

Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup> 2011  
The Letter to the Hebrews  
Part Twenty Four

1). Heb 7:23 *Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. 24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. 26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.*

a). We have seen over the past several weeks how the writer of Hebrews had made comparisons between the priesthood that had been established through the lineage of Levi and Aaron upon the earth and the Priesthood of Christ that has been established in the heavens, according to the order of Melchizedek.

b). We had noted particularly that the priests who occupied this position within the earthly tabernacle were appointed by ‘the law of a fleshly commandment’ whereas Christ is appointed by the power of an endless life – an endless life that has been determined not by the absence of death, as is the case with Melchizedek, but by overcoming death through the power of the Spirit in resurrection – Ro 8:11 *But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*

c). Not only is Christ’s Priesthood based on His endless life, but He has been appointed and affirmed by God the Father by the swearing of an oath – Heb 7:21 *(for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "The LORD has sworn And will not relent, 'You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek'")*,

d). And as we saw last week Christ’s endless life means that His Priesthood is unchangeable. The descendants of Aaron would live and die and so the priesthood that existed in the tabernacle was constantly changing – but with Christ, His Priesthood is the same yesterday, today and forever; which means that at any time we can go boldly to the throne of grace and we will always find mercy and grace to help in time of need. It means that if we will confess our sins He is always

faithful to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And it is right and proper that our Lord should minister to us in this way because, as a result of His experience of suffering as the Son of Man, He is able to sympathize with our weakness and have compassion upon our struggle. What a comfort it is to know that this is the way it will always be until the time comes for us to stand before Him in judgment.

e). In consequence then of the power of and endless life and an unchangeable priesthood Christ is able, according to the scripture, to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him – He is able to bring about the totality of the redemption of Man, spirit, soul and body – to redeem those who are eternally saved throughout this dispensation to the condition of Adam and the Woman before the fall as a precursor to their receiving a position of rulership with Him in the 7<sup>th</sup> Day, the Millennial Kingdom.

f). The law appointed as high priest men who had weakness, morally, spiritually, physically, but the word of the oath on the other hand appointed the Son who has been perfected forever.

f). And in the totality of the comparisons made between Christ as the unchangeable High Priest and that of Aaron we came to see the superiority of the Priesthood of Christ, as His Priesthood is the substance, the reality, the fulfillment of that which is pictured for us in the tabernacle in the wilderness.

g). And although in our Bible, Chapter 7 of the Book of Hebrews draws to a close, there is no such close to the argument our writer is presenting – and so Chapter 8 continues.....

2). Heb 8:1 ¶ *Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.*

a). ‘The main point of the things we are saying’ is not in fact a reference back to that which has been previously said in the last Chapter, but to that which is about to be said in this Chapter. Although obviously that which is about to be said is built upon that which has gone before.

b). And the first thing the writer wants us to note is that we have a High Priest ‘who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty, in the heavens.

c). And this is significant because our High Priest is seated, showing that His work with respect to providing the sacrifice for sin is finished. The high priest in the earthly tabernacle did not sit down as his work of providing the sacrifice for sin was continual.

d). Now, not only is our High Priest sitting down, but He is sitting down ‘at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens’. The right hand is

always representative of power and might and so we see the Lord seated in the place of power next to God the Father – this is no insignificant fact –

Heb 10:12 *But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,*

e). And all of this is shown to be ‘in the heavens’ – therefore not on the earth. And in this fact we would see two important things firstly there is the distinction again between Christ and the Levitical priests with respect to location and accomplishment – Aaron and his successors could never attain the position of being seated at God’s right hand. And secondly we see Jesus, the Son of Man, second only to God the Father, clearly pointing to the impending change in rulership that we had seen so often in Chapter 1 - Heb 1:5 *For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"? 6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him."*

f). And so Christ’s work of offering one sacrifice for sins forever being over and having attained the exalted position at God’s right hand in anticipation of rulership in the coming Kingdom he is now ‘a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.’

