A BETTER HOPE

**DATE: 3/5/2014 Wed.**

**TEXT: Hebrews 7:11-28 (v. 19)**

**INTRODUCTION**

From the very beginning of this study we have seen that the continuing Theme for the Book of Hebrews as been the word - ***“Better”***

The word itself is found 13 times in this epistle

It’s a Comparative adjective expressing the Superiority of the NT over the OT

So far we have seen the Superiority of Christ over –

Angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron, and now we will see its superiority to the Levitical Priesthood

The sacrificial system of the Jerusalem temple was based upon the Mosaic Law

The Priesthood of Christ, after the order of Melchizedek, was not related to either one

In this section the author argues that God proposed a change from one system to another

The writer further develops his argument that the Priesthood of Christ has suspended and superseded the Levitical Priesthood

Let’s pray and think on this thought -

***“A Better Hope”***

***~~~Prayer~~~***

**I. THE “PREDICTION” OF CHANGE – vs. 11-17**

As we can suppose, the Jews regarded their system as perfect

It was appointed by God, and they had no other reason than to regard it as permanent, that it needed no change

And that, by it, they would earn Salvation

But the writer now states that this isn’t so

Because the Scriptures themselves prophesied that a priest was to arise of another order

Jesus said – ***“Search the Scriptures”***

The Bereans – ***“searched the scriptures daily”***

It’s obvious the writer did this

Turn to **Psalm 110 …**

This Psalm was well regarded by the Jews as a Messianic Psalm

One that foretold the coming of the Messiah

A Priest of a more permanent order

And this, he says, was full proof that there were *Limits* to the previous order

What where these *Limits*?

His reasoning in these verses shows -

- That it was not to be permanent

- That it could not make the worshippers perfect

- That the blood which they offered in sacrifice could not take away sin, and could not render those who offered it holy

The author now sets out to defend his reasoning

**A. The New ‘Order’ – vs. 11, 12 …**

There are 4 thoughts that we find in these 2 verses

**1.** The Law Could not Bring Perfection

**v.11a – *“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood…”***

It was never God’s intention for perfection to come by the Levitical priesthood

When the writer used the phrase ***“Levitical priesthood”***

He was referring to all the aspects of the ceremonial regulations -

Sacrifices, Diet, Religious Calendar, and Place of Worship

Note the Contrary statement in **v. 11**

The key being the word ***“If”***

- It could not remove sin nor give righteousness

- It could not provide justification, sanctification, nor glorification

**2.** The Moral and Social Laws cannot be separated

**v.11b – *“(for under it the people received the law,)”***

There is an inseparable connection between the Levitical priesthood and the entire Mosaic Law with its moral, civil, and ceremonial implications

Under the priesthood, the people of Israel ***“received the law”***

The Law was given as a whole, to Israel at Sinai

The nation accepted it with these words found in –

**Exodus 19:8 – *“All that the Lord hath spoken we will do”***

They did not differentiate between the sacrifices and the Ten Commandments

Both came from God and deserved their obedience under the guidance of the ***“Levitical priesthood”***

**3.** The Law was Designed to be Temporary

**v.11c – *“what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”***

Why did God raise up ***“another priest”***?

The prediction of the arrival of ***“another priest … after to the order of Melchizedek” …***

… Is showing that the Levitical system was only temporary

Again the author references the messianic psalm of David to prove his point

The adjective ***“another”*** means *one of a different kind*

If salvation and sanctification for the believer could have been realized through the Law …

Then God would never have announced the coming of a new priest out of an order which preceded that of Levi and Aaron

**4.** The Change in the Law

**v.12 – *“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law”***

The replacement of the Levitical priesthood also necessitated …

***“a change also of the law”***

Since the Law and the Priesthood were an integral part of each other

The removal of the one also meant the removal of the other

The dispensation of the Mosaic Law served its purpose in the divine plan for Israel

But its supervision of the lives of people ended at the cross with the death of Christ

**Colossians 2:14-17 …**

**Galatians 3:21-25 …** we will look at these vs. in a minute

John put the change into stark contrast –

**John 1:17 – *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”***

Early Jewish believers were often criticized for their refusal to follow the old legalistic regulations of Jewish life

**Acts 6:14 – *“For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us”***

**Acts 21:20 – *“And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law”***

As a matter of fact / the temptation for the Jewish believer was to go back to the old ways

And I believe is the whole premise of this letter

When it came to the “Prediction of Change”, we also see

**B. The New ‘Priest’ – vs.13-17 …**

**v.13a - *“He of whom these things are spoken”***

***“He”*** is the Lord Jesus Christ

There are 2 Facts about this New Priest set forth here

**1.** He is a physical member of the tribe of Judah

But Jewish priests came from the tribe of Levi

Yet **v. 13b** declares that Christ descended from –

***“another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar”***

We see the seriousness with which God dealt with anyone intruding into the Priesthood

