

Chapter 07

To proue the Priefthood of Chrift incomparably to excel the Priefthood of Aaron (and therefore that Leuitical Priefthood now to ceafe, and that law alfo with it) he fcanneth euey word of the verfe alleaged out of the Pfalme, Our Lord hath fworne: thou art a Prieft for euer, according to the order of Melchifedech.

Gen. 14, 18.

For this ^aMelchifedech, the King of Salem, Priefth of the God moft high, who met Abraham returning from the flaughter of the Kings, and bleffed him: ² to whom alfo Abraham deuided tithes of al: firft indeed by interpretation, ^a)the King of iuftice: & then alfo King of Salem, which is to fay, King of peace, ³ ^a)without father, without mother, without Genealogie, hauing neither beginning of daies nor end of life, but likened to the Sonne of God, continueth a Priefth for euer.

Nu. 18, 21.

Deut. 18, 1.

Iof. 14, 4.

⁴ And ^a)behold how great this man is, to whom alfo Abraham the Patriarke gaue ^a)tithes of the principal things. ⁵ And certes they of the fonnes of Leui that take the priefthood haue commandement to take tithes of the people according to the Law, that is to fay, of their Brethren: albeit themfelues alfo iffued out of the loines of Abraham. ⁶ But he whofe Generation is not numbred among them, tooke tithes of Abraham, and bleffed him that had the promifes. ⁷ But without al contradiction, that which is leffe, ^a)is bleffed of the better. ⁸ And here indeed, ^b)men that die, receiue tithes: but there he hath witnes, that he liueth. ⁹ And (that it may fo be faid) by Abraham Leui alfo, which receiued tithes,

^a When the Fathers & Catholike Expositours pike out allegories and myfteries out of the names of men the Proteftants not endowed with the Spirit whereby the Scriptures were giuē, deride their holy labours in the fearch of the fame: but the Apoftle findeth high myfterie in the very names of perfons & places, as you fee.

^b The tithes giuen to Melchifedech were not giuen as to a mere mortal mā, as al of the Tribe of Leui & Aarons order were: but as to one repreſenting the Sonne of God, who now liueth & reigneth & holdeth his Priefthood & the fūctions thereof for euer.

was tithed. ¹⁰ For as yet he was in his Fathers loines, when Melchifedech met him. ¹¹ ¶If then confummation was by the Leuitical Priefthood (for vnder it the people received the Law) ¶what neceffitie was there yet another Priefte to rife according to the order of Melchifedech, and not to be called according to the order of Aaron? ¹² For the Priefthood being ¶tranflated, it is neceffarie that a tranflation of the Law alfo be made. ¹³ For he on whom thefe things be faid, is of another Tribe, of the which, none attended on the altar. ¹⁴ For it is manifelt that our Lord fprung of Iuda: in the which Tribe Moyfes Priefthood. fpake nothing of ‘Prieftes.’ ¹⁵ And yet it is much more euident: if according to the fimilitude of Melchifedech there arife another Priefte, ¹⁶ which was not made according to the Law of carnal commandment, but according to the power of life indiffoluble. ¹⁷ For he witneffeth, *That thou art ¶a Priefte for euer, according to the order of Melchifedech.* ¹⁸ Reprobation certes is made ¶of the former commandement, becaufe of the weakenefle and vnprofitableneffe thereof. ¹⁹ For the Law brought nothing to perfection, but ¶an introduction of a better hope, by the which we approach to God. ²⁰ And in as much as it is not without an othe, (the other truly without an othe were made Prieftes: ²¹ but this ¶with an othe, by him that faid vnto him: *Our Lord hath fworne, & it fhall not repent him: thou art a Priefte for euer*) ²² by fo much, is IESVS made a furetie of a better Teftament. ²³ And the other indeed were made Prieftes, ¶being many, becaufe that by death they were prohibited to continue: ²⁴ but this, for that he continueth for euer, hath an euerlafting priefthood. ²⁵ Whereby he is able to faue alfo for euer them that goe ‘going’ by himfelf to God: ^a)alwaies liuing to make interceffion for vs.

