

Hebrews

Chapter 7:11-28

¹¹ So ***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?

Guthrie > Now that he has demonstrated the superiority of Melchizedek to the Levitical order, the writer proceeds to show the need for a priest belonging to that superior order of priesthood.

If > Strong's > *ei* >

HELPS > *ei* (followed by any verb) expresses "a condition, *thought* of as *real*, or to denote *assumptions*" (i.e. *viewed as factual*. for the sake of argument)

Perfection > Strong's > completion, perfection

HELPS > a brand of *consummation (completion)* which focuses on the final stage (*fulfillment, end-phase*) of the consummation process

Utley > The Greek family of terms based on *telos* basically means "to bring to the end," "to bring to completion," or "to bring to maturity." Here it refers to an adequate and effective representative or intercessor.

Constable > The writer's point was that since God promised in Psalm 110:4 that the coming Messiah would be a priest after Melchizedek's order ("*You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*"), He intended to terminate and replace the Levitical priesthood, because it was inadequate. If the Levitical priesthood had been adequate, the Messiah would have functioned as a Levitical priest.

Through > Strong's > through, on account of, because of

Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law) > Constable > The priesthood was such a major part of the whole Mosaic Covenant that this predicted change in the priesthood signaled a change in the whole Covenant (see verse 12).

Received the Law > Pink > The passive "received the law" is a single word in the Greek, and really means "were legalized". The reference is not to bring to the actual giving of the law, but to the state of the people under it, their being brought beneath its power. The law demanded perfect righteousness, but fallen man was incapable of producing it (Romans 3:19, Romans 3:20; Romans 8:3); nor could the Levitical priesthood effect it. Thus the only hope lay outside of themselves. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4).

Another > HELPS > *héteros* – *another* (of a *different* kind). *héteros* ("another but *distinct* in kind") stands in contrast to *állos* ("another of the *same* kind"). *héteros* ("another of a *different quality*") emphasizes it is *qualitatively* different from its counterpart.

Designated > Strong's > to say

Stedman > The argument of Hebrews 7:11-19 constitutes a bold, and even radical, declaration by the writer. This section asserts unequivocally that the death and resurrection of Jesus has introduced a new and permanent priesthood that brings the Levitical priesthood to an end and, with it, the demise of the law of Moses.

Wuest translation of verse 11 > *If indeed, therefore, completeness were through the Levitical priesthood, for the people upon its basis had the law laid down, what need after that should there be of a priest of a different kind arising according to the order of Melchisedec and not being called after the order of Aaron?*

¹² **For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.**

Constable > The priesthood was such a major part of the whole Mosaic Covenant that this predicted change in the priesthood signaled a change in the whole Covenant. This verse is one of the clearest single statements in the New Testament indicating that God has terminated the Mosaic Law

Utley > The purpose of the Mosaic law was never to produce righteousness, but to show the continuing results of the fall and mankind's inability to please God (cf. **Gal. 3:23-25**). This is a major truth in trying to figure out God's purpose for the Mosaic Law.

Gal. 3:23-25 > ²³ *But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the Law, being confined for the faith that was destined to be revealed.* ²⁴ *Therefore the Law has become our guardian to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.* ²⁵ *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.*

Changed > Strong's > *metatithémi* > to transfer, change

Precept Austin > literally, the act of transferring from one place to another and so the removal or taking up or away.

Vincent > Or transferred to another order

Change > Strong's > *metathesis* (from the previous word) > a change, removal

Vincent > The fundamental idea of the law was that of a people united with God. Sin, the obstacle to this ideal union, was dealt with through the priesthood.

If the law failed to effect complete fellowship with God, the priesthood was shown to be a failure, and must be abolished; and the change of the priesthood involved the abolition of the entire legal system.

Precept Austin > So the whole Judaistic system was changed-not just changed, but exchanged-for a new order, a new Priest, a new sacrifice, an entirely New Covenant. This is why he had exhorted them to leave behind the elementary teachings about the Christ & to be borne along to maturity in Heb 6:1-3. Remember the idea there of "leave" meant to completely lay these old teachings aside.

Wuest utilizes the concept of "transfer" as he translates this verse > *For there being a transfer of the priesthood, of necessity also of the law there is a transfer*

¹³ *For the one about whom these things are said belongs to **another** tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.* ¹⁴ *For it is **evident** that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses said nothing concerning priests.*

Another > HELPS > (we saw this earlier) *héteros* – *another* (of a different kind). *héteros* ("another but distinct in kind") *héteros* ("another of a different quality") emphasizes it is *qualitatively* different from its counterpart.

