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By Dan Maines

Hebrews 7

Hebrews 7:1-2

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace.

† Melchizedek appears briefly in Genesis 14, but his significance is great. He was both king and priest, unlike Israel's system where kings and priests were separate. His name means king of righteousness, and Salem means peace, pointing forward to Christ.

† Philo (On Abraham 235) wrote that Melchizedek symbolized true righteousness and peace. Hebrews applies this directly to Christ.

† Origen (Homilies on Genesis 16) noted that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham because he blessed him, foreshadowing Christ's greater priesthood.

Hebrews 7:3

Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually.

† The Genesis account gives no genealogy for Melchizedek. This silence was interpreted to mean his priesthood was perpetual. He resembled the Son of God in having an eternal priesthood.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls (11QMelchizedek) presented Melchizedek as an eschatological deliverer, reinforcing his role beyond a mere historical king.

† Rabbinic tradition (Midrash on Psalm 76:2) identified Salem with Jerusalem, showing how Jews connected Melchizedek with the holy city.

Hebrews 7:4-7

Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have a commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brothers and sisters, although these are descended from Abraham. But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises. But without any dispute the

lesser person is blessed by the greater.

† Abraham, the father of Israel, gave a tithe to Melchizedek. This act placed Melchizedek above Abraham and, by extension, above Levi. The one who blesses is greater than the one who receives the blessing.

† The Talmud (Nedarim 32b) affirms that Melchizedek's priesthood was honored by Abraham's tithe, proving his superiority.

Hebrews 7:8-10

In this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is testified that he lives on. And so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, has paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his forefather when Melchizedek met him.

† Levi, and by extension the entire Levitical priesthood, acknowledged Melchizedek's superiority when Abraham paid him tithes. This placed Melchizedek's order above Levi's, showing the temporary nature of the Law.

† Chrysostom (Homilies on Hebrews 12) explained that Levi's priesthood was only potential in Abraham, but Melchizedek's was already real and eternal.

Hebrews 7:11-12

So if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.

† If the Law and Levitical priesthood had brought perfection, there would have been no need for another priest. But the very mention of Melchizedek shows that something greater was intended. With a change of priesthood comes a change of

covenant.

† Josephus (Antiquities 20.10.1) recorded corruption in the Levitical priesthood under Roman control, highlighting the need for a greater priesthood.

† Tertullian (Against the Jews 9) argued that the prophecy of Psalm 110 proved the Law was temporary and that Christ's priesthood was eternal.

Hebrews 7:13-17

For the one about whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses said nothing concerning priests. And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. For it is attested of Him, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

† Jesus came from Judah, not Levi. This means His priesthood was outside the Law and of a higher order. He is priest not by lineage but by the power of His indestructible life. His resurrection is the ultimate proof.

† Origen (Homilies on Hebrews 8) emphasized that Christ's resurrection was the seal of His eternal priesthood.

Hebrews 7:18-22

For, on the one hand, there is the nullification of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect); on the other hand, there is the introduction of a better hope, through which we come near to God. And to the extent that it was not without an oath (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, "The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, 'You are a priest forever'"); by the same extent Jesus also has become the guarantee of a better

covenant.

† The Law could not perfect, but Christ's covenant does. His priesthood was established with an oath, making Him the guarantee of a better covenant.

† The Mishnah (Avot 1.2) said the world stood on the Law, temple, and sacrifices but Hebrews shows the better covenant now rests only on Christ.

† Augustine (On the Psalms 110.4) taught that the Lord's oath was unbreakable, proving Christ's eternal priesthood.

Hebrews 7:23-25

The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing; Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore He is also able to save forever those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

† Levitical priests died and had to be replaced. Christ never dies, so His priesthood continues permanently. His intercession is constant and complete.

† Chrysostom (Homilies on Hebrews 13) emphasized that Christ's unending priesthood guarantees salvation forever.

† Seneca (Letters 24.22) remarked that death interrupts all human offices, but Christ's indestructible life proves His eternal priesthood.

Hebrews 7:26-27

For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest: holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens; who has no daily need, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because He did this once for all time when He offered up Himself.

† Christ is the perfect high priest. He needed no sacrifice for Himself, and His offering of Himself was once for all. The repetition of sacrifices ended in Him.

† The Mishnah (Yoma 5.1) described the yearly sacrifices of the high priest, but Hebrews declares Christ's one sacrifice fulfilled them all.

† Irenaeus (Against Heresies 4.17.2) said Christ's once-for-all sacrifice ended the need for repeated offerings.

Hebrews 7:28

For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, who has been made perfect forever.

† The Law appointed weak men, but God appointed His Son by oath, making Him perfect forever. His priesthood is final and unchanging.

† Tertullian (Against Marcion 5.9) declared that Christ's eternal priesthood fulfilled and ended the temporary system.

Application For Us Today

† Hebrews 7 shows the supremacy of Christ's priesthood. He is not part of a corrupt, dying order, but of the eternal order of Melchizedek.

† The change of priesthood means the change of law. The Old Covenant has ended, and Christ's New Covenant reigns forever.

† Christ's one sacrifice was sufficient. Futurism that looks for another temple or sacrifices denies the finality of His work.

† Our hope rests in His eternal intercession. Unlike earthly priests, Christ never dies, never leaves, and never fails.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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