

DEREK PRINCE
MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Sermon

Analysis of Hebrews: Chapter 7



Part 10/23

God's Last Word: An Exposition of Hebrews By Derek Prince

I think it would be profitable if I just read through the note outline that you have commencing at the bottom of 7/1. I don't intend to pause but just to get our minds in gear, then we'll go on.

Chapter 7:11, I've commented on the need for another priest to rise subsequent to the Levitical priesthood indicates that the latter—that's the Levitical priesthood—was not God's ultimate. That's one of the most important truths emphasized in Hebrews.

My comment on 7:12, the covenant of the Law and the Levitical priesthood are interdependent. They stand or fall together. Therefore, a change in the latter—that is the Levitical priesthood—implies a change also in the former, which again is extremely important. It has bearing on the status of the covenant based on the Law.

Commenting on 7:13, the one who fulfilled the prophecies concerning the priesthood of Melchizedek did not come from the tribe of Levi.

And on verse 14, Old Testament prophecy revealed that the Messiah was to come from the tribe of Judah. Two Old Testament passages are cited there. On the other hand, Psalm 110:1–4 reveal that the Messiah was also to be a priest in the order of Melchizedek. So we have here a revelation that the Messiah was to be both king and priest, which was impossible in the Levitical priesthood and demanded a whole new order of things. In fact, reinstates the priesthood of Melchizedek or brings it back into focus because Melchizedek, unlike the Levites, was both a king and a priest.

Then in commenting on verses 15–17 of chapter 7, the Levitical priesthood was based on physical requirements: (a) descent from Levi, (b) absence of individual physical defects. We gave Scriptures for that. The priesthood of Melchizedek was based on the power of an indestructible life. He remains a priest forever. He has a life that cannot be destroyed, which was fulfilled, of course, by Jesus through the resurrection. Then on verses 18–19, a double change is therefore indicated. First negative and then positive. The negative change: a setting aside of the covenant based on the Law and the Levitical priesthood, because it could not do what was needed. And then the positive change: the

© 1982 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.

introduction of a better hope, which gives direct access to God. That's one of the important emphases of Hebrews, is having direct personal access to God.

Then commenting on verses 20–22, the confirmation of the priesthood of Jesus by God's oath further indicates its superiority over the Levitical priesthood—which was not confirmed by an oath—and therefore also the covenant which this new priesthood guarantees over the covenant of the Law.

Then we come to verse 22 which I will now read out.

> "By so much did Jesus become the guarantor [or the pledge] of a better covenant."

It was a better priesthood and it established a better covenant which was based on better promises.

This is the first use of one of the key words that we have listed, the word for covenant.

I think it might be worthwhile to turn back for a moment in your outlines to Pages 0/4 and 0/5 where we list some of these key words. The fourth word listed on Page 0/4 is covenant. You'll notice there's no mention of covenant before chapter 7 but then in chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10 it occurs very frequently. Altogether it occurs 16 times.

If you look at the other words related with covenant (which are offer, sacrifice and blood), you find that offer and sacrifice are first mentioned in chapter 5 but really the emphasis on them also is in chapter 7, 8, 9 and 10. The mention of blood occurs for the first time only in chapter 9 but then it occurs very frequently in chapters 9, 10 and also in 11, 12, and 13. Altogether it occurs 21 times. What that brings out is that covenant, offering, sacrifice and blood are very closely interrelated. When we start to find one we start to find the others.

I don't know whether I related to you, but it's so fresh in my mind although it happened probably in 1944. At that time I was in what was then Palestine. I was in a hospital on the Mount of Olives, which is now a Lutheran leper hospital in a building called the Augusta Victoria building. I decided to teach myself Hebrew so I got myself a Hebrews Bible, a Hebrew grammar. I didn't have a dictionary but I had, of course, the translation in English. I set out in Genesis 1:1 where I had set out about four years earlier to read the Bible in English and for some reason, I armed myself with three colored pencils, blue, green and red. Again, I can never explain to myself why but I said, "I'll underline three themes: covenant in blue, sacrifice in green, and the shedding of blood in red." I mean, I have no idea what made me choose those three themes. I quickly made a discovery: Wherever I had the blue, I needed the green. And wherever I needed the green, I had to have the red. There is no covenant without a sacrifice and there is no sacrifice without the shedding of blood.

And so, in my simplicity, like the man who drew a bow and hit Ahab between the joints of the harness, I stumbled on one of the most profound revelations of Scripture. A covenant requires a sacrifice and a sacrifice demands the shedding of blood representing the laying down of a life. What has since emerged, and is very clear here in Hebrews, is that all those things require a priest to ratify them, guarantee them, and make them effective. There you have, in essence, a major part of the revelation of the book of Hebrews.

I'd like to just comment at this point that Hebrews is one of the more difficult books of the Bible to analyze. So, if you've found it difficult, don't get discouraged. I have read it probably in the last year I think at least fifty times and I never read it without discovering something in it that I didn't see before. We took on quite a major project when we set out on Hebrews. I'm sure some of you by now are kind of examining your blisters and wondering where they came from. Well, it was like setting out on a marathon when you've never even run one mile before—so just don't be discouraged.

Now we're going on in Hebrews 7:23–24. I'm translating ad lib from Greek.

> "And they, on the one hand, have become many priests, because of being prevented by death from continuing [or remaining]."

They were all subject to death. So none of them could remain a priest longer than the period of their life. It was even less, because they could only become a priest at the age of 30 or later. (David changed it to age 20.) In a way, their priesthood was a comparatively brief period.

Now we go to verse 24:

> "But he [the one who's after the order of Melchizedek], because he remains forever [for the age], has his priesthood one that is not transferred to another."

