

Hebrews 7:11-19

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Introduction: it's difficult to let go of the way things used to be—especially if it was good. And what could be better than a priesthood that was commanded by God, with a law that was commanded by God, and designed by God to do us good as His people? That, indeed, is the question before us in Hebrews 7:11-19.

1. The Levitical priesthood

- a. It was good
 - i. Under it, the people received the law
 - ii. It is connected not just to Israel (Jacob), but to Abraham, the patriarch, who had the promises
 - iii. Through it, the people could draw near to God on earth and (hopefully) in their hearts.
- b. It could not perfect
 - i. It could make people ceremonially clean, but not spiritually clean. They could tell you what righteousness was, but couldn't make you righteous.
 - ii. The one who receives the promises is always looking forward to the One who is promised
 - iii. Through it, the people could not draw near to God by being seated in the heavenly places, or in the certainty of entering glory at last.
- c. When Jesus arises from Judah as a new priest, the Levitical priesthood and ceremonial law must end.

2. Jesus's new priesthood

- a. Jesus was not authorized to officiate at the tabernacle or temple altar. He wasn't from Levi. But Jesus is the only priest authorized to offer the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world—Himself!
- b. He was from Judah. Judah was the kingly tribe. Jesus is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the King of all history.
- c. Psalm 110 does not set up a new ceremonial law with a new procedure for making priest. It simply declares Jesus priest *forever*. His priesthood is established and maintained by the power of His endless life.
- d. Jesus is the better hope, who *does* make perfect all who believe in Him!
 - i. Jesus keeps the law in our place and pays the penalty of our law breaking (justification). He writes His law on our hearts and enables us to live unto God (sanctification). He brings to completion the work of making us like Himself (glorification).
 - ii. Jesus is the One who was promised, and all of God's other good promises have their "yes" in Him, to which we say the "amen!"
 - iii. Through Jesus, we draw near to God, being joined with Him, being seated in heaven with Him, being presented in heaven with Him, and with the certainty of being always with the Lord.

3. The Ceremonial law is annulled

- a. The former commandment is annulled, because it could point to the things promised, but could not accomplish them.
- b. The ceremonial law taught the people how to be ready and clean and acceptable to draw near to God. The ceremonial law provided the way in which they could draw near to God. The ceremonial law taught them what to do when they were there.
- c. When the Jesus's new priesthood appears, then all of these change: how to be acceptable for worship, and where to go for worship and what to do there. God made this abundantly clear, because our Lord arose from Judah (v14). Do NOT be embarrassed of simple worship. Its substance is Christ!
- d. Christian worship is no longer tied to a particular building, with particular furniture, and clergy of a particular ethnicity. It is tied to our great Priest in glory, and His endless life!

Conclusion: What could be better than the Levitical priesthood? Christ's priesthood! Where the law is weak, in that it cannot do anything about our sin, Jesus is strong. Trust in this Priest. Rejoice in this Priest. Jesus gives us full and final access to God in worship. His priesthood will never be annulled. Let us draw near to God, only ever in Him!