THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK AND THE CHANGE OF THE LAW

An In-Depth Scriptural Analysis of Hebrews 7 and the Eternal Priesthood of Jesus Christ

Introduction: The Great Conflict Over the Law

The book of Hebrews stands as one of the most profound and structurally complex theological treatises in the entire New Testament canon. Written to believers facing immense pressure to return to the visible, tangible rituals of the Levitical system, it systematically demonstrates the supremacy of Jesus Christ over every aspect of the old covenant. Yet, in modern theological discourse, few passages have been subject to as much distortion and misinterpretation as Hebrews Chapter 7. In this chapter, the writer introduces a pivotal reality that shakes the foundation of human religious systems: Christ has risen as a High Priest not through the lineage of Aaron, but after the unique and eternal order of Melchizedek. Consequential to this reality, the scripture explicitly declares that 'there is made of necessity a change also of the law.'

It is this very statement regarding the 'change of the law' that the religious world seizes upon to justify an absolute antinomianism—the complete abolition of all biblical law. Secularist minds, compromised theologians, and various mainstream denominations utilize this single verse as a license to strip away the foundational commandments of God. They argue that because the priesthood changed, the entire moral, civil, and financial instructions given by God have been rendered obsolete. Among the most frequent casualties of this theological erasure is the principle of tithing. Critics and commentators argue that since the Levitical system has been superseded, the command to tithe has been utterly done away with, leaving no structural obligation for the believer.

However, a careful, rigorous, and literal examination of Hebrews 7 reveals a vastly different conclusion. The 'change of the law' spoken of by the inspired writer does not denote the destruction of God's moral boundaries or His institutional requirements. Rather, it refers explicitly and exclusively to the administrative and structural mechanics of the priesthood itself. The law was changed because we no longer have to select a high priest from among mortal men. Jesus Christ, through His physical death and triumphant resurrection, tore down the physical and spiritual veil that separated humanity from the Holy of Holies. He has entered into the true heavenly sanctuary, becoming our permanent High Priest and sole intercessory Mediator to carry our prayers directly to God the Father. This document will systematically analyze Hebrews 7, exposing the fallacy of global law abolition, vindicating the continuity of God's structural principles, and illustrating the sublime glory of Christ's eternal Melchizedek priesthood.

Section 1: The Context and Identity of Melchizedek

To comprehend why a change in the priesthood necessitates an administrative change in the law, one must understand the mysterious figure of Melchizedek. He first appears seamlessly in the book of Genesis, long before the tabernacle, the temple, or the tribe of Levi ever existed. After Abraham defeated the confederation of kings to rescue his nephew Lot, he was met by a figure who held a dual office that was strictly forbidden under the later Mosaic system: he was both a king and a priest.

As it is written in Genesis 14:18-20: 'And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.'

This encounter establishes a crucial historical and prophetic precedent. Hundreds of years before the law of the tabernacle was given at Mount Sinai, the foundational components of worship—blessing, the elements of bread and wine, and the rendering of tithes—were already operational under a non-Levitical priesthood. The writer of Hebrews seizes upon this to demonstrate that the Melchizedek order is inherently superior, older, and more foundational than the temporary Levitical structure.

Hebrews 7:1-3 elaborates on this identity using the precise language of the King James Bible: 'For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.'

The description 'without father, without mother, without descent' highlights a stark contrast with the Levitical priests. Under the Mosaic law, a priest's entire right to serve depended on his genealogy. If a son of Aaron could not prove his lineage through meticulous family registers, he was barred from the altar. Melchizedek's priesthood, however, did not depend on human physical descent or biological succession. He stands in the scriptural record as an eternal figure, serving as the perfect prophetic prototype for the Son of God, who would likewise break the mold of human priestly inheritance.

Section 2: The Insufficiency of the Levitical Order

The necessity for a new priesthood arises directly from the inherent limitations of the Levitical system. The Aaronic priesthood was a temporary, introductory framework designed to point toward a greater reality. It could never bring true perfection or permanently purge human sin, because it was staffed by weak, dying men who had to offer sacrifices for their own errors before they could stand on behalf of the nation.

The writer of Hebrews poses a definitive rhetorical question in Hebrews 7:11: 'If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what

further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron?'

The presence of King David's prophecy in Psalm 110:4—written centuries after the giving of the Law—proves that God always intended to bring forth a different priesthood. God swore an oath: 'The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' If the Levitical system had been sufficient to reconcile man to God completely, God would never have predicted its replacement by a radically different order.

The old system was characterized by a continuous cycle of death and replacement. As stated in Hebrews 7:23: 'And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death.' A high priest might be deeply compassionate and holy, but eventually, his life would end, and a new, untested man would take his place. This structural fragility meant that the people were tied to an earthly, fluctuating mediator whose service was confined to a physical, earthly tabernacle built by human hands.

Section 3: The True Meaning of the 'Change in the Law'

We now arrive at the core theological nexus of the chapter, where the critical phrase regarding the alteration of the law is delivered. Hebrews 7:12 explicitly states: 'For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.'

Mainstream religious teachers frequently isolate this verse to proclaim that the law of God has been completely abolished, obliterated, and replaced by a formless grace that requires no structural obedience. They argue that if there is a 'change,' it implies total destruction. But such an interpretation ignores both the Greek context of the word used for 'change' (metathesis, which means a transposition, transfer, or rearrangement) and the immediate textual argument. The law is not being liquidated; it is being administratively redirected because the priesthood executing it has moved from earth to heaven.

The context dictates that the specific aspect of the law undergoing this transposition is the statute governing the selection and operation of the high priest. Under the Mosaic code, it was a capital offense for anyone outside the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron to act as priest. King Uzziah, for instance, was struck with leprosy when he presumed to enter the temple to burn incense, because he violated the tribal boundaries of the priesthood. Therefore, for Christ to become our High Priest, an administrative alteration had to occur, because Jesus did not belong to the tribe of Levi.