Wuest > The Messiah comes from another tribe, and not merely from another tribe, but from a tribe which was not specially set apart for priestly service, a tribe of a different nature in that respect from the tribe of Levi. This is made clear by the use of *heteros*.

Evident > Strong's > *prodelos* > from *pro* > *before* + *delos* > *evident* > *evident beforehand* > *plain before all men*

¹⁵ *And this is **clearer still**, if **another** priest arises according to the **likeness** of Melchizedek,* ¹⁶ *who has become a priest not on the basis of a law of **physical requirement**, but according to **the power of an indestructible life**.* ¹⁷ *For it is attested of Him, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."*

Clearer still > Strong's > *katadelos* > From *kata* intensive and *delos* > *manifest* -- *far more evident*.

If > Uteley > This is a (Greek grammar) which is assumed to be true from the author's perspective or for his literary purposes. Another priest HAS come and is from the line of Melchizedek.

Another > (As previously) *héteros* – *another* (of a different kind). *Heteros* ("another but distinct in kind") stands in contrast to *állos* ("another of the same kind"). *héteros* ("another of a different quality") emphasizes it is *qualitatively* different from its counterpart.

Likeness > Strong's > From *homoios* > *resemblance* -- like as, similitude.

Precept Austin > the state of being similar to something but not being identical to it. It means *correspondence*, but *not identity*.

Requirement > Strong's > an injunction, order, command

Physical requirement ... the power of an indestructible life > Utley > Jesus' priestly authority does not rest in what tribe/family He descended from, but from His possession of eternal, indestructible life (i.e., Melchizedek's parents are not named in Genesis 14 and the word "forever" is used in Ps. 104:4). Jesus has the endless life of God (as well as the oath and promise of God).

Barclay > "... every single regulation that governed the old priesthood had to do with the priest's physical body. ... Every single item in the whole ceremony is a physical thing, affecting the priest's body. ... Christ's priesthood depends not on physical things, but on His character, His personality, His being, what He was in Himself. Here was a revolution; it is no longer outward ceremonies and observances that make a priest; it is inward worth."

¹⁸ For, ***on the one hand***, there is the ***nullification*** of a former commandment because of its weakness and ***uselessness***¹⁹ (for the Law made ***nothing perfect***); ***on the other hand***, there is the introduction of a better hope, through which we come near to God.

One the one hand ... on the other hand > Swindoll > In the original Greek text, the author uses a common device for contrasting two elements: "men . . . de", often translated, "on the one hand . . . but on the other. . . ."

On the one hand, the author argues, the Law was set aside because of "its weakness and uselessness" at providing genuine access to God and a means of spiritual growth > "for the Law made nothing perfect" (7:18-19).

On the other hand, with the installation of Christ's priesthood, "there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God" (7:19).

Nullification > Strong's > *athetesis* > from *atheteo* > *a* > *negate* + *tithemi* > *to place, lay, set* ...therefore > *to set aside*

Robertson > Common in the papyri in a legal sense of making void.

Precept Austin > In **Hebrews 9:26** (the only other NT use) *athetesis* refers to the fact that at the Cross, the guilt and power of sin were disannulled.

Hebrews 9:26 > ²⁶ *Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been revealed to put away (athetesis) sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

Uselessness > Strong's > useless, unprofitable

Barnes > For the law made nothing perfect - The Levitical, ceremonial law. That Law, as such, did not reconcile man to God; it did not make an atonement: it did not put away guilt; in one word, "it did not restore things to the condition in which they were before the Law was broken and man became a sinner."

Nothing > Precept Austin > *but absolutely not one*

Perfect > Strong's > to bring to an end, to complete, perfect

Wiersbe > The writer kept in mind the temptation his readers were facing to go back into the old temple system. This is why he reminded them that Jesus Christ has accomplished what the law could never accomplish: He brought in a better hope, and He enables us to draw near to God.

It is no wonder that the Jewish nation was SO angry at Paul and Steven!!! They not only declared that Jesus was the wanted Messiah ... but their message would also declare the setting aside of the very Law!!

Pink takes us to **Acts 6:11 and 13**. (Although Steven would not have stated "*This man does not stop speaking against this holy place*" or "*this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place*" the message here in Hebrews could easily be understood as written.)