g). The word translated ‘minister’ is, in the Greek language a compound word that has to do with service to God and service to man and so we can see in this word the Lord’s service to God the Father on behalf of Man and His service to Man in His continual intervention and provision for the totality of Man’s redemption so that, in fulfillment of the type of Adam and the Woman, those who are saved to the uttermost will rule and reign with Him.

h). And as we see from the scripture Christ’s ministry is in the sanctuary, literally the holy places, of the ‘true tabernacle’ which the Lord erected and not man. Now the word true here does not suggest that the tabernacle in the wilderness was false or counterfeit, but was rather just the shadow of that which is real, which is true - Heb 9:11 *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.*

i). This heavenly tabernacle which is the true tabernacle was erected by the Lord and according to Hebrews 9:11 this tabernacle is greater and more perfect and is not of this creation – that is to say that the heavenly tabernacle is not a part of the material creation and therefore has been in existence before that which is recorded in Genesis 1:1 – interestingly the word tabernacle is literally a tent and the word translated erected in Hebrews 8:2 is literally pitched. Maybe we have never made the obvious connection, but as the tabernacle in the wilderness was made according to the pattern that the Lord showed to Moses on the mountain and was a tent – so

the true tabernacle, which it was patterned after, would also be a tent. And so the picture here is of God pitching His tent in the heavens, erecting the true tabernacle, before there was ever a man who would need the services of a High Priest.

3). Heb 8:3 *For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer.*

a). That which our scripture clearly shows us here is that the offering of both gifts and sacrifices is an inherent part of the appointment of the high priest, it is the central part of his ministry. Therefore every high priest, those who ministered on the earth and the One who ministers in the heavens has to offer the gifts and sacrifices – ‘Therefore’, our scripture says, ‘it is necessary that this One [this High Priest – Christ] also have something to offer’. And of course that which He offered was Himself – Heb 9:24 *For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another-- 26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

b). Now we know this from related scripture concerning the high priest - Heb 9:7 *But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance;*

c). And we also know that Christ is without sin and would therefore have no need to offer a sacrifice for Himself – but having said that let’s remember that Christ became sin for us, taking our sins upon Himself as the Son of Man, and that He offered Himself as our Passover Lamb in payment for those sins. And so in this way we can see Him fulfilling the type completely.

4). Heb 8:4 *For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." 6 ¶ But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.*

a). That our Lord is a Priest in the heavenly tabernacle is again emphasized in v4, because if He were on earth, rather than the heavens, then He would not be a priest as there was already a priesthood in existence according to the order of Aaron who offered gifts ‘according to the law’.

b). V5 again makes the distinction between the earthly and the heavenly – the priests on the earth we are told, just as we have previously seen, ‘serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things’, and our writer quotes from Exodus 25:40 to demonstrate exactly that which God said to Moses concerning this.

c). Now the interesting thing about a shadow is that it has no substance of itself, but the very fact of the casting of a shadow is proof positive of the object that produced it, as it is an object standing in light that is responsible for the shadow. And such is the case with the tabernacle in the wilderness – of itself it had no substance as the ministry contained in it made nothing perfect, but its very existence was proof positive of that which is real that is responsible for casting the shadow – the more perfect tabernacle not made with hands.

d). Heb 10:1 ¶ *For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.*

e). Col 2:16 ¶ *So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, 17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

f). 2Pe 1:19 ¶ *And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;*

g). The distinction continues in v6 where we see that Christ has ‘obtained a more excellent ministry’ – a phrase that contains in it the ideas of surpassing and differing. Christ’s ministry then in the heavens surpasses that of the priests of the order according to Aaron as it is in every way superior to theirs and His ministry is entirely different from theirs. And this superior and different ministry is such ‘inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant’ - Heb 7:22 *by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.*

h). Through His death and resurrection he has become the pledge of ‘a better covenant’, and also the Mediator, literally the go between for that same covenant which was established on better promises.