²⁶ For it was feemely that we fhould haue fuch a high Priefte, holy, innocent, impolluted, feparated from finners, and made higher then the Heauens. ²⁷ Which hath not neceffitie daily (as the Prieftes) firft for his

Leu. 9, 7.
16, 6.

^a Chrift according to his humane nature praieth for vs, & continually reprenteth his former paffion and merits to God the Father.

owne finnes to offer Hoftes, then for the peoples. For this he did once, in offering himself. ²⁸ For the Law appointeth Priestes men that haue infirmitie: but the word of the othe which is after the Law, the Sonne for euer perfected.

ANNOTATIONS

1 Melchifedech.) The excellencie of this person was so great, that some of the antiquitie tooke him to be an Angel, and some the holy Ghost. Which opinion not only the Hebrewes, that auouch him to be Sem the Sonne of Noe, but also the cheefe Fathers of the Christians doe condemne: not doubting but he was a mere man, and a Priest, and a King, whoeuer he was. For els he could not in office and order and Sacrifice haue been so perfect a type and resemblance of our Sauour, as in this Chapter and other is shewed.

3 Without father.) Not that he was without father and mother, saith S. Hierom *ep. 136.* for Christ himself was not without father, according to his diuinity, nor without mother in his humanity: but for that his Pedegree is not set out in the Genesis, as the Genealogie of other Patriarches is, but is sodenly induced in the holy historie, no mention made of his stocke, Tribe, beginning, or ending, and therefore in that case also resembling in a sort the Sonne of God, whose generation was extraordinarie, miraculous, and ineffable, according to both his natures, lacking a father in the one, & a mother in the other: his Person hauing neither beginning nor ending, & his Kingdom, & Priesthood specially, in himself & in the Church, being eternal, both in respect of the time past, and the time to come; as the said Doctour in the *fame epistle* writeth.

4 Behold.) To proue that Christes Priesthood farre passeth the Priesthood of Aaron; and the Priesthood of the new Testament, the Priesthood of the old law; & consequently that the Sacrifice of our Sauour and the Sacrifice of the Church doth much excel the Sacrifice of Moyse law, he disputeth profoundly of the preeminences of Melchifedech about the great Patriarch Abraham who was father of the Leuites.

4 Tithes.) The first preeminence, that Abraham paid tithes, and that of the best and most cheefe things that he had, vnto Melchifedech, as a duty and homage, not for himself only in person, but for Leui, who yet was not borne, and so for the whole Priesthood of Leuites stocke, acknowledging thereby, Melchifedech not only to be a Priest, but his Priest and Superiour, & so of al the Leuitical order. And it is here to be obserued, that whereas in the *14. of Genesis* whence this holy narration is taken, both

The resemblance of Melchifedech to Christ, in many points.

By the fundrie excellencies of Melchifedechs Priesthood is proued the excellencie of the Priesthood and Sacrifice of the new Testamēt.

He receiued tithes of Abrahā, and consequently of Leui and Aaron.

in the Hebrew, and in the 70. it standeth indifferent or doubtful whether Melchifedech paid tithes to Abraham or tooke tithes of him; the Apostle here putteth al out of controuersie, plainly declaring that Abraham paid tithes to the other, as the inferiour to his Priest and Superiour. And touching payment of tithes, it is a natural duety, that men owe to God in al lawes & to be giuē to his Priests in his behalfe, for their honour & liuelihood. Iacob promised or vowed to pay them, *Gen. 28.* Moyfes appointed thē *Leuit. 27. Nu. 18. Deut. 12. 14. 26.* Chrift confirmeth that duety *Mat. 23.* and Abraham specially here giueth thē to Melchifedech plainly thereby approuing them or their equiualent to be due to Chrift and the Priesthood of the new Testament, much more then either in the Law of Moyfes, or in the Law of Nature. Of which tithes due to the Clergie of Chriftes Church see S. Cypr. *ep. 66.* S. Hierom *ep. 1. c. 7.* and *ep. 2. c. 5.* to Heliodorus and Nephtianus, S. Auguftin *fer. 219 de tempore.*

Tithes.