Acts 6:11 and 13 ¹¹ *Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God."* ¹² *And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away, and brought him before the Council.* ¹³ *They put forward false witnesses who said, "This man does not stop speaking against this holy place and the Law; ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses handed down to us."*

Wuest brings all this together in his translation of this passage > *For there is indeed a doing away with a preliminary commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for not even one thing did the law bring to completion; but a bringing in to take its place of a better hope, by means of which we are drawing near to God.*

²⁰ *And to the extent that 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**, 'You are a priest forever'");*

Not without an oath > Barnes > In addition to every other consideration showing the superiority of Christ as a priest, there was the solemnity of the oath by which he was set apart to the office. The appointment of one to the office of priest by an oath, such as occurred in the case of Jesus, was much more solemn and important than where the office was received merely by descent. (and that "Oath" was from the LORD Himself)

Wuest > when Messiah was made a high priest, God took an oath guaranteeing the unending character of His priesthood. This shows the inferiority of the Aaronic priesthood to that of Melchisedec.

They ... became priests > Vincent > Lit. (They) are priests, having become such.

Change His mind > HELPS > *metaméllomai* (from *metá*, "change after being with," and *mélō*, "care, be concerned with")

²² *by the same extent **Jesus** also has become the **guarantee** of a better **covenant**.*

Jesus > Guthrie > In a summary statement which gathers up the main point of the preceding discussion, Jesus is again mentioned by name. Moreover, in the Greek text the name stands in the emphatic position at the end of the sentence. It is clear that special significance must be attached to the use of the human name here, since it is as perfect representative of man that he becomes the surety

Guarantee > Strong's > under good security (adjective), guarantee (noun)

Barnes > The word "surety" - ἔγγυος *enguos* - occurs nowhere else in the New Testament nor is it found in the Septuagint. It properly means, a bondsman; one who pledges his name, property, or influence, that a certain thing shall be done. When a contract is made, debt contracted, or a note given, a friend often becomes the "security" in the case, and is himself responsible if the terms of the contract are not complied with. (a Co-signer?)

Uteley > The Hebrew background is "a pledge put in the hand," which implies surety. It came to be used in Greek for collateral on a loan or a jail bond. Also, in Roman law it stood for that which was legally secured.

Covenant > Precept Austin > *diatheke* from *dia* > two + *tithemi* > to place ... pictures that which is placed between two. Thus, a covenant is something placed between two, an arrangement between two parties and was commonly used in the Greco-Roman world to define a legal transaction in settling an inheritance.

Constable > This is the first mention in the epistle of the word covenant, which will play a major role in the writer's argument to follow.

Ellingworth > Hebrews develops the theme of the new covenant more fully than any other NT writer, the epistle accounting for just over half the occurrences of *diatheke* [covenant] in the NT.

²³ *The (former) priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing; ²⁴ Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood **permanently**.*

Permanently > Precept Austin > *aparabatos* from *a* = w/o + *parabaino* = go beyond, transgress) is literally that which does not go beyond and thus does not pass away. It means more than incidental permanence or something that simply will not be changed. It means unchangeable, unalterable, inviolable. It is something that cannot be changed.

Wuest notes that *aparabatos* "describes that which cannot be violated, or that which does not pass over to another. The priestly ministry of Messiah is in view here, a ministry such that no other person can step into it, a ministry that cannot be transferred to another."

Barnes > Margin, "or, "which passeth not from one to another." The margin expresses the sense of the passage. The idea is not strictly that it was "unchangeable," but that "it did not pass over into other hands."

Pink > The death of Christ was a vastly different thing from the death of the Levitical priests, for His death did not prevent Him abiding a priest, as theirs did.

- First, He died as a Priest; they died from being priests; He died in His office, they died out of office.
- Second, personal death was no part of their work, whereas to die was the chief priestly duty incumbent upon the Lord Jesus.
- Third, when they fell under the power of death, they could not extricate themselves from it and return to life and the service of the sanctuary, but the Son of God had power to lay down His life and take it again. So far from death putting an end to His priesthood, it did not even interrupt the exercise of it. Christ died as a priest, because He was also the Sacrifice for sins, yet through the indissolubleness of His person, His soul and body still subsisting in the person of the Son of God. He abode active in His office without any break: "He continueth forever".

²⁵ *Therefore He is also able to save **forever** those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make **intercession** for them.*

Forever > Robertson > (The) Vulgate renders it *in perpetuum* (temporal idea) or like παντοτε. This is possible, but the common meaning is *completely, utterly*.

Precept Austin > The evangelist Billy Sunday had a great sermon, where he talked about how God saved him *from the gutter-most* because he was a gutter-drunk when God saved him. The emphasis is on the fact that Jesus saves completely, forever, all who put their faith in Him, because He is our High Priest forever.

Intercession > Strong's > plead with, make intercession. From en and tugchano; to chance upon, i.e. (by implication) confer with; by extension to entreat (in favor or against) -- deal with, make intercession.

