

## Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; Hebrews 1:1-4 (NIV)

**7:1** This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him,<sup>2</sup> and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.”<sup>3</sup> Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

<sup>4</sup>Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! <sup>5</sup>Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, from their fellow Israelites—even though they also are descended from Abraham. <sup>6</sup>This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. <sup>7</sup>And without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater. <sup>8</sup>In the one case, the tenth is collected by people who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. <sup>9</sup>One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, <sup>10</sup>because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

<sup>11</sup>If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood—and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood—why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? <sup>12</sup>For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. <sup>13</sup>He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. <sup>14</sup>For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. <sup>15</sup>And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, <sup>16</sup>one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. <sup>17</sup>For it is declared: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

<sup>18</sup>The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless <sup>19</sup>(for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

<sup>20</sup>And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, <sup>21</sup>but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him:

“The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever.’” <sup>22</sup>Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

<sup>23</sup>Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; <sup>24</sup>but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. <sup>25</sup>Therefore he is able to save completely<sup>d</sup> those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

<sup>26</sup>Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup>Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. <sup>28</sup>For the law appoints as high priests men in all their weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

**Observation** (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)  
**Know** (what does the text say about God?) **Be** (what does it say about us?) **Do** (what does it call us to do?)

## Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

## CH.7

O: Starter (encourage everyone to do this before anyone shares) - Choose one verse or phrase from **Heb. 7** that stands out to you. This could be something you're intrigued by, something that makes you uncomfortable, something that puzzles you, something that resonates with you, or just something you want to examine further. What strikes you about this verse?

O: What do we learn about Melchizedek from **Hebrews 7:1-10**?

Follow-up: Levi, one of the twelve sons of Jacob and a great-grandson of Abraham, founded the priestly tribe of Israel. How does **7:4-10** make the case that Melchizedek's priesthood is superior to Levi's? (Amy's sermon spoke to why this is important, do you remember why?)

O: How are Melchizedek and Jesus similar as seen in these verses (**7:1-10**)? **Know**

Follow-up: What further contrasts are outlined in **verses 11-19** between Jesus' priesthood and the priesthood of Levi and his descendant Aaron? **Know**

I: What was the purpose of the old religious system?

Note from N.T. Wright - The word better (or at least the Greek word which it here translates) occurs more times in Hebrews than in the whole of the rest of the New Testament put together. The writer is constantly contrasting—not something bad with something good, but something good with something better. He is not saying that the ancient Israelite system was a bad thing, with its temple, its law and its priesthood of Levi. What he is saying is that something new has arrived in and through Jesus which is even better than what went before.

I: What important contrast or change in direction does the little word “but” highlight in **verse 24**? **Know**

I: Remember again the commands in **3:1** and **12:2**. Then think carefully about **verses 24-28** in this chapter. What do these verses really say about Jesus, and why is their message important? **Know**

I: What does it mean for you/us personally that Jesus Christ is your/our perfect High Priest forever? **Be**

A: This chapter of Hebrews should bring us to a place of gratitude and hope after we truly grasp the work of Jesus in his death and resurrection. In what ways can you express your gratitude to Jesus this week? **Do**

## Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray together, use short expressions of praise and gratitude for all that Jesus is and for all that He has accomplished for the world and for you individually and for us corporately.
- **Respond:** Spend this week responding to God's word as fleshed out in the group time, as well as journey through this week's companion devotional guide.
- **Read:** Next week's sermon (3/15/20) will focus on Hebrews ch.8. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, as well as journey through this week's companion devotional guide.

## An explanation on how Riverside structures these discussion guides\*:

Riverside defines a disciple of Jesus as a **“Know, Be, Do”** person. And since Jesus told us to “make disciples” we use the “Know, Be, Do” framework in our discussion guides.

Riverside leadership regularly asks questions around these areas:

- “What do we need to **know** about God?”
- “Who do we need to **be**?”
- “What do we need to **do**?”

Here is what we mean by “Know, Be, Do” (based on Colossians 1:9-10, see below)

**Know** – *“to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives..., growing in the knowledge of God”* Not just knowing about Jesus, but knowing Him personally, intimately, and deeply. This is also about knowing the scriptures, knowing the voice of the Holy Spirit, even knowing yourself.

**Be** – *“so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way”* Becoming more like Jesus (sanctification). This is about our character and our heart and our motivations, our passions and convictions change the more we get to Know Jesus (and others).

**Do** – *“bearing fruit in every good work, ...”* Knowing Jesus and Becoming like Jesus practically will change our actions. As we grow in these areas we will naturally DO the things that Jesus did while in the flesh on earth (living and loving like Jesus). Some broad categories around DO are evangelism and justice and service.

Notice *“bearing fruit in every good work”* then yields more *“growing in the knowledge of God.”* In other words, while “Know, Be, Do” are three distinct words, they are deeply interconnected.

As a side note, the next chapter states: *<sup>6</sup> So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. <sup>8</sup> See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Col. 2:6-8)* To aid in this process Riverside also has a **daily devotional guide available each week.**

### Colossians 1:9-10, NIV

*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,...*

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\* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.” There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. This guide relies heavily upon the following resources: Thomas, Mack. *The Complete Bible Discussion Guide: Old Testament and New Testament*, Serendipity Bible for Personal and Small Group Study, Zondervan, along with the following group studies specific to Hebrews: Tom Wright (978-0-281-06379-6), Kay Arthur (978-0-7369-2306-4), Wiersbe (978-0781445665), MacArthur (978-0-7180-3515-0).