

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Part III

STUDY NUMBER THIRTEEN - HEBREWS 7:11-28

INTRODUCTION:

I want to remind you that the author uses a lot of Jewish terms and we are going to see a few of them today.

He explains to them that when they met Jesus Christ they had everything that God had for them, and He is totally adequate for any situation.

In fact, the name of the series is called, “Jesus Is All You Need.”

The author shows us in the first chapter that Jesus Christ is superior to the angels.

Then He shows us that Jesus Christ is superior to Moses and the law, and that Jesus Christ is of a better covenant.

Jesus Christ is also a priest of a superior priesthood.

And that’s where we are in the study in Hebrews chapter 7.

Do you remember that Moses went up the mountain, and he spent a lot of time up there and while he was up there what did God say to him?

Basically, God told him that

#1 There is a law by which the people will live, and you have the Ten Commandments and all the law.

What else was given up there?

God gave him a pattern for approach to Himself in a tabernacle, and we will talk more about that in the later studies.

What was the other thing that God did?

God told Moses, that in order to gain acceptance in the presence of God there had to be a priest.

There had to be somebody, who stood between them and God, who could gain acceptance and by whom they could approach God.

So who did we say was the first priest?

Aaron, the brother of Moses became the priest.

And of what tribe were they?

They were the tribe of Levi.

So we say Levitical. So Levi, that's the tribe and Aaron is the first priest.

Last week we also talked about professional sports and agents.

Let's suppose the professional athlete received a huge contract.

Did he negotiate it on his own?

What did he do?

He got himself an agent, didn't he?

You need an agent to negotiate for you in things where you can't handle it.

Let's suppose you get sued and end up in court.

What are you going to do?

Are you going to represent yourself?

No, you are going to hire a lawyer.

That lawyer is going to represent you in court and what's your hope?

You hope you are going to win your day in court.

Let's suppose you get really sick physically.

What are you going to do?

I hope you go to a doctor.

You are going to visit with somebody who's going to help you get better.

When God talked to Moses up there on the mountain,

He said, "You can't come by yourself.

You have to have somebody else represent you."

**We will all have our day in court when we die.
And you and I will face God face to face.**

We will not win our day in court on our own.

The author today will introduce you to the ONE and ONLY, greatest negotiator, in the whole wide world.

**He's the court appointed attorney and
He can win the case.**

What is the case?

**The case is to gain access and acceptance
into the presence of God.
That's His job description.**

**All the writer is going to show us today is that Aaron,
never did that and never could do it.**

**And so it was necessary for the change of priesthood.
That's all! Isn't that easy?**

**These Hebrew Christians are thinking of, going back
under something, that no longer exists.**

**And they are thinking of going back under a priest
that never did accomplish anything in getting
an acceptable hearing and access into the presence
of God.**

Let me read Psalm 110 v. 4. “The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind. You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.”

Now there’s nothing like having somebody who’s the right agent to represent you when you meet God face to face.

Now, keep in mind that they are contemplating, going back, under the old Aaronic priesthood.

And what this writer is going to tell them is, that’s already gone, it’s done, and it’s imperfect.

I would title today’s study “A Change of Priesthood.”

How can I confirm to you that the priesthood ended.

Well, it ended in a dramatic experience, in Matthew 27. What happened at 3 o’clock in the afternoon when Jesus cried, “*My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me?*”

He became sin for us hanging on the cross.

What happened in the temple?

The Aaronic priest was standing in front of the veil and what happened?

God, Himself reached down from heaven and He ripped the veil from top to bottom.

**In essence its God saying it's OVER.
There's no more Aaronic priesthood.**

**Not only is Christ greater than Aaron.
The hard thing to accept today is that
Christ replaced Aaron.**

So there's no more Aaronic priesthood.

Verse 11:

**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?**

**“If perfection” was accomplished through Aaron
why did we have to have another priest
from the Order of Melchizedek?**

**We talked about Melchizedek the last time
we were together.**

**Why have a new one if the old one's working
is all the writer is saying.**

**Would you look at that word “perfection.”
The only way you will be accepted into God's presence
is perfection.**

You have to be perfect to be accepted in God's sight.

