

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

STUDY NUMBER THIRTEEN - HEBREWS 7:11-28

TEXT:

v.11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood, for on the basis of it the people have received the Law, what further need was there for another priest to be arising according to the order of Melchizedek, and not being designated according to the order of Aaron?

v.12 For when the priesthood is being changed, of necessity there is taking place a change of law also.

v.13 For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.

v.14 For it is known to all that our Lord has descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.

v.15 And this is clearer still, if another priest is arising according to the likeness of Melchizedek,

v.16 who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life.

v.17 For it is witnessed of Him that: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

v.18 For, on the one hand, there is a doing away of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness

v.19 for the Law made nothing perfect, and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we are drawing near to God.

v.20 And inasmuch as it was not without an oath for they indeed have become priests without an oath,

v.21 but He with an oath through the One who is saying to Him, "The Lord placed Himself under oath and will not change His mind, 'You are a priest forever'";

v.22 so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

v.23 And they indeed have been made many priests in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing,

v.24 but this [priest], because He is abiding forever, is holding His priesthood permanently.

v.25 Hence also He is able to be saving forever those who are drawing near to God through Him, since He always is living for the purpose of making intercession for them.

v.26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, having been separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

v.27 He who is not having a need daily, like those high priests, to be offering up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, for this He did once for all, having offered up Himself.

v.28 For the Law is appointing men as high priests who are having weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, who has been made perfect forever.

INTRODUCTION:

Don't ever let anybody tell you that writing is not a difficult task.

T. S. Eliot defines writing as:

“A raid on the inarticulate.”

Red Smith says:

“There's nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and open up a vein.”

Partway through the writing of the new book, Pearl gave me this message:

This is what I prayed for you today:

“Combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words”
(1 Cor. 2:13b).

I thought as we begin our studies together a little COWBOY POETRY might lift your spirits:

(Humorous Cowboy Poetry: A Knee-Slappin' Gathering edited by staff members)

The Preacher's Horse

LeRoy Jones

The Preacher saw this Cowhand come a-walking up the lane--
His saddle on his shoulder and his face was marked with
pain.

The Preacher said, "Just come right in and pull you up a
chair
And tell me of the problem that has brought you to despair."

The Cowboy said, "My horse stepped in a hole and took a
fall,

It broke his leg and so I had to shoot him. After all,
You can't just let them suffer, but it fills me with remorse
To take his life that way; but, Preacher, now I need a
horse."

The Preacher said, "You're lucky, 'cause I've got just what
you need.

I trained a horse for my own use, but I'll sell you that
steed.

He's sound as any dollar, and he's up to any task,
You'll find him plenty willing, and he'll give you all you
ask.

"Come out and take a look at him and see if you agree
He'll do for what you have in mind. He's good, I
guarantee."

The chance to get a horse like that sure boosted his morale,
So he got up with the Preacher and went to the corral.

That Preacher knew his horses, that was very plain to see;
So they both struck a bargain for a reasonable fee.

The Preacher said, "You've bought the best and that I'll
verify.

But let me tell you one more thing before you say good-bye.

"I trained that horse to use myself and taught him by the
Book.

For you to use him here's the rules you mustn't overlook.
He works by voice command alone; your guard you mustn't
drop,

‘Cause Giddap doesn’t make him go, and Whoa don’t make him stop.

“I trained him with the words I use in sermons that I preach,
So you just need to learn these words and proper use of each.
To make him go, say ‘Praise the Lord.’ He’ll move right out, and then,
Just when you want to make him stop you simply say, ‘Amen.’

“With just a bit of practice you can learn that in no time.
These words will make him hit a run, or stop him on a dime.”
So this Cowpuncher saddled up and then he climbed aboard,
And making this small clicking sound said, “ck, ck, Praise the Lord!”

The horse stepped out and in a canter headed down the lane.
He said, “Amen,” and then the horse came to a stop again.
Why this would be more simple than he even dared to hope,
And with that knowledge, shouting “Praise the Lord,” he hit a lope.

With fluid motion horse and rider seemed to be as one--
The distance simply fell away. That horse could truly run.
The Cowpoke doesn’t seem to know how far he’d really gone
Until amazed he saw the cleft that he had come upon.

He knew it was the river with a bluff on either side,
And knew if he went over he had taken his last ride.
“Whoa, horse!” he shouted and pulled back with all his might,
But that horse didn’t break his stride or slow his headlong flight.

Now what was it the Preacher said that he would have to say
To make that horse come to a stop, now did he say to pray?
That’s not quite it. Oh, now I know. “AMEN,” he fairly shrieked
And brought him to a sliding stop--but he could hardly speak.

His heart was right up in his throat and pounding like a drum,

And he could barely catch his breath, the scare left him so numb.
 The bluff edge there was right back underneath the horse's chin.
 How lucky he remembered that he had to say "Amen."

He stood up in his stirrups there and looked down at the bluff.
 There wasn't room for one more step. Man, that was close enough!
 He'd almost met his maker and collected his reward.
 He sunk back in the saddle as he sighed, "Oh, Praise the Lord!"
 pp. 87-88

(Perilous Pursuits by Joseph M. Stowell)

Counselor Larry Crabb notes: "The human race got off on a seriously wrong foot when Eve yielded to Satan's lie that more satisfaction was available if she took matters into her own hands. When Adam joined her in looking for life outside of God's revealed will, he infected all his descendants with the disease of self-management."
p. 88

(Acts of Love: The Power of Encouragement by David Jeremiah)

Jim Elliott, the martyred missionary, once wrote in his journal: "I think the Devil has made it his business to monopolize on three elements: noise, hurry, and crowds. Satan is quite aware of the power of silence."
p. 66

The writer to the book of Hebrews is writing to a group of individuals who are contemplating departing from their Christian faith and going back to find comfort under the old Judaism that they left when they invited Christ into their lives.

It is the challenge of the author to admonish them in this regard by pointing out the superiority of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the epistle thus far we have seen that:

1. CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO ANGELS,
2. HE'S SUPERIOR TO MOSES, and
3. HIS PRIESTHOOD IS ALSO SUPERIOR TO THAT OF AARON.

Do You Have an Agent?

The sports scene is a dominant part of American society. Name your favorite sport: golf, tennis, hockey, bowling, baseball, football--they all have their high-priced talent. In many instances, athletes are hiring men to represent them in contract negotiations with team owners and managers. These go-betweens are called agents. Their job is to speak in behalf of their clients and to bring about harmony when there is disagreement, usually on matters relating to salary and benefits.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

Just as we are careful to choose our lawyers to represent us, and our doctors to diagnose our situation, it is absolutely essential that we choose the right priest to represent us before a holy God.

There are some who are so foolish to think that they will represent themselves before God and do not have a need for one to intercede for them. How foolish to think that they can win their day in court on their own.

Scripture gives us sober warning in 1 Timothy 2:5:

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

The priesthood of Jesus Christ is unique and superior to that of the priesthood of Aaron.

In Hebrews 7 we are right in the middle of this argument about the superiority of the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

The whole argument of the passage is built on Psalms 110:4:

The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind:
"You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek."

As the passage unfolds, we will see:

1. In God's sight the Aaronic priesthood has come to an end.
2. The Aaronic priesthood is imperfect.

If we were to give a title to these verses that we are going to be considering at the end of chapter 7, it would be:

“A CHANGE OF PRIESTHOOD.”

