Old Testament what they were, but it was "the word of the oath" (which we have already studied in previous texts) that came "since the law" (Psalm 110:4 - a thousand years after the giving of the law) that made Christ our Great High Priest "for evermore."
4. The phrase "who is consecrated" is set before the final phrase of the verse to show that Christ is forever established and set apart as our Great High Priest "for evermore."

The word for "consecrated" (τελειόω) is the same word translated "perfect" in relation to the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ in Heb. 2:10 and 5:9.

[Hebrews 2:10](#)

¹⁰ For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Hebrews 5:9

⁹ And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

5. This text speaks to the eternality of Christ and the eternal security of the believer because of the eternal work done by our Saviour for our redemption.

Conclusion: This chapter started out with the type set by Melchisedec in the Old Testament for Christ as a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, and we spent some time showing why that was important.

We then saw that the tithe paid by Abraham, an inferior, to Melchisedec (king/priest), a superior, was to demonstrate how much better our High Priest is than the Aaronic priesthood.

The fact that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah rather than the tribe of Levi and was a priest after the order of Melchisedec was further evidence that He was a far better Priest for us.

We have the testimony of an endless life in Christ rather than the Levitical priesthood that ended in death, confirmed by Scripture as a "better hope."

We found that the new testament (covenant) that came by Jesus Christ was guaranteed by an uncompromising oath, an unmatched Jesus, an unchangeable priesthood, and an unending intercession.

The last few verses, along with verse one of chapter eight

(8:1), show us that our Great High Priest is right where He needs be to be for us what we need Him to be - He's at the right hand of the throne because He was perfect while on earth, because of His position as the perfect sacrifice, and as such, it allows His priesthood to be forever.

We need to always be thankful for "another priest" that arose to be that better provision for mankind.