

As you are turning, let me ask you a question that's almost sure to stir a debate: Who is the greatest superhero of all time? Would it be one of these superheroes:



You see, this question is asked a lot when a new movie comes out, like Shazam.



Coming out in April, featuring the Old Captain Marvel. Or if you are old school like me, I would choose one of these...the Justice League...



Like Superman! So, who is the greatest? Is there any one of those superheroes whose indestructible? In my opinion, they all seem to have some kind of weakness. I would say not a single one of them is absolutely indestructible. But, I know someone who is indestructible. Jesus!



But, does that image of Jesus look **INDESTRUCTIBLE** to you? No, it looks like He's been totally destroyed, doesn't it? But, that's the thing with Jesus, every time you think it's too late, there's no hope, defeat certain, this happens:



Resurrection! And you know what...that right there describes the fact that Jesus is indestructible! This morning we're going to see: "The Power of an Indestructible Life."

Our text for today is Hebrews 7, verses 11-21, but I want to read only the first four (4) verses because there is so much here that we'll get buried in the details if we don't take this in bite-sized chunks. To set the scene for us...for several weeks now we've been talking about this guy...



That's the High Priest...a man that the Jews revered to the highest degree. Now remember, the book of Hebrews is written to: **HEBREWS**...first century Jews, who have been steeped in Judaism all of their lives, but they have now given their lives to Christ. It's been hard for some of them to come out of their old lives and leave Judaism...in fact, when the Apostle Paul told them that Jesus was now their High Priest...some argued that Jesus wasn't from the right lineage. Remember this chart?

Melchizedek
(lived at the same time as Abraham)



- 1) Asher
- 2) Benjamin
- 3) Dan
- 4) Gad
- 5) Issachar
- 6) Joseph
 - Ephraim (son of Joseph)
 - Manasseh (son of Joseph)
- 7) Judah → David → Jesus
- 8) Levi → Aaron → Priests
- 9) Naphtali
- 10) Reuben
- 11) Simeon
- 12) Zebulun

They said Jesus was not from the line of Levi (#8), so He couldn't be the High Priest. But since chapter 5, Paul has been showing them that Jesus is not a High Priest in the order of Aaron and Levi...but, from the order of Melchizedek, and this is what King David prophesied in Psalm 110:4 in the Messianic Psalm.

Psalm 110:4

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Listen, this whole discussion about Melchizedek since chapter 5 and the reason for Paul taking the time to break this down for the people is to explain WHY the Levitical Priesthood could never bring people into a right relationship with God in the first place. This is what we're going to see now.

Hebrews 7:11-14

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.

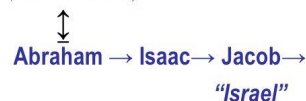
So, there it is...Paul says it again, "Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, not Levi," and THAT'S THE POINT! The tribe of Levi and the Aaronic Priesthood, which disseminated the LAW, could never bring perfection...it could never bring people into a right relationship with God. **Listen carefully, the Levitical priesthood was always meant to be temporary.** It could never bring perfection or completeness. But, for the Jews, they always felt that there was nothing that could possibly be superior to the Aaronic Priesthood. But here's the thing, the very fact that there existed another priesthood, the priesthood of Melchizedek, showed that the priesthood of Aaron wasn't the only one. And that's why Paul showed the Hebrews that Melchizedek's was better, because he was a King and a Priest... He was (Typology) a "type of Christ," foreshadowing Jesus who would be the GREAT High Priest and the King of Kings!

Remember what we learned last week... Abraham actually paid tithes to Melchizedek...and the Hebrews, the Jews all knew that you only tithe to someone who is superior to you. So,

Melchizedek was superior to Abraham...meaning Melchizedek was superior to Aaron's priesthood, because Aaron hadn't even been born yet...because...see it again... (LEFT-HAND SIDE)

Melchizedek

(lived at the same time as Abraham)



- 1) Asher
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- 3) Dan
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Yes, Abraham would eventually have Isaac and Isaac would have Jacob and Jacob would have Levi, (see #8) and Levi would have Aaron. But, Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, indicating Melchizedek was greater than Aaron and Jesus came from his order, not Aaron's! And you see, this was mind-blowing to the Jews...and this is why so many of them were struggling...and this is why Paul is having to offer even more evidence. See vs 15-16.

Hebrews 7:15-16

¹⁵This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek,¹⁶ who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.

Did you know there were no character requirements to become a High Priest in the line of Aaron? None! Zilch! Nada! Zero! You only had to be in the family line of Aaron to become High Priest. Talk about nepotism. Think about that: The priests of the Aaronic priesthood didn't have to pass any moral or spiritual tests in order to become a priest. The only requirement for the Aaronic priesthood was that the priest must be able to trace his ancestry back to Aaron. And that's why there were so many rotten priests. Think of Caiaphas...



Remember he was the High Priest during Jesus' day... He hated Jesus! What a terrible man! Yet, he could trace his family line to Aaron and that's why he was in as High Priest.