Pink says:

In the second section of chap 7 which begins at v. 11, the apostle points out the inevitable inferences which must be drawn from and the certain corollaries which are involved in what had just been shown. The fact that the Messiah was Priest after the order of Melchizedek, necessarily set aside the Levitical order. The fact that God had sent His Son to perform a sacerdotal work, plainly signified that the ministry of Aaron and his successors was inadequate. The fact that “perfection” was not brought in till Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice to God, clearly showed that imperfection attached to those who preceded Him. To bring this out the more clearly was the great design of the apostle in the verses which are to be before us. He had now reached that which was the most difficult for the Jews to receive, viz., that what had been so long venerated by their fathers had now been set aside by God.
p. 379

Lenski says:

The preceding section is built up on the very greatness of Abraham; but Melchizedek and the royal-kingly priesthood represented in him are shown to be even greater than Abraham. We have also seen that the priesthood that had its source in Abraham through Levi was beneath Melchizedek and the priesthood which he represents. Now we learn in what respect the Levitical priesthood is lacking and thus necessitated a greater priesthood, namely the one that is typified in Melchizedek and that is before us in Jesus, “a Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”
p. 221

Kistemaker points out:

One of the recurring motifs in the Epistle to the Hebrews is that of God introducing a new order and thereby bringing the old order to an end. In 4:8 Joshua's concept of rest is completely overshadowed by God's rest. In 8:13 the first covenant is declared obsolete because the new covenant has taken its place. And in 7:11-12 the Levitical priesthood (which was established by divine law) has been superseded by the priesthood of Melchizedek; this necessitates a change in that law.

p. 192

DeHaan says much the same thing:

First then it is shown that the priesthood of Christ was better than Aaron's. Aaron's priestly ministry was imperfect, because he himself was a sinner and needed to sacrifice for himself. Moreover the priesthood under the law was incomplete, for the priest died before he had finished his work, and it had to be continued by his successors. The priesthood of Aaron was not from the tribe of Judah, but Levi, while God's eternal Priest was to be of the kingly line of Judah. The only acceptable priest must also be a king. In Israel no king was allowed to be a priest, and no priest was allowed to be a king. But in Christ both are combined, and therefore, He was after the order of Melchisedec, who was "King of righteousness," and a "priest of the most high God."

p. 121

Barclay observes:

If the old priesthood had fulfilled the function of bringing men to the presence of God there would have been no need for any priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

p. 73

Barclay summarizes things well when he says:

- (i) Jesus is the High Priest, whose priesthood depends not on any genealogy, but on Himself and Himself alone.
- (ii) Jesus is the High Priest who lives for ever and who never dies.
- (iii) Jesus is the High Priest who Himself is sinless and never needs to offer any sacrifice for His own sin.
- (iv) Jesus is the High Priest who in the offering of Himself made the perfect sacrifice. No more need sacrifice be made every day. Once and for all the sacrifice has been made which opens the way to God.

The function of the priest is to open the door of access to God; once and for all Jesus did that, achieving for ever that which the ordinary and the earthly priesthood could never do.

p. 74

Wiersbe prepares us for our study when he says:

In this section, the writer took his argument one step further. Not only is Melchizedek *greater than* Aaron, but Melchizedek has *replaced Aaron!* It is no longer “the order of Aaron” or “the order of Levi.” It is forever “the order of Melchizedek.” Why would God effect such a radical change?

p. 75

v.11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood, for on the basis of it the people have received the Law, what further need was there for another priest to be arising according to the order of Melchizedek, and not being designated according to the order of Aaron?

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

In the simplest manner, the author argued for the imperfection of the **Levitical priesthood** on the basis of God's promise. . . . Since there was a **change of the priesthood**, it follows that the whole legal system on which the Levitical institutions were predicated also had to be changed.
p. 798

“NOW IF PERFECTION WAS THROUGH THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD”

That is, they are saved and trying to reach perfection through the Law.

The futility of that is underscored by the apostle Paul in Romans 3:19-24:

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus

Romans 6:14

For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

The writer is saying that if the goal of ACCESS and ACCEPTANCE into the presence of God was accomplished by the Levitical priesthood in the observance of the Law, that raises a real question:

QUESTION:

WHAT FURTHER NEED WAS THERE FOR ANOTHER PRIEST TO BE ARISING ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK, AND NOT BEING DESIGNATED ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF AARON?

IF THE OTHER ONE WAS WORKING, WHY CHANGE IT?

Westcott observes:

The Levitical priesthood and the Law, which it represented, were alike transitional and transitory.
p. 180

If then there had been a bringing to perfection through the Levitical priesthood--if in other words there had been a bringing to perfection through the Law--there would have been no need of another priesthood. If on the other hand the whole Law failed to accomplish that to which it pointed, then so far also the priesthood failed. Such a failure, not a failure but the fulfilment of the divine purpose, was indicated by the promise of another priesthood in a new line.
p. 180

Delitzsch observes:

If the Levitical priesthood was able to bring about perfection, what need was there to look any further? The author of the epistle thinks himself back into the time in which the prophetic oracle was given in the 110th Psalm, and speaks as objectively and as definitely as possible.
p. 350

Lenski says:

God gave the Levitical priesthood to the Jews and then imposed a number of laws upon them with regard to this priesthood. The perfect tense “have been lawed,” i.e., “have been subjected to law,” stresses the condition as continuing thus under the laws imposed.

p. 223

Draper says:

Had that law done what it was intended to do, there would be no need for another priest. The sacrificial system under the Levitical priesthood was intended to bring men to God and unite them together in the bond of salvation to be provided by God. Had the priesthood achieved its purpose, there would be no reason for another system.

pp. 193-4

Bruce points out:

If God had intended the Aaronic priesthood to inaugurate the age of perfection, the time when men and women would enjoy unimpeded access to him, why should he have conferred on the Messiah a priestly dignity of his own--different⁴⁵ from Aaron's and by implication superior to Aaron's?

⁴⁵. See A. Vanhoye, *Prêtres anciens, prêtre nouveau selon le Nouveau Testament*, Parole de Dieu 20 (Paris, 1980).

p. 165

Wuest observes:

The word “another” is the translation of *heteros*, meaning, “of another kind.” That is, since the Levitical priesthood brought nothing to completion, not merely another priest was needed, but another priest of a different kind. It could not be another priest in the line of Aaron, but one of a different order of priesthood. That is the argument of the writer.

p. 132

Richards says:

The immediate reaction of the readers must have been a challenging question: "What's wrong with the old system? Why did the Aaronic priesthood (and, by implication, the whole system of Law) have to be replaced?"

p. 72

MacArthur makes similar observations:

If the Aaronic priesthood had been perfect, another would have been unnecessary. Or, if God had intended the Aaronic priesthood somehow to improve and one day introduce the age of perfect access to Him, why would He have planned for the Messiah to be a priest of a different **order**?

It was no accident or mistake that God set aside the Israelite priesthood. He had planned it that way from the beginning. That is obvious because soon after He called Abraham, before He actually made the covenant with him, God introduced him to Melchizedek, a priest of a higher order than the one that would come from Abraham's descendants.

p. 185

The point of 7:11 is made clear. If the Levitical priesthood could have brought this perfection--which is access to God, or salvation--why would God have provided another priesthood?

p. 187

Hession says:

The fact that it was prophesied that a priest should arise after the order of Melchizedek, and not after Aaron, and that Jesus is that Priest has some far-reaching consequences and implications in this epistle.

It implies first of all that the Levitical priesthood and system of worship were inadequate and due to be replaced. "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood . . . what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" (7:11).

p. 71

English says:

The whole purpose of priesthood is to offer expiation for sin that will result in man's being in right relationship to God. If the relationship between man and God could be satisfactory and entirely peaceful by means of the Levitical priesthood, why should it have been necessary for another priest to arise, after the order of Melchisedec? Why not simply mediate through another successor in the line of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi?
p. 197

Lange quotes Rieger as saying:

From the fact that another Priest was to appear, was to be inferred an entire change in the economy of God.
p. 135

McGee summarizes it all when he says:

In other words, the thing which characterized the Aaronic priesthood is that it was incomplete. It never brought perfection, complete communion with God. It *never* gave redemption and acceptance before God to the people. It never achieved its goal. Therefore we need Christ.
p. 554

During the spring of this year a doctor friend who assisted on my hip replacement suggested that he take some x-rays to see how I was doing. My doctor friend took the x-rays and sent them on to the surgeon who had done the surgery in Dallas. I received a call from the surgeon asking that I make an appointment so they could further diagnose my situation and see whether anything needed to be done at this time. They were observing some wear and wanted to take a further look.

Being pressed for time, I checked with my good doctor next door, Dr. Knarr, and he asked me if my hip was working. I said, "Yes, sir, it is." And he said, "Then leave a sleeping dog lie. There is no need to mess with something that is working."

It is obvious that the Aaronic priesthood was not working. It was not accomplishing its purpose. Therefore, in the coming of Christ the King-priest after the order of Melchizedek, we have One who can provide a righteous standing in the presence of a holy God and provide access into His very presence.

v.12 For when the priesthood is being changed, of necessity there is taking place a change of law also.

A changed PRIESTHOOD requires a changed LAW.

The law and the priesthood go together.