That's a complicated word. I think it says "simply has a permanent priesthood." Is that right? "Holds his priesthood permanently." But, the Greek word means "one that is not passed on to another." His priesthood is permanent, unchanging, eternal. There's a contrast. The Levitical priests were many, because those who died had to be replaced continually by others who, in turn, died. But Jesus as a priest in the order of Melchizedek has an unchanging, eternal priesthood which never passes to another.

Going on now in verse 25 we come to one of the most beautiful verses, I think, in the Bible.

> "Wherefore, he is able, also, to save ..."

Now here's a phrase that can be translated various ways.

> "... to save forever [or to save completely] those who come to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them."

That's a very important conclusion. You've been through a lot of reasoning and you might have got to the point where you could hardly see the wood for the trees because there have been so many points brought out that here is one major conclusion about this high priest. He is able to save forever and completely those who come to God through him. The King James says "save to the uttermost." I really think that translation will never be improved on.

When I worked in street meetings in the city of London we used to say, "He saves from the gutter- most to the uttermost." We saw many examples of that kind of transformation take place. I always think of one man who was on his way to commit suicide when he heard one of our young men giving his testimony. He was so arrested by this that he walked the streets of London for the rest of that night, which was about 12 hours. About 8 o'clock in the morning he knelt down in the street and gave his heart to the Lord. Two days later he came to see me at my address. It's always stayed in my memory as a beautiful example that no one is beyond God's power to reach. There isn't any situation that God can't save a person from.

I think of the person for whom I requested prayer before we began the meeting. There is another example. "Seeing He ever lives to make intercession, He is able to save anybody from anything." That's the Prince version! And to save them totally: spiritually, mentally, physically, financially, in every aspect, in every degree. He can do it. We need to be proud of our high priest. We need to have a real enlarged vision of His greatness and His mercy because when we see how great He is, then there's no problem in life which needs to defeat us.

I'm also impressed by the importance of the ministry of intercession with Jesus as our pattern. If you take the time spans in the life of Jesus, they're very illuminating. Thirty years as the carpenter's son. No public ministry, just a perfect family life. Three and a half years of public ministry; very dramatic, very powerful. And something like two thousand years of intercession. Which, I think, should help us to adjust our scale of values and where we place the emphasis.

We'll go on, verses 26–27. This is another example of a very concentrated passage which says a great deal in a very short space.

> "For such was the high priest who was appropriate for us ..."

Then it lists things that made Him appropriate.

> "... holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens; who does not need every day, as the other priests, first to offer sacrifices for his own sins, and then for those of the people, for he did this when he offered himself once for all."

Let's look, for a moment, in the outline at that list of qualifications. Interestingly enough, there are seven points. I made no effort to make it seven, it just is seven. Almost everything in Hebrews goes in sevens. Anything that relates to priesthood, if you analyze it, it comes in sevens. First of all, He's holy— in nature, not merely by consecration. That's very important to see that. Aaron was made holy by being consecrated. Jesus didn't have to be made holy; He never was anything but holy.

If you look at the ceremony of consecration for a moment—keep your finger in Hebrews 7—and turn to Exodus 28:36–38.

> "You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'Holy to the LORD.' And you shall fasten

> it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban; it shall be at the front of the turban."

So the first thing you saw when you encountered Aaron was this shining, golden plate on the front of his headgear.

> "And it shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD."

I want to read that in the New International Version, that 38th verse.

> "It will be on Aaron's forehead, and he will bear the guilt involved in the sacred gifts the Israelites consecrate, whatever their gifts may be. It will be on Aaron's forehead continually so that they will be acceptable to the LORD."

When we studied that chapter together I pointed out that the gifts of the people of God were not accepted because of their own holiness, they were accepted because of the holiness of their high priest. It had to be on his head. He was only a picture, a foreshadowing of Jesus. We need to bear in mind that our gifts and our sacrifices are not accepted because of our holiness, they're accepted because of the holiness of Jesus. He had to be holy. That's the first requirement of the priest.

Going back to the list, He was also innocent. The word means in Greek "He never did any harm to anybody." Let's look quickly at just two passages. First in the Old Testament, Isaiah 53:7–9. This is the famous prophetic portrait of the suffering servant of the Lord—perhaps the most complete prophecy of Jesus and the atonement anywhere in the Scriptures. It says of Him:

> "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned to be with wicked men, yet with a rich man in His death, although He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth."

So, in spite of all that was said and done against Him, He never reacted, He never answered back.

There's a passage in 1 Peter which just comes to my mind. I haven't listed it, but we could turn there for a moment. First Peter 2, beginning at verse 21.

> "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps ..."

That's a very searching thought, isn't it?

> "... who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously ..."

That's a commentary on that second statement "innocent." Or, perhaps better, "harmless." He never reacted, He never wished ill to His tormentors and persecutors.

It reminds me, by way of contrast, of a sign that was once put up in a French zoo. It's always stuck with me, it's very hard to translate because of one word. Those of you that know French, the word is ?may -shon? which means naughty. But, it is not used of animals. This sign said, "This animal is naughty [or bad or wicked]. When attacked, it defends itself." Jesus wasn't like that. When attacked He did not defend Himself, and so this is the meaning of that statement He had to be innocent or harmless.

Then I'd like to also look at the testimony of Pontius Pilate in John 19:4–6. This is the conclusion of the trial of Jesus by Pilate.

> "Pilate came out again, and said to them, 'Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that

> you may know that I find no guilt in Him.' Jesus therefore came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe."

We spoke about that earlier, I believe. The two emblems of the curse: the thorns and the purple of the thistle.

> "And Pilate said to them, 'Behold, the Man!'"

The only man that was all that God intended that man should be.

