

Hebrews

Chapter Seven

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Heb 7:1-3 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ²to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. ³Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually.

The author is going to show that there is a higher priestly office than that of Aaron and that Jesus Christ is the greatest priest of all. In biblical study, a type refers to someone or something in the OT that has a fulfillment in the NT. An antitype is the fulfillment of that type (not the nomenclature I would prefer) and the study of types and antitypes is called typology (also not what is used in mathematics). The event recorded in Gen 14:18-20 is the one instance recorded of Melchizedek who is a type of Jesus Christ although we also read of him in Psa 110 and in Hebrews. Some commentators say that Melchizedek was an angel but Heb 5:1 dismisses that possibility. Some say that he was a preincarnate form of Jesus in the time of Abraham but Heb 7:3 states that he was made like the Son of God so that interpretation is wrong. Some interpreters have tried to make the case that Shem, a son of Noah, was Melchizedek. While it is most probably that Shem was alive in the early part of the life of Abraham, it is not possible to prove the assertion that he was Melchizedek. Shem lived to be 600 years old but there is no Biblical evidence that he ever claimed any office of king or priest. It is interesting that when Abraham was 75, the flood was only 367 years in the past (Gen 12:4) and it was about 267 years after the dispersion at Babel. We only know that he was an extraordinary man who had kept the religion pure as it was handed down to him from the flood and the dispersion.

All priests were Levites but not all Levites were priests. They were not rulers but subject to the king in all matters except those related to their priestly functions. Verses 1 and 2 state that Melchizedek was both priest and a king and such a dual office was not known in Israel after the establishment of the priesthood but predicted in Zech 6:13. David, in Psalm 110 looks forward to the Messiah who will be both priest and king: *Psalm 110:4 The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.*

Abram had just come back from a major victory over five kings when Melchizedek came to meet him:

Gen 14:14-18 And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

¹⁵And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions, and also the women, and the people. ¹⁷Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.

It is important to note that the King of Sodom was on his way to meet Abram when Melchizedek interceded. After receiving the bread and wine from Melchizedek, Abram was strengthened to refuse the elaborate gifts of the King of Sodom, who represented the impurity of the world. The author states that Melchizedek blessed Abram as only a priest could. Some people have interpreted the giving of bread and wine to Abram as a sacramental connection. However the author of Hebrews did not include this aspect of their meeting and, if this event had any connection to a mass as thought by some Roman Catholics, he would surely have commented on that possibility. It seems that the author is including the bread and wine as part of the blessing. Abram then gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything.

The author then tells us that Melchizedek is translated king of righteousness and certainly righteousness has a prominent place in salvation. He also says that he is king of Salem, which is king of peace. His name consists of the Hebrew word *melek*, which translates as “king” and *tsedeq*, which translates as “righteous”. Certainly in the midst of the evil of the Canaanites and men like the king of Sodom this man was a bright light in the world of Abraham. The word Salem comes from the same root as the Hebrew word “shalom”, which is the Hebrew word for peace and that is surely what the author meant. Even the order of his titles is spiritual for righteousness has to come before there can be peace: *Isaiah 32:17 And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever. Rom 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

The Levitical priesthood could not bring lasting righteousness and peace but Melchizedek is called the king of righteousness and peace so he ruled with both aspects. Only the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ could bring permanent righteousness and peace: *Psalm 85:10 Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* Melchizedek ruled in both areas during his temporary lifetime so he seems to have temporarily accomplished more than the Levitical priests, which is one reason that he is a type of Christ.

There are some other special characteristics of this man that make him unique. He is said to be king of Salem and Salem is referred to as Jerusalem in Ps 76:2 but if that is what the author meant he surely would have said Jerusalem. In Jerome's time Salem was near Scythopolis and the LXX seems to identify Salem with Shechem in Gen 33:18 so we cannot be sure that Salem

was Jerusalem. Saying that he was a priest of the Most High God indicates the God of the Jews. The name used is El Elyon proclaiming that He is Sovereign.

