

Hebrews: Better than Melchizedek

Hebrews 7

This Semester, we're studying the book of Hebrews to better understand Who Jesus is and What He's done. What we will find is that Jesus is better than anything our world has to offer. This week, the author uses the historical figure of Melchizedek to demonstrate that even compared to our greatest priest, Jesus is Better not only because of what He's done, but because of what He is.

Read: Hebrews 7.22-28

Intro: Pastor Punches Kid (Video) – Our priests have problems

The Truth is...

- **We've all seen problems with people in church leadership.** Some problems are **smaller like saying "do life & love on"** while some are **bigger like punching you**; They **overlook** us, They see & **dismiss** us, They fall into **moral failure!** **But...**

The Beauty is...

- We have a **High Priest over even the greatest of our leaders!**

This Semester...

- **We're studying the book of Hebrews to better understand Who Jesus is and What He's done. Our world tells us we deserve "The Best" so we try to be "The Best" or we try to know "What's Best." But Hebrews tells us that no matter what anyone thinks, says, or does, Jesus is Better.**

This Morning...

- We're in **Chapter 7** where the author uses the historical figure of **Melchizedek** to demonstrate that even compared to our greatest priest, **Jesus is Better** not only because of **what He's done**, but because of **what He is!**

Remember Context to understand Content

- **Audience:** 60s AD **Jewish Believers** facing persecution
- **Passage:** Christ is serving as our **High Priest** securing our salvation & providing **confidence to approach God**. In the meantime, we should **press towards maturity**. But even in our failure, Christ is working on our behalf, **like Melchizedek**
 - Okay, big Mel keeps popping up, so...

Why Melchizedek?

- **Read: 7.1-2a (4-10) – Technically paid by Levi**
 - Wait, what?
 - **Read: Gen 14.18-20** – Sure enough, there's Mel! And by paying Mel tribute, Abraham is elevating Mel's position above his own & all his descendants
 - **Ex:** Some parents place themselves **under Texas A&M** along with all their descendants
- **Read: 7.2b – Priest AND King**
 - In the Hebrew, Mel's name breaks down into **"king"** and **"righteousness"** – This is an **incredible combo** we never see, even the best Israelite kings still had separate priests
 - **Ex:** It's great to be a **Girl scout** & It's great to sell **cookies**, but it's something else entirely if you're a combination of **both**
- **Read: 7.3 – Appearance of eternal**
 - Some scholars take this to mean Mel was a **Christophony** (Old Testament appearance of Christ); Others take this to mean Mel's time before and after Abraham **simply isn't recorded in OT**

- This isolated story gives him the **appearance of eternity** and creates his **legendary status**
 - Ex: Your **dog** who went to live “**on a farm**”
- **Read: 7.21-22 – Jesus actually IS eternal!**
 - “**Better Covenant**” - **New Covenant** - Coming up in GG this week & Sunday in 3wks

Why Focus on Eternal?

- **Better Comfort – Read: 7.23-25**
 - “**To the Uttermost**” - **Removes guilt** –
 - We don’t have to feel shame that our failures will eventually become too great for Christ to handle!
 - This is the key to our
 - “**Draw near to God**” **Removes worry** –
 - We have a **new perspective on present issues** when compared with eternity
 - Ex: In light of eternity, **Susan** doesn’t worry about “**wine on the carpet & dents in the wall**” – because we know how to party
 - **We worry about Org, School, Work** – We should be **responsible**, but we have to remember where we’re headed – **calm in small helps calm in large**
- **Better Hope – Read: 7.26-28**
 - “**Above the Heavens**” - **We should hope in Heaven**
 - **We leave the guilt of our past & the worries of our present to live differently in light of the hope of our future**
 - Ex: **Senioritis** – last 6wks you stop worrying about HS and begin preparing for college - (**Susan & pals** put on **homecoming dresses to watch the bachelor**)
 - **Hard Ex:** Fellow staff losing son – lost Ethan at 8 months pregnant, but are able to **trust God and take comfort in their future Hope**
 - “**Perfect Forever**” - **We should long for Eternity**
 - **Hard Ex:** Fellow pastor’s **new Perspective** – As a Christian, He would’ve said he **wanted Christ to return**, while subconsciously he wanted to **get some stuff done first**. But seeing infant son’s difficulties has pushed every desire aside in favor of eternity, when **son can walk** through God’s creation as he was meant to
- **Better Purpose – Read: 8.1-2**
 - “**True tent**” - **Moses Tabernacle** - Our world is a **fleeting shadow in the light of eternity**
 - **There should always be a desperation in our preaching**
 - **Bible Ex: Audience** had family/friends stuck in the hopelessness of **Judaism**
 - We’re called to **share the Gospel** with our friends, family, classmates, coworkers! **How can we not?**
- This is why we take **Communion** – to **remember Christ’s sacrifice which gives us Comfort, Hope, and Purpose**

Prayer

- **Partner:** Share what you want the Lord to remind you of this week – your **Comfort, Hope, or Purpose?**

[1] For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, [2] and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. [3] He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.

(Hebrews 7:1-3 ESV)

[21] but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him:

“The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind,
‘You are a priest forever.’”

(Hebrews 7:21 ESV)

[22] This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

[23] The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, [24] but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. [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.

[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. [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. [28] For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

(Hebrews 7:22-28 ESV)

[1] Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, [2] a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

(Hebrews 8:1-2 ESV)

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) And he blessed him and said,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Possessor of heaven and earth;
and blessed be God Most High,
who has delivered your enemies into your hand!”

And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

(Genesis 14:18-20 ESV)

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26 ESV)