

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## BETTER

*And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. Hebrews 7:7*

Melchisedec is a mysterious character to say the very least. He only appeared once to Abraham yet he holds a prominent position in the unfolding of the kingdom of our LORD. So much so that the seventh chapter of Hebrews is devoted to discussing his priesthood. He is described as having no mother or father nor ever tasting death. In fact it seems somewhat clear to me that Melchisedec is most likely a pre-incarnate appearing of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Just as HE appeared in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abenego and to Abraham on the plains of Mamre.

There is a principle that is taught throughout scripture which is plainly stated by Paul in 1 Cor 13:10, "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." This is the principle that is also set forth in the text we have taken from Hebrews 7:7. The Levitical priesthood, as great as it was in the day of its inception, was only temporary. It was just a signpost on the road which pointed to a "better" priesthood. In fact the scripture points out that the Levites actually paid tribute to this ONE who came before them though they had no intimate knowledge of HIM. (see Heb.7:9) This is an illustration of the scripture which says "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil 2:10-11) All priests of the old testament order were limited by the scope of the "system" that they operated under. All that they could do was offer sacrifices continually year by year, never really altering the sinful condition of their constituents, but in reality only reminding them of sin's continual presence. (see Heb. 10:1-4)

The priesthood of JESUS CHRIST however is not based upon the Mosaic law which is limited in its scope and capability by the weakness of the flesh. Though JESUS of Nazareth was born a Jew of the tribe of Judah, his priesthood did not spring from that nativity, but from the power of an endless life which HE possessed from the beginning and now in the end of this age HE has revealed that power in obtaining eternal redemption for HIS people. In contrast with the work of the Levitical priests who could only remind men of their sin, this "better" PRIEST has taken away the sin of HIS people both judicially (as they are condemned by a broken law) and just as importantly: HE has satisfied the conscience of HIS elect by giving them a peace that passes understanding in imparting to them the gift of faith. They are reconciled to GOD in mind and heart because of the work of CHRIST as well as having their sin debt cancelled by HIS death, burial, and resurrection. On top of that HE has purchased for them the right to be the sons of GOD working in them to will and do of HIS good pleasure as HE transforms them by HIS SPIRIT's indwelling presence. This is indeed a "better" priesthood.

The book of Hebrews is one of contrasts, the old versus the new. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." (Heb 1:1-2) This kingdom which CHRIST came to establish is not just

*an extension or refurbishing of the old covenant, but rather a new and living way. (see Heb.10:20) Those things which are “better” are pointed out here in the book of Hebrews.*

A **“better”** Administrator. *“Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” (Heb 1:4) GOD often sent angels in the old testament as messengers with heavenly tidings to Israel and to her prophets. Even the birth of CHRIST was heralded by such. But now (in these last days) HE has sent HIS SON to personally testify of GOD’s purpose in the redemption of HIS people.*

A **“better”** Hope. *“For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.” (Heb 7:19) The law is powerless to meet the needs of men. It cannot alter a sinner’s heart nor can it give him any sort of encouragement. But CHRIST not only gives us a hope which is sure and steadfast but gives us a delight in HIM and HIS way.*

A **“better”** covenant. *“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.” (Heb 7:22) There are some who try to say that the “new covenant” which is ushered in by CHRIST is just a new and improved model of the “old” which was established with the nation of Israel. Yet the very name by which it is called (new) causes us to examine the issue more closely. Though there are areas of comparative similarity in the old and the new covenants this descriptive word “better” which is used here denotes a distinction rather than a comparison.*

**“Better”** promises. *“He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” (Heb 8:6) The promises that were made to Israel were all conditional upon her obedience. The covenant of law could only say “Do this and live”. The failure of the flesh to meet its conditions brought about a failure of the covenant. The “better” covenant which CHRIST has ushered in is not conditional at all but is built upon the yea and amen of HIM who promised, therefore it has no weakness and is in no danger of not being fulfilled. The unveiling of the new covenant has caused the old to “vanish away” just as light causes darkness to flee.*

A **“better”** country. *“Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.” (Heb 10:34) “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” (Gal 4:6-7) The prospect of life beyond the grave is forever solidified in the minds and hearts of GOD’s children by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST. It is no longer just a place of myth and lore, but can be seen clearly by the eye of faith. What the law could not do, JESUS CHRIST has done. (see Rom. 10:1-16)*

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