

7:1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him; **2** and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. **3** He is without father or mother or genealogy, and has neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest for ever.

4 See how great he is! Abraham the patriarch gave him a tithe of the spoils. **5** And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brethren, though these also are descended from Abraham. **6** But this man who has not their genealogy received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. **7** It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. **8** Here tithes are received by mortal men; there, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. **9** One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, **10** for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

11 Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? **12** For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. **13** For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. **14** For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

15 This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, **16** who has become a priest, not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life. **17** For it is witnessed of him, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." **18** On the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness **19** (for the law made nothing perfect); on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

20 And it was not without an oath. **21** Those who formerly became priests took their office without an oath, but this one was addressed with an oath, "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'Thou art a priest for ever.'" **22** This makes Jesus the surety of a better covenant.

23 The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from con-

tinuing in office; **24** but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. **25** Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. **27** He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself. **28** Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect for ever.

8:1 Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, **2** a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord. **3** For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. **4** Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. **5** They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary; for when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain." **6** But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. **7** For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion for a second.

8 For he finds fault with them when he says: "The days will come, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; **9** not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in my covenant, and so I paid no heed to them, says the Lord. **10** This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **11** And they shall not teach every one his fellow or every one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest. **12** For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." **13** In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

9:1 Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. **2** For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. **3** Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, **4** having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; **5** above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

6 These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; **7** but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people. **8** By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary is not yet opened as long as the outer tent is still standing **9** (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, **10** but deal only with food and drink and various ablutions, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) **12** he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. **13** For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, **14** how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred which redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant. **16** For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. **17** For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. **18** Hence even the first covenant was not ratified without blood. **19** For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, **20** saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you." **21** And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used

in worship. **22** Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

23 Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **24** For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. **25** Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the Holy Place yearly with blood not his own; **26** for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. **27** And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment, **28** so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

10:1 For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices which are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who draw near. **2** Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? If the worshipers had once been cleansed, they would no longer have any consciousness of sin. **3** But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year. **4** For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.

5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings thou hast not desired, but a body hast thou prepared for me; **6** in burnt offerings and sin offerings thou hast taken no pleasure. **7** Then I said, 'Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God,' as it is written of me in the roll of the book." **8** When he said above, "Thou hast neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), **9** then he added, "Lo, I have come to do thy will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. **10** And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. **12** But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, **13** then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet. **14** For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. **15** And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, **16** "This is the covenant that I will

make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," **17** then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their misdeeds no more." **18** Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, **20** by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; **24** and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

26 For if we sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, **27** but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire which will consume the adversaries. **28** A man who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses. **29** How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God, and profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." **31** It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. **32** But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, **33** sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. **34** For you had compassion on the prisoners, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. **35** Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. **36** For you have need of endurance, so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised. **37** "For yet a little while, and the coming one shall come and shall not tarry; **38** but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." **39** But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and keep their souls.

Hebrews 7-10 RSV