

# Hebrews 7:1-10

Melchizedek is the topic here because the readers are considering turning from Christianity and back to the Levitical system so they can be TRUE sons of Abraham. The author is saying:

- 1) Jesus is a priest like Melchizedek was
- 2) Abraham honored Melchizedek. So honoring Jesus as High Priest is exactly what Abraham would do.

The author is focusing on Jesus being a perpetual high priest so he goes to Psalm 110:4 to build on “the order of Melchizedek.”

**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,**

Melchizedek is mentioned in:

- 1) Genesis 14:18-20 – Abraham took a vow and swore to “God Most High, maker of heaven and earth” before the priest Melchizedek in Gen. 14:18-20.
- 2) Psalm 110:4

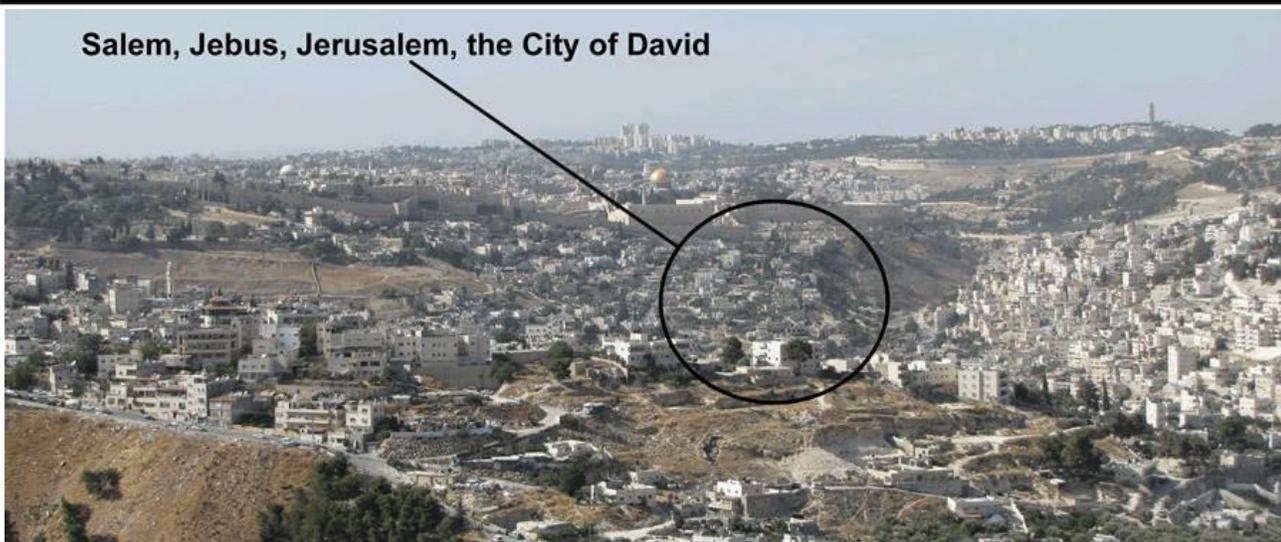
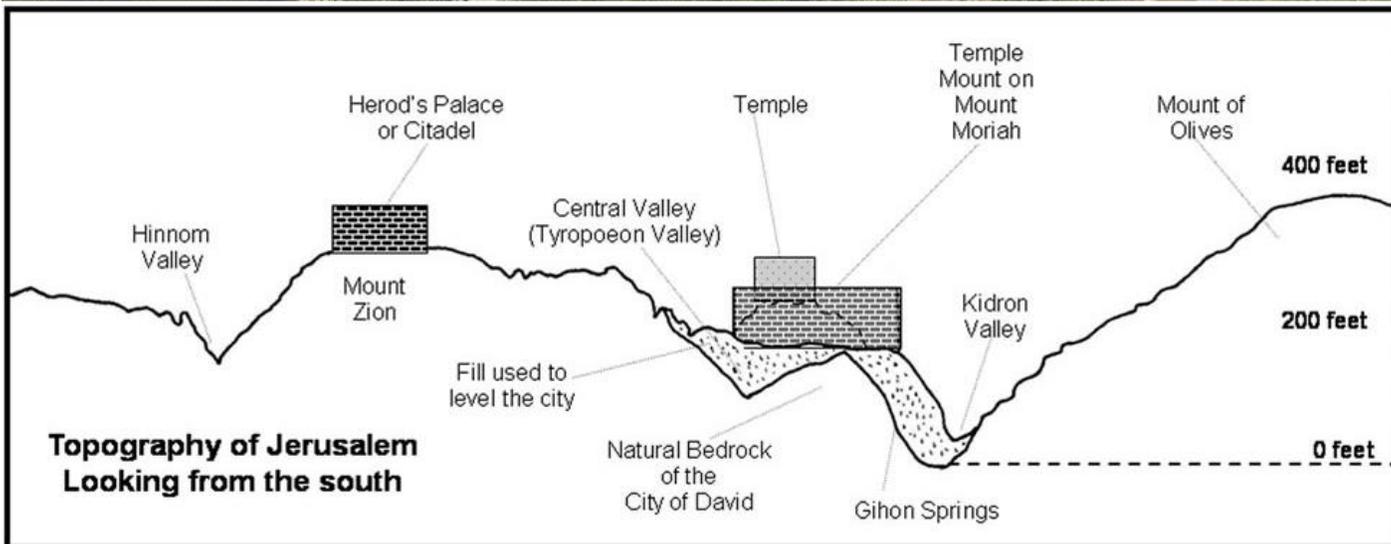
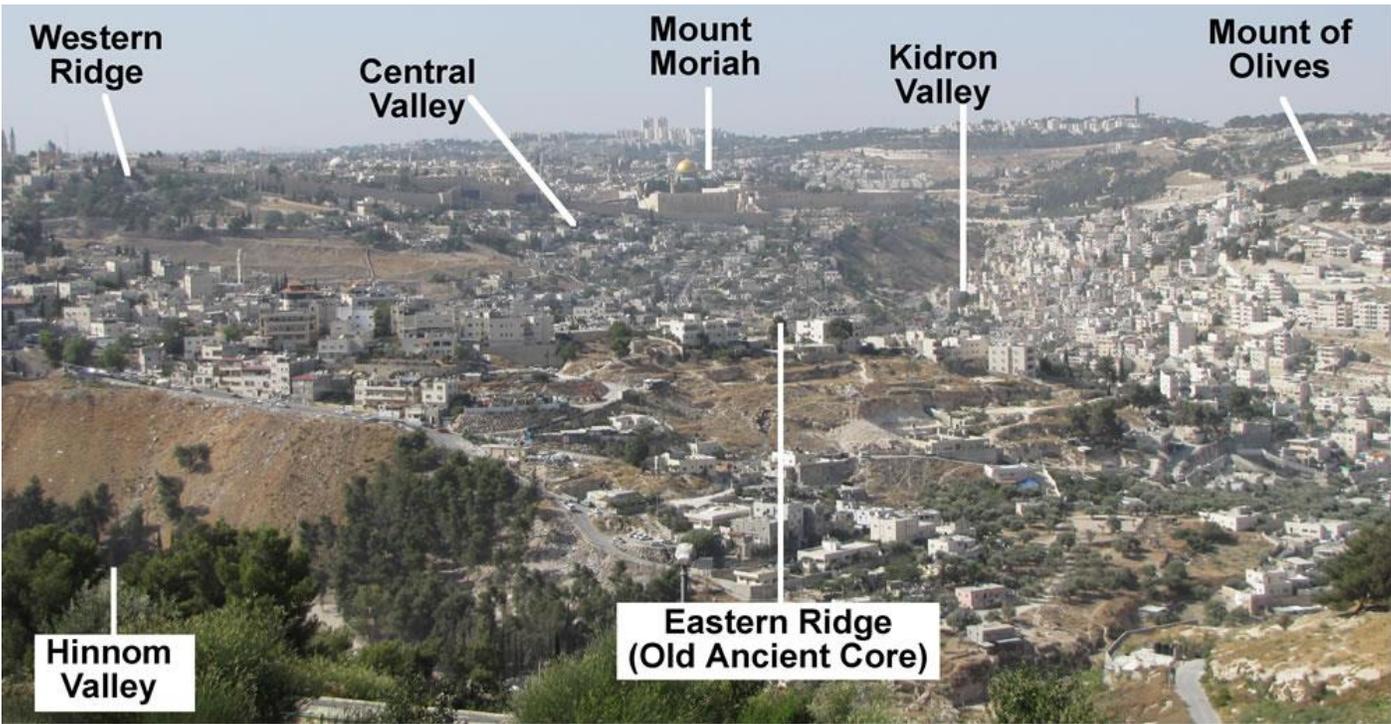
Melchizedek (or, Melchi-Zedek) was the king of an ancient city-state called Salem.