But, you may ask, "Well, what about the requirements for the Melchizedekian priesthood? Could someone simply claim to be a Melchizedekian priest and say they fell in that line?" BTW **that's exactly the claim the Mormons make...did you know that?** The Mormons say they come from the line of Melchizedek, so what's to stop such a claim? Well, we just read it...the answer is the

end of verse 16. The requirement for belonging to the priesthood of Melchizedek is the power of an indestructible life. What does that mean? It means this...RESURRECTION!



You had to be indestructible. You had to rise from the dead! This is why it was said of Melchizedek that he had not beginning or no end...no father or mother or genealogy. Of course we know that he was a man...you had to be in order to be a High Priest...you had to be human...but the reason it's not recorded about his parents or genealogy is to show that his ORDER had nothing to do with a family line, but rather, that he was the hand-chosen priest of God. That's why God said at Jesus' baptism...said: "This is my beloved Son in whom I'm well-pleased, HEAR HIM!"

And do you know what is more...In 70 A.D. this would happen...



around 5 years from the writing of this letter to the Hebrews...That's the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman General, Titus and what you see there is the Kidron Valley in the foreground and behind it is the Temple, surrounded by the walls of Jerusalem...but, it would all be destroyed. The Aaronic priesthood...the Temple sacrifices...all of it has stopped and hasn't been seen for 1,949 years, since 70 AD. Look at verse 18 and we'll see more...

Hebrews 7:18-22

¹⁸For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹(for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. ²⁰And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, ²¹but 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.'" ²²This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

Indeed: "The law made nothing perfect..." (verse 19 says). And since that's the case we need to ask ourselves, "Well, what was the Law for in the first place?" You know the 10 Commandments brought down by Moses from Mt. Sinai...and then the appointment of his brother, Aaron, to be High Priest... What was the purpose in all of this, if it's: "weak and useless"? Was the Law a bad thing? No! We've said this so many times. Jesus said, "I didn't come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it."

You see, the Law was never designed to make anyone spiritual. The Law was designed to teach us about our lack of spirituality. The Law is a mirror to show us our sin, so we can see our lives

from the perspective of God's requirements and standard of holiness. There was no bending of the Law because God Himself could not bend in His holiness. God is perfect and demands perfection, that was vs 11 that we read earlier.

And so, here's what the Law does...it shows us our inability to be holy and our inability to come into the presence of God. We can never come into the presence of God in our sin. Again, the Law was never designed to save...instead it was designed to point to the One who would save...Jesus! It's like this...let me give you an example. **Let's say there's a family on their way on a trip, and they're driving to Myrtle Beach, and eventually they come to this sign:**



And they all pile out of the car and they get out their luggage and all their stuff and they say, "Who-hoo! We're here!" And they spend the next week at the sign. What would you say?

You'd say they'd lost their minds! Were they really at Myrtle Beach? Of course not! That's ridiculous and you see, this is what happened with the Israelites. In the Old Testament, God gave the Israelites the signpost called the Law, but instead of following it on to the cross...to Jesus...they camped around the signpost and made religion out of it! You see, the Law was just a PICTURE...a signpost that was pointing to Jesus, the ultimate destination.

Church, the only thing the Law was and ever is able to do is to condemn us because we simply can't keep in our flesh! None of us can keep the Law...not in all points...we're not capable. But Jesus could! He was the One through whom we could go to and actually draw near to God.

As you are turning, let me say this: the Law seeks to produce morality, but when the Holy Spirit came, He gave us the ability to live a supernatural life as overcomers. He gives us the ability to be indestructible! You understand, because Jesus is indestructible, through Him, we become indestructible! The OLD passes away and we become NEW...we are born again to a new life because the Holy Spirit enters our spirits here giving us LIFE...and one day...this life will translate into ETERNAL LIFE...and that my dear friends makes us indestructible! That'll make a Baptist shout!

Romans 8:1-11

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 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, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh

cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

So what does all of this mean: Living by the Spirit...and...Setting our minds on the things of the Spirit...Not living by the Flesh but the Spirit? What does this mean on our climb?



Church family, I believe Christians look at their lives in one of three ways. I want you to listen please...as we seek to apply what we've seen to our lives... **Christians usually see their lives in one of three ways.**

#1 Some see Jesus as only a means to **keep them out of Hell**. He's just Hell insurance. They don't want to go to Hell...so, they'll pray a prayer and walk an aisle and get wet...being baptized and that's where it stops. Jesus is the spare tire in the trunk. He's the emergency kit to keep you out of hell...and that's all they want Him for. The rest of the time...they keep Him in the trunk...they don't anybody to see Him...because they don't Him to cramp their style. **Does this describe your view of Jesus?**

#2 Some see Jesus as a only a means to **PERSONAL HAPPINESS**. That's all they want Jesus for...to make them happy. Just like whipped cream to your pie...



Jesus is just an add-on...just a little whipped cream to make your life taste better. Because the way you see it...IT'S YOUR LIFE NOT HIS! No! He's not the pie...just whipped cream...the fluff...the stuff to make you happy.

