

SECTION SEVEN

JESUS, SON OF GOD, THE PERFECT HIGH PRIEST, SECOND PART

1. TEXTS

a. **Hebrews 7:1 – 8:2.**

b. **Complementary relevant texts**

(1) **Genesis 14:18-20**—“Then Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine.”

(2) **Psalms 110**—“The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever ...’”

2. TRANSITION FROM PREVIOUS SECTION TO THIS SECTION

a. **Hebrews 5:6**—“And he says in another place, “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek (**Psalm 110:4**).

(1) “You are my Son; this day I have become your Father”—from **Psalm 2:7**.

(2) He did not presumptuously take the priesthood on Himself; God appointed Him to it.

b. **Hebrews 6:20**—“He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

(1) By the combination of declaration and oath, God made His **promise** as certain as possible.

(2) The **priesthood** is the method of the implementation of the **promise**.

(3) If the priesthood is shown to be superior, then the corresponding superiority of the **promise** is confirmed.

3. CONCERNING “THIS MELCHIZEDEK” (7:1-10)

a. **His name**

(1) Melki-zedek

(2) Melki—“king” or “my king”

(3) Zedek—“righteousness” or “is righteous”—the writer asserts the translation “king of righteousness.”

b. **He is called “king of Salem”**

(1) That is, king of Jerusalem--there are hints in ANE texts that this name should be associated with the Jebusites.

(2) The writer remarks that, by translation, this designation means “king of peace” (*shalim* or *shalom*).

c. **He was also a priest of *El Elyon*, who performed intercessory duties with *El Elyon* on behalf of Abram**

(1) He extended the blessings of *El Elyon* in the form of a ritualistic meal provided to Abram.

(2) On behalf of *El Elyon*, he extracted a tithe from Abram.

(3) He blessed Abram in the name of *Elohim Elyon*.

a. **We are invited to consider the characteristics drawn from this incident which attest to his greatness**

(1) Abram, the greatest character of the Hebrew race, deferred to him.

(2) He blessed Abram and, by extension, Levi, who as a descendant of Abram was **lesser** than his forebear.

- (3) He “blessed him who had [been given] the promises.” That is, even after the divine favor of selection and extension of the promises had been conferred on Abram, Melchizedek’s blessing was significant.
- (4) “... without doubt, the lesser is blessed by the greater.”

b. Concerning the standing of the priestly order he represented

- (1) There was no **system** of succession in his hieratic lineage—he was not a priest by genetic descent—his appointment was **individual**, based solely on divine selection and, presumably, his estimable character.
- (2) His order was not extended by natural or typical succession—there was never again anyone like him ...
- (3) ... that is, until the incarnation of God, because “resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.”

4. JESUS AS A PRIEST IS SUPERIOR TO ANY AARONIC PRIEST (7:11-8:2)

a. Otherwise, why would a priest from a different order be designated by God? (11-14)

- (1) “If perfection could have been obtained by the Levitical priesthood ...” which was clearly not the case.
- (2) Since the Levitical high priest mediated the Mosaic covenant of law, a priest from a different order cannot mediate the relationship based upon that law—there must be a change of the law (specifically, **elimination** of law as the basis of the covenant which is mediated by Jesus the high priest).
- (3) Even more clearly, the superior priesthood both implies and facilitates a superior covenant relationship—one which a Levitical priest could not mediate.
- (4) Jesus, Messiah, was a descendant of Judah, and as such was ineligible to serve as Levitical priest.

b. Contrasting the Levitical priesthood with Jesus’ priesthood shows the succeeding priesthood to be *better*(15-25)

- (1) To mediate this new covenant a different hieratic order is **required**.
- (2) This new order which is based not upon a **system** of genetic lineage but upon “the power of an (**individual**) indestructible life.”
- (3) For it is declared (**Psalm 110:4**), “You are a priest **forever** ...”
- (4) His priesthood’s eternal duration is confirmed by oath: “Jahweh has sworn and will not change his mind ...”
- (5) Having one priest, a **person** who can be the permanent guarantor of a covenant relationship, is better than having a **system** of many priests each of whom is prevented by death from continuing in that role.
- (6) Participants in the better covenant “come to God through him”—not through a system, through a **person**.

c. Jesus, the perfect high priest, meets the needs of everyone who desires a relationship with God (26-28)

- (1) He possesses unique **individual** qualities, unlike the men appointed high priests under the Law **system**
 - (a) Holy, blameless, pure.
 - (b) Set apart from sinners.
 - (c) Exalted to the highest possible place.
- (2) He does not need to offer repeated sacrifices the way the Levitical priests did, because he had a better sacrifice, which needed to be offered only once: *viz.*, the sacrifice of Himself.
- (3) The divine oath was issued after the provision of the law with its priesthood.
- (4) That oath appointed as the intercessory priest the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

a. We have such a high priest (8:1-2)

- (1) As Son of God and Messiah, He is seated at the right hand of the highest majesty.
- (2) As high priest, He serves in the **real** sanctuary, the place of meeting between God and man (see **9:1-10**) which was created by God, and not by men.