

# Bible Study Guide - Hebrews 7:15-28

Bellevue Church of Christ – Fall / Winter 2017-2018

## The Greater Mediator (Chapters 1 to 7)

**Greater Than the Priests (4:14 to 7:28)**

### Power (15-17)

#### This...more evident

-That there had to be a new law and priesthood (11-14)  
-The priesthood had to be from a different order than Aaron.

<sup>15</sup> **This becomes even more evident** when another priest arises in the *likeness* of Melchizedek,<sup>16</sup> who has become a **priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.**

**Jesus**

**Melchizedek**  
-Gen 14:17-20  
-Ps 110:4

*The priesthood of Jesus is not based on His ancestry, but by His life!*

### Indestructible Life

-Jesus defeated death through the resurrection  
-1Co 15

### Peace (18-19)

#### "set aside"

-Lit "annulled"  
-The law was not capable of making man acceptable before God (2:2)  
-The Levitical system is no longer necessary because of Jesus' priestly work (10:1-4).

<sup>17</sup> For it is witnessed of him, "**You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.**"

Ps 110:4

<sup>18</sup> For on the one hand, a **former commandment is set aside** because of its *weakness* and *uselessness*<sup>19</sup> (for the law **made nothing perfect**); but on the other hand, a **better hope** is introduced, through which we draw near to God. <- Rom 5:1-11; Eph 2:11-22

**The author does not claim that the OT no longer has relevance for God's people (Rom 15:4).**

### Promise (20-22)

<sup>20</sup> And it was **not without** an **oath**. For those who formerly became priests were made such **without an oath**,<sup>21</sup> 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.**'"

Ps 110:4

There was no oath when the Aaronic priesthood was formed, which means that it lacks the permanence of the priesthood of Jesus.

### Permanence (23-25)

#### "many in number"

-Further contrasts to show the temporary nature of the Levitical priesthood vs. the permanence of Jesus' priesthood.  
-Josephus said there were 83 high priests from Aaron to the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 (Antiq. XX, x. 1)

<sup>22</sup> This makes Jesus the **guarantor** of a **better covenant**.

### Guarantor

**What makes Jesus the "guarantor?"**

*\*The entirety of His life, together with all that He did and is doing:*

- Death on the cross
- Resurrection
- Ascension
- Sitting down at the right-hand of God
- Interceding for the redeemed

<sup>23</sup> The former priests were **many in number**, because they were **prevented by death from continuing in office**,<sup>24</sup> but **he** holds his **priesthood permanently**, because he continues forever.<sup>25</sup> 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.**

4:14-16; Rom 8:34

### Propitiate (26-28)

#### Reasons why Jesus provided a superior sacrifice

- (1) Holy
- (2) Innocent
- (3) Unstained
- (4) Separated
- (5) Exalted

<sup>26</sup> For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, <sup>(1)</sup> **holy**, <sup>(2)</sup> **innocent**, <sup>(3)</sup> **unstained**, <sup>(4)</sup> **separated** from sinners, and <sup>(5)</sup> **exalted** above the heavens.<sup>27</sup> 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.<sup>28</sup> 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.**

**The promise of Ps 110:4 was made after law.**

## Hebrews Chapter 7 - Questions for Discussion

What is the “power of an endless life?” Who has this? (v. 16)

What did the law make perfect? What was the weakness in the law of Moses?  
(vv. 19; Rom 7)

What is the “better hope” that is introduced? (v. 19)

What oath is referred to in Heb 7:20? (v. Psalm 110:4)

What benefit do we derive from the fact that Christ “always lives?” (vv. 23-25)

Why was Christ, our High Priest, “fitting for us?” (v. 26)

According to Heb 7:27, what is the difference between Christ and the high priests of the Mosaic Law?

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### Teacher's Notes

#### Melchizedek

##### Genesis 14:17–20 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup> After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). <sup>18</sup> And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) <sup>19</sup> And he blessed him and said,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
Possessor of heaven and earth;  
<sup>20</sup> and blessed be God Most High,  
who has delivered your enemies into your hand!”

