

HEBREWS – LEVITICUS
“Eternal Priest”
Hebrews 7:11-22
July 9, 2023

Hebrews 7:11-22

¹¹ Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?

¹² For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. ¹³ For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

¹⁵ This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is witnessed of him,

“You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek.”

¹⁸ For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, **a better hope** is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

²⁰ And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, ²¹ but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him:

“The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind,
‘You are a priest forever.’ ”

²² **This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.** ¹

“This is the Word of God” – “Thanks be to God.”

It can be embarrassing. It can be shocking. It can be frustrating. The meal is over...you’ve given the waitress your credit card only to have her come back saying “Your card was declined.”

Years ago, we as a church family rented out the theater at Orange Park Mall for the showing of a new Christian film. I was at the box office pre-purchasing the tickets for church members to then buy. The employee rang up the tickets, took my credit card and then with a sheepish look said “It says your card is not going through.”

This is the church’s card, so I called the bank. It seems that hundreds of dollars’ worth of liquor had been charged on my card and the limit had been hit. It seems this took place somewhere in London a day prior. Well...suffice to say I was not in London the day prior. Nor was I purchasing hundreds of dollars’ worth of liquor from a London liquor store...on the church’s credit card.

The issue was corrected, and the fraudulent charge erased as a loss to the bank, and eventually to everyone who uses our bank, I’m sure. Nonetheless, the awkward moment where “Insufficient funds” was declared caused me some frustration, not to mention a moment of “What now?” at the theater.

Maybe you’ve had something like this happen. Maybe it wasn’t a liquor purchase in London, but something on your own end where the funds you thought you had really weren’t there. It leads to perhaps putting some items back on the shelves at the grocery store, getting friends to chip in and help at a restaurant, or maybe you ended up washing dishes to pay? I don’t know, but when you think you have something covered

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Heb 7:11–22). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

only to realize it is not is embarrassing at a minimum, frightening to a higher degree.

As we look to this portion in the New Testament book of Hebrews today, we continue in this letter to Christians with Jewish backgrounds who were facing persecution and questioning their own personal sacrifices, not to mention the theology and doctrine of the Son of God. Fear often leads to questions. Confusion has an author, and it's not God, but this enemy creates much confusion in the minds of believers so to incapacitate them. At a minimum, this was happening to the church, but the author writes to this group, with the Holy Spirit's words to point to the Father through the Son and thus, advocating and proving Christ to be who he says he is and whom the prophets declared.

But...as we look at this portion of scripture, I want to give you some verses in Leviticus first. There are many, but they are here to help you frame an understanding.

Leviticus 3:1

If his offering is a sacrifice of peace offering, if he offers an animal from the herd, male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD.²

Leviticus 4:1-3

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone sins unintentionally in any of the LORD’s commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them, ³ if it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people, then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering.³

Leviticus 6:8-9

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Le 3:1). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Le 4:1–3). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,⁹ “Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering. The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.”⁴

The law was good. It was godly. It was God’s design and desire for developing a holy nation. There were guidelines. There still are. There were rules. Still are. There were boundaries of protection, fences if you will, that were built to protect his people and provide hope and health.

This is a holy nation, set apart and a gift to the world.

And...in this law, there were steps for handling one’s sin. The wages of sin is death and it always has been. Thus, the need for sacrifices. Places and people set up for the righteous handling of sacrifices and the progression of forgiveness upon individuals and a nation who perpetually find themselves drifting away from holy living and righteousness.

Human nature on full display...even among a nation of chosen people.

Thus, the priests, from the bloodline of Aaron as declared by God. Men who had offices to hold, roles to fill, intercession to offer. Offerings given by the people that were not dependent on the people to determine. There was no “I’ll give this...it’s good enough.” No. God set the standard and the standard was not debatable, nor voted upon by the majority. In fact, in this theocracy, majority did rule, but it was a majority of one as declared in Deuteronomy. The Lord, our God, is ONE and his one vote was always unanimous, not in need of a second, and never out of order.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Le 6:8–9). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Why does this Levitical aspect matter today as we look to Hebrews? Because Hebrews without the foundation of Leviticus will leave us without the foundation needed to understand what God is saying.

