



JESUS

Up Close and Personal

A Study of Hebrews | The Pastors' Bible Study 2013-2014

Hebrews 7:11-28

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Luke Gordon, Youth Ministries Director

Hebrews 7:11-28 (NIV)

¹¹ If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood—and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood—why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? ¹² For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. ¹³ He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. ¹⁵ And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, ¹⁶ one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is declared:

“You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek.” ^[Psalm 110:4]

¹⁸ The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

²⁰ And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, ²¹ but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him:

“The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind:
‘You are a priest forever.’” ^[Psalm 110:4]

²² Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

²³ Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely ^[c] those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

²⁶ Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men in all their weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Reflection Questions

1. The author begins by asking his audience to consider “If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood...” In what ways do you seek to attain perfection outside of Jesus Christ? In what ways did the sacrificial system of the Levitical priesthood fall short? In what ways do your attempts at perfection fall short?
2. Jesus was a priest, but not from the priestly line of Aaron or the tribe of Levi. On what basis did Jesus’ priestly authority rest? (*see verse sixteen*)
3. We live in a world where position and power are often inherited. Jesus’ priestly power and authority originated outside the expected boundaries and regulations. Like the nation of Israel, the church has a rich ancestry. In what ways can our rich ancestry and tradition create boundaries and regulations that hinder our faithfulness to Jesus? Our Lord calls us to follow Him outside our man-made borders. What border is Jesus calling you to cross right now in your life?
4. Verse eighteen says that *the former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect)*. In what ways have you found this to be true? What does this reveal about God’s righteousness and our unrighteousness?
5. The sacrificial system was a means to atone for the sins of the people. Guilt and shame are two of the natural consequences of sin. Guilt and shame cause us to turn away from God. Can you think of a time recently where your own sin has caused you to turn away from God?
6. Hebrews tells us that Jesus offers a *better hope, by which we draw near to God (18)*. Jesus has become the *guarantor of a better covenant (22)* and a *permanent priesthood (24)*, by which *He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him (25)*.

What does it look like for us to come to God through Jesus Christ? The first time we come to God through Jesus is called conversion. However, one time is not enough. We are called to draw near to God daily and to come to God through Jesus as a part of our momentary experience of life. How is this better than the Levitical sacrificial system of atonement?