- Saul

When Saul, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, intruded into the office of the priest by offering a sacrifice, he forfeited his kingdom to David

**I Samuel 13:8-13**

The prophet Samuel rebuked him in **v.13** –

***“Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee”***

- Uzziah

When Uzziah, the king of Judah, went into Solomon’s Temple to burn incense, God dealt with him by afflicting him with leprosy

**II Chronicles 26:16-21**

At that time, Azariah the priest resisted him in **v.18** saying -

***“It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron...”***

The evidence of biblical history and genealogy shows this …

**v. 14 - *“… it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood”***

Judah was the tribe which produced the rightful Kings of Israel

On his death bed, Jacob pronounced blessings upon his twelve sons in **Genesis 49**

He declared that the right to rule would rest within Judah

**Genesis 49:8-12**

God subsequently gave this promise to David who was of Judah in **II Samuel 7:16 –**

***“And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: …***

***…thy throne shall be established for ever”***

That covenant promise was repeated by the angel Gabriel to Mary …

Who also was of the family of David - **Luke 1:30-33**

Luke recorded the physical ancestry of Jesus through Mary in - **Luke 3:23-38**

In it he traces Christ back to David, Judah, Abraham, and Adam

The Apostle Paul declared in **Romans 1:3** & **II Timothy 2:8** that Christ -

***“was made of the seed of David according to the flesh”***

Christ was born in the city of David, namely Bethlehem of Judah

**Micah 5:2 – *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting”***

**Luke 2:4, 11 – *“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)” “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord”***

But Christ is not only a King, but also a Priest!

How could that be?

Because …

**2.** Christ is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek

**v. 15 – *“And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,”***

The evidence from **Psalm 110** definitely anticipated the arrival of a new Priest / King

No ordinary Jew could meet those qualifications

Because he could not be born out of two different tribes

Thus, Israel was caught in a dilemma

How could her Messiah / Redeemer be both a King and a Priest and how could He be both Divine and Human?

Christ gained His Royal right through His physical ancestry

But His Priesthood is not based upon any human genealogy

The Jewish priests became such …

***“after the law of a carnal commandment” -* v. 16a**

It was ***“carnal”*** in that it pertained to a human birthright

The ancestral circumstances of their births dictated whether they would be involved in the priesthood

On the other hand, Christ gained His priesthood by His Death and Resurrection

**v.16b *–“after the power of an endless life”***

The event of physical death terminated the priestly ministry of the Levites

But it actually began Christ’s Ministry

He continues His priestly ministry in a glorified, resurrected, and ascended body

Whereas Jewish priests became such because their human fathers were priests

Christ became a Priest by the oath of God

**v.17 – *“For He [the Father] testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”***

**THE “PREDICTION” OF CHANGE**

The writer not only show us from a prophetic perspective

But also from …

**II. THE “FACTS” OF CHANGE – vs. 18-22**

We are no longer under the dispensation of Law, but of Grace

And therefore, according to Scripture …

**A. The Commandment is Set Aside - v.18**

**v. 18a - *“For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment…” [Mosaic Law]***

The Redemptive Work of Christ caused the -

***“disannulling of the commandment”***

The term ***“disannulling”*** means to *abolish* or *to render inoperative*

This same idea of *rendering something inoperative* can be seen throughout Scripture -

**- Mark 7:9 – *“And He said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition”***

Here the translators use the word ***“reject”***

The Rejection of the Divine Law for the traditions of men

**- Luke 10:16 – *“He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent me”***

Here it’s convened as ***“Despiseth”***

The Despising of Christ is to regard with contempt

They rendered the Authority of Christ inoperative

**- I Corinthians 1:19 – *“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, …***

***…and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent”***

God will *render inoperative* the spiritually proud

**- Hebrews 10:28 – *“He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:”***

*Despised* - a powerful feeling of dislike toward somebody or something considered to be worthless, inferior, or undeserving of respect

When someone despised the Mosaic Law they were literally rendered inoperative

- The sacrifice of Christ ended the era of the Levitical order and the Mosaic Law

It *rendered it inoperative*

**v.18b *– “for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof”***

There were just some things that the Law was never designed to do

We know that the Law is Divinely given and intrinsically holy, just, and good

**Romans 7:12 – *“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good”***

But we find the writer suggesting 2 things here

Its ***“weakness”*** and ***“unprofitableness”***

**1. *“Weakness”***

It possessed ***“weakness”*** in that it could not …

…eliminate the cause of man's sinful position before God

It revealed the Holiness of God and the Depravity of man

But it could not bring about salvation

**Romans 8:3 – *“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:”***

**2. *“unprofitableness”***

The Law was also ***“unprofitable”*** in that it could not remove the effects of sin