And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

##### Psalms 110:4 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> The LORD has sworn  
and will not change his mind,  
“You are a priest forever  
after the order of Melchizedek.”

#### More Evident

##### Hebrews 7:11–14 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> 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? <sup>12</sup> For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. <sup>13</sup> For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. <sup>14</sup> For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

#### Indestructible Life

##### 1 Corinthians 15 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on

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the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,<sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.<sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.<sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.<sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.<sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.<sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.<sup>11</sup> Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?<sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.<sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.<sup>15</sup> We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.<sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.<sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.<sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.<sup>19</sup> If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

<sup>20</sup> But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.<sup>21</sup> For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.<sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.<sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.<sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.<sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death.<sup>27</sup> For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him.<sup>28</sup> When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

<sup>29</sup> Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?<sup>30</sup> Why are we in danger every hour?<sup>31</sup> I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day!<sup>32</sup> What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”<sup>33</sup> Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”<sup>34</sup> Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

<sup>35</sup> But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?”<sup>36</sup> You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.<sup>37</sup> And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.<sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.<sup>39</sup> For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.<sup>40</sup> There are heavenly bodies and

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earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

<sup>42</sup> So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

<sup>50</sup> I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

<sup>55</sup> “O death, where is your victory?  
O death, where is your sting?”

<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

### Set Aside

#### Hebrews 10:1–4 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup> Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? <sup>3</sup> But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

#### Romans 15:4 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

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### Hope / Peace

#### **Romans 5:1–11 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup> Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— <sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. <sup>11</sup> More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

#### **Ephesians 2:11–22 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— <sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility <sup>15</sup> by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. <sup>17</sup> And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. <sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

### Permanence

#### **Antiquities of the Jews - Book XX**

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***Containing the interval of 22 Years.***

***From Fadus the procurator, to Florus.***

### **Chapter 10.**

*An enumeration of the High Priests.*

1. And now I think it proper and agreeable to this history to give an account of our High Priests; how they began; and who those are which are capable of that dignity; and how many of them there had been at the end of the war. In the first place therefore history informs us, that Aaron, the brother of Moses, officiated to God as an High Priest: and that, after his death, his sons succeeded him immediately: and that this dignity hath been continued down from them all to their posterity. Whence it is a custom of our country, that no one should take the High Priesthood of God, but he who is of the blood of Aaron: while every one that is of another stock, though he were a King, can never obtain that High Priesthood. Accordingly the number of all the High Priests from Aaron, of whom we have spoken already as of the first of them, until Phanias, who was made High Priest during the war by the seditious, was eighty three. Of whom thirteen officiated as High Priests in the wilderness; from the days of Moses, while the tabernacle was standing, until the people came into Judea, when King Solomon erected the temple to God. For at the first they held the High Priesthood till the end of their life: although afterward they had successors while they were alive. Now these thirteen, who were the descendants of two of the sons of Aaron, received this dignity by succession one after another. For their form of government was an aristocracy; and after that a monarchy; and in the third place the government was regal. Now the number of years during the rule of these thirteen, from the day when our fathers departed out of Egypt, under Moses their leader, until the building of that temple which King Solomon erected at Jerusalem, were six hundred and twelve. After those thirteen High Priests, eighteen took the High Priesthood at Jerusalem, one in succession to another, from the days of King Solomon, until Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon made an expedition against that city, and burnt the temple, and removed our nation into Babylon, and then took Josadek the High Priest captive. The times of these High Priests were four hundred and sixty six years, six months, and ten days: while the Jews were still under the regal government. But after the term of the seventy years captivity under the Babylonians, Cyrus, King of Persia sent the Jews from Babylon to their own land again; and gave them leave to rebuild their temple. At which time Jesus, the son of Josadek took the High Priesthood over the captives, when they were returned home. Now he and his posterity, who were in all fifteen, until King Antiochus Eupator, were under a democratical government, for four hundred and fourteen years. And then the forementioned Antiochus, and Lysias the general of his army, deprived Onias, who was also named *Menelaus*, of the High Priesthood, and slew him at Berea; and driving away the son [of Onias the third,] put Jacimus into the place of the High Priest. One that was indeed of the stock of Aaron; but not of that family of Onias. On which account Onias, who was the nephew of Onias that was dead, and bore the same name with his father, came into Egypt, and got into the friendship of Ptolemy Philometor, and Cleopatra his wife; and persuaded them to make