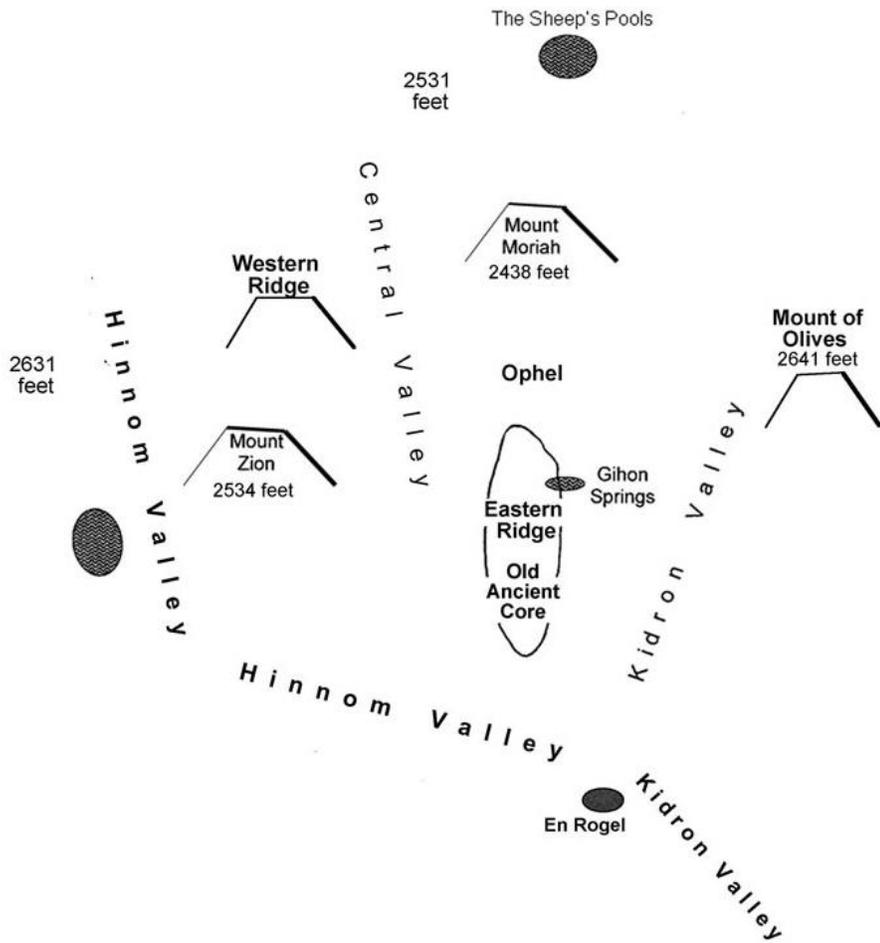
Salem was the home of the Jebusites and was called Jebus in:

- 1) Jud 19:10, 11 – “But, unwilling to stay another night, the man left and went toward **Jebus (that is, Jerusalem)**, with his two saddled donkeys and his concubine. When they were near Jebus and the day was almost gone, the servant said to his master, ‘Come, let’s stop at this city of the Jebusites and spend the night.’ His master replied, ‘No. We won’t go into an alien city, whose people are not Israelites. We will go on to Gibeah.’ ”
- 2) 1Ch 11:4. – “David and all the Israelites marched to **Jerusalem (that is, Jebus)**. The Jebusites who lived there said to David, ‘You will not get in here.’ Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David.”

The city was called Jerusalem in Joshua 10:1.

In Joshua day the king of Jerusalem (Salem) was Adoni-Zedek (Adonizedek) in Joshua 10:1,3 Adoni-Zedek was killed in Joshua’s invasion (Joshua 12:7, 9), but the city was not taken until David took it in 1 Chronicles 11:4-9 and 2 Samuel 5:7-12.





