

Forever (Hebrews 7:1-28)

It's easy to allow the hardships of life to overshadow the significance of what Jesus accomplished. When that happens, we can be tempted to turn back to what we came out of or begin to think something else needs to be added to our faith. Hebrews 7 encourages us to press into the significance of who Jesus is and what he accomplished. It reminds us that he is our 'forever' priest, who not only meets the deepest needs of our lives but offers us a 'forever' assurance to rest in.

1. A 'forever' priest (Hebrews 7:1-10)

The author of Hebrews can't seem to get enough of Melchizedek. He mentions his name 8x and keeps quoting Psalm 110:4 - 3x so far (5:6, 10; 6:20). Takes us back to Genesis 14:18-20 to explain why.

Melchizedek becomes a "type" or a "pattern" pointing us to the kind of priest Jesus would be.

2. A better hope (Hebrews 7:11-22)

Hebrews 7:11 speaks of a "*perfection*" that couldn't be achieved. Perfection here doesn't mean without flaws or moral perfection but "*to bring to completion; to reach the end goal; fulfill.*"

V19 "better" hope? = superior; able to accomplish; achieve; fulfill the salvation we desperately need.

3. A 'forever' assurance (Hebrews 7:23-28)

Hebrew 7:25 Jesus is able to save to the "uttermost" = completely; absolutely; for all time. 1 John 2:1-2

Jesus *lives to intercede*. Romans 8:34-35

Do you have certainty in the sufficiency of his sacrifice?
Confidence in the permanence of his priesthood?
Assurance in the totality of his saving work?
Rest in the fact that he always lives to intercede for you?

QUESTIONS (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. Read Hebrews 7:1-10. What do we learn about Melchizedek? What made him so great?
2. How does Hebrews 7:4-10 make the case that Melchizedek's priesthood is superior to Levi's (Levi was Abraham's great-grandson)? How are Melchizedek and Jesus *similar* in these verses?
3. Read Hebrews 7:11-22. The original recipients of this letter had moved away from old traditions/practices in order to embrace Jesus. Now some were tempted to "go back" to those traditions. This was in part due to persecution. Describe a time when you faced a trial, or due to feelings of exhaustion, were tempted to "go back" to past traditions or patterns of living you used to embrace. How does Hebrews 7 challenge and equip us to face those temptations again?
4. What other contrasts are made in VV11-19 between Jesus' priesthood and that of Levi? What was the purpose of the old priesthood? Why is our hope in Jesus a "better" hope?
5. Read Hebrews 7:22-28. What does Jesus' superiority to other priests mean for our salvation?
6. What does the permanence of Jesus' priesthood make possible for us? VV22-25
7. How does the fact that Jesus "*always lives to make intercession*" help us in the midst of our fears, anxieties and shame? How might it help us persevere in the midst of trials and persecution?
8. Spend some time asking Jesus to deepen your trust and assurance in the sufficiency of his sacrifice and the permanence of his priesthood.

Use short expressions of praise and gratitude for all Jesus is and all he has accomplished for you.