

Hebrews

Study of Chapter 7

Day 1

The overall theme of Hebrews has been *greater, superior, better.*

Chapter 1 - Jesus is greater than angels

Chapter 2 - Jesus, fully God, fully human

Chapter 3-5 - Jesus is superior to Moses

Chapter 6 - Jesus, the anchor of our hope, He is high priest forever

In Chapter 7, we will see Melchizedek priesthood is superior to Aaron's. Jesus' priesthood is greater than all.

1. Who were the original recipients of this letter? _____

Do you believe the message thus far might have been difficult for them to hear? Why do you believe it was so important for the author to make these comparisons? _____

2. Our last chapter ended with a bit of a teaser for this chapter. I really like The Passion Translation of Hebrews 6:19-20, "*We have this certain hope like a strong, unbreakable anchor holding our souls to God himself. Our anchor of hope is fastened to the mercy seat which sits in the heavenly realm beyond the sacred threshold,²⁰ and where Jesus, our forerunner, has gone in before us. He is now and forever our royal Priest like Melchizedek.*"

This week we will look at this priest Melchizedek in greater detail. Please read chapter 7 twice before starting the study guide. As we have said before, try reading it in a few different translations: Amplified Bible, English Standard Version, The Passion Translation, The Holman Christian Standard Bible, or the New Living Translation.

3. You may be wondering why we are taking time to look at a priest who lived so long ago. How could this be anything to concern ourselves with? Why would the author of Hebrews take time to write about Melchizedek? We must look at the setting. What has the author been encouraging these Hebrew believers to do? If you do not recall, read Hebrews 6:1.

What is he calling the reader to do? _____

4. Who was the object of Melchizedek's worship, stated in Hebrews 7:1?

5. Do all religious roads lead to the same place? _____
Read Psalm 119:160 and Proverbs 14:12 before you answer.

It is crucial that a believer take care and mature in their walk with the Lord. In John 17:17 Jesus prayed for his followers to be set apart, cleansed, and made holy through believing and obeying the Word of God, "Sanctify them by the truth, your word is truth."

6. What two positions of authority does Hebrews 7 say Melchizedek held?

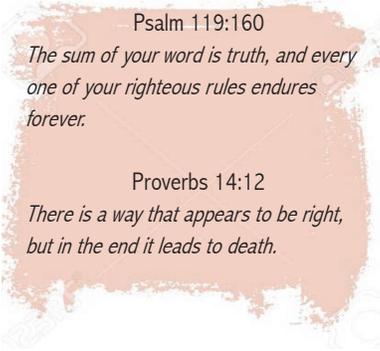
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What does this tell us about the character of this man? _____

7. Which famous Old Testament character does Hebrews tell us lived at the same time as Melchizedek? _____

8. Melchizedek means _____

His name, king of Salem means _____



Day 2

9. The first mention of Melchizedek in the Scriptures is found in Genesis 14:18-20, and then again in Psalm 110:4. Write down any facts you find concerning Melchizedek in Hebrews 7 and these two following sections of Scripture.

Hebrews 7	
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Genesis 14:18-20
Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High,¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth."²⁰ And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand."

Psalm 110:4
The LORD has sworn an oath and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Genesis 14:18-20	
Psalm 110:4	

10. Hebrews 7:3 tells us that Melchizedek is "like" or "resembles" the Son of God. It is the Greek word *apomoioo*, which means made to be like or resembling. From the Scriptures you have read so far concerning Melchizedek, what are those similarities?

11. Hebrews 7:5 refers to the law; what law is the author directing our attention to here?

12. Where were the Levites at the time of Melchizedek? _____

13. This chapter compares Melchizedek to the priesthood of Levi. Read below Numbers 8:10-19 and Numbers 18:1-7. Use a highlighter to mark the Levitical priests' responsibilities in the verses.

Numbers 18:1-7 HCSB

The Lord said to Aaron, "You, your sons, and your ancestral house will be responsible for sin against the sanctuary. You and your sons will be responsible for sin involving your priesthood.² But also bring your brothers with you from the tribe of Levi, your ancestral tribe, so they may join you and serve with you and your sons in front of the tent of the testimony.³ They are to perform duties for you and for the whole tent. They must not come near the sanctuary equipment or the altar; otherwise, both they and you will die.⁴ They are to join you and guard the tent of meeting, doing all the work at the tent, but no unauthorized person may come near you.⁵ You are to guard the sanctuary and the altar so that wrath may not fall on the Israelites again.⁶ Look, I have selected your fellow Levites from the Israelites as a gift for you, assigned by the Lord to work at the tent of meeting.⁷ But you and your sons will carry out your priestly responsibilities for everything concerning the altar and for what is inside the veil, and you will do that work. I am giving you the work of the priesthood as a gift, but an unauthorized person who comes near [the sanctuary] will be put to death."

Numbers 8:10-15, 19 NLT

You are to bring the Levites before the LORD, and the Israelites are to lay their hands on them.¹¹ Aaron is to present the Levites before the LORD as a wave offering from the Israelites, so that they may be ready to do the work of the LORD.¹² "Then the Levites are to lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, using one for a sin offering to the LORD and the other for a burnt offering, to make atonement for the Levites.¹³ Have the Levites stand in front of Aaron and his sons and then present them as a wave offering to the LORD.¹⁴ In this way you are to set the Levites apart from the other Israelites, and the Levites will be mine.¹⁵ "After you have purified the Levites and presented them as a wave offering, they are to come to do their work at the tent of meeting....¹⁹ From among all the Israelites, I have given the Levites as gifts to Aaron and his sons to do the work at the tent of meeting on behalf of the Israelites and to make atonement for them so that no plague will strike the Israelites when they go near the sanctuary."

