
Words of Truth

Hebrews 7:11

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We have been studying how that the priesthood of Christ is after the order of Melchisedec. In this study it will be established that the Levitical priesthood was not perfect. In addition, the Law of Moses was not either. Notice: *"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron" (Hebrews 7:11)?*

The Levitical priesthood was significant in the relationship between God and Israel. If the people sinned, the priest was vital in the process of reconciling them to God. Notice: *"And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity. Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether it be a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and if it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty. Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty. Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these. And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing: And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin. And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, and wring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide it asunder: And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin offering. And he shall offer the second for a burnt offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him. But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering. Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, even a memorial thereof, and burn it on the altar, according to the*

offerings made by fire unto the LORD: it is a sin offering. And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him: and the remnant shall be the priest's, as a meat offering" (Leviticus 5:1-13). So, what was lacking? What kept perfection from coming about?

As we progress later in this epistle, we are going to read this about the offerings under the Law of Moses through the priests unto God: *"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins"* (Hebrews 10:1-4).

As you just read, the annual offerings through the priests from the tribe of Levi did not make anyone continually perfect. Early on, God established that those sacrifices needed to be made annually (Exodus 30:10). God had appointed a specific time for such sacrifices (i.e. Leviticus 16:29-30). If you were to go back to where I left off in the previous paragraph (Hebrews 10:4) and continue reading the chapter, you find that what the blood of animals could not do the blood of Christ did (Hebrews 10:5-22). Later in this chapter we are studying right now, we will read this concerning Jesus: *"For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself"* (Hebrews 7:26-27).

We do need to understand something. While the Levitical priesthood was not the ultimate plan of God and certainly lacked in making men perfect, it worked for that time. The priests, under that system, were the messengers of the Lord (Malachi 2:7). They were called of God (Hebrews 5:4; cf. Exodus 28:1 and Numbers 18:1-5). When the children of Israel were faithful, they would have understood this priesthood was forever (I Chronicles 23:13). Therefore, they needed to be persuaded that there was a necessity for a change. So, this passage of Scripture we are looking at is a question designed to teach a point. That point being, God was reverting the priesthood back to what it was under Melchisedec rather than having His only begotten Son to be a priest after the order of Aaron and his sons.

The children of Israel needed to understand that the system of sacrifices they were lawfully accustomed to had changed. Jesus wasn't like the priests they were accustomed to. Think about this in conclusion: *"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God"* (Hebrews 9:13-14)?