“FOR WHEN THE PRIESTHOOD IS BEING CHANGED” (referring to putting one thing in the place of another) it is necessary that there be “A CHANGE OF LAW ALSO.”

Galatians 3:13

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”

Matthew 27:50-52

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split, and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised

(The Finishing Touch: Becoming God's Masterpiece: A Daily Devotional by Charles R. Swindoll)

As Yogi Berra once said, “You can observe a lot just by watching.”
p. 432

English makes the point by saying:

The Law was given in connection with the priesthood. And this is important: *the Law could not survive without the priesthood.*
p. 198

Westcott says:

The change of priesthood involves the change of Law. Such a change must have been called for by an overwhelming necessity.
p. 181

Wiersbe puts it this way:

Since the priests received their authority from the Old Testament Law (Heb. 7:28), and since the priesthood has been changed, there has also been a change in that Law. The President of the United States cannot proclaim himself King of the United States because U.S. law makes no provision for a king. First, the law would have to be changed.
p. 76

Kistemaker says:

If then a change of the law had to occur, God himself would have to accomplish the change. And this is exactly what God did when, centuries after the law was given, he said through David, "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek'" (Ps. 110:4). God changed the law by appointing his Son high priest in another order and confirming the change with an oath (Heb. 7:28). With the coming of Christ the priestly order was transformed and transferred.¹⁸ With his once-for-all sacrifice, Christ fulfilled the law and made the Levitical priesthood obsolete.

18. Ceslaus Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, 3d ed., (Paris: Gabalda, 1953), vol. 2, p. 190).
p. 194

Griffith Thomas says:

The purpose of priesthood is described by the word “perfection,” meaning that true relation of fellowship with God which is the true end and object of man’s existence. He was to be brought near, and then kept near to God, but since for the accomplishment of this the Levitical priesthood was powerless, a change was essential. With a change of priesthood there came, of necessity, a change in the law which was bound up with the priesthood, priesthood and law going together (v. 12).
p. 86

Hughes says:

If the Aaronic priesthood could have brought *perfection*--that is, access or nearness to God--it would not have been replaced by a new order and a new priest, Melchizedek! In fact, both the priesthood and the Law have been replaced because they are inseparable . . .
p. 196

Stedman says:

One thing clearly marked the fact that the old priesthood was no longer acceptable as help for men. It was the appearance of a new priest with a different address and a different ancestry. And if the old priesthood went, the law had to go, too. That is the argument here. This new priest had a quite different address; He came from the tribe of Judah instead of the tribe of Levi. Judah was not a priestly tribe at all, but a kingly tribe. The new priest was a king. Obviously, some change has been made. If God recognizes Christ as a priest, then there has been a change made, the law which was part of the old priesthood has been set aside.
p. 105

Macaulay says:

The tie-up between the priesthood and the Law is so intimate that a change in the one involves a change in the other. The Aaronic order being basic to the whole system, a transference of the priesthood was revolutionary. When the ordinance governing the Aaronic monopoly of priestly functions was set aside, the entire economy of Moses was subjected to displacement.

p. 104

v.13 For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.

Psalm 110 spoke of a priest from David's line.

This person is the Lord Jesus Christ.

He's the "ONE CONCERNING WHOM THESE THINGS ARE SPOKEN."

He "BELONGS TO ANOTHER TRIBE" (not the tribe of Levi)

"FROM WHICH NO ONE HAS OFFICIATED AT THE ALTAR."

Lane says:

Continuing the main argument, the writer declares that the one about whom the new priesthood was prophesied came from a non-Levitical tribe. The perfect tense of the finite verb in the phrase "belongs to a different tribe" expresses both a historical and an official condition of fact.

p. 182

Hughes says:

The profound inadequacy of the old priesthood was further emphasized by the fact that the new had nothing to do with the old Aaronic priesthood: . .

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p. 197

v.14 For it is known to all that our Lord has descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.

“FOR IT IS KNOWN TO ALL.”

In other words, it is just downright evident.

“THAT OUR LORD HAS DESCENDED FROM JUDAH.”

Westcott in commenting on the word “DESCENDED” says:

The image may be taken from the rising of the sun or of a star, or from the rising of a plant from its hidden germ.
p. 183

Numbers 24:17

I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel.

Hughes says:

In fact, the phrase “descended from Judah” was meant to indicate that the new Melchizedekian priest was a Messianic figure. The word “descended” is literally, “has arisen,” a term that has Messianic significance in Scripture. Malachi 4:2 prophesies of the rising of one who is the “sun of righteousness.” Numbers 24:17 promises the appearance of “a star . . . out of Jacob.” Luke 1:78 speaks of Christ as “the rising sun . . . from heaven” (cf. Revelation 2:28). Second Peter 1:19 tells of the rising of “the morning star” in our hearts. The prophets also predict the raising up of a righteous Branch for David (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5ff.; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12; Revelation 22:16).⁴

4. Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), p. 259).

Draper makes this same observation when he says:

The word translated “sprang” means “to grow out of a root.” Isaiah declared that “there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots” (Isaiah 11:1). Later Isaiah spoke of a root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:10), and pointed toward a time when the Messiah would come from the tribe of Jesse, the tribe of Judah. This is a prophecy, a reminder, an identification of Jesus Christ as Lord.
p. 198

“FOR IT IS KNOWN TO ALL THAT OUR LORD HAS DESCENDED FROM JUDAH, A TRIBE WITH REFERENCE TO WHICH MOSES SPOKE NOTHING CONCERNING PRIESTS.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

[He is] from Judah, which is proof that a change was made.
p. 798

v.15 And this is clearer still, if another priest is arising according to the likeness of Melchizedek,

“CLEARER STILL” only appears here in the New Testament.

The word “ANOTHER” is “another of a different kind.”

The word “ARISING” is the word indicating “certain fulfillment of the divine purpose.”

Wiersbe says:

The word “another” in verse 15 means “another of a different kind.” The Levitical priests were made priests by the authority of a temporary and imperfect Law. Jesus Christ was made priest by a declaration of God. Because the Law was “weak and useless” (7:18, NIV), it could not continue forever. But because Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, He lives by “the power of an endless life” (7:16). What a contrast between the profitless Law and an endless life!
pp. 76-77

Owen points out:

“Another priest,” in this case a stranger, one that is not of the house or family of Aaron; “Aaron and his sons, they shall wait on the priest’s office, and the stranger that cometh nigh (that is, to discharge any sacerdotal duty) shall be put to death.” We have a solemn instance of the severity of God with respect unto this law in the punishment of Korah for the transgression of it, though he was of the tribe of Levi. When “another Priest arose,” the former priesthood was abolished. The arising of Christ in His office as a High Priest put an end to all things that went before in connection with the priesthood.
p. 123

v.16 who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life.

Speaking of this other priest who is “arising according to the likeness of Melchizedek,” the writer puts the truth in bold relief by speaking from a NEGATIVE and a POSITIVE point of view:

NEGATIVELY:

“NOT ON THE BASIS OF A LAW OF PHYSICAL REQUIREMENT, BUT” [in contrast]

POSITIVELY:

“ACCORDING TO THE POWER OF AN INDESTRUCTIBLE LIFE.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

[These verses express] further proof . . . that the new Priest has **an indestructible life**. . . . The new Priest does not hold His office **on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry**.
p. 798

Phillips points out:

And what an amazing priesthood it is. Its dynamism is drawn, not from the Law but from life. A cold, formal, mechanical Law kept the Aaronic priesthood in place (7:16).

But Christ is a Priest because of the untrammelled, unhindered, unlimited power and vitality of an endless life! The Aaronic priests grew feeble, took to their beds, and died. Christ has conquered death and all its powers and lives forever in the power of an endless life. It is this that gives His priesthood not only its dynamism but its durability. He is “a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” (7:17).
p. 104

v.17 For it is witnessed of Him that: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Here the witness that is called forth on this occasion is the psalmist, and the record is in Psalm 110:4.

THE RISE OF THE NEW SHOWS THE INFERIORITY OF THE OLD.