**7:2 - “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.”**

Amazingly, one thing that is not mentioned is the fact that the priest Melchizedek brought out “bread and wine”. It seems it would be a perfect opportunity for the author to mention the Lord’s Supper. Men like Cyprian (bishop in 249 AD) and Ambrose (338-397) later in church history connect Melchizedek’s offering of bread and wine to Jesus offering of his body and blood. Again, the same order of priesthood.

“Salem” is to be interpreted to mean “peace”

The Hebrew word *sedeq* which means “righteousness” is considered by the author and by Philo to be the meaning of Zedek in both Melchizedek and Adoni-Zedek.

**7:3**  
**“He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.”**

In the Levitical priesthood the genealogy was most important. All priests had to prove their father's genealogy back to Aaron or lose their priestly standing.

Here is a classic example of an argument from silence.

1. Since Melchizedek's genealogy is not mentioned the author uses it to say it doesn't exist.
2. Part of the inspiration of scripture may have presented him this way to preserve him as a type of Jesus, the true high priest.
3. Melchizedek is in a type what Jesus is in reality: Eternal.
4. In scripture's account Melchizedek was never replaced and continues as a priest forever.
5. This is an argument from silence.
6. The biblical text does not identify Melchizedek's lineage, descendants, birth or death.
7. Jesus is a priest forever in reality.

But, Melchizedek is a real person with a real genealogy:

1. He comes from a line of kings called Zedek.
2. 7:6 clearly says that he had a genealogy: *"This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi."*

Why Melchizedek is not Jesus in the OT or a Theophany:

1. He is said to be "made like the Son of God". Why say this if he IS the Son of God? (7:3)
2. Psalm 110:4 says the Messiah will be a priest "after the order of Melchizedek." This makes a clear distinction between the Christ and the man, Melchizedek.
3. Melchizedek was a citizen of an earthly city who lived his life as a king and priest in ancient Jerusalem. A theophany appears for a moment and then is gone. A theophany does not live out a life.
4. To connect the name Zedek (righteousness) with Jesus, the king of righteousness, will not work when you add the name of one of the Jebusite's wicked kings, Adoni-Zedek, into the mix.

#### 7:4 - "See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils!"

2334 [e]	1161 [e]	4080 [e]	3778 [e]	3739 [e]	2532 [e]	1181 [e]	11 [e]	1325 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]
Theōreite	de	pēlikos	houtos	hō	kai	dekatēn	Abraam	edōken	ek	tōn
4 Θεωρεῖτε	δὲ	πηλίκος	οὗτος ,	ὃ	[καὶ]	δεκάτην	Ἀβραὰμ	ἔδωκεν	ἐκ	τῶν
Consider	now	how great	this one [was]	to whom	even	a tenth	Abraham	gave	out of	the
V-PMA-2P	Conj	Adj-NMS	DPro-NMS	RelPro-DMS	Conj	Adj-AFS	N-NMS	V-AIA-3S	Prep	Art-GNP

205 [e]	3588 [e]	3966 [e]
akrothiniōn	ho	patriarchēs
ἀκροθινίων ,	ὁ	πατριάρχης .
best spoils	the	patriarch
N-GNP	Art-NMS	N-NMS

The word "plunder" or "spoils" is the Greek word "akrothinion" which means "the top of a heap, the best of the spoils."

1. The Greeks would gather the spoils of a military victory and place them in a heap.

2. The top or the best part of the heap was presented to the gods.

**7:5 - “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 brothers, though these also are descended from Abraham.”**

Numbers 18:21-32, The Levites received tithes from Israel. Then the Levites gave a tithe to the priests.

The right to tithe someone indicates a certain authority or right. This is not an inherent superiority as if they were a better person but an official superiority.

**7:6 - “But this man who does not have his descent from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.”**

First Superiority:

Abraham willingly gave the tenth of his own free will but Melchizedek did receive it which indicates he recognized his position as a priest and accepted the tithe.

**7:7 - “It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.”**

Second Superiority:

This is the point of a blessing. The superior approves and accepts the work of the lesser. It also says Melchizedek blessed Abraham. This means more than he wished him well. The blessing were God’s words of approval spoken through his priest Melchizedek to Abraham.

**7:8 - “In the one case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives.”**

Third Superiority:

Again the superiority of the priesthood of Melchizedek is at hand.

The Levitical priesthood was constantly replacing the high priest since he would die. But, Melchizedek is never recorded as dying.

**7:9-10 - “One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.”**

Fourth Superiority:

Levi is seen as being present in Abraham when the tithe was paid.