It's interesting to reflect, isn't it, that Pilate was prophetic many times? Don't imagine that a person can only be prophetic when he's consciously prophesying and he knows he's serving the Lord. Pilate was prophetic; he didn't know anything about the Lord.

Let me say this out of personal experience. Sometimes God will speak to you through a person that doesn't know the Lord. Just be ready to hear him when he does. Some things that have been said to me in my life that stay with me were said by people who didn't know the Lord. But, I knew that the Lord was speaking to me through them.

Going on in John 19:6.

> "When therefore the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, 'Crucify, crucify!' Pilate said to them, 'Take Him yourselves, and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.'"

Another interesting thing is—and Jesus is our pattern—that our lives have to be attested by many different types of people. It's not sufficient that we impress our fellow believers. You see, Jesus had the testimony of the Roman governor, "I find no guilt in Him." That's been recorded for eternity.

He also had the testimony of a traitor because after Judas had betrayed Him he said, "I've betrayed innocent blood." Judas had been with Him every day for three and a half years. But even he had to acknowledge the absolute spotlessness and faultlessness of Jesus.

You see, sometimes God may put you with very strange company and you may think, "What am I doing here?" But, you may have to emerge with a testimony from the lips of that kind of person. I think of my own example. Let me give you a Scripture, first of all, in Romans 14. This became very real to me as a soldier in the British Army because I got saved in the army. I would never have chosen it that way, because I lived a very godless life for almost one full year and then I got saved. God did not say to me, "Now you are pious. I will take you out of this situation and put you in a nice college for training preachers and give you a black cassock." He said, "Just stay where you are and show them the difference." Believe me; I lived with them every day. There was no getting away from them. Especially when I was in the desert, there was no escape from those ornery, blaspheming, unspiritual British soldiers. I thought to myself, Is it possible in this situation to maintain my testimony? I really didn't have a lot of religious language about maintaining a testimony at that time. One of the Scriptures that came to me was here in Romans 14:17–18.

> "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men."

God showed me if you have righteousness, peace and joy, everybody you live with will end up approving you. I have that testimony in writing because when I got discharged after five and a half years in the British Army, in my military book—which I still have—in the passage for discharge they graded me in character. They have certain official grades and I was graded "exemplary," which is the highest that they give. I never compromised my testimony. In fact, with three of my commanding officers at different times I stood and rebuked them, in a sense, to their face.

One, because I felt the military commanders were not giving the men enough information. Then one in Palestine because he said, "You're ruining your career if you get discharged from the army in this country." He said, "If I knew a way to stop you, I'd do it." I didn't say anything but I was in charge of my own documents and I could have told him three different ways to stop me, but I didn't. Then there was the commanding officer in the Sudan who—I didn't intend to get involved in this, but one of my less glorious assignments was in this small military hospital in a desert out in eastern Sudan. I was put in charge of the native labor who were responsible for keeping the hospital clean, etc. In charge of the native labor was a Sudani named Ali. He was a Muslim. They were all Muslims, there weren't anything but Muslims in the entire area. Ali was notorious. He took a rake-off from the wages of all the men under him. He would get drunk, he was a brawler. Getting drunk, incidentally, is not permitted by the Muslim religion, but that was another

of his sins. Ali and I became friends. I didn't intend to tell this story, it's going to take a long while.

The way we established our relationship was rather remarkable. He spoke "soldier's English," which is, you know, I couldn't speak it here. He'd learned it from British soldiers and so we communicated. Then I started to learn Arabic. One day I was talking to him and he told me that he believed in Satan. I said, "I believe in Satan, too." Believe it or not, that was our point of contact. We both believed in Satan. Then I prayed for him when he was sick. I'd never done that before to anybody, and the Lord healed him. He wanted to know more so I got the gospel of John in the King James Version and every day when we met to go over the assignments for the labor I would begin by reading him a short passage from the gospel of John, translating from King James into "soldier's English" as I went!

Then he offered to teach me to ride a camel. Now, of course, those of you that have been to Israel as tourists, they'll put you on a camel that's been drugged and doped and it won't do anything. But Sudanese camels are another breed! I learned to ride a camel with him and one day we took a picnic out into the foothills. Since I was also in charge of the rations, we could arrange that.

Another thing I was in charge of was that I inspected the milk that was delivered by the local Sudanese cowherd. We also suspected him of putting water in the milk. The medical officers got a thing that measures specific gravity. It's the sort of thing that you put in and according to how high up it floats you know what the specific gravity of milk is. I'm not scientifically minded, but I learned it. When he came along with this bucket I would put my little glass thing in and it would bob up and down. He looked at it with bitter suspicion because he knew somehow it revealed his cheating, but he didn't know how! If the thing didn't float high enough I said, "Take it back, we're not accepting it." Then we discovered hairs in the milk. Of course, hairs from the cow. What else would you expect? The medical officers said, "This isn't healthy to have hairs in the milk." He said, "I'll give you some gauze. Give him some gauze to strain the milk with." So I gave him the gauze and I explained very carefully he had to strain the milk. Well, for about three or four days we got milk with no hair in it. Incidentally, I was trying my Arabic out all this time on him. Then, hairs in the milk again. I said to him, "What happened?" He was very solemn, he didn't want to—eventually he confessed the truth. He said in Arabic, ?El baca ak-a-loo?, "The cow ate it." (The gauze, in other words.)

I was talking about Ali. So we were on our picnic and he said, "There's water." There was this sort of slimy, black, brackish stream trickling out of the side of the hill. Then he looked at me and said, "You white people don't drink this water." I said, "I'll drink it." He said, "Why are you willing to drink it and others not?" I said, "In the Bible it says if you drink any deadly thing in the name of Jesus, it will not hurt you. I'm going to drink it in the name of Jesus." He had never heard the name of Jesus. So I drank it and I impressed him deeply.