Hughes points out:

Whatever our problem, Jesus is the answer! We must not sell our life short by looking to other places or persons for help, as contemporary evangelicalism is doing more and more. We must hold to the sufficiency of our Melchizedek with all we have!
p. 199

Bruce says:

A further token of the imperfection of the old priesthood and the superiority of the new lies on the face of our author's Old Testament text, "You are a priest *for ever*." These words are quite inapplicable to the old order; no priest of Aaron's line could have been described as "a priest for ever,"⁵⁸ for the simple reason that each one of them died in due course. But the Christians' high priest is immortal; having died once for all and risen from the dead, he discharges his ministry on his people's behalf in the power of a life which can never be destroyed.
p. 169

v.18 For, on the one hand, there is a doing away of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness

The QUESTION that comes to our minds immediately:

WHAT HAS HAPPENED WITH THE CHANGE OF PRIESTHOOD?

The author addresses that here in verse 18:

“THERE IS A DOING AWAY OF A FORMER COMMANDMENT.”

It is the PUTTING AWAY of:

LAW

and SIN.

The “FORMER COMMANDMENT” was put away because of its:

WEAKNESS--it could not impart strength to fulfill its demands.

USELESSNESS--it could not bestow life.

Romans 8:3

For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh

Phillips observes:

It was a bankrupt and unprofitable system at best, unable to make anything perfect. Yet God, by His very nature, demands perfection. As Isaac Watts says:

Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain;

Could give the guilty conscience peace
Nor wash away one stain.

p. 104

Lane says:

The argument begun in v 11 is brought to a conclusion in vv 18-19. In v 11 the writer deduced from Ps 110:4 that the prophecy of a new priesthood showed the old to be insufficient. In v 12 he implied that a change in the priesthood would necessitate a change in the law by which it was regulated. The subsequent demonstration that Jesus is the eschatological priest acclaimed in Ps 110:4, who holds his office by virtue of a superior qualification, permitted the writer to assert categorically that the old priesthood and law have been replaced by the new arrangement announced in the psalm oracle. The Levitical priesthood and law have been superseded by the new and “better hope” based on the superior quality of the new priest.
p. 184-5

Hession says:

It is, therefore, only too possible for the child of God, in all sincerity, to be trying to live under a covenant which cannot give life in that it is “weak through the flesh” and which in God’s economy has been rendered obsolete by the new and better one that we shall see Jesus has brought in.

Under the law with its ten-fold lash,
Learning, alas, how true,
That the more I tried, the sooner I died,
While the law cried, You! You! You!

Hopelessly still did the battle rage,
O, wretched man, my cry,
And deliverance I sought, by some penance bought,
While my heart cried, I! I! I!

Then came a day when my struggling ceased,
And trembling in every limb,
At the foot of the tree, where One died for me,
My heart cried, Him! Him! Him!

p. 77

Barclay observes:

The word that is used for cancellation is *athetesis*; that is the word that is used for annulling a treaty, for abrogating a promise, for scoring a man's name off the register, for rendering a law or regulation inoperative. The whole paraphernalia of the sacrificial and ceremonial law is wiped out in the priesthood of Jesus.

p. 84

Hewitt says:

A threefold superiority of Christ's priesthood is now shown. Firstly, it fulfils the purpose of priesthood by bringing men into God's presence. Secondly, its permanency is secure, for it is built upon God's oath which cannot be revoked. Thirdly, it is unchangeable. Thus the priesthood of Christ is perfect, eternal and unchangeable.
p. 122

Delitzsch says:

Experience shows that the law is too weak to bring about perfection, and inadequate for securing real good; for--as the author explains himself in the parenthetic clause--to speak generally, the law perfected nothing with which it had to do, whether person or thing (see ix. 23).
p. 360

Pink says:

"For the weakness and unprofitableness thereof". Here the apostle assigns the reason why God had annulled the Mosaic law. In v. 11 the apostle had asked, If "perfection were obtainable by the Levitical priesthood what need was there for another priesthood to arise? Here he plainly declares that the whole system was, relatively speaking, worthless.
p. 397

(The Last Bus to Albuquerque by Lewis Grizzard)

"Grizzard said the doctor told him if he quit smoking, quit drinking and quit carousing every night, he'd live a whole lot longer.

"And Grizzard said he asked his doctor, 'Why would I want to?'"
p. 35

Stedman says:

As C. S. Lewis puts it, “No clever arrangement of bad eggs will ever make a good omelet.”
p. 108

(Our God Is Awesome by Tony Evans)

I'm reminded of the badly aging Hollywood star who had her photograph taken. When she saw the picture, she said to the photographer, "That picture doesn't do me justice."

The photographer looked at her and said, "Lady, with a face like yours, you don't need justice, you need mercy."
p. 276

v.19 for the Law made nothing perfect, and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we are drawing near to God.

You have got to have perfection to be acceptable in God's presence, and we do not have it apart from a personal relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. When we enter into a relationship with Him, we are declared perfectly righteous in God's sight. We are dressed not in our own righteousness but in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before His throne.

The Law could not do that. It could not make anything perfect.

"AND ON THE OTHER HAND THERE IS A BRINGING IN OF A BETTER HOPE."

This "BETTER HOPE" takes us back to 6:19:

This hope we are having as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and secure and one which is entering within the veil.

It is through this "BETTER HOPE" that **"WE ARE DRAWING NEAR TO GOD."**

We could translate the phrase:

"CONSTANTLY DRAWING NEAR TO GOD."

This is the KEY PHRASE to the whole passage. The RESULT of the new priestly ministry is:

ACCESS.

We are coming as sons in His family into His presence.

Now that we are sons by a relationship, we can be “DRAWING NEAR TO GOD.”

John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name

Romans 8:16, 17

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

Romans 5:1, 2

Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

MacArthur points out:

God's ultimate desire for men is for them to come to Him. His ultimate desire for believers is that they continue to draw nearer to Him. God's goal in all that He does in behalf of men is that they might come into His presence. Drawing near to God is the essence of Christianity. Drawing near to God is the Christian's highest experience, and should be his highest purpose. This is the design of God for Christianity--access to His presence, coming into His presence with nothing between. Sometimes we forget this.
p. 184

A young woman had run up a lot of bills and charged far beyond what she was able to pay. She was in debt over her head and saw no way to get out. She was in trouble and the situation looked hopeless. Then a young man came along and fell deeply in love with her. After some months he proposed. She also loved him very much, but felt that she should tell him about her debts before she agreed to marry him. When told, he said, "Don't worry. I'll pay all your debts. Just leave them to me." Before the wedding he gave her an engagement ring and reassured her many times that he would take care of her debts. She trusted him implicitly and knew he was a person of his word. She had every reason to be confident and hopeful. But she was not yet actually free of her debts and, consequently, could not be at peace about them. Finally they were married, and he paid her debts. Not only that, but he told her that he was wealthy beyond her wildest dreams and gave her a joint checking account with himself. She would never again need to be concerned about debts. From that time on she was secure in the riches of the one she loved and who loved her.

That is how much better off a person is under the New Covenant than under the Old. In Christ we are freed from all sin's debts, and we live forever in the riches of the One we love and who loves us.
MacArthur, p. 193

Lenski says:

Thus from this angle the readers are again shown that the Levitical priesthood had to be abolished when "our Lord" came as the eternal High Priest, and they are shown what would result for them if they turned away from this High Priest in order again to put their hope in the disannulled Levitical priesthood.
p. 232

(Even Eagles Need a Push by David McNally)

A successful bank president, about to retire, was being interviewed by a reporter: "Sir, to what do you attribute your success?"

"That's easy to answer: good decisions."

"And to what do you attribute your good decisions?"

"That's easier still: the wisdom gained from experience."

"And where did you get that experience?"

"Easy again: bad decisions!"

p. 4

(From Beginning to End: The Rituals of Our Lives by
Robert Fulghum)

I remember a "Peanuts" cartoon in which Charlie Brown is complaining to Linus about his lunch because it has the same thing in it every day. When Linus asks Charlie Brown who makes his lunch, Charlie Brown says, "I do."

p. 251

v.20 And inasmuch as it was not without an oath for they indeed have become priests without an oath,

The emphasis in the passage now changes to the SIGNIFICANCE OF AN OATH.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary titles the remaining verses in this chapter as:

“The Superiority of the New Priest.”

If, as the author has shown, Melchizedek was greater than Levi (vv. 4-10) and the new priesthood necessarily abrogates the old (vv. 11-19) then the new Priest has to be greater than the Levitical priests.
p. 799

In this 20th verse we see that the Melchizedek priesthood is accompanied by an OATH and the Levitical priesthood has none.