7 Is bleffed of the better.) The fecond preeminence is, that Melchifedech did bleffe Abraham: which we see here S. Paul maketh a great and foueraigne holy thing, grounding our Sauours prerogatiue about the whole Order of Aaron therein: and we see that in this fort it is the proper act of Priesthood: and that without al controuersie as the Apostle faith, he is greater in dignitie, that hath authoritie to bleffe, then the person that hath not, and therefore the Priests vocation to be in this behalfe farre about any earthly King, who hath no power to giue benediction in this sacred manner, neither to man, nor other creature. As here Melchifedech, fo Chrift bleffed much more, and fo haue the Bishops of his Church done, and doe. Which no man can maruel that our Fore-fathers haue fo highly esteemed and fought for, if he marke the wonderful mysterie and grace thereof here expreffed. This Patriarch also which here taketh bleffing of Melchifedech, himself (though in an inferiour fort) bleffed his sonnes, as the other Patriarches did, and fathers doe their children by that example.

He bleffed Abraham.

Bleffing a great preeminence, specially in Priests.

11 If confummation.) The principal propofition of the whole Epistle and al the Apostles difcourse, is inferred and grounded vpon the former prerogatiues of Melchifedech about Abraham and Leui: that is, that the end, perfection, accomplishment, and confummation of ala man's duties and debts to God, by the general redemption, fatisfaction, ful price and perfect ranfom of al man-kind, was not atchieued by any or al the Priests of Aarōs Order, nor by any Sacrifice or act of that Priesthood; or of al the law of Moyfes, which was grounded vpon the Leuitical Priesthood, but by Chrift and his Priesthood, which is of the Order and rite of Melchifedech.

The ful accōplishment of man's redemption was not by Aaron, but by Melchifedechs Priesthood.

11 What necessitie.) This difputatiō of the preeminēce of Chriftes Priesthood about the Leuitical Order, is against the erroneous persuasion of the Iewes, that thought their law, Priesthood, and Sacrifices to be euerlasting, & to be sufficient in themfelues

The Apostle to confute the Iewes false persuasion of Aarons Priesthood and Sacrifices, speaketh altogether of the Sacrifice of the Croffe.

without any other Priest then Aaron and his Successors, and without all relation to Christs Passion or any other redemption or remission, that that which their Levitical offices did procure: not knowing that they were all figures of Christs death, and to be ended and accomplished in the same. Which point well understood and kept in mind, will clear the whole controversy betwixt the Catholics and Protestants, concerning the Sacrifice of the Church. For, the scope of the Apostles deputation being, to avouch the dignity, preeminence, necessity, and eternal fruit and effect of Christs passion, he had not to treat at all of the other, which is a Sacrifice depending of his Passion, specially writing to the Hebrewes, that were to be instructed & reformed first touching the Sacrifice of the Cross before they could fruitfully hear any thing of the other. Though in covert and by most evident sequel of disputation, the learned and faithful may easily perceive whereupon the said Sacrifice of the Church (which is the Mass) is grounded. And therefore S. Hierom saith, *ep. 26.* that all these commendations of Melchisedech are in the type of Christ *Cuius profectus Ecclesiae sacramenta sunt.*