It had no innate power to produce change within a sinner

It could tell a sinner what to do, but it could not enable him to do it

The Law thus could neither begin nor end the process of spiritual perfection

**v.19a – *“For the law made nothing perfect,”***

**The Commandment is Set Aside**

But …

**B. The New Hope Brings Perfection – v.19b**

***“…but the bringing in of a better hope did; …”***

The Inability of the Law involves also the Inability of the Levitical order

It could not produce justification or sanctification

As we read, it ***“made nothing perfect”***

The Apostle Paul argues in **Galatians 3:21** that God never intended for the Law to give righteousness and eternal life

***“Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law”***

The Law, however, was designed to bring man to a sense of moral guilt and to direct him to put his faith in God for salvation

**Galatians 3:22-24 – *“But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe” “But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed” “Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith”***

 The ***“better hope”*** centers in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ which is the cross and the resurrection

Christ conquered both the Cause and Effects of sin

He now empowers every believing sinner for a holy life

The presence of Christ in the believer is our ***“hope of glory”***

**Colossians 1:27 – *“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:”***

By our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, the believer can live for God because Christ is living in him

**Galatians 2:20 –** ***“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”***

He thus has guaranteed glorification one day

**Romans 8:28-30 – *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”***

***“For whom He did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” “Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified”***

The believer, through Christ, thus has unrestricted access into the very presence of God

**v. 19c - *“by the which we draw nigh unto God”***

**The Commandment is Set Aside**

**The New Hope Brings Perfection**

**C. The New Covenant is Sure – vs.20-22**

There are 2 Principles stated in these verses

The New Covenant is Sure because of -

 **1.** The oath of God

Guarantees the immutability of Christ's Priesthood

We looked at this in earlier verses (**6:16, 17**)

An oath is a solemn affirmation that guarantees a promise

But the writer reasserts it here again

**vs. 20, 21 – *“And inasmuch as not without an oath He was made priest:”* *“(For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)”***

He did not become a Priest ***“without an oath”***

The Levitical priests did not need a divine oath to receive their ministry

**v. 21a – *“For those priests were made without an oath;”***

They were born into the priesthood established under the Mosaic covenant

However, The Priesthood of Christ was established by both a positive and a negative affirmation

**Psalm 110:4 – *“The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek”***

- Positive – ***“hath sworn”***

- Negative – ***“will not repent”***

The First is an unconditional declaration

The Second stresses the eternal permanence of the decree

There is no possibility of change in the Priesthood of Christ

**Hebrews 13:8 – *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever”***

The Levitical order functioned with the realization of being replaced by the order of Melchizedek

The Oath of God guaranteed the promise to Abraham

And it also secures the Priesthood of Christ

**6:17 – *“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath:”***

The New Covenant is Sure because -

**2.** Christ has become the ***“surety of a better covenant”***

**v.22 – *“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament”***

The term ***“surety”*** is talking about someone *near* or *drawing near*

It implies or suggests the sense of a *guarantor*

Guarantor is *a person who pledges himself for* *another*

Today we might call it *co-signing*

Christ, both by His person and work, is guarantor of the promises of God to man

He is the one who established the new & better covenant, through the shedding of His blood

The ordinance of Communion remembers this significance

**Luke 22:20 – *“Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you”***

He signed this guarantee with His Blood!

Christ's return to the earth one day will finalize the blessings of the new covenant

Even Israel will be a part of this New Covenant -

**Romans 11:26, 27 – *“And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:” “For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins”***

**Jeremiah 31:31-37 …**

His resurrection and position of advocacy before the Father in heaven should give all believers assurance

…that we will fully inherit all of the divine promises given to us

**THE “PREDICTION” OF CHANGE**

**THE “FACTS” OF CHANGE**

**III. THE “PERSON” OF CHANGE – vs. 23-28**

Not only was the priesthood imperfect, but it was also interrupted by death

There were *many* high priests; because no one priest could live forever

In contrast, the church has *one* High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, who lives forever!

An unchanging priest means an unchangeable priesthood, and this means security and confidence for God's people

**Hebrews 13:8 - *“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever”***

**Psalm 110:4 – *“Thou art a Priest forever”***

**A. He’s Our ‘Security’ – vs. 23, 24**

**1. v. 23 - *“And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:”***

The Levitical Priests served and died

Death ended their priesthood

There were 83 High Priests from Aaron to Phineas

As soon as one passed another picked up and carried it forward until his death

This happened 83 times until their sanctuary was destroyed and the priesthood ceased

**2. v. 24 - *“But this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood”***

Under the Levitical priesthood, there were many priests

Under Christ's priesthood, there is one

Jesus continues forever!