That particular day my reading was from John 3 about being born again. The Holy Spirit thrust an arrow into his heart when I read those words. All the way back on the camels he said, "What's this about being born again? What does that mean?" I said, "God gives you a new heart." He just roared with laughter because he couldn't envisage anything but a new physical heart, you know? He thought, That's absolutely ridiculous. When we got to our place where we parted, I said to him, "Would you like to be born again?" He said yes. I didn't have any gospel instruction; I'd never been anywhere where they tell you what to do. And, I didn't know anything about Muslims, which was my safety because if I had, I don't think I'd have ever told him what I told him.

So, I said, "Well, you go to your hut at 6 o'clock tonight when the sun sets. You pray in your hut. I'll be in my room, I'll pray. You ask to be born again." The next day I met him at the usual 10 o'clock to go over the assignments. I looked at him and I said, "Did you pray?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Did anything happen?" He said, "No". He was so realistic. I mean, if it wasn't real, it wasn't anything. As I was wondering about this the Holy Spirit said, "He's a Muslim. Ask him if he prayed in the name of Jesus." I said, "Did you pray in the name of Jesus?" He said, "No." I said, "If you don't pray in the name of Jesus you can't get it." I have to say: Fools rush in where angels fear to tread! I said, "Are you willing to pray in the name of Jesus?" He said, "Yes." I said, "This evening at 6 o'clock you pray, I'll pray." The next morning I met him at 10 o'clock. I looked at him and said, "You've got it!" He said, "I did." He knew he'd got it.

This went around everywhere. Everybody said to me, "What's happened to your friend, Ali?" I said, "He got saved." They said, "What's that?" I said, "Let me tell you!" Eventually the commanding officer sent for me and said, "What happened to your friend, Ali?" I said, "He got saved." I have to say: he was a Scottish Presbyterian and he had a lot of theology but no salvation. I ended up by telling the commanding officer how to get saved. He said, "How will I know if I'm saved?" When I think of these things I just marvel! I said, "There are two marks. First of all, the Lord knoweth them that are His. Second, everyone that nameth

the name of Christ, let him depart from iniquity." He needed that message, believe me. As far as I know, he never got saved.

Anyhow, what I am trying to point out is that I did not compromise about being a Christian. At the end of five and a half years the Army rates me "exemplary." My point is that if you're going to be a real Christian, your testimony has got to stand in all sorts of different places. It's not enough to be good just in church. It's when you're suddenly exposed to very different kinds of people that they will find out and you will find out if you've got the real thing or not.

Don't kind of get upset if God suddenly plants you in a very strange place. There was I in this totally Muslim area of the Sudan. The British government—that at that time administered in the Sudan— wouldn't allow missionaries because they didn't want to offend the Muslims. Before I left that place, I baptized Ali in the swimming pool in the hospital. See? God has got His ways. A mere medical corporal, nobody made any fuss about me. God put me there and I have to say I have probably no greater excitement than to think I was the first person that ever won a member of that tribe to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet, it was not the kind of place where I would have chosen to be placed. It's a remarkable thing, when we left that place a year later, all my fellow soldiers were so happy to get out of this awful hole and I was extremely sad because I had become absolutely committed to those people. If God had asked me, I would have stayed there the rest of my life. In fact, I told God that I wanted to stay there. I remember He answered me, "I have another place and another people for you." Then He took me to Israel.

I really don't think anybody should minister to the Jews who isn't prepared to minister to Muslims first. If you can't love the Germans, don't talk about loving the Jews. If there's any Germans, don't be offended at that. But, in the light of what's happened in the Holocaust I think we have to just check ourselves. Is our love sentimental or is it real? Is it from God? Does it stand the test?

We're going on with this list of qualifications for the priest. The third qualification is undefiled. Let's look at the two Scriptures. First of all, the Old Testament Scripture, Leviticus 16:4, describing the way that the high priest put on his garments for the Day of Atonement. Remember, on the Day of Atonement he didn't wear his glorious garments that he wore all the other days. He went in simply in plain linen garments, which is a picture of Jesus laying aside His glory but still being in His perfect righteousness. And these are the ways symbolically in the Old Testament that His righteousness is represented. I want you to notice the occurrence of the word linen.

> "He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash, and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on."

How many times was linen mentioned? Four. Do you know what linen speaks of? Purity, righteousness. Then he had to bathe his whole body in water. So, there is the Old Testament's way of presenting the absolute purity and righteousness of Jesus. Not as He was born, but after His earthly life and when He came to the point of going to the cross, His purity was still uncompromised.

Then just one other Scripture in 1 Peter 1:18–19.

> "...knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."

Notice the two words used there: unblemished and spotless. Unblemished means "holy by nature." Spotless means "holy after thirty-three and a half years of living in this world." There was no initial blemish; there was no spot that came upon Him.

Fourth, He was separated from sinners. As I understand that, the separation took place because sinners rejected Him and He was placed upon the cross by the hands of sinners. But in so doing He was separated from sinners. You see, a priest under the Old Covenant had to be very careful; there were many things he could not touch. He could not touch a dead body—and many, many other things. He had to be separated from everything that would defile. In this way, God, through the act of sinners, saw to it that our high priest was separated from the sinners. They separated Him from themselves, He was hung upon the cross, He was, in a sense, cut off from earth and rejected from heaven. But, it was an act of separation by which He fulfilled the qualification as high priest.

Then the next qualification is He was exalted above the heavens. This was God's response to man's rejection. Man

rejected Him; God accepted Him, raised Him from the dead, vindicated His righteousness, vindicated His claims and exalted Him to His own right hand where He fulfills His ministry as a priest. I think it would be good if we look there in 1 Peter 3:22. Referring to Jesus Christ at the end of the previous verse:

> "... who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him."