Greek uses “without father” and “without mother” to indicate the people are of unknown parentage and is used for illegitimate children, from people of unimportant families, and for deities who supposedly only came from one sex. However this also can just mean that the origin is of no significance to the conversation and the omission of a statement of parents is taken to be as much inspiration as when such is given. It is simply a matter of record that his parents are unknown and this is a shadow of the truth of Christ in a more literal meaning. “Without genealogy” seems to be a term coined by this author since it is not found in the Bible or in Greek literature. In antiquity the genealogy of a priest was considered very important so this statement is very important. Some priests who could not establish their proper genealogy were excluded from the priesthood: *Neh 7:63-64 And of the priests: the sons of Hobaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai, the Gileadite, and was named after them. ⁶⁴These searched among their ancestral registration, but it could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean and excluded from the priesthood.* Also the record shows nothing of Melchizedek’s birth or death so the author says that he is made like the Son of God and thus is properly identified as a type of Jesus Christ. So Jesus Christ is the primary case and Melchizedek is of the same type regarding his recorded origin. Since Jesus has always existed, the author states that Melchizedek was made like Him. Of course with Jesus the situation is not just of historical origin but of spiritual significance regarding His eternal nature.

Heb 7:4-10 Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. ⁵And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. ⁶But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham, and blessed the one who had the promises. ⁷But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. ⁸And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. ⁹And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, ¹⁰for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

In verse four the author states the importance of Melchizedek due to the fact that Abraham gave him a tenth of the best of the spoils of the campaign Abraham had just won. Levi was born many years after the event in Gen 14 but Abraham was the father of all Hebrew tribes including the Levi so Abraham represents the priesthood to follow. Thus Abraham’s giving of a tithe to Melchizedek shows that Abraham recognized the superiority of him to the priesthood that would come. In Greek, “the patriarch” is at the end of the sentence indicating the greatness of Abraham. So that just a great man would give a tithe to Melchizedek speaks highly of the king/priest. The giving of one tenth of the spoils of a war to some deity represented by some priest was common

for the Greeks and other nations but not for Israel. After the battle for Jericho, the people were to give all the spoils that had been used in cult worship to the Lord and they were commanded to not keep any of it for they might be tempted:

Joshua 6:17-19 "And the city shall be under the ban, it and all that is in it belongs to the Lord; only Rahab the harlot and all who are with her in the house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. ¹⁸"But as for you, only keep yourselves from the things under the ban, lest you covet them and take some of the things under the ban, so you would make the camp of Israel accursed and bring trouble on it. ¹⁹"But all the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord."

They were to destroy everyone and every other thing in the city:

Joshua 6:21 And they utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

Joshua 6:24 And they burned the city with fire, and all that was in it. Only the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.

This was the law of herem was thus practiced by the Israelites (see also Deut 7:1-6; 20:15-18) so it was unusual for Abraham to give a tithe of the spoils of this war to Melchizedek. Abraham had to recognize this priest/king as very special before the Lord.

The Levites, unlike the other tribes, received no land. The Law required a tithe to be paid to the Levites for their "inheritance" (Num 18:21, 24) and they then paid tithes to the priesthood of the Lord (Num 18:26). So the other Jewish tribes paid tithes directly to the Levites who then gave a tithe of the tithe to the priests of the house of the Lord. Remember that not all Levites were priests but priests were only Levites. The priests were to stop ministering at age 50 so their service was limited whereas that of Christ is forever. In the first century it seems that the priests were in charge of the entire operation so the author, in verse 5, is probably referring to the local custom. The people were ethnic brothers of the priests who had no inherent superiority but were so established by blood lines and the Law. But Melchizedek did not trace his ancestry from Levi so he was not just one of a group of brothers but was a lone figure of great importance. He took tithes from the patriarch, which makes him especially significant in history. Not only did Melchizedek take tithes from Abraham but he blessed him, which shows his superiority as the lesser person is blessed by the greater person. When Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek he was admitting his inferior position and the blessing showed that Melchizedek accepted it even though Abraham received the promises of God.