Precept Austin > (*entugchano* from *en = in + tugcháno = get, obtain*) means to meet, to approach, to appeal, to make petition, to entreat, to make intercession. It can convey the idea of to ask for something with urgency and intensity (plead, beg, appeal to, petition)

Vincent > "means to light upon or fall in with; to go to meet for consultation, conversation, or supplication." The idea of *entugchano* is first to meet up with or to encounter, then to meet with for the purposes of conversation or an interview, and then to approach someone with a petition. *Entugchano* thus means to make an earnest request through contact with the one approached. To entreat (in favor or against), to make intercession, to bring a petition to a king on behalf of someone, to ask for something with urgency and intensity, to plead, beg, appeal to or to petition.

Guthrie > Already in this letter the intercessory work of Christ has been hinted at. His sympathy and help are in line with this, but it comes out more clearly in the present passage. The word for intercession does not occur elsewhere in this epistle but is used by Paul both of the Spirit's intercession (Rom. 8:27) and of Christ's intercession (Rom. 8:34). The function of our high priest is to plead our cause.

²⁶ *For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens;*

Innocent > Strong's > akakos > no bad, no evil > guileless

Undefiled > Strong's > akakos > no stain > unsoiled, i.e. (figuratively) pure -- undefiled.

Separated from sinners > Wuest translation > *having been separated from sinners*

THIS is the High Priest we want! An intercessor (as in verse 25) but absolutely pure!

²⁷ ***who has no daily need**, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because He did this once for all time when He offered up Himself.*

Who has no daily needs > Uteley > This combines the Day of Atonement (cf. Leviticus 16) with the daily offerings (the OT continual). It is historically and rabbinically verifiable that the high priest was directly involved in daily sacrifices in later Judaism but possibly not during the days of the tabernacle.

The Day of Atonement > Bible.org. > Leviticus 16

- 1) Aaron was to take off his normal priestly garments, wash, and then put on the special garments which were prescribed for the sacrifices which took him into the holy of holies (v. 4; cf. Exod. 28; 39).
- (2) Aaron secured the necessary sacrificial animals: a bull for his own sin offering and two male goats for the people's sin offering; two rams, one for Aaron's and the other for the people's burnt offering (vv. 3, 5).
- (3) Aaron slaughtered the bull for his own sin offering (vv. 6, 11).
- (4) Before entering into the Holy of Holies with the blood of the bull, Aaron had to create a "cloud" of incense in the Holy of Holies, covering the mercy seat, to "veil" the glory of God so that he could enter in (vv. 12-13). The best approximation to this in my experience is what a bee-keeper does, smoking the hive of the bees, before he begins to remove the honey. In the case of Aaron, he was to offer only the prescribed incense so as to create an obscuring veil of smoke, thus dimming the glory of God's presence and sparing his life.
- (5) Aaron then took some of the blood of the bull and sprinkled it on the mercy seat seven times (v. 14).
- (6) Lots were then cast for the two goats, to determine which would be slaughtered and which would be driven away (vv. 7-8).
- (7) The goat for slaughter, the goat of the people's sin offering, was sacrificed, and its blood was taken into the Holy of Holies and applied to the mercy seat, as the bull's blood had been (v. 15).
- (8) Cleansing was then made for the holy place (v. 16), seemingly by the sprinkling of the blood of both the bull and the goat. The atonement of the holy place is done alone, without anyone present to help, or to watch (v. 17).
- (9) Next, outside the tent, Aaron was to make atonement for the altar of burnt offering, [71](#) using, it would seem, the blood of both the bull and the goat (vv. 18-19).
- (10) Now the second goat, the one which was kept alive, had the sins of the nation symbolically laid on its head, and was driven from the camp to a desolate place, from which it must never return (vv. 20-22).

(11) Aaron then entered the tent of meeting, removed his linen garments, washed, and put on his normal priestly garments

(12) The burnt offerings of rams, one for Aaron and his family and the other for the people, was now offered (v. 24)

(13) The earlier sacrifices of the bull and the goat were completed. The fat of the sin offering was burned on the altar (v. 25), and the remains of the bull and the goat were taken outside the camp, where they were burned (v. 27).

(14) Those who had been rendered unclean by handling the animals on which the sins of Aaron or the people were laid were to wash themselves and then return to camp (vv. 26, 28).

²⁸ ***For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, who has been made perfect forever.***

A Son > Wuest translation > *One who is in character Son*

***For the Law appoints men as high priests ...
but the word of the oath ... appoints a Son*** > Amen!