So, that's His position in heaven at God's right hand, our representative sharing the throne with the Father, and all other spiritual authorities: angels, principalities and powers have been made subject to Him. Or angels, authorities and powers.

Returning now to the list of qualifications, the sixth one: He does not need to offer sacrifices first for his own sins because He had no sins for which to offer sacrifice.

The seventh and final qualification: He offered Himself as one final, all-sufficient sacrifice. He was both the priest and the victim. It's important to see that. I think most Christians with any knowledge of the New Testament are aware that Jesus was the victim, He was the sacrifice. But He was also the priest. He offered Himself. There was no one else who could do it. He alone fulfilled the qualifications both to be priest and to be victim. I'd like to turn to Hebrews 9:14 which is one of my favorite Scriptures. I want to commend this to you as being so tremendously rich.

> "How much more will the blood of Christ..."

Or "the blood of the Messiah." It's got a definite article in front of it. "The blood of the Christ."

> "... who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself ..."

And that word offer is the priestly word for bringing a sacrifice.

> "... without blemish to God, cleanse [or purify] your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

It's the first part of that statement that is so real to me. Jesus Christ as priest, through the Holy Spirit, offered Himself as victim to the Father. One of the things that is so important to me is that all three persons of the Godhead are in that act. The Son, through the Spirit, offered Himself to the Father.

You may have heard me relate, the second time I heard the gospel preached, which was in a Pentecostal church, when the appeal was made I was already alerted because I'd been in one once before and knew what was coming, and I put my hand up. The previous time somebody else had put my hand up for me, an invisible power. I was the only person on either occasion who did put my hand up. I don't think there was a large selection of sinners there, anyhow. At the end of this second occasion the preacher came to me and he looked at me and I looked at him and I think he knew he had a problem on his hands. He asked me two questions. The first was, "Do you believe that you're a sinner?" I'd spent seven years in philosophical study majoring on definitions so the obvious way for me to find the answer to that question was to think of all the probable definitions of a sinner. I went through them quickly in my mind and they all fitted me exactly. So, I said, "Yes, I believe I'm a sinner."

Then he said, "Do you believe that Christ died for your sins?" I remember so clearly I answered him with complete honesty. I said, "To tell you the truth, I can't see what the death of Jesus Christ nineteen centuries ago could have to do with the sins that I've committed in my lifetime." I couldn't. I mean, I couldn't see how there could be any connection. I think he was wise enough not to argue with me.

Later I found the answer. It's in this verse, Hebrews 9:14.

> "Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God."

See, the word eternal means "not subject to the limitations of time." That's become extremely real to me, that on the cross Jesus bore the guilt of all men of all ages; past, present and future. Through the eternal Holy Spirit He comprehended the guilt of all men.

I don't think that any human mind can even begin to understand the awful weight of guilt that came upon Him. If He had borne only my guilt, that would have been terrible enough. If He had borne only the guilt of the people gathered in this room tonight. But to think that He bore the guilt of all men of all ages through the eternal Spirit.

It's a very interesting fact, I don't want to dwell on it, that every major crisis of redemption, all three persons of the

Godhead are involved. Incarnation: the Father incarnated the Son by the Spirit. Equipment for ministry: the Father anointed the Son with the Spirit. Sacrifice of Calvary: the Son offered Himself, through the Spirit, to the Father. Resurrection: the Father raised the Son by the Spirit. Pentecost: the Father, through the Son, sent the Spirit. I say this: that there's a kind of divine jealousy in the Godhead when it comes to blessing man. No person of the Godhead is willing to be left out. It's the Father, the Son and the Spirit.

I think perhaps it's least obvious here that the sacrifice of the cross was only made possible through the Holy Spirit. The Son, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God.

Going back to our outline, that was the final qualification that He as priest could offer Himself as victim once for all. Never did it have to be done again. Let me just quickly enumerate those seven qualifications and we must move on.

First, holy in nature.

Second, innocent or harmless.

Third, undefiled. Holy in life as well. Fourth, separated from sinners by the cross.

Fifth, exalted above the heavens at God's right hand, the seat of all authority. Sixth, not needing ever to offer sacrifice for His own sin.

Seventh, once for all as priest He offered Himself as victim, through the Holy Spirit. Then we come to verse 28 which sums up the comparison and the contrast. Hebrews 7:28:

> "For the law appoints men as high priests who have weakness ..."

They have moral weakness, they're subject to sin. They have physical weakness, they're subject to death.

> "... but the word of the oath ..."

Which is quoted in Psalm 110, "The LORD hath sworn, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

> "... the word of the oath, which was after the Law, appointed a Son ..."

It doesn't say the Son but a Son, the only priest who is a Son of God.

... made perfect forever. We've already looked at the fact that Jesus as priest had to be made perfect. In His sinless nature He was always perfect but as a priest He had to be made perfect. He was made perfect by fulfilling the seven qualifications listed above.

Now I want to take the rest of this session rather rapidly to go through with you what is on Page 7/4 and 7/5: the points of contrast between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Melchizedek. You will see there are fourteen points of contrast. What two numbers multiplied together make fourteen? Two and seven. I did not try to make this happen, it just is there.

We'll go through the outline and we'll look at the references. I'm going to use the English translation, it's quicker then looking at the Greek. The first point of contrast. M stands for Melchizedek, L for Levi.

The priesthood of Melchizedek combines priesthood and kingship. He was both priest and king. Whereas, the Levitical priesthood was allotted to Levi, but the kingship at that time went to the tribe of Judah and no interchange was permitted. They were absolutely separated. That's found in verses 1 and 2 where it describes Melchizedek as king of Salem, priest of the Most High God. And then it points out he was king of righteousness and king of Salem as well as priest. Verse 14, it says our Lord was descended from Judah. Judah is the kingly tribe.