**God in His court is not going to cut any slack.
He's not going to bend any rules.
He's not going to grade on the curve.**

**If you are going to gain acceptance into God's presence
the word is "perfection."
You have to have a perfect record.**

**The good news is: there is somebody who can
accomplish it and we're going to get to that
in just a minute.**

**But notice the question.
"What further need was there for another priest to be
arising according to the Order of Melchizdek?
And not being designated to the Order of Aaron"**

**He didn't come under the tribe of Levi.
He didn't come like an Aaronic priest, He came from a
separate order and from a separate tribe.
Melchizdek means King of Righteousness.**

**Jesus Christ is the last prophet.
He is the only priest and He is the King of Kings and
Lord of Lords.**

**Prophet, Priest and King all wrapped into
one wonderful person.
And what is He guaranteed to do for us?
Gain access and acceptance in the presence of God.**

Now, God obviously saw that there were shortcomings in the Aaronic priesthood and it wasn't accomplishing its function.

So, God took the initiative to change the priesthood. That's all!

And you don't go back under the old because it doesn't work.

And that's what he's telling these Jewish Christians.

It never did work and it never will or God would never have replaced it.

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

Did you ever realize in your long legged life that the law and the priesthood were combined?

There are people that are living by the Ten Commandments and the Golden rule and they think they are going to score because they're keepin' a pretty good record with the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments went out with the priesthood. Nobody is getting into heaven by the way of the Ten Commandments.

I'm not trying to be exclusive, I'm being Biblical.

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.

Is Jesus of the tribe of Levi? No!
You see that verse 14 gives you the answer to that.

He is of the Tribe of Judah. Fourth born son of Jacob & Leah.

Now when you see the word “descended” you always think down, don’t you?

Like you have a Great Great Great Granddaddy and then you have a Great Great Granddaddy and then you have a Great and then you have a Granddaddy then you have a parent and then you have kids. You think of a descendant.

That word that is used here in the Greek is just the opposite.

You have to translate “descended” so you can understand it but it’s really the picture of the rising of the sun or the rising of a star.

“It is known that our Lord has arisen from Judah.”

Doesn't that just warm your heart?

Listen to Moses as he describes the coming of Christ prophetically in Numbers 24:17:

"I see Him, but not in the present time.

I perceive Him, but far in the distant future.

**A star will come out of Jacob;
a scepter will rise out of Israel."**

He is going to rise.

**He is going to come on the scene and
in the fullness of time.**

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

**"It's clearer still because another of a different kind"
is the way the Greek word reads, "is arising."**

**That means that's the fulfillment of the
eternal purpose.**

You're seeing it happen before your eyes. It's rising up.

**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.**

Now Jesus became a priest negatively and positively.

"Not on the basis of a law of physical requirement."

**How did they become priests in the Old Testament?
You had to be a part of Aaron's family to be a priest.**

**So Christ didn't come on the basis of family descent,
"but according to a power of an indestructible life."**

What does that tell you?

**That tells you he is never going to die and
you don't have to replace your priest
once you appoint Him as your agent.**

**You don't ever have to worry about Him
checking out on you.**

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

That's Psalm 110:4.

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

**Why did God do away with the law that went
with the priesthood?**

Because of its "weakness" and its "uselessness."

Why was the law weak?

It couldn't give strength to fulfill itself.

And why was it uselessness?

**It couldn't give life.
It was a bankrupt system.**

**Nobody ever gained acceptance and access
in the presence of God by the keeping of the law.**

**C. S. Lewis said it well. He said,
“No clever arrangement of bad eggs will ever make
a good omelet.”**

Simply said, the law isn't going to do it.

**It is a dynamic relationship, only with a proper agent,
who can gain acceptance in the presence of our Father,
that will qualify for us, to have any peace today.**

**The difference between law and grace is law is going to
give you justice and grace is going to give you mercy.**

**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.**

See that word “drawing near”?

That is in the present tense.

**I could translate that, we are constantly drawing near
to God.**

**Once Christ becomes your agent, you wake up every
morning, talking to your Father through your agent.
And that's the joy of the Christian life, to be aware**

of the fact, that Christ has gained access and acceptance into the presence of the Father.

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

How did they become priests in the Old Testament?

Daddy was a priest.

Sons became priests.

It was family.

It was no oath involved.

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.’”

This is great!

God took an oath. Isn't that incredible?

God said, “I solemnly swear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God.”

He took an oath.

That means it's absolutely positively only going to be done through His son and His son alone.

And this oath is God's purpose declared absolutely.

Your priesthood comes with a guarantee.

Not only with an oath but with a guarantee.

That's the difference between the two priesthoods.

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

You don't want that old covenant. It never worked. You want the brand new one, that demands perfection.

