

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Feb 2014

Hebrews

The Preeminence of Jesus Christ

Lesson #9: The Superior Priest

INTRODUCTION

Why aren't Jews sacrificing animals today?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Hebrews 7:1-19

Note: Many people feel that chapter 7 is the focal point of Hebrews. No sacrifices could be made except by the priest and no forgiveness of sins could be made without (blood) sacrifices. Consequently, the priesthood was exalted in Judaism. The name Melchizedek means "king of righteousness." Rom 5:1 Salem comes from the Hebrew root "shalom" meaning peace. As the king of Salem (an ancient name for Jerusalem) he could also be considered the king of peace. Isa 32:17 By blessing Abraham and receiving his tithes, he acknowledged his role as priest. Melchizedek was unique because he was both king and priest, a foreshadow of Christ. Abraham lived hundreds of years before Moses' brother Aaron was born. A priest could only serve between the ages of 25 and 50. Although "perfect" in scripture often means complete, here it means mature or full-grown. Maturity in this sense means full access to God by salvation in Christ (coming to faith).

1. What was Melchizedek's heritage to priesthood? vvs.3, 6.
2. Was Jesus' lineage from Aaron or Judah? Matt 1; Lk 3 Why is this significant, especially to Jews?
3. Abraham was under no law, commandment or obligation and yet he gave freely and generously his choicest spoils to Melchizedek. In return he was blessed. What is the lesson here?
4. Why were there no chairs for the priests in the tabernacle or temple? Heb 10:11-12
5. Why couldn't the Levitical priesthood (and law) provide full access to God? Jn 14:6; Jer 31:31-34
6. What is different today that makes it possible for us to "draw near to God?" v 19

Read Hebrews 7:20-28

7. What made the Levitical priesthood temporary? V. 23 How is Christ different? So what?
8. How does verse 25 represent the whole essence of the gospel? Jn 3:16; Acts 4:12
9. Why didn't Jesus need to offer sacrifices for himself like the other priests?
10. How is Christianity different than "religion" like Judaism?

APPLICATION

How are you experiencing Christ's sacrifice and priestly role to draw close to God?

Father Joseph F. Lupo of the Most Holy Trinity Fathers in Garrison, Maryland, got a lot of press attention after he placed a \$9,000 ad in the January 1972, issue of Playboy. The ad was aimed at attracting recruits to the priesthood. Playboy used the ad as the basis for full-page ads in several large dailies to promote the magazine. Downright irreverent, scolded Lupo. And also in error. The Playboy display boasted that Lupo's ad had produced some 600 applicants within a few weeks' time. While the ad generated a number of inquiries on a variety of topics, explained Lupo, the number of applicants within a year's time was only thirty-five.¹

—Christianity Today

¹Tan, Paul Lee: *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations : A Treasury of Illustrations, Anecdotes, Facts and Quotations for Pastors, Teachers and Christian Workers.* Garland TX : Bible Communications, 1996, c1979