Pink says:

It may be well for us to recall the principal design of the apostle in this section of his epistle. This was twofold; first, to demonstrate that the great High Priest of Christianity is far more excellent than was the typical high priest of Judaism, and that, that the faith of the Hebrews might be established and their hearts drawn out in love and worship to Him. Second, to show that it necessarily followed God's bringing in of the new order of priesthood, the old order was completely set aside.
p. 401

Lange in his commentary quotes Rieger:

From the *swearing of the oath* the Apostle justly infers the great earnestness, the weighty interest and the extraordinary pleasure with which God has entered into and sealed this His arrangement.--Elsewhere *he swears* who *undertakes* an office in order that persons may entrust to him their interests;

but here He swears who *confers* the office in testimony of His high purposes,
and of His unchangeable will.
p. 136

Westcott says:

The Apostle goes on to shew the superiority of Christ's Priesthood over the Levitical priesthood from its essential characteristics. Christ's Priesthood is immutable in its foundation (20-22); and it is uninterrupted in its personal tenure (23-25).

p. 187

The additional solemnity of the oath gives an additional dignity to the covenant which is introduced by it (compare vi. 13 ff.). And yet further, by this oath the purpose of God is declared absolutely. Man's weakness no longer enters as an element into the prospect of its fulfilment. The permanence of a covenant which rests upon an oath is assured.

p. 188

The Law is an expression of the sovereign power of God Who requires specific obedience: the oath implies a purpose of love not to be disturbed by man's unworthiness.

p. 188

Barclay says:

Philo pointed out that the only reason for taking an oath is because a man's bare word may be disbelieved; and he takes an oath in order to guarantee that his word is true. God never needs to do that, because it is impossible that God's word should ever be disbelieved. If, therefore, God ever confirms a statement by an oath, that statement must be of unique and extraordinary importance. A thing which God confirms by an oath must be something so utterly unchangeable that it is woven into the very fibre of the universe and must remain for ever.

p. 85

Wiersbe says:

No priest in the order of Aaron was ever ordained and established on the basis of God's personal oath. The Aaronic priests ministered "after the law of a carnal [physical] commandment" (7:16). Their moral or spiritual fitness was not examined. The important thing was that a priest belonged to the right tribe and met the right physical and ceremonial requirements (Lev. 21:16-24).

v.21 but He with an oath through the One who is saying to Him, "The Lord placed Himself under oath and will not change His mind, 'You are a priest forever'";

We had the word "THEY" referring to the Aaronic priests in verse 20.

Then verse 21 has the word "HE."

"BUT (in contrast) HE (that is, Jesus Christ) WITH AN OATH THROUGH THE ONE WHO IS SAYING TO HIM"

Aaron had his priesthood by law based on man's requirements.

But, in contrast, Christ's priesthood was with an oath.

The oath is "THROUGH THE ONE WHO IS SAYING TO HIM, THE LORD PLACED HIMSELF UNDER OATH AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, 'YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER.'"

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The writer then quoted again the divine oath of Psalm 110:4 whose very solemnity argues for the superiority of the new Priest, who was majestically inducted into His role.

p. 799

Hewitt says:

Such *an oath* as that sworn by God, is as eternal as the eternal God and indicates that the priesthood is eternal and thus more excellent than, and far superior to, the Levitical priesthood which did not rest upon any such oath and, therefore, could only be temporary.

p. 124

v.22 so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

The author uses the human name of Jesus, referring to the Son of man who enters into the presence of God the Father.

“SO MUCH THE MORE ALSO JESUS HAS BECOME THE GUARANTEE OF A BETTER COVENANT.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary points out:

[that the word “guarantee” occurs only here in the New Testament] . . . In His own person, Jesus assured the superiority of the new order over the old because His oath secured His permanent installation in the priestly office.
p. 799

You could translate it “under good security.”

Whereas in verse 19 we had reference to:

“a better hope”

here in verse 22 we have reference to:

“A BETTER COVENANT.”

Hebrews 2:5-9

For He did not subject to angels the inhabited earth which was coming, concerning which we are speaking. But one testified somewhere, saying: “What is man that you are remembering him? or the son of man that you are concerned about Him? You made Him for a short time lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor, [and appointed him over the works of your hands] all things you put in subjection under his feet.” For in that He put all things in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not made subject to him. But now we are not yet seeing all things subjected to him. But we are seeing Jesus

who for a short time has been made lower than the angels because of the suffering of death, having been crowned with glory and honor, in order that by the grace of God He might taste death for every one.

Hewitt says:

The greatness of His Person, the sufficiency of His sacrifice, the authority behind His resurrection, the superiority of His priesthood and His ascension to the throne of God are a complete pledge of the validity of the better covenant.

p. 124

Lane says:

In relationship to the covenant, Jesus is designated “guarantor.” The choice of the term, which occurs only here in the NT, is purposeful. In the papyri it can denote a bond, a collateral, or some form of material guarantee that a debt will be paid or a promise fulfilled. But it may also refer to an individual who offers his own life as the guarantor of another person (see especially Sir 29:15-17). In this personal sense, the guarantor assumes a weightier responsibility than the “mediator.”

p. 188

F. B. Meyer raises the question:

Are you enjoying the terms of this covenant in your daily experience? God is prepared to fulfill them to the letter. Count on Him to do as He has promised. Reckon on his faithfulness. Claim that each pledge shall be realized in you to the fullest limits of his wealth, and your need. Do not try to invent conditions or terms not laid down by Him; but gladly accept the position of doing nothing to earn or win, and of accepting all that God gives, without money and without price.

p. 32

v.23 And they indeed have been made many priests in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing,

The word “THEY” returns us to the Aaronic priests once more.

“AND THEY INDEED HAVE BEEN MADE MANY PRIESTS IN NUMBER.”

We have only one.

The REASON they have had many is:

“BECAUSE THEY WERE PREVENTED BY DEATH FROM CONTINUING.”

Doctors, lawyers, CPAs, agents, all die; and when they do, you have to get a new one.

This is also the case with the priests of Aaron. They were not allowed to continue because of the coming of death.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

No Old Testament priest ever functioned in this permanent way, **since** all were subject to **death**.
p. 799

Numbers 20:28

Moses removed Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazer. And Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazer came down from the mountain.

Joshua 24:33

And Eleazer son of Aaron died and was buried at Gibeah which had been allotted to his son Phinehas in the hill country of Ephraim.

Bruce points out:

In generation after generation the high priest died and his office passed to another, until in all (so Josephus reckons⁷⁵) eighty-three high priests officiated from Aaron to the fall of the Second Temple in A.D. 70.

^{75. Ant. 20.227.}

p. 172

Draper says:

The text of Hebrews 7:23-28 presents a contrast between the inability of the Levitical priesthood and the sufficiency of our Lord's priesthood. Whatever happens to us, whatever our need, whatever our experience, whatever we face, Christ Jesus is sufficient to meet the challenge and to present us faultless before God.

p. 202

v.24 but this [priest], because He is abiding forever, is holding His priesthood permanently.

“BUT” forms the CONTRAST between:

the PRIESTHOOD OF AARON

and the PRIESTHOOD OF MELCHIZEDEK

There is no death in this priesthood, “BECAUSE HE IS ABIDING FOREVER.”

Since “HE IS ABIDING FOREVER,” He “IS HOLDING HIS PRIESTHOOD PERMANENTLY.”

Wiersbe says:

The fact that the *unchanging* Christ continues as High Priest means, logically, that there is an “unchangeable priesthood” (Heb. 7:24). The Greek word translated “unchangeable” carries the idea of “valid and unalterable.” The word was used at the end of legal contracts. Our Lord’s priesthood in heaven is “valid and unalterable.” Because it is, we can have confidence in the midst of this shaking, changing world.
p. 79

Barclay says:

Aparabatos is a legal word. It means *inviolable*. A judge lays down that his decision must remain *aparabatos*. It must remain *unalterable*. It means *non-transferable*. It describes something which belongs to one person and cannot ever be transferred to anyone else. Galen, the medical writer, uses it to describe absolute, scientific law which can never be violated, the principles on which the very universe is built and holds together. So then the writer to the Hebrews says that the priesthood of Jesus, the power of Jesus to give men access to God, the power of Jesus to enable men to become the friends of God is something which can never be taken from Him, is something that no one else can ever possess, is something that is as lasting as the laws which hold the universe together.
pp. 87-88

Westcott says:

Christ’s Priesthood is His alone, open to no rival claim, liable to no invasion of its functions.
p. 190

Macaulay says:

Now what do we have as a result of all this change? First the priestly office is permanently in the hands of one Man, the God-man. “He hath an untransmissible priesthood” (7:24, author’s trans.). There is no possibility of deterioration through the coming of an inferior successor.
p. 106

v.25 Hence also He is able to be saving forever those who are drawing near to God through Him, since He always is living for the purpose of making intercession for them.

