

**ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN LIGHT OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS**  
**XI. Catholicism's Lack Of Biblical Authority Versus Christ's Authority For A Priesthood**  
**(Hebrews 7:1-28)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. A number of the members of our Church have come from Roman Catholic backgrounds, and they often seek support in Biblical truth to counter the strong, errant indoctrination they experienced in their past.
- B. The epistle to the Hebrews was written to counter the errant traditionalism of first century Judaism that was similar in theological thrust to much of Catholicism, so we study Hebrews for edification in this matter.
- C. The author of Hebrews in Hebrews 7:1-28 contrasted Judaism's inferior priesthood to Christ's priesthood, what applies to the lack of Biblical authority for the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church versus the Biblical authority for Christ's priesthood. We study the passage for our insight, application and edification:

**II. Catholicism's Lack Of Biblical Authority Versus Christ's Authority For A Priesthood, Hebrews 7:1-28.**

- A. The Roman Catholic Church bases "her doctrine of the priesthood . . . almost only" on "Matthew 16:18-19" (Loraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 52). There Jesus told Peter (*petros*, masculine for "rock") that he was strong like a rock, but that on this rock (*petra*, feminine for "rock") He would build His Church. Peter would be given the keys of the kingdom to bind and loose people as he received instruction from heaven, the binding and loosing occurring there first. (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 57-58) Upon these two verses the Catholic Church has "built up an elaborate system which not only has no real support in Scripture, but which is actually contrary to Scripture" (Ibid., Boettner).
- B. In reality, the contrast between *petros* and *petra* indicates that Christ is building His Church **not** on **Peter**, but on **Himself**, that Peter would be given the privilege of introducing the gospel to Jews (Acts 2), giving the Holy Spirit to believing Samaritans (Acts 8) and introducing the gospel to Gentiles (Acts 10), Ibid., B. K. C., N. T.
- C. In contrast to Roman Catholicism, as well as to errant Judaism in the Early Church era, Christ's authority for His priesthood is firmly grounded in Scripture (as follows), Hebrews 7:1-28:
  - 1. The priesthood of ancient Melchisedek of Salem is **greater** than Aaron's priesthood, Hebrews 7:1-10:
    - a. The patriarch Abraham who fathered the nation Israel paid tithes to Melchisedek, priest of the Most High God, and Melchisedek as Abraham's superior before God blessed Abraham, Hebrews 7:1-2a.
    - b. Melchisedek's name means King of Salem, which translated means King of Peace, and the lack of any reference to his lineage typifies the eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ, Hebrews 7:2b-3.
    - c. Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedek, so Abraham's priestly descendants in the line of Aaron in Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedek, meaning that the Aaronic priesthood was subject to Melchisedek, Heb. 7:4-6.
    - d. Also, since the greater person blesses the lesser, Melchisedek's blessing of Abraham also certified that Melchisedek's priesthood was superior to the Aaronic priesthood that was still in Abraham's loins, v. 7-10.
  - 2. The priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchisedek then **replaced** Aaron's priesthood, Heb. 7:11-19:
    - a. Had the Aaronic priesthood been perfect, there would be no need for it to be replaced, Heb. 7:11.
    - b. However, there was a necessary change in the priesthood, what required a change in the Mosaic Law, for Psalm 110:1-2 promised Messiah a priesthood forever after the order of Melchisedek, Heb. 7:12-17.
    - c. Thus, God did away with the Aaronic priesthood to replace it with the priesthood of Messiah Jesus Christ that was made an eternal priesthood after the order of Melchisedek, Hebrews 7:18-19.
  - 3. Christ's priesthood after the order of Melchisedek is **superior** in **ministry** to Aaron's priesthood, v. 20-28:
    - a. God took an oath to confirm that Messiah Jesus would be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek, Hebrews 7:20-21; Psalm 110:1-2. Jesus was thus made the guarantor of a better covenant, Heb. 7:22 ESV.
    - b. The Aaronic priests in mortal bodies were unable to continue forever as priests by their deaths, but Christ continues forever with an unchangeable priesthood as the resurrected Lord of glory, Heb. 7:23-24.
    - c. Christ is thus able to save people completely and forever as He forever lives to intercede for them, v. 25.
    - d. Jesus is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens, Who needs not to offer for His own sins and then for the people since He is sinless, but through His one sacrifice He can forever in superiority over the Aaronic priests always perfectly minister as our High Priest, Heb. 7:26-28.

**Lesson:** *The Aaronic priesthood and the Roman Catholic Church's priesthood have no Biblical basis for our era, but Christ's priesthood after the order of Melchisedek is authorized by the Old Testament Psalm 110 prediction.*

**Application:** *May we trust Christ's Biblical High Priestly authority and avail ourselves of His ministry for blessing.*