Your priest is under oath, with a guarantee that He will fulfill, all that's necessary for it.

Now verses 23 and 24 give you one more thing that's the best of all.

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

Okay! What happens when your CPA dies? You go hire another CPA.

What do you do when your doctor dies? You get another doctor, don't you?

What do you do when your lawyer dies? Well, you go to court with another one.

What do you do when your priest dies? Well, you have to get another one.

Isn't it wonderful to know that your priest is never going to die? He's eternal. Look at verse 24!

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

An oath, a guarantee, is permanent.

It won't change.

It's eternal.

He's a priest forever, designated by the Father to carry out the function that every one of us need.

The law couldn't do it verse 25.

“Hence”, now this is the summary of what we have just been talking about.

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.

“Also He is able.” There is your word.

“He is able” to do, what the law couldn't do.

He has the power to do it. To do what?

To be “saving forever those who are drawing near to God through Him.”

He's your agent.

If you've hired Him as your agent

he's been representing you for 24 hours.

He is functioning as your agent and your record is clear.

Isaiah 1:18: “Come now and let us reason together,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

When Jesus is in the Garden of Gethsemane, what is He saying?

John 17:9

I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me for they are Yours.

Jesus is praying for them.

And Romans 8:33-39, just jump out of the text at you:

**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 will separate us from the love of Christ?**

And there's nothing that will separate us because of the fact, that He's functioning as our Agent, our Priest.

Now, this is the third time in the book of Hebrews we run into the little word "He is able."

First in Hebrews 2:18:

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

Secondly, Hebrews 4:15

We are not having a high priest, who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses,

And third, Hebrews 7:25

He's able to sustain, He's able to sympathize, and He's able to save.

Now, let's wrap it up—26, 27 and then 28 are the conclusion of the whole argument.

You discovered that this Priest is a priest under oath. He's a Priest with a guarantee and He is a Priest who is a permanent Priest.

But now we have His resume:

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;

“For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest.”

Five things are on His resume that qualify Him as the spotless Priest:

He’s “holy,”

He’s “innocent,”

He’s “undefiled,”

He’s “having been separated from sinners” and

He’s been “exalted above the heavens.”

Yes, He’s spotless.

Notice He’s a sufficient sacrifice. Look at 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.

**Now would you pause with me and
just go up to Calvary for just a second?
Let's see the Lamb of God who takes away
the sin of the world?**

**Let's pause for a moment, go with me to Calvary and
appreciate your Priest offering the sacrifice of Himself.**

What did He say, while He hung on the cross.

**“Father, forgive them for they are not knowing
what they are doing.”**

**“Today you'll be with me in the paradise.”—He spoke
to a guilty criminal who asked Him to remember him.**

**“Woman behold your son. Son behold your mother.”—
speaking to John and Mary.**

Giving them to each other, in the hour of His death.

**The culmination of all of it is when the skies grew black
and about three in the afternoon, He cried:
My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me?”**

**That's a holy God turning His back on the sin, that is
laid on your sacrifice, your agent, as He gave His life.**

“I thirst.”

And then thank God for the next word: It is finished.”

Jesus paid it all, the debt has been paid. Fully paid.

You don't add anything to it.

It's totally cancelled, wiped out and

you're going to see in the later chapters of the book of Hebrews, it's completely blotted out and washed away.

And, “Father, into your hands I commend My spirit.”

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.

And because He has been made perfect forever,

He is able to make those who hire Him as agent,

by receiving Him by faith, perfect as well.

Fanny Crosby really had nothing to live for. For at about six months of age, a doctor botched up some things and she was blind for life. But she lived for 95 years. And she wrote 8,000 great gospel hymns. And on her tombstone are the words that Jesus said of Mary, the sister of Lazarus, when He anointed her feet, She did what she could. It was she who wrote:

**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.**

**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.**

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: The fact that there is another priesthood that 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.

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

PART II

STUDY NUMBER THIRTEEN — Hebrews 7:11-28

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.

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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.

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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.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read Hebrews 7:11-28 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. What is “known to all” in verse 14?**
- 3. What is said about the “Law” in verse 19?**
- 4. What has “Jesus become the guarantee” of, according to verse 22?**
- 5. Why is Jesus “holding His priesthood” forever, according to verse 24?**
- 6. What is He able to do, according to verse 25?**
- 7. What is Jesus, our High Priest, doing for us, according to verse 25?**
- 8. How is Jesus, our High Priest, described in verse 26?**
- 9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**

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