His priesthood will never change!

He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament priesthood

**Hebrews 5:10** ***– “Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec”***

He lives forever!

He’s our Security

**B. He’s Our ‘Salvation’ – v.25**

***“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them”***

The beginning word ***“wherefore”*** tells us that what the writer is about to say is based on what he has just said about Christ's unchangeable and permanent Priesthood in …

**v. 24 – *“But this man [Christ], because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood”***

The Levitical priest had no ability to perfect sinners and could only minister during his own lifetime

But Jesus ***“continueth ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood”***

3 Thoughts Here

**1.** The Thought of Certainty **– v.25a**

***“Wherefore He is able also to save them...”***

The word ***“able”*** means *ability with power*

It speaks of the *innate power to accomplish a task*

Jesus saves because He is the Saviour

The work of salvation is the supernatural accomplishment of His person

**2.** The Thought of Completeness **– v.25b**

He saves ***“... to the uttermost [those] that come unto God by Him”***

What man needs, Jesus Christ is able to give

The word ***“uttermost”*** expresses the idea of *total completeness*

**Philippians 1:6 – “*Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:”***

**Jude 1:24 – “*Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy*”**

We are guaranteed that our Lord's salvation is a completed work

**3.**The Thought of Confidence - **v.25c**

*“...* ***seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them”***

A lot hangs on the words *“****ever liveth”***

Jesus said to His disciples in **John 14:19 –** *“****Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but ye see Me: because I live, ye shall live also”***

Unlike the OT Priest who was limited by his personal infirmities and limited term of office,

Jesus, the sinless High Priest, ***“ever liveth”*** to bring us to perfection

The word *“****intercession”*** comes from a word that means to *confer with; to entreat in favor of*

It refers to Christ’s High Priestly ministry of pleading our case before God the Father

**I John 2:1** says – ***“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”***

The word ***“Advocate”*** is a judicial term

**Definition:** Noah Webster says: *"Advocate in its primary sense, signifies, one who pleads the cause of another in a court of civil law...  to plead in favor of; to defend by argument, to support or vindicate.*"

Jesus ***“ever liveth to make intercession for [us]”***

**C. He’s Our ‘Separation’ – v.26**

***“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;”***

The phrase ***“became us”*** means *He was fitting to represent us*

The only High Priest suited to stand in the presence of God on behalf of sinners …

… Had to be Someone who is ***“Holy”,*** ***“Harmless”,*** ***“Undefiled”,*** ***“Separate from sinners”***

The words used to describes Christ in this verse speak of His pure sinless character

**1.** He is *“****holy”,***He is free from sin

**2.** Christ is *“****harmless”***

The word *“****harmless”*** means that He is *void of evil, free from malice, blameless*

**3.** He is ***“undefiled”***

The word *“****undefiled”*** means that Christ is *free from moral impurity*

**4.** Christ is *“****separate from sinners”***

This means that He is *free from contamination*

The Levitical priest, when in the sanctuary, was separated from the people

**Leviticus 21:12 – *“Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD”***

When on earth Christ ate with sinners and is the friend of sinners, but He never condones sin

**D. He’s Our ‘Sacrifice’ – v.27**

***“Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, [did]***

***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”***

Jesus doesn't have to offer sacrifices daily like the Levitical priests did

The high priests of the Old Testament went into the Most Holy place once each year on the Day of Atonement,

But they also brought daily offerings

**Exodus 29:38 – *“Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually”***

One lamb had to be sacrificed every morning and another every evening

**Exodus 29:39 – *“The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even:”***

The Levitical priest was a sinner just like the rest of the people

Therefore he had to offer first for his own sins, and then for the people's

But **v.27** says – ***“... for this He [Jesus] did once, when He offered up Himself”***

Because Jesus is perfectly pure and sinless He was able to offer the perfect sacrifice once

The phrase, ***“this He did once”*** states the fact clearly that there is no need for any further sacrifice

**He’s Our Sacrifice**

**E. He’s Our Service – v. 28**

***“For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity...”***

These men had faults and failures

They did not always please God

Their flesh flared up just like ours

They had bad days just like we do

They were not perfect husbands

They had trouble with their kids

But the law compelled them to serve

***“... but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore”***

By oath of God Almighty, Jesus has been consecrated for evermore

He is the eternal High Priest!

Therefore Christ is Superiority to –

The Angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron, and also the Levitical Priesthood & Law