As Hebrews 7:13-14 states: 'For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.'

By human, carnal legal standards, Christ was disqualified from the earthly altar. Therefore, for God to seat Jesus at His right hand as our true Intercessor, the law restricting the priesthood exclusively to the sons of Aaron had to be changed. The change in the law is simply this: we no

longer select a high priest from among mortal men on earth. The office has been transferred to a spiritual, immortal realm, bypassing human lineage entirely.

This is confirmed beautifully in Hebrews 7:15-16: 'And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.' The 'carnal commandment' was the physical requirement of bloodlines and biological descent. Christ's credentials do not rely on a genealogical scroll, but on the indestructible power of His resurrection and eternal life.

Section 4: Refuting the Abolition of Tithing

Just as the world misuses Hebrews 7:12 to reject the moral law, many individuals use it specifically to attack the concept of tithing. They assert that because the priesthood has changed, tithing is done away with, since the commandment in the law of Moses directed the tithe to be paid to the Levites. However, a systematic reading of the text demonstrates that Hebrews 7 establishes the exact opposite conclusion: it uses the historical reality of tithing to prove that the Melchizedek priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood.

The author guides the reader to look at the interaction between Abraham and Melchizedek. Long before Levi was born, Abraham paid tithes to this king-priest. Hebrews 7:4 commands: 'Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.'

The writer then compares this pre-Mosaic tithing with the later Levitical system in Hebrews 7:5: 'And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.' Under the law, mortal men took tithes from their own brothers. But Melchizedek, who represents an eternal order, took tithes from Abraham himself, the very root of the nation.

Hebrews 7:6-8 delivers the decisive blow to those who claim tithing is dead: 'But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.'

Notice the phrase: 'And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.' In the earthly tabernacle, mortal, dying human beings received tithes. But in the true spiritual reality ('there'), the one who receives them is He 'of whom it is witnessed that he liveth'—Jesus Christ! The change in the law did not abolish the tithe; it changed the recipient. The tithe is no longer delivered to a dying human priesthood of the tribe of Levi; it belongs directly to our living High Priest in heaven, who continues to receive the honor of His people just as His prototype Melchizedek received it from Abraham. Tithing remains an operational, structural principle of financial stewardship, transferred from an earthly ministry to a

heavenly one. Therefore the true church of God, that keeps the commandments of God and is headed by our high priest, Jesus Christ, is the receipient of our tithes and offerings.

Section 5: The Tearing of the Veil and Direct Access

The practical reality of this change in the priesthood culminated at the exact moment of Christ's physical death on the cross. For centuries, the high priest was an exclusionary figure. He stood before a massive, thick veil that barred entrance into the Holy of Holies, where the Shekinah glory of God dwelt above the mercy seat. The average Israelite could never enter; even the high priest could only enter once a year, with fear and trembling, carrying blood.

When Jesus Christ cried out with a loud voice and gave up his spirit, something miraculous happened in the physical temple. As recorded in Matthew 27:50-51: 'Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the spirit. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;'

The tearing of the veil from top to bottom was a direct act of God the Father. It signified that the human, carnal mediation system was shattered forever. The physical temple, with its mortal Aaronic high priests, was completely bypassed. Christ, through His own blood, entered into the true holy place in heaven, making a way for every believer to have direct, personal access to the throne of God.

Because the veil has been torn, we no longer look to an earthly religious hierarchy, a local priest, or any mortal man to carry our prayers to God. Jesus Christ is our sole intercessory High Priest. He knows our weaknesses, having been tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He carries our prayers directly into the presence of the Father, ensuring that our access is unbroken and permanent.

Section 6: The Perfection and Permanence of Christ's Ministry

Because Christ's priesthood is based on an unchangeable life, it brings the absolute security and perfection that the Levitical system could never achieve. The old covenant was weak because it relied on human executioners who died and sinned. The new covenant is anchored by an unchangeable, sinless, and eternal High Priest.

Hebrews 7:24-25 states this with absolute clarity: 'But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.'

The word 'uttermost' implies complete, total, all-inclusive salvation. Christ does not offer a temporary covering for sin that must be renewed year after year with the blood of bulls and goats. His sacrifice was offered once for all, and His continuous life in heaven guarantees the ongoing preservation of those who commit their lives to Him. He is constantly alive, actively representing us before the Father, ensuring that our prayers are heard and our justification stands secure.

Furthermore, Christ does not need to offer daily sacrifices for His own mistakes. He is entirely pure. As Hebrews 7:26-28 concludes: 'For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.'

Conclusion: Honoring the Eternal High Priest

In conclusion, the 'change of the law' outlined in Hebrews Chapter 7 is a magnificent demonstration of God's order, structural continuity, and redemptive wisdom. The world's attempt to use this text to dismantle the entirety of God's commandments is a profound theological error born out of a desire to escape scriptural obedience. God did not throw away His laws; He elevated them. He took the priesthood away from mortal, failing men who operated behind a physical veil and transferred it eternally to His Son, Jesus Christ, who operates in the power of an endless life.

This administrative shift preserves the timeless principles of stewardship, such as tithing, while redirecting them to their true, living Recipient in heaven. It frees the believer from relying on human intermediaries, institutional gatekeepers, or carnal genealogies. We have an unchangeable High Priest who has torn down the barrier between heaven and earth. As we walk out our faith, we must reject the lawless deconstructions of mainstream theology and instead anchor our souls in the truth: Jesus Christ stands consecrated forevermore, our eternal High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, carrying our prayers directly to the Father and saving us to the absolute uttermost.