

Building on the Foundation

Chapter 11

I want to continue looking at the priesthood and make a last comparison between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of mature sons, named in scripture after Melchisedec. In the 11th verse of the 7th chapter of Hebrews, it says, If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (and when it says perfection, it's talking about the coming to maturity of God's purpose), what further need was there that another priest should come after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? Before we go forward there, I want to go back to Romans 8. We know that the Levitical priesthood was established in the law so that the authority of that priesthood was by the law. Here we have a clear verse as to why there needed to be another priest. In the 3rd verse of the 8th chapter of Romans, it says, For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness spoken to by the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk after the Spirit. The 8th verse wraps it up and puts a bow on the package, So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Let's go back into Hebrews 7:12, For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. This tells us that since there is a new priest, whose authority is not of the law, something needed to be changed about the authority that establishes the priesthood. As long as the law of Moses was in place, then Aaron and the Levites were the priests. In order to have a different priest, you have to set aside the law of Moses as well. In verse 13, For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses said nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there arose another priest, who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

The authority of a Levitical priesthood was the law of Moses, but the power and the authority of Melchisedec is the omnipotence of God. We have a very clear picture here of what we read in Romans 8 of what the law could not do. The law brought a priesthood with it that could only forgive some sins but could not change the person who brought the sacrifice. So, we needed a provision of better blood; we needed a better sacrifice; and we needed a better priest. Christ is all of that. Christ is a better life, a better blood, a better priest, and is actually able to change the one in which it is birthed. Earlier in this study, we recognized that Christ is not limited to

the man Jesus, but Christ is a life quickened in us by the Holy Spirit so that we are changed by the work of the Holy Spirit growing that life up.

The 19th verse says, For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh to God. What is that better hope? Christ in you is the hope. Christ as life: you living as a son; you having been quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; your sins being forgiven; righteousness being imputed to you for faith; having a door open to have a rightness with God through the spirit whereby God is as much your father as he was Jesus's father, whereby you being yoked to the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus was, you may present yourself to God as he did through the spirit. The influence of the spirit in your life one day at a time will grow you up spiritually.

We read earlier in the 5th verse of Hebrews 5, where it says, So Christ glorified not himself to be made a priest. The 7th verse then tells us what he did do. It says, He in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death. This is Jesus petitioning his father because what he had to fulfill he could not do out of his own strength. Remember where it said that this priest was made according to the power of an endless life. What we read in the 7th verse indicates that the life that he lived in the flesh was not eternal. It says he had to be saved from death by God. Eternal life cannot be subject to death. Eternal life is not able to be controlled by death. Eternal life does not need to be saved from death. I'm emphasizing this because I want us to clearly see that the power that made Jesus a priest after the order of Melchisedec did not come from Jesus. He had to be saved. The only one who could save him was his father. Jesus clearly said in the gospels, My father is greater than I am. In another place he said, Of myself, I cannot do this.

I want to read some more here in this 5th chapter and the 8th verse, Though he were a son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Here, the same word as was used in John 1:12 "becoming" is in the 9th verse. We'll read it that way, And he became perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. He was born Christ but he had to be made a high priest by God himself. His consistency of staying under his father by a daily offering, by living not out of himself, is what enabled him to become a high priest. This is the point: the life that is Christ is the only life on this planet that is not self-sourced. Every other form of life lives out of what is in it; it lives out of the process of existing as it is, for good or for bad. Christ, however, has no confidence in himself. He said concerning himself, I am meek and lowly in spirit and I live by my father.

We have a responsibility on a daily basis to humble ourselves before God and to present ourselves to the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. It's a work that

Colossians 2:11 refers to when it says, In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands. This is talking about Christ. It's not talking about circumcision of the flesh; it's not talking about self-discipline; it's not talking about suppressing bad behavior. It's talking about a circumcision that is made without hands. This is a responsibility that we have to petition God, to bring ourselves as a sacrifice to him. As Paul said in Romans, true worship is to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. This is the daily responsibility of one who is serious about growing up to the fullness of Christ.