5). Heb 8:7 *For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—*

a). Here in v7 we again see the acknowledgement that the first covenant, the law of Moses, was not faultless. Now this is not to say that God instituted something that He later found didn’t work, but rather that He had set in place that which was a shadow of the good things to come, but was not the very image of the things.

b). And so, it had always been God's intention that the first covenant would be replaced by a new covenant. The very fact that a new covenant is prophetically presented in the scriptures is the very proof that the first covenant had an expiration date.

c). In fact as we see from the scripture the problem was not so much with the law, but with the character of the people – 'Because finding fault with them...'

d). What then follows in v8-12 is a quotation from the Prophet Jeremiah Jer 31:31 *"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah- 32 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

e). The days that are coming of course are the days following the conclusion of the Tribulation when the remnant of the nation of Israel will come to repentance, recognizing Jesus as their Messiah in fulfillment of the type of Joseph and his brothers - Ge 45:4 *And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 "But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.*

*Zec 13:8 And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one -third shall be left in it: 9 I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"*

f). And in fulfillment of the type of Melchizedek blessing Abraham at the conclusion of the battle with the kings.

g). And this new covenant, and please note this carefully, is to be made 'with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah'. God makes no covenants with Gentiles and we should in no way see the new covenant as being the establishment of what we know as Christianity.

h). Now what we see from the quotation from Jeremiah that this new covenant will not be *according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt,* - just as Christ's Priesthood is an entirely different kind of priesthood from that of Aaron,

so will the new covenant be an entirely different kind of covenant from that which Aaron ministered.

i). And logically this would need to be so because we know that the law made nothing perfect - *My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.*

j). The first covenant, which God gave to Moses was written on tablets of stone - Ex 24:12 ¶ *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."*

j). But not so the new covenant - 33 *"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

k). No longer will any Jew have to teach another Jew to 'know the Lord', but each one, from the highest to the lowest will know Him personally - Isa 54:13 *All your children shall be taught by the LORD, And great shall be the peace of your children. 14 In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you.*

l). And this new covenant will accomplish that which the first covenant never could - *For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

m). V13 then states that which should now be obvious - Heb 8:13 *In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.*

6). Now let's consider some things concerning this new covenant that God will make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. We have already seen recorded in - Heb 7:22 *by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.*

a). We saw how Jesus has become a surety, a pledge, of a better covenant and this better covenant and the new covenant are one and the same thing.

b). We might also remember Jesus' words on the night of the Last Supper – Mr 14:23 *Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.*

c). Then all of this is summed up for us in - Heb 9:15 ¶ *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

d). Christ's sacrifice on the cross then is that which brings the new covenant into existence, but its acceptance by the house of Israel and the house of Judah is still dependent upon their recognition of Jesus as their Messiah, their receiving Him as their Passover Lamb and their repentance – all of which remain yet future awaiting the conclusion of the time of Jacob's trouble - Jer 30:7 *Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it. 8 'For it shall come to pass in that day,' Says the LORD of hosts, 'That I will break his yoke from your neck, And will burst your bonds; Foreigners shall no more enslave them. 9 But they shall serve the LORD their God, And David their king, Whom I will raise up for them. 10 ¶ 'Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the LORD, 'Nor be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar, And your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, And no one shall make him afraid. 11 For I am with you,' says the LORD, 'to save you;*

e). And so, as we think about all of these things there may well be a number of questions that come to our mind for which it would be helpful to have answers.

f). If the new covenant is not made with Christians, which it isn't and if exclusively has to do with the house of Israel and the house of Judah at the end of the Tribulation, which it does – why is our writer, why is God, going to such great lengths to bring all of this to the attention of those who are actively in pursuit of the Kingdom?

g). If the new covenant of itself has no bearing on our race of faith, then what is the importance of it in respect of Christ as our High Priest?

h). Now we know that the original recipients of this letter would be Jews who had become Christians and therefore from a Jewish standpoint this would be most interesting, but we aren't Jews and yet we know that what is contained here in the scriptures has everything to do with our success at the Judgment Seat because we know that - 2Ti 3:16 *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

i). Well the answer to our questions is really quite simple to understand – but will have to wait until next time – if the Lord is willing.