12 Translated.) Note well this place, and you shall perceive thereby, that every lawful form and manner of law, state, or government of Gods people dependeth on Priesthood; riseth, standeth, falleth, or altereth with the Priesthood. In the Law of Nature, the state of the people hanged on one kind of Priesthood: in the law of Moyses, of another: in the state of Christianity, of another; & therefore in the former sentence, the Apostle said, that the Jewish people or Common-wealth had their law under the Levitical Priesthood, and the Greek more properly expresseth the matter, that they were *legitimated*, that is to say, made a lawful people, or communitie under God, by the Priesthood. For there is no iust nor lawful Common-wealth in the world, that is not made legal & Gods peculiar, and distinguished from unlawful Common-wealths that hold of false goddesses, or of none at all, by Priesthood. Whereupon it is clear, that the new law, & all Christian peoples holding of the same, is made lawful by the Priesthood of the new Testament, and that the Protestants shamefully are deceived, and deceive others, that would have Christian Common-wealths to lacke an external Priesthood, or Christs death to abolish the same. For, this is a demonstration, that if Christ have abolished Priesthood, he hath abolished the new Law, which is the new Testament & state of Grace, which all Christian Common-wealths live under. Neither were it true, that the Priesthood were translated with the Law, if all external Priesthood ended by Christs death, where the new law began. For so the law should not depend on Priesthood, but dure while all Priesthood were ended: which is against S. Pauls doctrine.

Furthermore it is to be noted, that this legitimation or putting Communities under law, & Priesthood, of what Order soever, is

No lawful State of people without an external Priesthood.

External Priesthood necessary for the state of the new Testament.

External Sacrifice also necessary for the same.

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no otherwise, but by ioyning one with another in one homage of Sacrifice external, which is the proper act of Priefthood. For, as no lawful ftate can be without Priefthood, fo no Priefthood can be without Sacrifice. And we meane alwaies of Priefthood & Sacrifice taken in their owne proper fignificatiō, as here S. Paul taketh them. For, the conftitution, difference, alteration, or tranflation of ftates & lawes rife not vpon any mutation of fpiritual or metaphorically taken Priefthood, or Sacrifice: but vpon thofe things in proper acception, as is moft plaine.

Laftly, it followeth of this, that though Chrifft truly facrificed himfelf vpon the Croffe, (there alfo a Prieft according to the Order of Melchifedech) and there made the ful redemption of the world, confirmed, and confummated his compact, and Testament, and the law and Priefthood of this his new and eternal ftate, by his bloud: yet that can not be the forme of Sacrifice into which the old Priefthood and Sacrifices were tranflated, whereupon the Apoflle inferreth the tranflation of the Law. For they al were figures of Chriftes death, and ended in effect at his death, yet they were not altered into that kind of Sacrifice, which was to be made but once at his death, and was executed in fuch a fort, that peoples and Nations Chriftned could not meet oftē to worship at it, nor haue their law & Priefts conftituted in the fame. Though for the honour and duty, remembrance and representation thereof, not only we Chrifians, but alfo al peoples faithful, both of Iewes & Gentils, haue had their Priefthood and Sacrifices according to the difference of their ftates. Which kind of Sacrifices were tranflated one into another: and fo no doubt is the Priefthood Leuitical properly turned into the Priefthood and Sacrifice of the Church, according to Melchifedechs rite, and Chriftes inftitution in the formes of bread and wine. See *the next note*.

17 A Prieft for euer.) Chrifft is not called a Prieft for euer, only for that his Perfon is eternal, or for that he fitteth on the right hād of God, & perpetually praieth or maketh interceffion for vs, or for that the effect of his death is euerlafting: for al this proueth not that in proper fignification his Priefthood is perpetual: but according to the iudgement of al the Fathers grounded vpon this deep and diuine difcourfe of S. Paul, and vpon the very nature, definition, and propriety of Priefthood, and the excellent act and Order of Melchifedech, and the ftate of the new law, he is a Prieft for euer according to Melchifedechs Order, fpecially in refpect of the Sacrifice of his holy body and bloud, inftituted at his laft fupper, and executed by his commiffion, commandement, and perpetual concurrence with his Priefts, in the formes of bread and wine: In which things only the faid high Prieft Melchifedech did Sacrifice. For though S. Paul make no exprefse mention hereof, becaufe of the depth of the myfterie, and their incredulity or feebleneffe to whom he wrot: yet it is euident in the iudgement of al the learned Fathers (without exception) that euer wrot either

The tranflatiō of the old Priefthood & Sacrifices, muft needes be into the faid Priefthood & Sacrifice of the Church.

How Chrifft is a Prieft for euer.