The second point of contrast, Genesis 14:18. I will not turn there because we've looked there in previous studies. It's very interesting. Melchizedek gave to Abraham bread and wine, the emblems of the New Covenant. He had not previously received them from Abraham. If you look at the ordinances of the Levitical priesthood, they had nothing to give the people until the people had first given them something. They only gave them back part of what they had offered. So you see, on a much higher level Melchizedek initiated the giving and what he gave has become for us the symbols of the New Covenant, the elements of the Lord's Supper: the bread and the wine.

The third point of contrast, and it's stated in verses 2, 4 and in 9, Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham. Levi gave tithes through Abraham. We need to look in verse 9.

> "And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him."

So Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham. Levi gave tithes through Abraham.

The fourth point of contrast, Melchizedek's priesthood is based on an indestructible life and it is therefore a permanent priesthood, which never passes by succession to others. The Levitical priesthood, because of mortality, is only a temporary priesthood.

The fifth point of contrast, Melchizedek does not trace his genealogy from Abraham. He was without genealogy; whereas Levi had to be descended from Abraham—that was his qualification.

The sixth point of contrast, Melchizedek blessed Abraham. The writer of Hebrews points out the greater blesses the less. On the other hand, Levi and the Levitical priests owed their blessing to Abraham so that Abraham was greater than they.

The seventh point of contrast, we need to look at these verses. Verses 11, 19 and 28.

> "Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?"

Then in verse 19:

> "(for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God."

And verse 28:

> "For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever."

So, there are two things that go together there. Perfection and direct access to God. If you don't have direct access to God, you're not perfect, the job isn't done. The priesthood of Melchizedek provided direct access to God and perfection, completeness, fulfillment, maturity. Remember all those meanings? The Levitical priesthood could not provide direct access to God and could not provide perfection. Turning the page, the eighth point of contrast, we'd better look in verse 16. The one who follows in the likeness of Melchizedek:

> "... has become such not the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life."

Melchizedek was a priest by the power of an indestructible life, but Levi, on the basis of a physical requirement. The physical requirement being, first of all, descent from Levi and thus descent from Abraham. Second, having no physical imperfection.

The ninth point of contrast, verses 20–21.

> "And inasmuch as it was not without an oath (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, 'The LORD has sworn ...'"

And so on. The priesthood of Melchizedek was appointed with God's oath but the priesthood of Levi was appointed without an oath.

The tenth point of contrast in verse 22:

> "So much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant."

So the priesthood of Melchizedek insures a superior covenant. But, the priesthood of Levi is linked to an inferior covenant.

The eleventh point of contrast, we'd better look at verses 23–24.

> "The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers, because they were prevented by death from continuing, but He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently."

I said it was never passed from Him to another. Melchizedek is one all-sufficient priest. Levi, because of death, there had to be many and they were never sufficient.

The twelfth point of contrast in verse 25:

> "Hence, also, He [that is, Jesus] is able to save forever [or completely or to the uttermost] those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

Melchizedek is able to save completely and forever. Levi is unable to save.

The thirteenth point of contrast in verse 27, we've just been looking at it. The Levitical priests had to offer sacrifices, first of all, for their own sins. Jesus only had to offer himself once, the all-sufficient sacrifice. The point of contrast is not needing to offer sacrifice for His own sins whereas the Levitical priests needed always to sacrifice first for their own sins.

Then the final summation of the contrast in verse 28:

> "For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever."

The priest after the order of Melchizedek is God's perfect Son. The priests of the order of Levi are men with human frailty.

I think it would be good there to look for a moment in Hebrews 10:11–12. I think it's always interesting and, in a sense, entertaining to notice the human element in the Scriptures. If you're familiar with Jewish people, they are never content to make their point once. I mean, you know, there's just no way they'll ever just say it once. I think there's something of that in the writer of Hebrews. He's determined to establish this point no matter how many times he has to say it. He's not going to leave you in any doubt of what he wants you to believe. It appeals to me because it's so very Jewish. I'm not saying because it's Jewish it's not good, you understand; but it's so characteristic.

Let's look in chapter 10, verses 11–12, which again returns to this contrast between Levitical and Melchizedek.

> "And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He [Jesus], having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God."

The real point of emphasis there is between standing and sitting. The Levitical priest, you'll never read anywhere that they sat down. Why did they always stand? Because the job was never complete. But Jesus, having offered one sacrifice, when He arrived in heaven sat down. Why did He sit down? Because He was never going to have to do it again. It's so vivid to me. I always like to picture Jesus seated in heaven. I don't believe He's leaning over the rails of glory with white knuckles, gripping on in tension, hoping things will work out. I think He knows He's done all that ever needs to be done forever.

When I speak about what Jesus has done on the cross, the phrase I use in prayer is this: A total, irreversible victory. There is no way the devil can ever undo what Jesus did. The victory is not fully worked out in all its aspects but it's total and it's irreversible. So He sat down. He has nothing to worry about. The only one that has to worry is the devil and he's got plenty to worry about!

I would like to go back to the introductory Pages 0/2 and 0/3 and try to not sum up the whole epistle because we've only been through seven chapters but make some practical applications that you can take away with you.

First of all, let me say I'm sure that for quite a number of you this way of analyzing the Bible was somewhat new. Perhaps your most vivid impression is a lot of mental gymnastics. Don't worry about that. You see, it's true in the mental, spiritual, physical. If you do the gymnastics faithfully, you'll reap the benefits. It isn't always that obvious. There can be a kind of time when your muscles feel over-exercised. But in actual fact, if you have faithfully followed the routine of exercise—how many of you know this?— the results are there. The only way you don't get the results is by flunking and dropping out.