The word “HENCE” gives us the CONCLUSION to the writer’s argument.

“HENCE ALSO HE IS ABLE”

The Law could not do it, but HE has the power to do it!

Acts 4:12

And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”

Since He LIVES forever, He is able to SAVE forever!

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The readers were to hold fast to their professions of faith and to continue numbering themselves among **those who come to God through Him**, knowing that He can see them through every trial and difficulty right to the end of the road **because He always lives to intercede for them.**

“HENCE ALSO HE IS ABLE TO BE SAVING FOREVER”

That is:

COMPLETELY,

FULLY,
WHOLLY.

The word “SAVING” is reference to PRESENT TENSE SALVATION.

“HENCE ALSO HE IS ABLE TO BE SAVING FOREVER THOSE WHO ARE DRAWING NEAR TO GOD THROUGH HIM”

John 6:37

All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

“HENCE ALSO HE IS ABLE TO BE SAVING FOREVER THOSE WHO ARE DRAWING NEAR TO GOD THROUGH HIM”

The NATURE of this “DRAWING NEAR TO GOD” is to provide an eternal salvation which has:

PAST,

PRESENT,

and FUTURE ramifications.

In the:

PAST to be freed from the PENALTY of sin,

PRESENT to be freed from the POWER of sin,

FUTURE to be freed from the PRESENCE of sin.

The phrase “DRAWING NEAR TO GOD” here in verse 25 takes us back to verse 19:

“for the Law made nothing perfect, and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we are drawing near to God.”

And we are “DRAWING NEAR TO GOD THROUGH HIM” (that is, the Lord Jesus Christ).

It is not like Moses in Exodus 17, who sits as the people come and renders judgment in expressing God’s desires for the concerns of the people.

“HENCE ALSO HE IS ABLE TO BE SAVING FOREVER THOSE WHO ARE DRAWING NEAR TO GOD THROUGH HIM, SINCE HE ALWAYS IS LIVING FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING INTERCESSION FOR THEM.”

The security that is ours is that He is always living, therefore, He is available to be called upon at any time.

“HE ALWAYS IS LIVING”

The purpose for His continuing priesthood is “FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING INTERCESSION FOR THEM.”

HIS PRIESTHOOD IS BASED ON THE RESURRECTION. He is the eternal Son of God.

Luke 22:31, 32

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.

John 17:9

I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom Thou hast given Me for they are Thine

Wiersbe observes:

It is unfortunate that this verse is often read, “He is able to save *from* the uttermost” instead of “*to* the uttermost.” To be sure, it is true that Christ can save any sinner from any condition; but that is not the import of the verse. The emphasis is on the fact that He saves completely, forever, all who put their faith in Him. Because He is our High Priest forever, He can save forever.

p. 80

Macaulay points out:

With an untransmissible priesthood in the hands of an all-perfect Priest, whose ministrations on our behalf find their all-efficient basis in the one all-sufficient sacrifice of Calvary, we shall not be disappointed in the service rendered. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (7:25).

p. 107

Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

In our author's view the whole mission of the Son of God, comprising his advent, ministry, death and ascension, was not primarily undertaken to express God's nature but to achieve a specific object; to bring men to God. His eternal session in heaven, since his ascension, results in the ceaseless maintenance of this priestly ministry.

p. 129

J. Vernon McGee says:

He died down here to save us, but He *lives* up there to keep us saved.

p. 555

Wiersbe says:

Because He is a Priest forever, He saves forever (vv. 23-25). "To the uttermost" means "completely," "perfectly." You are secure as long as He lives, and He lives eternally. You can live by the power of His endless life!

p. 818

MacArthur says:

Here is one of the most beautiful verses in Scripture. Like John 3:16, it contains the whole essence of the gospel. Salvation is the main theme of the entire Bible. Salvation is what the text is all about.

Jesus' priesthood not only is eternal and unalterable, but is also unlimited in its scope. He saves **forever** (*panteles*). Although the meaning in the context of 7:25 can be that of eternal, the basic idea of the word is that of completeness or perfection.

p. 199

Within the few words of Hebrews 7:25 we can see salvation's basis, its nature, its power, its objects, and its security.

p. 199

Delitzsch points out:

Christ is able to save in every way, in all respects, *unto the uttermost*; so that every want and need, in all its breadth and depth, is utterly done away. This all-embracing salvation is vouchsafed to those who through Him approach to God, *i.e.* those who in faith make use of the way of access which He has opened, and which remains open in Him; nay more, this very access to free and joyous communion with God, made by the removal of the barrier of sin, is in itself the all-including commencement of that perfect salvation.

p. 371

Griffith Thomas says:

This verse is the crown of the argument. Everything else in the Epistle may be said to be included in it, for as all the truths hitherto discussed lead up to this verse, so everything flows from it. He is able to save completely those who approach God through Him because He always lives to intercede for them. But the truths here stated are so vital and far-reaching that the verse must receive separate and thorough attention.

p. 90

When it is said, “He is able to save,” it should be noted that this is the third thing associated with His ability in the Epistle: He is able to sympathize (4:15); able to succor (2:18); and able to save (7:25). This ability of Christ is a truth of great importance, and one that is at the base of everything in our Christian life and experience. It is probably on this account that we find it so prominently set forth in the New Testament. “God is able to make him stand” (Rom. 14:4); “able to stablish you” (Rom. 16:25); “able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless” (Jude 24); “able to make all grace abound toward you” (II Cor. 9:8); “able to keep” (II Tim. 1:12); “able to build you up” (Acts 20:32); “able even to subdue” (Phil. 3:21); “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Eph. 3:20). The more we are occupied with the power of the living Christ, the fuller, deeper, and richer will our spiritual life become.

pp. 92-93

English says:

The phrase, “to the uttermost” signifies the completeness of His salvation. He is able to save exhaustively, in an all-comprehensive way, completely. It is a salvation that, because of its totality and perfection, is unending. It embraces pardon for past sins, deliverance from the power of sin in the daily life, forgiveness and cleansing day by day when we do fail, assurance of our eternal destiny with the Lord, and ultimate glorification.

pp. 209-10

Hewitt points out:

There are others, however, who link it with *able*, translating ‘He is completely, or for ever, able to save’. There seems little, if any, difference in the meaning. Christ is able to save completely in time and for eternity.

Our great High Priest through His perfect sacrifice saves from the penalty of sin by the bestowal of forgiveness, and through the permanency of His life saves from the power of sin by the communication of grace and strength to those who have faith in Him and *come unto God by him*.

p. 125

Draper observes:

The writer of Hebrews asserts that Christ is able to save them “to the uttermost,” the absolute extreme. The word “uttermost” is comprised of two words. One means “all” and the other one means “termination,” “end,” or “completion.” Christ Jesus is able to save through all eternity. He is able to save forever. He is able to save completely.
p. 208

G. Campbell Morgan says:

That word “uttermost” is a great word. It has within it two qualities, which merge into a complete revelation, the two qualities are represented by *panteles*, which means all, and is a word of quantity; and *telos*, which is a word of reach, and means extent. He is able to save to the uttermost, that is in Him there is fullness of provision in quantity, and fullness of provision in duration.
p. 87

(Leadership: Enhancing the Lessons of Experience by Richard L. Hughes, Robert C. Ginnett and Gordon J. Curphy)

HIGHLIGHT 2-1

Leadership Quotes, Chapter Two

It's not what we don't know that hurts, it's what we know that ain't so.

Will Rogers

An educated man can experience more in a day than an uneducated man in a lifetime.

Seneca

I took a great deal o' pains with his education, sir; let him run the streets when he was very young, and shift for his-self. It's the only way to make a boy sharp, sir.

Charles Dickens, *Pickwick Papers*

Common sense is the collection of prejudices acquired by age 18.

Einstein

What would a man be wise, let him drink of the river
That bears on its bosom the record of time;
A message to him every wave can deliver.
To teach him to creep till he knows how to climb.