Our points today:

1. Christ is Sufficient
2. Christ is Enough
3. Christ is Access

CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT

Insufficient funds are embarrassing and leave us wanting. It's different when you KNOW there's money in the bank to pay for the services or goods desired. There's a confidence that otherwise is absent.

In the Old Testament, the priesthood from Aaron was insufficient. It could never bring the people to perfection.

Hebrews 7:11

Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?⁵

If...and this is the writer's major point...IF the Levitical priesthood was enough, could bring the people to perfection then there would be no need for Christ.

But, the Aaronic priesthood was insufficient.

Meaning that with the old way, a person could never be put in the situation or position to where he could come, or stand, before God.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Heb 7:11). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The Law made nothing perfect. The Law was not useless. It was from God and provided great services...but it was never meant to be complete.⁶

In truth the Law is excellent. The real issue was that man was, and is, sinful. And that is why we need a priest, not in the Aaronic order, but in the order of Melchizedek – as we spoke last week, one who fulfills an unlimited role as illustrated by this one who blessed Abraham. One who would be eternal, not bounded by a genealogy or limited by man-focused understanding. One who would be the fulfillment of the prophecies, the ultimate sacrifice...the priest who would become the sacrifice...making the way clear to the Father. There is beauty here and I hope you see it. If not, forgive me for not finding the words. But the insufficient has been made sufficient. In Christ alone.

Romans 8:3-4

³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.⁷

CHRIST IS ENOUGH

It's one thing to have insufficient funds. It's another to be told you just don't measure up.

Whether it's being cut from a team, not getting the promotion, being "let go" due to unforeseen issues, being unfriended, or feeling that perpetual "thanks but we're looking elsewhere" and wondering if you'll ever be enough.

⁶ Hughes, R. Kent. *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 196.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 8:3–4). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

This is so hard in a world that is so good at beating people down while simultaneously selling the “participation trophy” mantras of “believe in yourself, you can do it, you’re a superstar, and such.”

What a crazy world, right?

So...here’s an encouraging word for you: “You *don’t* measure up.”

You don’t. You don’t have what it takes, regardless what your men’s group leader told you. You don’t have enough change in your pocket to make the world work. You don’t. You can’t. You never will.

But before you go dig a hole and lay down in it, look at this amazing reality. Our priest, our advocate, our redeemer, our sacrifice, our savior, our Jesus is enough. He’s more than enough.

Hebrews 7:18-19

¹⁸ For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. ⁸

A better hope – Jesus Christ – through which we draw near to God.

And drawing near to God changes everything, but this was not always available.

CHRIST IS ACCESS

A few years ago I told you how I was invited to Daytona for the Coke Zero 400 NASCAR Race. Now, I know hardly anything about NASCAR, and for saying that some will move to have me removed from the south, but it’s a fact. I’m not anti-NASCAR...I just have not been a lifelong fan.

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Heb 7:18–19). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Yet, I went. And I didn't have a seat in the grandstand. I had a pass that allowed me into the pit area. I was walking around the pits. Went to the garage pre-race. Attended the race chapel. Met some drivers and owners. It was surreal and totally unfair for those of you who are lifelong NASCAR fans. Yet, I was there because I had this pass.

But I didn't deserve the pass. I only had it because a friend advocated for me and invited me. I didn't earn it. I didn't go to a ton of other races to have it awarded to me. I was given it by someone who had access and by virtue of his access...I had access.

It's a simple illustration and while true, only an illustration, but the parallels hopefully make sense. You see, in the Old Testament under the Aaronic priesthood, only the priests were able to enter the Holy of Holies, and then on a limited basis with many rules.

But now, because of Jesus Christ, a priest in the order of Melchizedek, but not just that, but the King of kings and Lord of lords, and even more than that, the Son of man and Son of God. The Son who is God has access to the Father and through his blood, his payment, his cross, his death and resurrection, you and I have access.

Seriously, that should blow us away.

In a culture that treats Jesus as a caricature, a buddy, and promotes praying to "Daddy God" the holiness is lost. But this hope is secure in Christ and as the writer states...

Hebrews 7:22

This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.⁹

Sufficient. Enough. Access. – Way. Truth. Life.

⁹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Heb 7:22). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.