When he says that "in this case mortal men receive tithes" he seems to be referring to the Temple practices and this indicates that the epistle was written prior to AD 70. He then says that in the case of Abraham only one person received the tithe, rather than in the Temple and this person is never stated to die. This does not mean that he did not die but only that his death is not recorded. In verses 9 and 10 he amplifies on his assertions. The Levitical priests received tithes so it is surprising that through his descendants Levi also paid tithes. In several instances the Bible will

include the ancestor when speaking of the descendants. For example, Paul said “in Adam all die” (1 Cor 15:22). The author is making the important point that even though Levi was not alive when Abraham met Melchizedek he paid the tithe as a point of the Law to come. Levi was Abraham’s great-grandson and was not born when Abraham met Melchizedek. The author uses the phrase “so to speak” to indicate that he is speaking of a situation regarding Levi that is hypothetical but yet still meaningful. The author sees the mysterious figure as illustrating the superiority of Jesus Christ yet to come historically in the time of Abraham.

Heb 7:11-14 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? ¹²For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. ¹³For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. ¹⁴For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.

Perfection in this context means being found acceptable before God. The author is speaking about Psalm 110 in which David proclaimed the day of the new priest/king.

Psalm 110:1-7 (A Psalm of David.) The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." ²The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Thine enemies." ³Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of Thy power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Thy youth are to Thee as the dew. ⁴The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." ⁵The Lord is at Thy right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. ⁶He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country. ⁷He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up His head.

If the Levitical priesthood had achieved perfection before God then there would have been no need for another priest. To the Jew the Law was the final word from God and since the Law came after Melchizedek the Aaronic priesthood was superior to his. However the author makes the point that the priesthood of Melchizedek that is spoken of in Psalm 110 came after the giving of the Law. Since David spoke of another priest the Levitical priests did not fully accomplish the task required. The words in parenthesis state that the Law and the priesthood are closely connected for the priesthood forms the basis for the Law and is needed for the operation of the Law. Thus the two are intertwined. In verse 11 he is saying that another priest is needed who is not of the lineage of Aaron and this would have been a significant blow to the concepts of the Jew. Remember this text is written to Jews who are being tempted to return to their original religious ways. Before their conversion they may have been expecting a greater priest to arise but he would have been of the Levitical lineage. Their Christian teachers would have been

encouraging them to think of the old priesthood as the era of preparation and now they were in the era of fulfillment. It was thus critical of the author to make the point that this new priest had been foretold long before their time and thus part of their heritage.

Since the priesthood was insufficient for the purpose of developing perfection of mankind before God and because of the intimate connection between the priesthood and the Law, there was a need for a change in both. Christ is not another Aaron for He replaces the old priesthood with another that is different and attains the goal of perfection of His followers before God. After the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Aaronic priesthood has no value at all; not even as a temporary covering of sin and therefore it is totally abrogated. The Jews could only make sacrificial offerings at the Temple. The destruction of the Temple in AD 70 emphasizes that fact since there was no place since then for the offering of sacrifices. Since the priesthood is replaced then the Law is replaced also since it lost its basis of the former priesthood. At the “trial” of Jesus the high priest, Caiaphas, became so frustrated that he tore his robes (Matt 26:65). This act was forbidden (Lev 10:6) and the priesthood passed from the house of Aaron at this action. Thus the entire legal economy became superseded by the dispensation of grace. Paul made the same argument: *Gal 3:24-25 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.* ²⁵*But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.* Before his conversion, Paul thought that the Law was to promote his justification before God. But after being born again, he knew that the Law was only designed to increase ones awareness of all sin. Be careful here to not think that I am teaching antinomianism! We will see that Jesus has His commandments and He tells us clearly that if we love Him we will show that love by obeying His commands (John 14:15, 21).

In verse 13 the author is referring to Jesus and He was not descended from the “tribe” of Aaron but of Judah, which was a non-priestly tribe. David and Solomon were also of the tribe of Judah and the OT does record that they offered sacrifice (2 Sam 6:12-13, 17-18; 24:25; 1 Kings 3:4; 8:62). However they did not personally slay the sacrificial animals (Solomon offered 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep!) but they made them available so that the priests would perform the actual liturgical functions. The author is referring to the regular administrations of the office of priest and nobody but the sons of Aaron did that in the OT period. In verse 14 the author offers an explanation of the preceding sentence. In this epistle, Jesus is only referred to as “our Lord” here and in 13:20. He mostly refers to the Father as Lord (kyrios) but it is obvious that here he is referring to Jesus. Outside of the nativity events, Jesus is only referred to as coming from the tribe of Judah here and in Rev 5:5. The Hebrew verb used for “descended” is unusual and was commonly used to mean the rising of a star or a shoot from the roots of a plant. He may have had in mind the OT prophecies of the Messiah being a shoot from the root of David (Jer 23:5). Moses did not report any possibility of a priest coming from any tribe other than Levi so this new priesthood would be very different from any experienced or expected by the Jews.