John Boyle O'Reilly

Teach a highly educated person that it is not a disgrace to fail and that he must analyze every failure to find its cause. He must learn how to fail intelligently, for failing is one of the greatest arts in the world.

Charles F. Kettering

Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand.

Chinese proverb

Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.

Henry Ford

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.

John F. Kennedy

(Active Spiritually by Charles R. Swindoll)

Now that we have analyzed all the vital parts, let's put the verses back together in an extended paraphrase:

Throw yourself completely upon the Lord--that is, cast all your present and future needs on Him who is your intimate Savior-God . . . finding in Him your security and safety. Do this with all your mind and feeling and will. In order to make this possible, you must refuse to support yourself upon the crutch of human ingenuity. Instead, recognize His presence and concern in each one of your circumstances. Then He (having taken full control of the situation) will smooth out and make straight your paths, removing each obstacle along the way.

p. 31

Romans 8:33-39

Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jude 24, 25

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

The Unfinished Work of Christ

Robert Murray McCheyne once remarked, “If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet the distance makes no difference. He is praying for me!”

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

Our Fulltime Intercessor

It was dawn, and I was painfully aware of being only a few weeks into widowhood. After another restless night, I felt too weary to pray for myself. "Lord," I sighed, "I need someone to pray for me right now."

Almost instantly God's Spirit comforted my distraught mind with the words of today's text, reminding me that Jesus was praying for me that very moment. With a wave of relief, I acknowledged Him as my lifelong intercessor. I will never forget how that bleak morning became gold-tinged with hope. Since then, I have drawn courage and strength countless times from my faithful High Priest.

Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-1843), pioneer missionary to America, testified, "If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me!"

We too can draw courage and strength from Jesus. He is our priestly representative before God the Father.

Are difficult circumstances creating fear in your heart? By all means, ask others to pray for you. But don't forget to count on the prayers of Jesus Himself. By faith, hear Him praying around the clock for you, as if He were in the next room. --JEY

*I have an Advocate above,
And though I cannot see
His face, I know His heart is love,
And that He pleads for me. --Tydeman*

EARTH HAS NO SORROW THAT HEAVEN DOES NOT FEEL.

(From *Our Daily Bread*, Sunday, May 28, 1995)

Hebrews 4:14-16

Since then we are having a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us be holding fast our confession. For we are not having a high priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore be drawing near with confidence to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

. . . their Captain and High Priest can get the job done! He could lead them victoriously into the glory of the many sons. In this way He saves “completely.”
p. 799

(The Seeking Heart by Fenelon)

When outward distractions and a wayward imagination hinder you from having a peaceful inner life, then you must, by an act of will, bring yourself before God. Not that you can force yourself into God's presence, but even the desire to come into God's presence is, in itself, a powerful aid to your spirit. Cultivate a pure and upright intention toward God.

From time to time you must stir up your deepest desires to be fully devoted to God. There need to be seasons when you think on Him alone, with a wholly undistracted love. Consecrate your senses to Him completely at these times. Don't get caught up with things that you know distract you both outwardly and inwardly from God.

p. 121

Let's meditate on 3 THINGS as we contemplate the ramifications of this 25th verse. Let's focus on the words "HE IS ABLE":

1. "HE IS ABLE" to PROVIDE SUSTENANCE (roadside assistance)

Hebrews 2:18

For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are being tempted.

2. "HE IS ABLE" to SYMPATHIZE

Hebrews 4:15

For we are not having a high priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

3. "HE IS ABLE" to SAVE

Hebrews 7:25

Hence also He is able to be saving forever those who are drawing near to God through Him, . . .

v.26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, having been separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

The writer now brings the passage to a CONCLUSION in verses 26-28. Here he summarizes the arguments.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

After all, He is the kind of **high priest** who **meets our need**. His character is utterly without blemish and He has been **exalted above the heavens**.
p. 799

There are 5 THINGS that are said about our High Priest in this 26th verse. He is:

1. "HOLY"
2. "INNOCENT"
3. "UNDEFILED"
4. "HAVING BEEN SEPARATED FROM SINNERS"
5. "EXALTED ABOVE THE HEAVENS"

Lane says:

The argument in 7:11-25 is aptly summarized in the final paragraph of chap. 7. On the basis of Ps 110:4, the writer has been showing that the promised exalted priest supersedes the old priesthood and that he is effective where the Levitical priests were not. The exposition is brought to a conclusion in vv 26-28 with a majestic statement concerning Jesus' character, achievement, and status as high priest.
p. 191

Kistemaker says:

After explaining the quotation from Psalm 110:4, the author of Hebrews presents a comprehensive summary. He gives a full description of our only high priest Jesus Christ and compares his perfect sacrifice with the daily sacrifices offered by the Levitical priests. Jesus' death on the cross was a once-for-all event.

p. 205

Lange quotes Heubner:

The ground of the priestly dignity of Christ lies in His innocence, righteousness and holiness.--The repetition of sacrifices was a constant reminder of the weakness and sinfulness of men.

p. 140

We have a SPOTLESS High Priest.

1. His personal purity is seen in the word "HOLY," which points Godward.
2. He is "INNOCENT"--He did not practice evil; that's manward.
3. He is "UNDEFILED"--There is freedom from defilement which points selfward.
4. He is "SEPARATED FROM SINNERS"--pointing to His present ministry in the holy of holies.
5. He is "EXALTED ABOVE THE HEAVENS"--the way He became separated from sinners.

We have a SPOTLESS PRIEST in verse 26,

but we also have a SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE in verse 27.

v.27 He who is not having a need daily, like those high priests, to be offering up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, for this He did once for all, having offered up Himself.

Our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, “IS NOT HAVING A NEED DAILY, LIKE THOSE [of the Aaronic priesthood] TO BE OFFERING UP SACRIFICES:

1. FOR HIS OWN SINS
2. THEN FOR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE.”

The writer then gives a REASON:

“FOR THIS HE DID ONCE FOR ALL, HAVING OFFERED UP HIMSELF.”

It would be good for us for a moment to meditate upon Calvary, the 7 SAYINGS OF CHRIST UPON THE CROSS as He makes this sacrifice:

1. He prays to the Father: “FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY ARE NOT KNOWING WHAT THEY ARE DOING.”

(The Tribute by Dennis Rainey with David Boehi)

Forgiveness is the fragrance the violet sheds on the heel that crushed it.

--Mark Twain

p. 155

2. “TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN THE PARADISE.”

Here is the promise of eternal salvation to this thief who is hanging with Him there on one of the other crosses.

3. “WOMAN, BEHOLD YOUR SON. SON, BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER.”

He gives and makes provision for His family and friend.

4. "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

Here God the Father turns His back on God the Son as He is made sin for us.

5. "I THIRST."

6. "IT IS FINISHED."

Tetelestai, the work is done.

7. "FATHER, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT."

J. Vernon McGee says:

If it were necessary for the Lord Jesus to come back and die for you again, He'd be back, my friend. He would be back today. But He won't be back to die for you--He died *once*.

p. 556

Ray Stedman says:

Now, between verses 26 and 27 of chapter 7, there is a major division in the letter. I have a continual quarrel with whoever put the chapter divisions in our Bible. They are seldom in the right place, from my point of view. They miss it by two verses this time. Between these two verses the writer turns from his discussion of the person of Jesus Christ, to that which occupies the next chapters, His work, His sacrifice. The next three chapters focus on the great altar of the cross and the bleeding sacrifice that hung there. You will never understand Jesus Christ except in connection with His cross, and you will never understand the cross apart from the person of Christ. These are indivisibly united.

p. 114

Richards says:

It's important for us to see Jesus this way.
Our High Priest and Perfector.
Powerful.
Oath-established.
Permanent.
Perfect.

He Himself is the unshakeable guarantee that in Him we have actually been perfected for fellowship with God. The task of "religion"--to open the way to God--has been accomplished once and for all.

With that task complete, the whole Old Testament system crumbles and fades away. The shadows now disappear in light as Jesus, the Reality, appears.

p. 75

v.28 For the Law is appointing men as high priests who are having weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, who has been made perfect forever.