This is true in the natural; it's much more true in the spiritual. If you have diligently been through these mental exercises, you'll never go back to being the same kind of person.

A window has been opened to you. In due course as you pray, you'll begin to find that your prayer is different. You're praying on the basis of facts you know about the unseen realm, about your high priest, about the completeness of His sacrifice, about the authority that's vested in Him. That creates faith. See, faith just doesn't happen. Faith has to be built up. There is an intellectual aspect to building your faith. It isn't all instantaneous inspiration. There's

perspiration and inspiration. Some people want inspiration but they're not prepared to invest any perspiration. That kind of inspiration really is very superficial.

I have over the years had the privilege of listening to a lot of effective preachers, very different persons. Many of them I count as my friends. There isn't one of them that I know that's an effective minister of the Word of God that hasn't put a lot of work in. I know many of them closely. I listen to my brothers pray. I listen to Brother Charles Simpson pray. Sometimes when Charles prays it's like heaven opens. But you listen to his prayer. Every sentence is permeated with scriptural truth. That doesn't happen, it has to be cultivated. Many others. Brother Ern Baxter, when he really gets going praying, every sentence is minted out of Scripture. The devil isn't afraid of theology, he's not afraid of our puny strutting to and fro on the stage. There's one thing he cannot face and that is the Word of God. He'll do everything in his power to keep you from being effective in the use of the Word of God.

I'm absolutely confident that those of you that have been with me through this will never be the same. I have done this in countless different places. I've done it in deserts, I've done it in the most strange places; conducted a Bible study. I know once I get the green light from the Lord to teach the Bible to a group of people, those people will not be the same. I don't say this boastfully, my confidence is not in myself. It's in God's Word. Scripture says it will never return to Him void. It will accomplish what He pleases and prosper in the thing to which He sent it. It also says it effectually works in those who believe. You've only just begun to experience what the epistle to the Hebrews will do for you.

Let me recommend if you are concerned that, if possible, you go back over this outline and work through it for yourself. You'll find some things you'll say, "Now why did he quote that Scripture?" Or, "Why did he say that?" Try and not stop with the why but find out. As you work through it again for yourself it'll become yours in a way that nothing and no one will ever be able to take from you.

Just by way of considering some practical application to go on with in our lives, I'd like to go back to the analysis that starts on Page 0/2. I'll begin just with the passages that contain solemn warning. There are five. It's interesting we've covered three of them, more than half. Almost all the other things we've covered less than half. The warnings come early on in part. I tell you, I don't know how it's affected you, but I have been tremendously challenged myself as I've looked at the list of things we're warned against. You see where it says "Warnings Against"? The first one seems so harmless, really. Neglect. Even unbelief most of us are quite prepared to live with. Unfortunately, most of us do.

The next one is apostasy. That's an awful word.

After that, willfully continuing to sin and coming short of the grace of God. I want to tell you all in a kind and gracious way but very firmly and directly, I don't know of any place I've ministered over a period of time where there is a greater tendency to neglect than in South Florida. I would like to ask you this question: Is it easier to be a Christian here or in Russia? You don't have to answer. I'll rephrase the question. Is it easier to be a real Christian here or in Russia? I could argue that it might be easier in Russia because the issues are pretty clear. Here you can drift, you can put on a lot of the outward appearances and there's perhaps nothing immediately to test the reality of your commitment. What is the danger? I think all of us that minister here would probably pick out the word that's there, neglect.

You say, "Well, neglect isn't so bad." No, but it leads to unbelief. Well, there are lots of people who don't believe very much, but what does that lead to? Apostasy. What does that lead to? Willfully continuing in sin. Believe me, this wasn't written for somebody in some other place at some other time. This was written for people in this room tonight and people like us all around us in this culture and in this situation.

I doubt if there is a more timely word for people like us than the epistle to the Hebrews. You know, something else, there's the parable of the talents. Do you remember that? One man had one talent, one man had two and one man had five. The man who had five doubled, the man who had two doubled, the man who had one flunked. That is psychologically true. It's the people who don't think they have much who are the ones who are likely to flunk. I believe I've got more than one talent, to be honest. I don't have to assess how many I have. But you see, because of that I am in this thing with all I have. There isn't any part of me or my life that isn't involved in the Lord's ministry and service and the people of God. But, if I just had something that I contributed on Sunday morning, it wouldn't seem very important to me. I'm not that type of person. Whatever I do I have to be wholehearted about it. Ruth is laughing at me because it reacts on her sometimes. No matter what it is, even if it's helping her make the bed. I mean, there are right ways to make beds and wrong ways to make beds! And no messing around. See, one of the things I had to learn as a medical orderly was how to make beds. When it comes to cooking, I just don't argue. All I do is taste! She's telling me

I'm near the end! I don't know whether that's wishful thinking or not.

Let's go down the page a little more. Passages indicating positive, practical applications. Interestingly, we have looked at three out of seven. It's somewhat logical that the practical application should come rather at the end because first of all, we have to fill in the picture and then see how it applies. And as I've pointed out, much of Hebrews is revelation. We wouldn't know how things go on in heaven if they weren't revealed. But out of this revelation there are very important practical applications. We'll look at the ones we've already worked through and then we'll just glance at the others. The first one is confident access to God. One of the key words is confidence. Don't throw away your confidence. Maintain confidence.

I would like to remind you that's one of the things the devil attacks. He attacks and undermines your confidence in God—in the Word, in yourself, in your destiny, in your gift. I probably strike you as a pretty confident person. I think most of the time I am. But there are times when I have real struggles to maintain my confidence. It's undermined by subtle, satanic insinuations. It's very well designed to touch me in my weak points. I say that because I don't think the majority of you would think of me in that light. I have to tell you, as a matter of fact, preachers have problems most of you don't know about. They need prayer.