Chrifts eternal Priefthood cōfifteth in the perpetual Sacrifice of his body and bloud in the Church.

vpon this Epistle, or vpon the 14. of Genefis, or the Pfalme 109, or by occafion haue treated of the Sacrifice of the altar, that the eternity and proper act of Chriftes Priefthood, and confequently the immutabilitie of the new Law, confifteth in the perpetual offering of Chriftes body and bloud in the Church.

Which thing is fo wel known to the Aduerfaries of Chrifts Church and Priefthood, and fo granted, that they be forced impudently to cauil vpon certaine Hebrew particles, that Melchifedech did not offer in bread and wine: yea & when that wil not ferue, plainly to deny him to haue been a Prieft: which is to giue check-mate to the Apoftle, and ouerthrow al his difcourfe. Thus whiles thefe wicked men pretend to defend Chriftes only Priefthood, they indeede abolifh as much as in them lieth, the whole Order, office, and ftate of his eternal law and Priefthood.

Arnobius faith, *By the myfterie of bread and wine he was made a Prieft for euer.* And againe, *The eternal memorie, by which he gaue the food of his body to them that feare him, in Pfal. 109. 110.* Lactanius, *In the Church he muft needes haue his eternal Priefthood according to the Order of Melchifedech. Li. 14. inftitut.* S. Hierom to Euagrius, *Aarons Priefthood had an end, but Melchifedechs, that is Chriftes and the Churches is perpetual, ^aboth for the time paff and to come.* S. Chryfoftom therefore calleth the Churches Sacrifice, *hoftiam inconfumptibilem, an hoft or Sacrifice that can not be confumed. ho. 27. in 9. Hebr.* S. Cyprian, *hoftiam qua fublata, nulla effit futuræ religio, an hoft which being taken away, there could be no religion. de Cæna domini nu. 2.* Emiffenus, *perpetuam oblationem & perpetuo currentum redemptionem, A perpetual oblation and a redemption that runneth or continueth euerlaftingly. ho. 5. de Pafch.* And our Sauour expreffeth fo much in the very inftitution of the B. Sacrament of his body and bloud: fpecially when he calleth the later kind, *the new Teftament in his bloud*, fignifying that as the old law was eftablished in the bloud of beafts, fo the new (which is his eternal Teftamēt) should be dedicated and perpetual in his bloud: not only as it was shed on the Croffe, but as giuen in the Challice. And therefore into this Sacrifice of the altar (faith S. Auguftin *li. 17. ce Ciuit. c. 20.* S. Leo *fer. 8. de Pafsione*, and the reft) were the old facrifices to be tranflated. See S. Cyprian *ep/ 63. ad Cecil nu. 2.* S. Ambrofe *de Sacram. li. 5. c. 4.* S. Auguftin *in Pfal. 33. conc. 2.* and *li. 17. de Ciuit. c. 17.* S. Hierom *ep. 17. c. 2. & ep. 126.* Epiph. *hær. 55.* Theodoret *in Pfal. 109. Damafcene li. 4. c. 14.*

Finally if any of the Fathers, or al the Fathers, had either wifedom, grace, or intelligence of Gods word and myfteries, this is the truth.

The Proteftants cauiling vpon particles, againft Melchifedechs facrifice & Priefthood directly againft the Apoftle.

Chrifts eternal Priefthood and Sacrifice in the Church is proued out of the Fathers.

Ep. 126.

^a That is from Adam to the end of the world, reprefented by Sacrifice.

If nothing wil ferue our Aduerfaries, Chrif IESVS confound them, and defend his eternal Priefthood, and ftate of his new Teftament established in the fame.

18 Of the former commandement.) The whole law of Moyfes cōteining al their old Priefthood, Sacrifice, Sacraments, and ceremonies is called the *Old commandment*: and the new Teftament conteining the Sacrifice of Chriftes body and bloud, and al the Sacraments & graces giuen by the fame, is named the *new mandatum*: for which our forefathers called the Thurfday in the holy week, *Maundy thurfday*, becaufe that in it, the new law and Teftament was dedicated in the Chalice of his bloud: the old *mandatum*, law, Priefthood, & Sacrifices, for that they were infufficient and vnperfect, being taken away: and this new Sacrifice, after the order of Melchifedech giuen in the place thereof.