Day 3

Hebrews 7:11 ESV

Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?

Hebrews 7:15 ESV

This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek,

Leviticus 9:7

Then Moses said to Aaron, "Draw near to the altar and offer your sin offering and your burnt offering and make atonement for yourself and for the people, and bring the offering of the people and make atonement for them, as the LORD has commanded."

Romans 3:20 NLT

For no one can ever be made right with God in doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.

Galatians 3:23-25 NLT

Before the way of faith in Christ was available to us, we were placed under guard by the law. We were kept in protective custody, so to speak, until the way of faith was revealed. ²⁴Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. ²⁵And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian.

14. Hebrews 7:11-16 speaks of a change. What was the change mentioned in these verses? Be as specific as possible from the information in these verses.

15. In the ESV translation of Hebrews 7:11 and 15, we see the words "another" and "likeness." Define these words using the Strong's Concordance.

another - _____

likeness - _____

16. If you are familiar with the Levitical priesthood, you know that forgiveness always requires something from the sinner. Read Leviticus 9:7. What did the Mosaic law require, and how did the people receive atonement for their sins during the days of the Levitical priesthood? _____

17. Hebrews 7:17 is a quote from Psalm 110. Look up Psalm 110; who is speaking? Who is the only one who could make this declaration? _____

18. According to Romans 3:20, what was the intended purpose for the Mosaic law? _____

19. What is the amazingly good news of Galatians 3:23-25? _____

Day 4

20. The law had been observed for generations from Moses to Jesus. Pay close attention to how the author of Hebrews describes this law in Hebrews 7:18-19. Look up the words used to describe the former regulation or commandment in the Strong's Concordance, and then paraphrase what you learned.

21. Hebrews 7:21-22 is a continuation of the quote from Psalm 110:4. What information can be gleaned from these verses? _____

Ephesians 1:3-14

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. ¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

- 22. Because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Such a beautiful promise we read in Hebrews 7:25. What is Jesus able to do for all those who place their trust in him? _____
- 23. God's persistent love through the ages has always moved toward our redemption and forgiveness. While we are in our sin, we are separated from God. Our God is holy and cannot look on evil. Only Christ's sacrifice for us can bring holy God close, so that we can have an intimate relationship with him that will last forever. Read Ephesians 1:3-14. Make a list of all you see concerning God's gracious love for us. It might help to circle the verbs that relate to what God has done for us by his grace. I have marked the first three. _____

- 24. Considering all we have seen concerning Christ and his provision of salvation, why not take a minute to write a prayer to God expressing the feelings in your heart.
- 25. According to Hebrews 7:25-26, what does our high priest Jesus, do, and how is he described? _____

Day 5

1 Corinthians 26-27

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

- 26. If you read Hebrews 7:28 in several translations you will see they describe the Levitical priests as weak, frail, having infirmities, prone to or subject to weakness, feeble, imperfect men who were never able to get the job done completely. Why do you believe God chose them? _____

- Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-27. Who does God choose to use today to bring men and women into a right relationship with Him? _____

- Why do you believe he does it this way? Who gets the glory? _____

Romans 1:28-32

Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.

²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

27. Men and women who refuse to accept Christ's finished work, who choose to remain in their sin, are described in Romans 1:28-32. How are they described? In the verse to the right, underline the descriptive words Paul used to identify those who would not accept the gift of salvation.

28. Using Hebrews 7:22-28, list the reasons Jesus is far superior to the Levitical priests. "Jesus has become our guarantor of a better covenant."

	Jesus	Levitical priests
Hebrews 7:23		Levitical priests died preventing them from continuing in office
Hebrews 7:24	Jesus lives forever. He has a permanent priesthood	
Hebrews 7:25		
Hebrews 7:26		
Hebrews 7:27		
Hebrews 7:28		

29. I understand if you are having a hard time seeing the need to study this king/priest Melchizedek. There are probably many other subjects you would rather study and discuss—subjects you feel would help you so much more in your day-to-day activities. The bottom line is, the Holy Spirit of God inspired the author of Hebrews to point our attention to Melchizedek, and so we must diligently glean all we can. Truly I tell you, Jesus Christ is the answer to every question we have, the answer to every temptation we encounter and the answer to every trial we walk through. We want to know Him intimately. What does it mean to know someone intimately? _____

30. The recipients of this letter were going through tremendous persecution and were in danger of returning to their former traditions and laws. Many were not maturing in their walk of faith but were still only taking in the milk of the word. The author wants them to see the futility of returning to the old covenant to save them. There was a new covenant. How was this covenant described in Hebrews 7:22? _____

31. When we see the holiness of God and the utter sinfulness of mankind, then we will see our desperate need for Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Look for opportunities to share some of what you have learned this week with someone else. Sharing helps the other person, and it solidifies what we have learned. If you are doing this study in a small group, tell them about your experience sharing the gospel.

32. The Scripture says that Melchizedek is a type of Christ. He worshiped the God Most High, the One True God who is sovereign over all, the God we can confidently put our trust in and are never disappointed. The question is, do you know Him? Do you know He loves you? He has loved you since before creation. Have you considered the tremendous sacrifice that was paid to enable you to have a relationship with God? Have you asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins and be your Savior? If so, you can confidently trust His promises. The Holy Spirit living in us is the guarantee of a better covenant.

33. Looking back on your time in God's word this week, what is your biggest takeaway?

