

## Jesus the Guarantor of a Better Covenant Hebrews 7:20-28

The writer to the Hebrews continues to urge these Christians onward in faith and love, encouraging by setting before the supremacy of Christ over the Judaism that had so shaped their lives and religious worldview.

It wasn't to negate the value of Judaism per se. It was to show that Judaism rightly understood led to and terminated in Christianity. This met that any thought of preserving or returning to was not only unthinkable but a positive negation of Christianity itself.

Part of how he does this is by taking the institution that was most central and venerated in the whole religious life of the nation and showing how it terminated in Christ and thus how He was superior to it. Having done this He draws three conclusions. That the priestly work of Christ as it was patterned on the Priesthood of Melchizedek was:

1. **Founded on a superior promise. Vv. 20-22.**  
The superiority of the priesthood of Christ is seen in that He was constituted a priest by divine oath while the others were not.
  - a. **The historical reality.** The way in which this is established is powerful but requires some unpacking. We first have to look at his conclusion and then how he got there.
    - i. **His conclusion. V. 22. "This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant."** Two critical words: guarantor & covenant.

1. **Covenant.** The word we render covenant is richer than our English word. It signifies an economy or arrangement. It is the word usually used to describe the two arrangements God placed His Church under.
2. **Guarantor.** Older translations render surety. It is the only occurrence and it denotes one who stands in the stead of another, one who transacted for another.

Both economies involved guarantors. In the old economy it was the Aaronic in the new economy it is Christ. To be a guarantor is to be a priest.

- b. **The principle.** In general the dignity of the station bears some relationship to the solemnity of the appointment. **Illustr. Heads of state are installed with a certain decorum that would ostentatious for CEO.**
  - i. Aaron was installed by immediate revelation. But without an oath. **V. 20. "Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests- Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar."**

- ii. Jesus was installed in a much more solemn and impressive way. **V. 21**. So John Brown:

In reading these words, we feel as if, like Paul we were “caught up into third heavens, and heard things which it is impossible” in mortal language intelligibly to express. Our thoughts are turned back through the course of eternal ages; and we seem to witness- though the minuter parts of the sublime scene are hid in excess of brightness- that awfully important transaction among the eternal and independent Three in One, from which originates the whole scheme of our redemption- the council of peace.

The old priesthood was divinely instituted and adherence to it was obligated- violation punished. But it was repeal able. Not this priesthood- it is final and that finality is attested to with a divine oath befitted its superlative dignity.

2. **Founded on a superior permanence. Vv. 23-25.** The priesthood of Christ is superior in that it is a permanent priesthood.
  - a. **The Levitical priests were many in number. V. 23.** They, being mere mortals died in office. Kent Hughs says, “Josephus reckoned that some eighty three priest served from Aaron until the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. But the Talmud lists even more-eighteen during the first temple and over three hundred for the second.” **Illstr. The many pastors of Piney Grove.**
  - b. **Jesus holds His priesthood permanently. V. 24.** His work is a heavenly work and He ever lives to carry it on. His is permanent and

non-transferable.- from age to age the same in quality and quantity.

- c. **This is superior to the old priesthood. V. 25.** He isolates to superior benefits:

- i. **Comprehensive salvation.** The idea is that there is no possibility in a let down of its efficacy. Why? Because:
- ii. **Comprehensive intercession.** He ever lives to intercede- this is intentional ongoing application of the atonement. He ever lives to apply it and flesh it out in all dimensions through all stages of the life of His people.

3. **Founded on a superior personage. Vv. 26-28.** The efficacy itself is finally be traced to the power of an endless life but the preeminence of His superior person.

- a. **What is that limits the efficacy of our own intercession?** Is it not our own sin, limited knowledge and personal weakness of flesh? This was true of the Aaronic priest. **Cf. V. 27a, 28a.**
- b. **Christ has none of these weaknesses. Vv. 26, 28b.** He is infinitely above these limitations. He has no need for ongoing atoning work. **Cf. 27.**

This priest meets our needs. How dare we look elsewhere, even to our selves!