19 The introduction.) Euer oberue, that the abrogation of the old law, is not an abolishing of al Priefthood, but an introduction of a new, conteining the hope of eternal things, where the old had but temporal.

21 With an othe.) This othe fignifieth the infallible and abfolute promife of the eternitie of the new Priefthood and ftate of the Church. Chrif by his death, and bloud shed in the Sacrifice of the Croffe, confirming it, fealing it, and making himfelf the furety & pledge thereof. For though the new Teftament was intituted, giuen and dedicated in the Supper, yet the warrant, confirmation, and eternal operation thereof, was atchieued vpon the Croffe, in the one oblation and one general and euerlafting redemption there made.

23 Being many.) The Proteftants not vnderftanding this place, feine very foolishly, that the Apoftle should make this difference betwixt the old ftate and the new: that in the old, there were many Priefts, in the new, none at al but Chrif. Which is againft the Prophet Eſay, ſpecially prophecying of the Priefts of the new Teftamēt (as S. Hierom declareth *vpon the fame place*) in theſe words, *You ſhal be called the Priefts of God: the Miniſters of our God, ſhal it be ſaid to you:* & it taketh away al viſible Priefthood, and conſequently the lawful ftate that the Church and Gods people haue in earth, with al Sacraments and external worſhip.

The Apoftle then meaneth firſt, that the abfolute Sacrifice of confummation, perfection, and vniuerſal redemption, was but one, once done, and by one only Priefte done, and therefore it could not be any of the Sacrifices, or al the Sacrifices of the Iewes law, or wrought by any or by al of them, becaufe they were a number at once, and ſucceeding one another, euery of their offices and functions ending by their death, and could not worke ſuch an eternal redemption as by Chrif only was wrought vpon the Croffe. Secondly, S. Paul infinuateth thereupon that Chrif neuer loſeth the dignitie or practiſe of his eternal Priefthood, by death nor

The old commandement & the new.

Maundy thurfday why ſo called.

The introduction of a new Priefthood.

The eternitie of the new Priefthood cōfirmed by the Fathers othe & Chrifts paſſion.

By the comparifon of many Priefts, & one, is not meant, that there is but one Priefte of the new Teftament.

The meaning is, that the abfolute Sacrifice of eternal redemptiō could not be done by thoſe many Aaronical Priefts, but by one only, Chrif IESVS who liueth a Priefte for euer, hath no Succellour, and as cheefe Priefte, worketh & cōcurrereth with al Priefts in their prieftly functions.

Eſa. c. 61.
ἱερεῖς
λειτουργοὶ

otherwise, neuer yealdeth it vp to any, neuer hath Successeurs after him, that may enter into his roome or right of Priesthood, as Aaron and al other had in the Leuitical Priesthood, but that himself worketh and concurrerth with his Ministers the Priests of the new Testament, in al their actes of Priesthood, as wel of Sacrifice as Sacrament, blessing, preaching, praying, and the like what fo-euer. This therfore was the fault of the Hebrewes, that they did not acknowledge their Leuitical Sacrifices and Priesthood to be reformed and perfited by Christes Sacrifice of the Croffe: and against them the Apostle only disputeth, and not against our Priests of holy Church, or the number of them, who al confesse their Priesthood and al exercises of the same, to depend vpon Christes only perpetual Priesthood.

27 This did he once.) This is the special preeminence of Christ, that he offereth for other mens finnes only, hauing none of his owne to offer for, as al other Priests both of the old and new law haue. And this againe is the special dignitie of his owne Person, not communicable to any other of what order of Priesthood fo-euer, that he by his death (which is the only oblation that is by the Apostle declared to be irreiterable in it-felf) paid the one full sufficient ranfom for the redemption of al finnes.