Heb 7:15-19 And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek,¹⁶ who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life.¹⁷ For it is witnessed of Him, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." ¹⁸For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness¹⁹ (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

The author now presses his case of a new superior priest in the person of Jesus Christ who is superior because of His life, the divine oath, the permanence of His priesthood, and His sacrifice. The law's establishment of the Aaronic priesthood is called a "carnal commandment" because it is only concerned with externalities of the religion such as the animal sacrifices, a material shrine, the physical descent of the priests, etc. This old priesthood is transient whereas the new High Priest is eternal. He now makes even clearer the superiority of the new priesthood. Greek has two words that we translate into English as "another". One is "allos", meaning of the same kind. The other is heteros, meaning a different kind and this is the word translated "another" in verse 15. Thus when one priest came to replace another he was "allos" but Jesus is "heteros" priest. The law of physical requirement would be that the priest must be of the tribe of Aaron and he has stated clearly that this new priest was not of that tribe. The authority of Jesus as priest was based upon the power of an indestructible life, where the word "power" is much more authoritative a concept than just authority. His life does not end and can never end so His power is forever and greater than any other power or authority including all on earth and the spiritual aspects of Satan. In verse 17 the author begins the sentence with the word "for", which is the superior explanation of what he has been saying about this new priesthood. The priesthood of the line of Aaron would continue for all generations (Exodus 40:15) but no individual priest of that lineage was forever. The life and priesthood of Jesus is forever and it is in the order of that of Melchizedek in that there is no historical end to his life but of course Melchizedek did die and his priesthood did end whereas that of Jesus is forever.

In verse 18 the author says that there is a setting aside of the former commandment and that statement refers to the whole Law with the setting aside of the entire Levitical system by the coming of the work of Jesus Christ. "Setting aside" means that although there is a connection between the former and the new the old did not succeed in "perfection" of mankind since no permanent salvation was attained by anyone attempting to obey the Law. The old Law made nothing perfect, meaning made acceptable before God but the new could achieve spiritual perfection of mankind through double imputation. The new priesthood brings to mankind a better or more complete hope of being able to come before the presence of Holy God in acceptance: *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.* The Law and the Gospel are in stark contrast for the Law could not enable people to draw near to God but the Gospel makes that possible.

Heb 7:20-22 And inasmuch as it was not without an oath ²¹(for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, "The Lord has sworn And will not change His mind, 'Thou art a priest forever'"); ²²so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

There was no oath for the Aaronic priests, which indicates that the priest was not permanent as would be the priesthood of the Lord. The Aaronic priesthood was inaugurated with a command (Ex 28:1) but no oath. He quotes again from Ps 110:4, which states (with proper names inserted for pronouns) "Jesus with an oath through the Father who said to Jesus". The oath of God makes this covenant eternal and not temporary because of the work done by our Lord. Again the author stresses that this office is forever and thus this covenant is better than the previous one. The Greek word translated guarantee is "engyos" and this is the only place it is used in the NT. The word was used in legal documents meaning the surety of the agreement. Since Jesus lives forever the surety is everlasting and the covenant will never be broken. Jesus stands forever as the guarantor before man in that He fulfills His covenant of forgiveness and as the guarantor to God that those who are in Him are acceptable. When God made His covenant with Abraham He did it with an oath (Gen 22:16-18; Heb 6:13) and that promise was unconditional and eternal. The Messiah came through Abraham so all the blessings of all people through all ages are continual fulfillments of the covenant with Abraham: *Gal 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.*

This is the author's first use of the word "covenant" although he uses it seventeen times in this epistle so the concept is very important to him. In no other NT book is the word used more than three times. A covenant is the establishment of an agreement and when God makes the covenant with man it brings God and man into some relationship and that can only be initiated by God. The Greek word used for "covenant" indicates that nobody can bargain with the person making the agreement and, of course, that is because nobody can bargain with God! The work of Jesus Christ initiated a new covenant by which we have a relationship with God. Retreating to the old covenant would be trying to enter into an administration that no longer exists! Paul also related this:

2Cor 5:1-19 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. ¹⁸Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Heb 7:23-25 And the former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers, because they were prevented by death from continuing, ²⁴but He, on the other hand, because He

abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently. ²⁵Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Obviously there were many priests in the old covenant because each of them would die and have to be replaced. The replacement of Aaron as a priest at his death is recorded in Num 20:28 with Eleazar taking his place. Josephus states that there were 83 high priests from the time of Aaron to the destruction of the Temple in AD 70. This transfer continued until the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70. This new priesthood is superior because the priest lives forever and there are no successors. Since Jesus lives forever, His priesthood is also forever. The word translated as “permanently” also carries the meaning of inviolable or unchangeable. Verse 25 is very comforting to those of us who are “in Christ”. Paul made a similar comment:

Rom 8:33-34 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴who 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.

Some have made some strange, improper comments about this last verse regarding the intercession of Christ for us. Paul also wrote of the intercession of Jesus and note that He **intercedes for the saints**: *Rom 8:27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.* The portrait is not of Him continually offering intercession for us as we continue to sin (sinners) but rather that His very presence seated at the right hand of the Father for those who are in Him is all that is needed. He is interceding **for the saints** (those who are in Christ). The Father is not sitting in heaven in hostility toward those whom Jesus has saved from His wrath (John 3:36). Before Holy God all of those in Christ have no sins on their accounts and instead they have the righteousness of Jesus (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:26) and this one-time event is called double imputation. Certainly those in Christ still have a sin nature that is being reduced and replaced with a Christ nature in the process called progressive sanctification.

Christians are never called sinners in the Bible but we are called saints (note again Rom 8:27 for those for whom He intercedes) because of the double imputation and not because of anything we did. His one-time sacrifice for the sins of His people is the final sacrifice that sustains our salvation **forever** as He lives forever. That is not to imply that He does nothing further for us in heaven. In Heb 2:17 we read that He made atonement for His people’s sins and strengthens them in the face of temptation (also read Luke 22:31-32; John 17:11). In Heb 4:15 we read that He sympathizes with our weaknesses and supplies mercy and grace as needed. Of course He and the Holy Spirit are also involved in our progressive sanctification (1 John 1:9; 2:1-2), which is one aspect of salvation that has three components: justification, sanctification, and glorification. It is the sanctification phase of which Paul speaks in: *Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your*

salvation with fear and trembling. God is involved in our total salvation from the very beginning: *John 6:44 "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.* Because of what Jesus did for us we have no condemnation from God (Rom 8:1). So while Christians are disciplined when they sin, they are never condemned for that sin. By definition, sinners practice sin but a true Christian cannot practice sin. We read of sinners in many instances in the Bible including: *Gen 13:13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the Lord.* Paul states that we **were** sinners: *Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* God does not even hear the prayers of sinners: *John 9:31 "We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing, and does His will, He hears him.*

Paul also clearly states the progression occurring spiritually in us from being sinners to being seated with Jesus in the heavenly places:

Eph 2-7 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, ⁷in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

The Bible clearly tells us the end for sinners:

Isaiah 1:28 But transgressors and sinners will be crushed together, And those who forsake the Lord shall come to an end.

Isaiah 13:9 Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it.

Amos 9:10 "All the sinners of My people will die by the sword, Those who say, 'The calamity will not overtake or confront us.'

Never let anyone call you a sinner! Christians are **saints before God** and becoming saintly before ourselves and mankind. Know who you are so that the truth will set you totally free from condemnation before God. The word “saint” appears 66 times in the Bible and I urge you to read all of those instances in context to better understand who you are. I have listed them at the end of this paper for your edification.

Heb 7:26-28 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; ²⁷who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the

sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. ²⁸For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.