So, Melchizedek is superior to Levi which includes the entire priesthood

The **Four Proofs of Melchizedek’s Superiority** from Heb. 7:6-10:

1. Abraham gave him tithes
2. Melchizedek accepted tithes indicating his superior position

3. Melchizedek's priesthood was not replaced, but Levitical priesthood would die and constantly be replaced
4. Israel, Levi and the priests all paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham's paying of the tithe

**7:11 – “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?”**

1487 [e]	3303 [e]	3767 [e]	5050 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	3020 [e]	2420 [e]	1510 [e]	3588 [e]	2992 [e]	1063 [e]	1909 [e]	846 [e]
Ei	men	oun	teleiōsis	dia	tēs	Leuitikēs	hierōsynēs	ēn	ho	laos	gar	ep'	autēs
11 Ei	μὲν	οὖν	τελείωσις	διὰ	τῆς	Λευιτικῆς	ἱερωσύνης	ἦν	ὁ	λαὸς	γὰρ	ἐπ'	αὐτῆς
If	indeed	then	perfection	by	the	Levitical	priesthood	were	the	people	for	upon	it
Conj	Conj	Conj	N-NFS	Prep	Art-GFS	Adj-GFS	N-GFS	V-IIA-3S	Art-NMS	N-NMS	Conj	Prep	PPro-GF3S

3549 [e]	5101 [e]	2089 [e]	5532 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]	5010 [e]	3198 [e]	2087 [e]	450 [e]
nenomothētētai	tis	eti	chreia	kata	tēn	taxin	Melchisedek	heteron	anistasthai
νενομοθέτηται	τίς	ἔτι	χρεία	κατὰ	τὴν	τάξιν	Μελχισέδεκ	ἕτερον	ἀνίστασθαι
had received [the] Law	what	still	need [was there]	according to	the	order	of Melchizedek	[for] another	to arise
V-RIM/P-3S	IPro-NFS	Adv	N-NFS	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	N-GMS	Adj-AMS	V-PNM

2409 [e]	2532 [e]	3756 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]	5010 [e]	2 [e]	3004 [e]
hierea	kai	ou	kata	tēn	taxin	Aarōn	legesthai
ἱερέα	καὶ	οὐ	κατὰ	τὴν	τάξιν	Ἀαρὼν	λέγεσθαι ?
priest	and	not	according to	the	order	of Aaron	to be named
N-AMS	Conj	Adv	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	N-GMS	V-PNM/P

“perfection” is *teleiosis* and speaks of completeness. To be *teleiosis*, “perfect” or “complete”, means it fulfilled the purpose that it was designed for. A priesthood’s purpose was to make men acceptable to God. The Levitical priesthood needed to be repeated each year, even each day. Thus, the Levitical priesthood failed to establish the relationship of man before God on a “complete” basis.

“If” is the first class condition which means “if, and it is true.”  
 But, it is followed by a challenge, “Why was it replaced in Psalm 110:4?”

The priesthood was established first and then the Law of Moses was given at Sinai. Aaron was identified before the Law was given. The Law regulated the priesthood. If the priesthood has changed, so has the Law that governs the priesthood.

Why did the Messiah not come through Levi? The Levitical priesthood was temporary and the Messiah was eternal. The Levitical priesthood was in place only until the true priesthood of the Messiah could come.

**7:12 – “For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well.”**

3346 [e]	1063 [e]	3588 [e]	2420 [e]	1537 [e]	318 [e]	2532 [e]	3551 [e]	3331 [e]	1096 [e]
metatithemenēs	gar	tēs	hierōsynēs	ex	anankēs	kai	nomou	metathesis	ginetai
12 μετατιθεμένης	γὰρ	τῆς	ἱερωσύνης	, ἕξ	ἀνάγκης	καὶ	, νόμου	μετάθεσις	γίνεται .
Being changed	for	of the	priesthood	from	necessity	also	of law	a change	takes place
V-PPM/P-GFS	Conj	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Prep	N-GFS	Conj	N-GMS	N-NFS	V-PIM/P-3S

If the priesthood changes then the law changes. This is clear in verse 7:18.