The second application, go on to maturity or perfection. That's a thing that runs all through this. Don't stop, don't rest content. Perfection, maturity, fulfillment is the only legitimate stopping place. Again, I think that's very relevant to us. There's so much to bog us down, deflect us. Some things that just make us busy. When I've spent a day—and today I've been almost all day busy either preparing radio outlines or getting ready for tonight—it's been hard work. But every now and then I stop and I thank God, "God, thank You for the privilege of working on things of eternal value." Even if it is hard, I count it an unspeakable privilege. I'm not wanting to stop, I don't want to go back, it doesn't enter my mind.

One thing you cannot do in the Christian life is stand still. You may think you're standing still but in actual fact God and His people are moving forward and you're getting left behind. "The pathway of the righteous is the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." If you're in the pathway of the righteous, the light is brighter today than it was yesterday. If it isn't, you better check.

Third application, the need for zeal, faith and patience. Let me emphasize: faith and then patience. I used to have a problem with impatience. I can more or less say "used." About once a month I find it beginning to reassert itself, but I'm on my watch. I'll tell you what I said last week. In one little fit of impatience you can throw away something that will take you five years to get back. You get discouraged and you make one foolish confession and the whole spiritual atmosphere around you changes.

The next one: draw near, hold fast, assemble and encourage. We haven't come to that yet. I'll just read them, we will not stop.

Remember and endure. How many of you praise God for the word endure? As Charles said, "If they keep telling you to fasten your seat belt, something's going to happen!" If the Bible keeps telling you to endure, there's going to be something to endure.

Press on—this is a good list here. I'm sorry we didn't get there. Press on, endure discipline, be strong, pursue peace and holiness.

The last one, which is quite lengthy: love, holiness, submissiveness and prayer.

Then the passages of comparison and contrast, we have looked at three. We just finished a lengthy one. The contrast between angels and Jesus, between Moses and Jesus, and between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Melchizedek. There remain a number of very important and significant comparisons still ahead of us.

Then finally, in the last few minutes that are left, let's look at the "let us" passages. There are four of them in chapter 4. What was the problem of the people in chapter 4, can you tell me quickly by memory? In one word? Unbelief. They didn't get in because of unbelief. I think every one of these "let us" can be viewed against the background of the problem of unbelief. Let us fear. Let us be diligent. Let us hold fast our confession. Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace. Oh, we have seen the fifth one, too. That's the last. Let us press on to maturity or perfection.

Why don't we say those five "let us" together? We won't go beyond where we've got. If you want to go through the rest you'll have to be back next winter. Take your time, we're going to read out the five "let us" and this is not just and exercise in reading, this is a way for you to set the seal of your will and decision on all that we've studied.

Number one, let us fear.

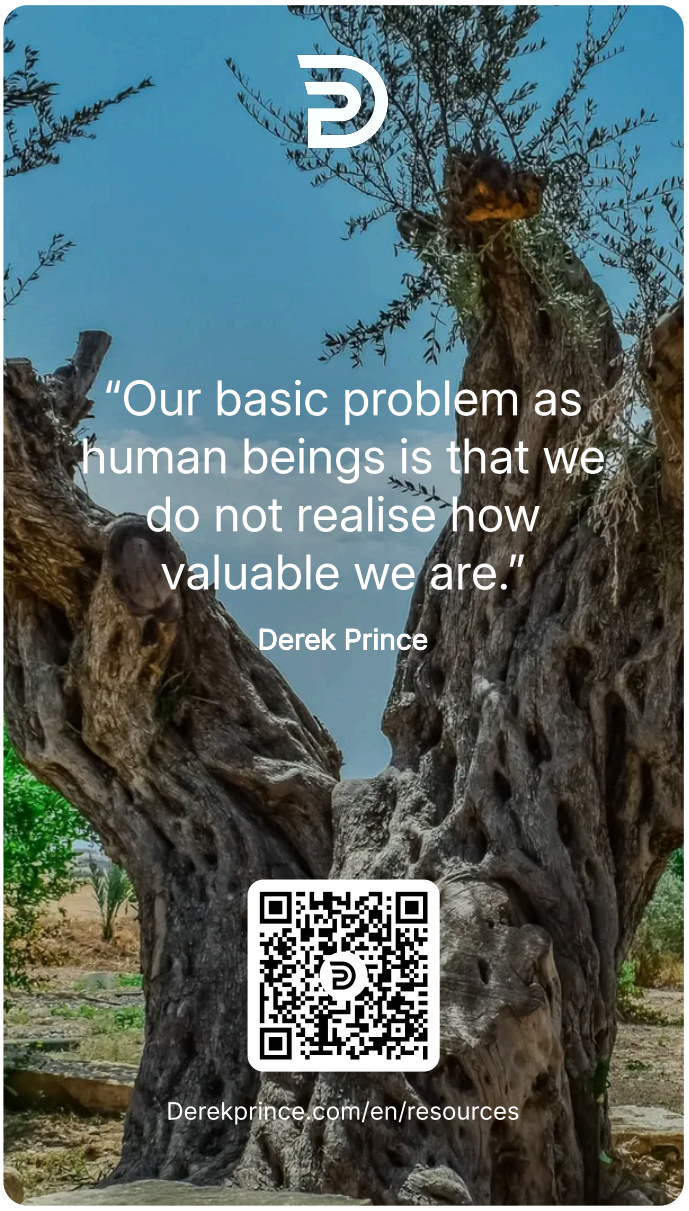
Number two, let us be diligent.

Number three, let us hold fast our confession.

Number four, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace.

Number five, let us press on to maturity, perfection.

Sermon
Transcript: MA-1110-100-ENG
Last Updated: 16 Sept 2026
Website: Derekprince.com/en/resources



© 1982 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.