The “for” connects this last section with the preceding sentences. It is because Jesus is such a superior high priest that He can act in this way. The reason for the phrase “it was fitting” is that the action of this high priest is the only way that people can be made acceptable before God. It was God’s plan from before the creation of the universe that this plan would be enacted to save His people in the same way that He saved Adam: by His grace acting to provide the perfect sacrifice. One Greek word for holy is “hagios” that refers to the quality of separateness and the other word is “hosios” that refers to the character involved in the separation and that is the word used here. He is also innocent or blameless, undefiled or without evil, and pure or separated from sinners. Finally the author states that Jesus is exalted above the heavens so that His name, Lord, is exalted above all names: *Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, (this name is “Lord”).*

The human high priests all had to offer sacrifices for their own sins before they could offer sacrifices interceding for other people. However Jesus was pure or totally separated from sinners so that He did not have to offer a sacrifice for any personal sins. His sacrifice of His holy person was the only sacrifice needed to settle the sin-before-God issue forever. However those in Christ still will sin but that one sacrifice settles the wrath of God for all their sins forever. The human priests were still men and because they continued to sin they had to continually offer sacrifices for those sins. But Jesus was righteous before God and remained in that condition so He only had to make the one sacrifice for all His people of all time. The oath came after the Law and thus superseded it and has the last word. Psalm 110 does not mention the Son as does Psalm 2 and the author sees both of them acting together to refer to Jesus. It was His suffering and final sacrifice that purchased salvation for His people. Since Jesus was made perfectly acceptable before God forever, His offering is the perfect and only salvation possible.

The pious Jew would obey the Law and behave by the Mosaic ritual because that is what God had ordained for the time in which they lived. But none of their sacrificial acts could bring righteousness to their credit. They had to trust God to complete their perfection in the fulfillment of the promise to provide the High Priest needed for their completion. Those who had been given faith would continue to obey the commands to the best of their ability knowing that none of their works produced their needed righteousness. God would fulfill their hope either by bringing Jesus into their lives while they lived or after their death. But the Jews who actually thought that their obedience was bringing them perfection so that they acted in a legalistic fashion would reject Jesus when He came in fulfillment of the promise. Thus Jesus said that He came to heal the sick, meaning those who recognized that they were spiritually dead and in need of spiritual healing: *Mark 2:17 And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a*

physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." To totally make the point after the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Temple was destroyed in AD 70 so that the legalistic Jews had no means to offer their impotent sacrifices. Still, most Jews rejected the promised Seed.

Saints

PSA 16:3 As for the saints who are in the earth, They are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight.

PSA 34:9 O fear the Lord, you His saints; For to those who fear Him, there is no want.

DAN 7:18 'But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'

DAN 7:21 "I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them

DAN 7:22 until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

DAN 7:25 'And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

DAN 7:27 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

MAT 27:52 and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

ACT 9:13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Thy saints at Jerusalem;

ACT 9:32 ¶ Now it came about that as Peter was traveling through all those parts, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda.

ACT 9:41 And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

ACT 26:10 "And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

ROM 1:7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

ROM 8:27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

ROM 12:13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

ROM 15:25 but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints.

ROM 15:26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

ROM 15:31 that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;

ROM 16:2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

ROM 16:15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

1CO 1:2 to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

1CO 6:1 Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?

1CO 6:2 Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?

1CO 14:33 for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

1CO 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

1CO 16:15 ¶ Now I urge you, brethren (you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for ministry to the saints),

2CO 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia:

2CO 8:4 begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,

2CO 9:1 For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this ministry to the saints;

2CO 9:12 For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.

2CO 13:13 All the saints greet you.

EPH 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:

EPH 1:15 ¶ For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints,

EPH 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

EPH 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

EPH 3:8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,

EPH 3:18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

EPH 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

EPH 5:3 ¶ But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints;

EPH 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

PHI 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

PHI 4:22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

COL 1:2 to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

COL 1:4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints;

COL 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

COL 1:26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints,

1TH 3:13 so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

2TH 1:10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed-- for our testimony to you was believed.

PHM 1:5 because I hear of your love, and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints;

PHM 1:7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

HEB 6:10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

HEB 13:24 Greet all of your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.

JUD 1:3 ¶ Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

REV 5:8 And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

REV 8:3 ¶ And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

REV 8:4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.

REV 11:18 "And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the

saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

REV 13:7 And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.

REV 13:10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

REV 14:12 Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

REV 16:6 for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink. They deserve it. "

REV 17:6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly.

REV 18:20 "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her."

REV 18:24 "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth."

REV 19:8 And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

REV 20:9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.