

# God's glorious Son ... as revealed in Hebrews

## Talk Three Jesus our great high priest

### Reading 4:14- 5:10

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

<sup>1</sup> Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. <sup>2</sup> He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. <sup>3</sup> This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. <sup>4</sup> And no one takes this honour on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was.

<sup>5</sup> In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." [Psalm 2:7]

<sup>6</sup> And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." [Psalm 110:4]

<sup>7</sup> During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup> Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered <sup>9</sup> and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him <sup>10</sup> and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

### Why Melchizedek? [Genesis 14:18-20], Hebrews 7:1-28

**Melchizedek has no successor recorded in the Old Testament. He appears as an eternal priest.**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

**Melchizedek was greater than Levi [and so greater than the Levitical priests who served in the temple].**

<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.*

**God's promise of a priest like Melchizedek showed the inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood.**

*<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.*

**God promised to provide an eternal priest like Melchizedek with an oath**

*<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.*

**Jesus, our eternal priest, always lives to make powerful intercession for us, having offered himself on earth as a sacrifice for our sins.**

*<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 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.*

**And:**

- as high priest Jesus is our ‘forerunner’ into heaven [6:20].
- Because we have ‘a great priest over the house of God’, we can ‘draw near to God with full assurance’ [10:21,22].

**So: ‘Do not drift away ... draw near ...’** [Hebrews 2:2, 10:22]