You know what this is called church family? It's described by A.W. Tozer as: "Jesus-And" philosophy. It's the idea that you can seek Jesus, while you seek something else...and the problem with this is that Jesus is the only One who can make you happy, and so when you try to seek Him and something else at the same time...it'll pull you apart.

Listen, the "AND" in the "Jesus-And" philosophy of Christianity, will leave you empty. Jesus is a gentleman, and He'll let you have "the AND," ...oh, but the AND will never fulfill you, nor make you

happy. But listen, if you omit the “AND” and you just have “JESUS”...you will soon find joy, meaning, purpose and peace, because you see, in finding Jesus you’ll find that He’s all you need! He’s all you’ve been longing for!

It’s true, some see Jesus as only a (#1) means to keep them out of Hell... or (#2) as only the whipped cream to make them Happy. But, then there’s **#3** Some Christians see **Jesus as Person**...the One in whom they’ve surrendered everything in their lives. For them, He’s not just Hell insurance...He’s not the whipped cream...No...He’s the pie...He’s everything...He is your life...AND...He is the One who brings you to God. He is the BETTER HOPE... He is the INDESTRUCTIBLE LIFE that makes your life indestructible. See it again...

Hebrews 7:19

¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

Church family, I’ve thought a lot about it...and I’ve prayed a lot about it. Drawing near to God is the purpose of life. The goal of the Law was to show us our need for Jesus...and Jesus coming to die on the cross for our sins...was so that we could repent and call on His name so that we could DRAW NEAR TO GOD! The highest experience of this life is to be in the presence of God...that’s the mountain top of all of life! That’s the point of life...to pursue God and draw near to Him...that is the greatest experience of life!

And hasn’t this been God’s desire all along! Think about it. God is a Person...never forget that...He desires to be wanted...don’t you? Do you where you get that from? Him. Because you are created in His image...you are a spirit-being, just as He is. God desires to be with us. He walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day in Garden of Eden. But, they sinned...breaking that fellowship... But, God came back, didn’t He...



Emmanuel...at Bethlehem, “God with us” ...Jesus born as a baby... Growing to be a man and then dying on the cross for our sin... Jesus made the way to God through His own flesh...as our High Priest...tearing down the veil between God and man and because of that, we can come to God.

Hebrews 10:19-20a

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that 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.

Are you near to God today? Are you experiencing His presence? You say, **“How do I do that? After all, He’s in heaven and Jesus is there with Him... How do we experience His presence?”**

Well, we read earlier in Romans 8 exactly how to do that...we do it through the Spirit...the Holy Spirit who gives new life... As we set our minds on Him...not our flesh. **Church do you want to know what I'm afraid of?** I'm afraid that we're afraid to allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. We can become so intellectually focused on the commands and principles...that we no longer feel anything of the Lord's presence. **I want you to listen and want you to listen carefully.**

The highest love of God is not JUST intellectual...it's also spiritual. God is Spirit and we are spirit and the Holy Spirit lives inside of us and thus we can't forget the Spirit. So many are quenching Him!

Let me say it this way: the SOUL HAS EYES AND EARS! Are you listening...the soul has eyes and ears with which to see and hear, but for so many, our SOUL'S eyes and ears have become so feeble and wretched simply from lack of use! The Lord says: Taste and see that I am good! We do that in our spirit!

You know what we need, church. We need to awaken the Spirit of God inside of us! We need to feel again! We need to be awakened to the God-consciousness inside our spirit. We need to see and hear with our SOULS once again! We need our spiritual faculties sharpened and attuned to His Presence. Whether you realize it or not, HERE TODAY...right now...can you sense Him...the Holy Spirit yearns on your behalf for you to sense the presence of God. He yearns to commune with us.

And He rewards those who diligently seek Him...those who seek Him with their whole heart! And church, when we seek Him and we concentrate on Him...forcing our spirits to think on Him throughout the day...all of a sudden...our spirit's become awakened inside...and GUESS WHAT??

We begin to change...we climb higher! We see our lives change in ways we've never seen before. Even if you've been a Christian (I speak from experience.) We begin to overcome sin! Sin begins to fall out of our lives.

Listen, you won't even have to try to stop sinning...when you awaken the Spirit inside of you and you look to Jesus...(this is so powerful), OBEDIENCE IS A BY-PRODUCT of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. It's like heat...as a by-product of sunshine...when we allow the Holy Spirit of God to own our lives...we will walk in the commands of Jesus...and Obedience becomes a by-product of our love for Jesus...like heat is a by-product of the sun...like $1 + 1 = 2$ and His words will become true in our lives... **He said, "If you love me, you'll keep my commandments,"** and we'll be doing that and not even realize it...because it will be Him doing it through the Holy Spirit in our lives. And you know what...that makes for an indestructible life!

Who's the most powerful superhero of all time? One of these...



No! I'll tell you who my superhero is...and He's the real thing, not a comic and...He's the indestructible One... Him:



Jesus Christ! Oh, give your life to Him today and you too will be indestructible!