
Words of Truth

Hebrews 7:18-19

By: Brian A. Yeager

Earlier in this chapter we considered that the change in the priesthood also made it necessary for there to be a change in the law (Hebrews 7:12). In that study we looked at some points we will not focus on here a second time. For example, we considered that justification could not occur under the Law of Moses (Acts 13:26-39). In this study, we will be considering the weakness of the Law of Moses. The text we are considering in this article is this: *“For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God”* (Hebrews 7:18-19).

Let’s start by considering the word “disannulling” that appears in verse eighteen. That word is translated from the Greek word “ἀθέτησις” (Strong’s # 115). That word is defined as: “cancellation (literally or figuratively): — disannulling, put away. Abolition, disannulling, put away, rejection.” That Greek word is used only one other time in the New Testament. It is translated as “put away” in the following passage: *“For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”* (Hebrews 9:26). The Law of Moses was abolished, it was put away.

When we look at Paul’s letter to the saints in Ephesus, the abolishment of the Law was discussed. Notice: *“Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh”* (Ephesians 2:11-17).

The weakness and unprofitableness of the Law of Moses cannot be ignored. For one, as Paul addressed to the Gentiles in Ephesus; Gentiles were non-citizens under the Law.

Under the Law of Moses, Israel was the chosen people of God (Deuteronomy 7:1-7 and Psalms 147:19-20). Gentiles were not part of the covenants of promise (Deuteronomy 29:1, Acts 7:1-8, Romans 9:1-5, and Galatians 3:16-17). Gentiles were without hope (Acts 14:15-16). God was known as “the God of Israel” (Exodus 5:1, II Kings 19:15, Psalms 68:35, and Luke 1:68). The weakness and unprofitableness of the Law of Moses was just towards the Gentiles. The Law was weak through the flesh (Romans 8:3). In fact, that is one of the points this chapter is highlighting over and over again. The Law depended on man. Sacrifices depended on man. Even when men in Israel could be counted as dependable, the Law still did not offer any lasting solution for sin.

What good were those carnal sacrifices even when they were offered aright? Notice: *“Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation... 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 9:6-10 and Hebrews 10:1-4).

The Law made nothing perfect. The Law served as a schoolmaster to bring the Jews unto Christ (Galatians 3:24). The bringing in of a better hope, by the which they and we draw nigh unto God, is Jesus and His law. The forerunner to Christ (John) said: *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”* (John 1:17). It took the blood of Christ for there to be remission of sins and a new covenant. We see this truth taught when Jesus instituted the memorial supper (Matthew 26:26-29). Jesus being the sacrifice for the sins of mankind was the plan of God before the foundation of the world (I Peter 1:18-25).

When John penned his Revelation to the seven churches of Asia, he wrote about how Jesus washed away their sins with His own blood (Revelation 1:5). Through God’s plan and Jesus’ execution of that plan, we see the love that our Father and our Savior has for us (Romans 5:6-11). It is through Christ that we come to the Father (John 14:6). He is our mediator (I Timothy 2:5). Jesus is the propitiation [an appeasing] for our sins (I John 2:1-2). So, let us be continually thankful to our Father and our Savior that we can be saved under the New Testament that is also known as the perfect Law of Liberty (James 1:25).