**7:13-14 – “For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.”**

Jesus was clearly from Judah:

- a. Matthew 1
- b. Luke 3
- c. Birth narratives

The Messiah promised in the OT was clearly from Judah as well

In fact, Second Chronicles 26:16 records the account of a king from Judah entering the temple and being struck with leprosy because he acted like a priest.

If Christ is regarded as a priest, and the Messiah is in Psalm 110:4, then a change has occurred in the Law.

When someone places faith in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, then according to the Old Testament itself, the Mosaic Law has been radically altered.

For the believing Jews who are reading this book there has been an exodus from the Law of Moses (either knowingly or unknowingly). But this identification of the Messiah as a priest that replaces the Levitical priesthood is documented in the same sacred text as the Law of Moses. (Ps. 110:4)

POINTS:

1. Christ’s priesthood was planned to succeed Aaron’s
2. Christ’s priesthood is superior since it is not dependent on physical heritage
3. Christ’s priesthood is superior because of His life

**7:15 - This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek,”**

2532 [e]	4053 [e]	2089 [e]	2612 [e]	1510 [e]	1487 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]	3665 [e]
Kai	perissoteron	eti	katadélon	estin	ei	kata	tēn	homoiotēta
15 Καὶ	περισσότερον	ἔτι	κατάδηλόν	ἐστίν	, εἰ	κατὰ	τὴν	ὁμοιότητα
And	<u>more abundantly</u>	<u>yet</u>	<u>evident</u>	it is	if	according to	the	likeness
Conj	Adj-ANS-C	Adv	Adj-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Conj	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS

3198 [e]	450 [e]	2409 [e]	2087 [e]
Melchisedek	anistatai	hiereus	<u>heteros</u>
Μελχισέδεκ	ἀνίσταται	ἱερεὺς	ἕτερος ,
of Melchizedek	arises	a priest	another
N-GMS	V-PIM-3S	N-NMS	Adj-NMS

The phrase “even more evident” or “even more clear” is *perissoteron eti katadelon*

<i>perissoteron</i>	<i>eti</i>	<i>katadelon</i>
<b>more abundantly</b>	<b>still</b>	<b>quite clear</b>

“what we have said” refers to:

1. it impossible for perfection to come through Levitical Priesthood (7:11)
2. the priesthood must be changed (7:11)
3. the law must be changed (7:12)
4. Jesus was from Judah (7:13-14)
5. Messiah would be a priest like Melchizedek, not Aaron. (Ps. 110:4)

Then while we were waiting for all of these things just mentioned someone like Melchizedek arrives. A DIFFERENT priest. The word “different” is the Greek word *heteros* which means “a different of another kind”. It is not the word *allos* which means “another of the same kind.” Classic example of these words used together is in Galatians 1:6

**7:16-17 – “who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him,**

**“You are a priest forever,  
after the order of Melchizedek.”**

3739 [e]	3756 [e]	2596 [e]	3551 [e]	1785 [e]	4560 [e]	1096 [e]	235 [e]	2596 [e]
hos	ou	kata	nomon	entolēs	sarkinēs	gegonen	alla	kata
16 ὅς	οὐ	κατὰ	νόμον	ἐντολῆς	σαρκίνης	γέγονεν ,	ἀλλὰ	κατὰ
who	not	according to	a law	of a commandment	fleshly	has been constituted	but	according to
RelPro-NMS	Adv	Prep	N-AMS	N-GFS	Adj-GFS	V-RIA-3S	Conj	Prep

1411 [e]	2222 [e]	179 [e]
dynamis	zōēs	akatalytou
δύναμιν	ζωῆς	ἀκαταλύτου .
[the] power	of a life	indestructible
N-AFS	N-GFS	Adj-GFS

3140 [e]	1063 [e]	3754 [e]	4771 [e]	2409 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	165 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]	5010 [e]	3198 [e]
martyreitai	gar	hoti	Sy	hiereus	eis	ton	aiōna	kata	tēn	taxin	Melchisedek
17 μαρτυρεῖται	γὰρ	ὅτι :	Σὺ	ἱερεὺς	εἰς	τὸν	αἰῶνα ,	κατὰ	τὴν	τάξιν	Μελχισέδεκ .
It is testified	for	-	You [are]	a priest	to	the	age	according to	the	order	of Melchizedek
V-PIM/P-3S	Conj	Conj	PPro-N2S	N-NMS	Prep	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	N-GMS

*Heteros* in this way:

Levitical priests were priests because of *sarka* or “flesh”.

