

A New Priesthood?

Hebrews 7:11-19

East Berlin Community Church

Pastor Keith A. Mosebrook

January 25, 2026

Introduction

- *"Nobody is perfect"* and yet some people think they are. Some people are perfectionists.
- *"Practice makes perfect!"*
- The Jews believed that they had the perfect religious system, given to them by God and thus no need for a new priesthood.
- Relating to the struggle of these early Jewish seekers and converts abandoning their old religion to embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior-Messiah, At one time you felt that you had no need for anything more.

- The superiority of Jesus Christ as presented in the book of Hebrews
 - Superior to the Old Testament prophets as the last voice from God (Hebrews 1)
 - Superior to the angelic realm (Hebrews 1)
 - Superior to Moses who was a servant over God's household. Jesus was the Son. (Hebrews 3)
 - Superior to Joshua who was unable to secure "rest" for the people of God (Hebrews 4)
 - Superior to the High Priest as the Great High Priest, according to the order of Melchizedek.
 - Hebrews 4:16-- *"come boldly before the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."*
 - Hebrews 5:6-- *"a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek"*
 - Hebrews 5:10-- *"called by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek."*

- Melchizedek as a "type" of Jesus Christ.
 - Genesis 14:18-20 -- *"Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all."*

- The superiority of Melchizedek's priesthood over the Levitical priesthood. (Hebrews 7:1-10)
 - Universal, not national
 - Royal
 - Righteous and peaceful
 - Personal, not hereditary
 - Eternal, not temporary

- The superiority of Melchizedek's priesthood proven by 1) Abraham paying a "tithe" of the spoils to Melchizedek and by 2) Melchizedek blessing Abraham.

A New Priesthood?

- Hebrews 7:11-19-- *"Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God."*

A. *The Need for a New Priesthood?*

- Hebrews 7:11-- *"Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?"*
- 1. **What is meant by "perfection"?**
 - a. Means the condition in which men are acceptable to God. Spiritual growth or maturity?
 - b. In the book of Hebrews, it refers to the goal or aim of Christianity.
 - 1) Some believe that the goal is salvation and personal happiness.
 - 2) Others believe the goal is a continuing growing relationship through Bible study and prayer.
 - 3) The revealed goal in Hebrews: *"drawing near to God."*
 - Hebrews 7:19-- *"for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God."*
 - Hebrews 4:16-- *"come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help us in time of need."*
- 2. **The Levitical priesthood and sacrificial system could never bring a man fully to God.**
 - a. The veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies where God dwelt served as a barrier.
 - b. The atonement sacrifice made once-a-year only covered the sin for one year. It had to be repeated year after year.
 - Hebrews 10:1-2-- *"For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins."*
 - c. The Old Testament saints lacked a total sense of freedom from a condemning conscience since the Old Testament sacrifices could not completely remove sin.
 - Hebrews 9:8-9-- *"the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience."*
 - d. The average "Joe" never set foot in the "Holy of Holies", only the High Priest once-a-year.
- 3. **"Perfection" means "access to God" which happens for us the moment we believe and are saved.--**
 - Hebrews 10:14-- *"For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."*
- 4. **Since the Levitical priesthood and the sacrificial system could not make a man perfect, there remained the need for another priest to arise "after the order of Melchizedek".**

B. *The Need for a New Law?*

- Hebrews 7:12-- *"For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law."*
- 1. **Christianity is not enhanced Judaism; it replaces Judaism.**
 - Ephesians 2:14-18-- *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."*

2. ***In what sense is the “Law of God” done away with and replaced with something new?***
 - a. The moral law, which includes the Ten Commandments, has not been changed nor replaced. God’s standard of righteousness has not only been affirmed, but strengthened. (Sermon on the Mount teaching)
 - b. The change is in regard to the ceremonial aspects of the Law: the sacrifices, the feast days, the Levitical priesthood, etc.
 - c. Some Jewish Christians in the early church insisted on maintaining their Jewish practices and making them mandatory for new believers to follow. One had to be circumcised first, become a Jew before one could become a Christ follower. Known in the early church as Judaizers.
 - Galatians 2:16-- *“that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”*
 - Galatians 5:16-- *“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.”*
3. **Evidence that a change of priesthood results in a change of the underlying law.**
 - a. **Jesus Christ is not from the priestly line of Levi, but rather a descendant of Judah.**
 - Hebrews 7:13-14-- *“For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses nothing concerning priesthood.”*
 - 1) It was indisputable that the Messiah would be from Judah
 - 2) Prophesied by Jacob when he blessed his sons
 - Genesis 49:10-- *“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.”*
 - b. **Jesus Christ is from the priestly line of Melchizedek**
 - Hebrews 7:15-17-- *“And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’”*
 - 1) Not *“according to the law of a fleshly commandment”*
 - 2) Based on the power of an *“indestructible life”*
 - Hebrews 7:25-- *“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”*

C. Summary: The Need for a New Priesthood and Underlying Law!

- Hebrews 7:18-19-- *“For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”*
 1. God set aside the old and imperfect, and replaced it with something new and perfect. He “annulled” the old.
 2. The old could reveal sin, cover it, but not remove it. Did nothing to cleanse the conscience.
 3. At Sinai, the mountain was fenced off so that the people could not approach God. In the tabernacle and temple, the people were kept at a distance by the veil.
 4. By His death on the cross, Jesus Christ paid in full for our sins. He not only forgives our sins but cleanses our conscience.

5. Jesus Christ not only offers to us a “sure” hope of eternal life, but a “better hope” in that He provides for us as ordinary people access into the very presence of God.
6. And so the invitation is for us to ***“draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith”***.
 - Hebrews 10:19-21-- *“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”*