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him the High Priest of that temple which he built to God in the prefecture of Heliopolis; and this in imitation of that at Jerusalem. But as for that temple which was built in Egypt, we have spoken of it frequently already.<sup>11</sup> Now when Jacimus had retained the High Priesthood three years, he died; and there was no one that succeeded him: but the city continued seven years without an High Priest. But then the posterity of the sons of Asamoneus, who had the government of the nation conferred upon them, when they had beaten the Macedonians in war, appointed Jonathan to be their High Priest: who ruled over them seven years. And when he had been slain by the treacherous contrivance of Trypho, as we have related somewhere,<sup>12</sup> Simon his brother took the High Priesthood; and when he was destroyed at a feast by the treachery of his son-in-law, his own son, whose name was Hyrcanus, succeeded him; after he had held the High Priesthood one year longer than his brother. This Hyrcanus enjoyed that dignity thirty years; and dyed an old man: leaving the succession to Judas, who was also called *Aristobulus*. Whose brother Alexander was his heir: which Judas died of a sore distemper, after he had kept the priesthood, together with the royal authority. For this Judas was the first that put on his head a diadem, for one year. And when Alexander had been both King and High Priest twenty seven years, he departed this life; and permitted his wife Alexandra to appoint him that should be High Priest. So she gave the High Priesthood to Hyrcanus: but retained the Kingdom her self, nine years; and then departed this life. The like duration [and no longer] did her son Hyrcanus enjoy the High Priesthood. For after her death his brother Aristobulus fought against him, and beat him, and deprived him of his principality: and he did himself both reign, and perform the office of High Priest to God. But when he had reigned three years, and as many months, Pompey came upon him: and not only took the city of Jerusalem by force, but put him and his children in bonds, and sent them to Rome. He also restored the High Priesthood to Hyrcanus; and made him governor of the nation: but forbade him to wear a diadem. This Hyrcanus ruled, besides his first nine years, twenty-four years more, when Barzapharnes and Pacorus, the generals of the Parthians, passed over Euphrates, and fought with Hyrcanus, and took him alive, and made Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, King. And when he had reigned three years and three months, Sosius and Herod besieged him, and took him. When Antony had him brought to Antioch, and slain there. Herod was then made King by the Romans; but did no longer appoint High Priests out of the family of Asamoneus; but made certain men to be so that were of no eminent families; but barely of those that were priests: excepting that he gave that dignity to Aristobulus. For when he had made this Aristobulus, the grandson of that Hyrcanus who was then taken by the Parthians, and had taken his sister Mariamne to wife, he thereby aimed to win the good will of the people, who had a kind remembrance of Hyrcanus [his grand-father.] Yet did he afterward, out of his fear lest they should all bend their inclinations to Aristobulus, put him to death: and that by contriving how to have him suffocated, as he was swimming at Jericho; as we have already related that matter.<sup>13</sup> But after this man he never intrusted the High Priesthood to the posterity of the sons of Asamoneus. Archelaus also, Herod's son, did like his father in the appointment of the High Priests: as did the Romans also, who took the government over

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the Jews into their hands afterward. Accordingly the number of the High Priests, from the days of Herod, until the day when Titus took the temple, and the city, and burnt them, were in all twenty eight.<sup>14</sup> The time also that belonged to them was an hundred and seven years. Some of these were the political governors of the people under the reign of Herod, and under the reign of Archelaus his son: although after their death the government became an aristocracy; and the High Priests were intrusted with a dominion over the nation. And thus much may suffice to be said concerning our High Priests.

### Intercession

#### Hebrews 4:14–16 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup> Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

#### Romans 8:34 (ESV)

<sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.