Jesus is a priest because of “the power of an indestructible life” (*akatalutou zoe*)

Levitical priesthood is “fleshly”:

1. Temporary
2. type or shadow of the coming reality
3. physical ancestry
4. marriage
5. health
6. diet
7. ceremonial performance
8. no one asked about the spiritual condition (Eli’s sons, Annas, Caiaphas, Ananias, etc.)

Jesus is eternal and the reality

1. Colossians 2:6-23
2. Like Melchizedek
3. Romans 8:3 – “For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin,[a] he condemned sin in the flesh.”
4. Galatians 4:9 – “But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?”

**7:18-19 - For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.**

115 [e]	3303 [e]	1063 [e]	1096 [e]	4254 [e]	1785 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	846 [e]	772 [e]	2532 [e]	512 [e]		
<u>Athetēsis</u>	men	gar	ginetai	<u>proagousēs</u>	<u>entolēs</u>	dia	to	autēs	asthenes	kai	anōpheles		
18 Ἀθέτησις	μὲν	γὰρ	γίνεται	προαγοῦσις	ἐντολῆς	,	διὰ	τὸ	αὐτῆς	ἀσθενὲς	καὶ	ἀνωφελές	—
A putting away	indeed	for	there is	of the preceding	commandment	because of	-	its	weakness	and	uselessness		
N-NFS	Conj	Conj	V-PIMP/P-3S	V-PPA-GFS	N-GFS	Prep	Art-ANS	Pro-GF3S	Adj-ANS	Conj	Adj-ANS		

1. “set aside” – *athetesis* – means “setting aside” as in an “annulment”, a “nullification”
  - a. This is a total setting aside of a covenant.
  - b. It is a complete cancelation of the Mosaic Law.
2. “Commandment” – *entole* – meaning “an injunction” “an order”, “a command”
  - a. This refers to the whole Mosaic Law
3. “Former” or “Preceding” – *proagouses* – means “to lead forth” or “to go before”
  - a. The Mosaic Covenant was given “to lead forth” to the New Covenant
  - b. The Mosaic Covenant had to come and go before the New Covenant
  - c. There is something very temporary about the Mosaic Covenant
  - d. The very giving of the Mosaic Covenant meant there had to be an end or an “annulment” or “setting aside” eventually

These verses restate 12-16

**7:20-22 – “And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him:**

**“The Lord has sworn  
and will not change his mind,  
‘You are a priest forever.’”**

**This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.”**

2596 [e]	5118 [e]	2532 [e]	2909 [e]	1242 [e]	1096 [e]	1450 [e]	2424 [e]
Kata	tosouto	kai	kreittonos	diathēkēs	gegonen	engyos	lēsous
22 Κατὰ	τοσοῦτο	καὶ	κρείττονος	διαθήκης	γέγονεν	ἔγγυος	Ἰησοῦς
By	so much	also	of a better	covenant	has become	[the] guarantee	Jesus
Prep	DPro-ANS	Conj	Adj-GFS-C	N-GFS	V-RIA-3S	Adj-NMS	N-NMS

1. The Levitical priesthood was given, but with no oath or eternal promise.
  - a. The Mosaic covenant was a conditional covenant
  - b. There was no guarantee (*engyos*) that the people would fulfill their side of the covenant.
2. Messiah’s priesthood was given with an oath and forever.
  - a. It came with a “guarantee or *engyos* which mean “under good security” or “guarantee”
  - b. The guarantee was Jesus. A solid 100% security of the covenant
3. The word “covenant” is used here by the author for the first time. (Total 17x in this book.)
  - a. “covenant” or *diathekes* means:
    - i. Secular text *diathekes* means “last will and testament
    - ii. The LXX *diathekes* is used to translate the Hebrew word for covenant *berit*.
    - iii. The Greek word *syntheke*, a word meaning a typical covenant between two equal persons is NOT used.

- iv. This Greek word *diathekes* refers to something more like a “will” or “last will and testament” which indicates a particular individual leaving something for another person to receive with no qualifying covenant obligations.
- v. There is no bargaining with a will (*diathekes*) because it is absolute and final. On the other hand a covenant or contract (*syntheke*) could be negotiated by two parties.

**7:23-28 – “The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.**

**For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. For 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 forever.”**