

The Melchisedec Priesthood of Christ

Melchisedec historically - Genesis 14v18-20

Melchisedec prophetically - Psalm 110v4

Melchisedec doctrinally - Hebrews 5-7 (ch5v6,10, ch6v20, ch7v17,21)

Ch5v1-10: The Appointment of Christ's Melchisedec Priesthood

2 principle prerequisite qualifications for priesthood

1. Selected from among men (v1); true of Christ (v5, Ps2v7) through His incarnation.

2. Summoned by God (v4); true of Christ (v6,10, Ps110v4) in His resurrection & exaltation.

Thus, the priesthood of Christ follows the pattern of the Aaronic priesthood, but the uniqueness & superiority of Christ's priesthood is in being after the order of Melchisedec.

Ch6v19-20: The Assurance of Christ's Melchisedec Priesthood

He is there in heaven now as our Forerunner, and He ensures that we will later join Him, because of His preserving priestly ministry for us.

Ch7v1-10: The Greatness of Christ's Melchisedec Priesthood

The greatness of Melchisedec as king & priest (v1-3).

The greatness of Melchisedec compared to Abraham (v4-8); he received tithes of Abraham and blessed him.

The greatness of Melchisedec compared to Levi is implied (v9-10), and therefore the Levitical priesthood is by inference inferior to the Melchisedec priesthood.

Ch7v11-22: The Legality of Christ's Melchisedec Priesthood

The need for a change of priesthood is an indication of the failure, weakness & imperfection connected with the Aaronic priesthood.

Christ's unique Melchisedec priesthood necessitated a change in the law as it pertains to priesthood & the priestly tribe (v11-14).

Christ's Melchisedec priesthood is not transferable; He is an eternal Priest who lives after the power of an indissoluble life (v15-17).

Christ's appointment to priesthood is based upon a divine oath (v18-22).

Ch7v23 - Ch8v2: The Sufficiency of Christ's Melchisedec Priesthood

It all contrasts with the temporary & unprofitable Levitical priesthood.

1. v23-24: Christ is our unchanging High Priest - He cannot die or be replaced

When Aaron died (Numbers 20v23-29), the office still continued, the high priestly ministry was transferred to his son Eleazar. Israel's many priests were all ultimately marked by relative failure; they were fallible, sinful & mortal men.

But, we have an eternal Priest upon the throne of God who will never die; His high priestly office will never need to be transferred to another, our Great High Priest will never change.

We came to Christ the Saviour at our conversion; from that moment on we have been getting to know Him more as our Great High Priest, and none will ever take His place.

He will continue in His priestly service on into eternity, eternally blessing the people of God.

2. v25: Christ is our interceding High Priest – He cannot lose any of His own

He ever lives to intercede for us, thus saving us to the uttermost, right on to the end of the journey through this wilderness world & safely to heaven (Romans 8v34).

This ministry of intercession on our behalf is done with all the love & affection of His heart towards His own (John 17, Luke 22v31-32).

3. v26: Christ is our exclusive High Priest – He cannot fail in His ministry

His priesthood is becoming to us, and exclusively towards His own.

He is perfectly fitted morally, physically & spiritually to be our unfailing High Priest.

OT priests had to be physically unblemished (Lev 21), but they were certainly not morally & spiritually unblemished (see Ex 32, Lev 10, Num 16, 1st Sam 2, Malachi 1).

Our High Priest is distinctive in the moral purity, glory & beauty of His character.

i) **“holy”**, i.e. pious, perfectly good & gracious in all His dealings with us & with God.

ii) **“harmless”** in His disposition toward us, entirely free from any unkind or evil feelings.

iii) **“undefiled”**; He remained pure & clean in this scene of sinful defilement.

iv) **“separated from sinners”**; occupied with a ministry that is exclusively towards believers.

v) **“made higher than the heavens”**; the exalted heavenly sphere & glory of His priesthood.

4. v27: Christ is our sacrificial High Priest – He could not offer more than Himself

The sinless & spotless Christ had no need to offer up any sacrifice for His own sins.

God’s holiness demanded a perfect sinless sacrifice, i.e. **“He offered up Himself”**.

Having done so, those He gave Himself for are infinitely precious to Him.

5. v28: Christ is our perfected High Priest – He cannot grow weary

OT priests were marked by human weakness, frailty & fallibility, their service unreliable.

We have **“the Son”**, a divine omnipotent Priest, who unfailingly preserves every believer.

When we are weak, He will give us of His strength (2 Cor 12v9, Phil 4v13, 2 Tim 2v1).

6. Ch8v1: Christ is our sovereign High Priest – He cannot be deposed

All through Israel’s history, the office of priesthood was kept separate from the position of sovereign rule.

In the millennium, Christ will be displayed to Israel as their Royal Priest (Zech 6v12-13).

The Melchisedec priesthood of Christ anticipates this millennial fulfillment.

He is for us today our sovereign High Priest, sitting and ruling upon the throne of heaven, with all things under His sovereign control.

Ch10v21-22: The Efficiency of Christ’s Melchisedec Priesthood

We have **“a Great Priest over the house of God (RV)”**; the efficiency of administration of Christ’s priesthood, enabling us to **“draw near”** into the presence of God (v22), to praise & worship our God (see also ch7v19), with assurance of constant access.

We have a Priest for the sanctuary, who renders our prayers & worshipful service pleasurable & acceptable to God (ch8v2, 1 Peter 2v5, Heb 13v15).

Through Him, all our offerings are presented to God in holy perfection.

Ian Gibson