This closing verse takes us back to chapter 5:8-10:

although being a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered; and having been made perfect, He became to all those who are obeying Him the source of eternal salvation; being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

A. T. Robertson says:

Imperfect and sinful as we are we demand a permanent high priest who is sinless and perfectly equipped by divine appointment and human experience (2:17f.; 5:1-10) to meet our needs, and with the perfect offering of himself as sacrifice.

p. 387

Wiersbe says:

This is the kind of High Priest we need! We are prone to sin daily, even hourly; and we need to be able to turn to Him for spiritual help. As our High Priest, Jesus Christ gives us the grace and mercy that *we need not to sin*. But if we do sin, He is our Advocate at God's throne (1 John 2:1-2). If we confess our sins to Him, He forgives us and restores us (1 John 1:9).

The application is obvious: why turn away from such an adequate High Priest? What more can you find in any other person? The men who served under the Law of Moses had human infirmities and weaknesses, and they often failed. Our heavenly High Priest has been "consecrated [perfected] forevermore" (Heb. 7:28) and there is no spot or blemish in Him. Such a High Priest "suits us perfectly"!

Are you availing yourself of His gracious ministry?
p. 82

Owen rightly observes:

They were men, mere men, nothing more. In opposition hereunto, the "word of the oath" made the Son an High Priest, that Son who is Lord over the whole house. The priests had "infirmity"--subject to infirmities--moral and natural. They had sins to make atonement for, and the issue of their natural weakness was death itself.
p. 135

F. B. Meyer says:

Do you ask how God can call this a covenant, in which there is no second covenanting party? The answer is easy: Jesus Christ has stood in our stead, and has not only negotiated this covenant, but has fulfilled in our name, and on our behalf, all the conditions which were necessary and right. He has borne the penalty of human weakness and transgression. He has met all demands for a perfect and unbroken obedience. He has engaged to secure, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, a holiness in us which could never have been obtained by our own efforts. And as He has become our Sponsor and Surety, so God is able to enter into these liberal terms with us, saying nothing of all the cost to his Son, but permitting us to share all the benefits: on this condition only, that we identify ourselves with Him by a living faith, entrusting all spiritual transactions into his hands, and abiding by the

decisions of his will. This is the new and better covenant, which has replaced the old.
pp. 32-33

(Holiness by J. C. Ryle)

I might show how language seems exhausted in the Bible, in describing Christ's various offices. I might describe how figures seem endless, which are employed in unfolding Christ's fulness. The High Priest, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the Saviour, the Advocate, the Shepherd, the Physician, the Bridegroom, the Head, the Bread of Life, the Light of the world, the Way, the Door, the Vine, the Rock, the Fountain, the Sun of Righteousness, the Forerunner, the Surety, the Captain, the Prince of life, the Amen, the Almighty, the Author and Finisher of faith, the Lamb of God, the King of saints, the Wonderful, the Mighty God, the Counsellor, the Bishop of souls--all these, and many more, are names given to Christ in Scripture. Each is a fountain of instruction and comfort for everyone who is willing to drink of it. Each supplies matter for useful meditation.
p. 312

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The fact that there is another priesthood points to the failure of the Aaronic priesthood.

LESSON #2: The Law and the priesthood go together.

LESSON #3: Jesus Christ is a King-priest from the tribe of Judah and the priesthood of Melchizedek.

LESSON #4: Jesus Christ can function as our priest eternally because He is eternal.

LESSON #5: The Law could not impart strength to fulfill its demands nor could it bestow life.

LESSON #6: The result of the new priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus is access into the presence of God the Father.

LESSON #7: The priesthood of the Lord Jesus is founded on an oath.

LESSON #8: Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

LESSON #9: "He is able to be saving forever those who are drawing near to God through Him."

LESSON #10: He is ever making intercession for us.

LESSON #11: The Lord Jesus Christ is a spotless High Priest, fully qualified to carry out His function as our representative before the Father.

LESSON #12: He is a sufficient sacrifice in that He has sacrificed Himself upon the cross.

Hession says:

What I want to suggest at this point, and this is the whole purpose of this particular chapter in our study, is that, in spite of all this, it is altogether possible for us to be attempting to live our Christian lives under an obsolete covenant, which has already proved itself to be powerless to produce what God wants from man, and we may not be enjoying the infinitely better benefits of the new one, which in God's economy has replaced the old. Obviously, we must look closely at these two covenants in order to ascertain to what degree we are still living under the old one and to what extent we may need to move on to live under the new.

p. 72

Barclay says:

There is much in this argument which for us is difficult to understand. It speaks and thinks in terms of ritual and ceremony which are long since forgotten; but one eternal thing remains. Man seeks the presence of God; man's sin has erected a barrier between him and God; man is restless until he rests in God; and Jesus alone is the priest who can bring the only offering that can open the way back to God for men.

p. 92

Macaulay says:

Now you cannot so approach God by any other than Jesus. No other priest, no other name, can give you this access. God will hide Himself from you, He will shut His ears to you, if you presume to come otherwise than by this great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; and in that great day of appearing before God, if you stand without the advocacy of Jesus, the awful words of divine repudiation will thrust you into the outer darkness, a lost soul, lost to the uttermost. I beseech you, therefore, commit yourself to the care of the only Priest who can bring you to God. Let not the multitude of your sins deter you. He will save from the uttermost, to the uttermost, and none will have more right to the loving intimacies of the throne of grace than you, and I.

p. 108

(First Things First by Stephen R. Covey, A. Roger Merrill, & Rebecca R. Merrill)

"As I began to think about what really matters most to me, I suddenly realized that over these past years, that feeling, that sense of purpose, has somehow gotten lost. I've been lulled by a sense of security. I haven't made a difference. I haven't taught my children to make a difference. I've basically been watching life go by through the hedges of my country club."
p. 50

(When Counseling Is Not Enough by J. Kirk Johnston)

There is an ancient story from the days of the desert fathers that describes a young man going out to the hut of an aged monk renowned for his depth of understanding into the ways of God. The young man, in a casual and somewhat flippant tone, said he wanted to know God. Would the old man show him?

The ancient saint said nothing but took the young seeker by the hand to a nearby stream. Leading him into the water, the old man grasped the young man firmly and pushed him under the water. Several seconds passed. With a fierce grip, the aged monk held the casual seeker under. The young man began to push, then to struggle. The old man continued to hold the other below the surface. The young man thrashed violently, then with a mighty heave, thrust himself above the water and inhaled great gasps of air. When his panting had subsided after a few minutes, he turned in bewilderment to the old monk.

The ancient sage, wise in the ways of the Lord and human beings, finally spoke, saying, "When you want God as deeply as you wanted air, only then will you find Him."

Jeremiah 29:13-14 gives us a general biblical principle in regard to knowing God: "You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found by you."
pp. 106-7

(The Hidden Price of Greatness by Ray Beeson &
Ranelda Mack Hunsicker)

As P. T. Forsyth said, "Christ can do without your works; what he wants is you."
p. 148

(The Message: Psalms by Eugene H. Peterson)

Psalm 43
Give me your lantern and compass,
give me a map,
So I can find my way to the sacred mountain,
to the place of your presence,
p. 64

(Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for
Daily Devotions by Kenneth W. Osbeck)

BLESSED ASSURANCE
Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915

*Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith,
having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having
our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we
profess, for He who promised is faithful.*
(Hebrews 10:22, 23)

Beware of despairing about yourself. You are commanded to put your
trust in God, and not in yourself.

--St. Augustine

Some people claim to have accepted Christ as Savior, yet they live in
the tragic uncertainty of doubting their personal relationship with God. The
Scriptures teach, however, that we can know with absolute confidence that
we have the life of God within us (1 John 5:13). This confidence is not based
on inner feelings or outer signs. Rather, this assurance is founded upon the
promises of a faithful God and His inspired Word. It depends not on the
amount of our faith but on the object of our faith--Christ Himself.

Though blinded at six weeks of age through improper medical treatment, Fanny Crosby wrote more than 8,000 gospel song texts in her lifetime of 95 years. Her many favorites such as "Blessed Assurance" have been an important part of evangelical worship for the past century. Only eternity will disclose the host of individuals whose lives have been spiritually enriched through the texts of Fanny Crosby's many hymns. Engraved on Fanny J. Crosby's tombstone at Bridgeport, Connecticut, are these significant words taken from our Lord's remarks to Mary, the sister of Lazarus, after she had anointed Him with costly perfume--"She hath done what she could" (Mark 14:8).

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Perfect submission, perfect delight! Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission--all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest;
watching and waiting, looking above, filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Chorus: This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

p. 340