

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXII

Tithing

Fred R. Coulter—November 3, 2002

Let's pick it up here beginning in Hebrews 7:4. I mentioned that we were going to do some things on tithing—we have a whole series on: *Tithing*. It all gets down to whatever your obedience to God is, *it has to come from the heart*. If someone makes you do it, or puts you in fear to do it, or coerces you to do it, or whatever means of pressure is upon a person to do something, and they don't want to do it, well then you can't change their mind. God shows that what He does in dealing with people, *He always brings repentance first*.

Hebrews 7:4: "But consider how great this one *was* to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils." The reason that this is given here is because he gave it to Melchisedec. There are two reasons why this is very important. It's because Abraham was the father of *physical* Israel. Abraham is also the father of *spiritual* Israel, being the Church. And in giving a tithe to Melchisedec, it was based on eternal life, because He remains a Priest forever. So, the authority for tithing is based upon God; He's the One Who gave the authority. The reason he is contrasting this, he brings up the sons of Levi and the Aaronic priesthood; then he is showing that the authority for tithing under the covenant with Israel was a lesser authority and a temporary authority, because the authority really resides in God, in the person of Melchisedec.

Verse 5: "For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham; but on the other hand, He Who was not descended from them received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him who had the promises. Now it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* is blessed by the superior *One*.... [this is what Paul is showing here] ...And in the first case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is* witnessed that He lives *forever*. And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes, also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him" (vs 5-10).

This is showing the point that the priesthood of Melchisedec is far superior to the priesthood of Aaron and the Levites. And that the receiving or the giving of tithes in Abraham's case; and that wasn't the only time he tithed, as recorded there in Gen. 14. That's the only one that's recorded.

Let's come back to v 5: "For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who

receive the priesthood... [That's separating out not just Levi alone, but also Aaron, because the Levites were assistants to the priests.] ...are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham."

Let's look at something that is very important to understand. When Abraham tithed to Melchisedec, and we saw that Melchisedec was the manifestation of God to Abraham, as the Priest of God. Just like He appeared to him when He came with the angels as a man.

Numbers 18:20: "And the LORD said to Aaron, 'You shall have no inheritance in their land...'" That means that the tribe of Levi did not receive a territory like we would call a state. Rather, the Levites and the priests were scattered throughout all Israel, and they had cities for Levites. The Levites and the priests could own their own homes on their own property within the cities that they had designated for the cities of the Levites. They were not without land that they owned themselves. Howbeit, they did not own agricultural production land as the rest of the tribes of Israel.

"...neither shall you have any part among them.... [that is in the land] ...**I am your part and your inheritance** among the children of Israel" (v 20). Isn't that interesting? Whenever you belong to God, that's how it's phrased, especially with the ministry. With the priesthood it's phrased that way here.

In John 13 we have the last Passover with Jesus Christ. And He was talking to His apostles, who were going to be the leaders of preaching the Gospel—is that not correct? *Yes!* Notice what Jesus said to him when He came to Simon Peter, John 13:6: "Then He came to Simon Peter; and he said to Him, 'Lord, are You going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall know after these things.'.... [You'll know when I'm done.] ...Peter said to Him, 'You shall not wash my feet, not ever.' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me'" (vs 6-8). It's interesting that that's the same phraseology that's used concerning Aaron. He had his part with God. Likewise with the apostles: "...you have no part with Me."

Let's come to Acts 1, and let's see when they selected the replacement for Judas Iscariot. And they selected Mathias. The reason that ministers are not selected in this manner today is because the

Bible does not instruct us to do so. And since the selecting of the apostles—because Jesus Christ personally chose them—they would be presumptuous if they had chosen one. For example if they said, ‘Ok, let’s have a vote on it, guys. Let’s all gather around here and we’ll vote who’s going to replace Judas.’ *They didn’t have the authority to do so.* Let’s just carry this one step further. When Barnabas and Saul were ordained as apostles, how was it made known to them that they were to be apostles? *The Holy Spirit revealed it,* and apparently there was the spoken word through the power of the Holy Spirit to ‘separate Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to do.’ So again, we have the selection of apostles done, not by men but by God. So we have the same thing here. This is why they cast the lots.

Verse 24: “And they prayed, saying, ‘You, Lord, *the* Knower of the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have personally chosen to receive the part of this ministry and apostleship...’” (vs 24-25). Not only did Aaron and the Levites have part in the ministry, and their part was with God, so likewise when it comes to the apostleship those who are going to be the ones in establishing the Church you have exactly the same thing, *a part.*

“...of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas *in* transgressing fell, to go to his own place.’ Then they cast their lots; and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles” (vs 25-26).

Come to Acts 8 and let’s see some interesting things that Peter said to Simon Magus when Simon said, ‘Oh, I’ll give you money and you give me this power.’ Acts 8:19: “...‘Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.’ But Peter said to him, ‘May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money. You have neither part *nor* lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God” (vs 19-21). Then he told him to go ahead and repent. So it’s very interesting, that the exact same wording in Num. 18 when God is talking to Aaron, and why He was going to do with Aaron what He was going to do.

Let’s see something that is very important and very profound. We have seen that the One Who became Melchisedec was also the One Who was the LORD God of the Old Testament—Old Covenant—or the LORD God, dealing with the patriarchs. When He dealt with the patriarchs, He appeared to them personally and also in vision. When He dealt with Moses, He told Aaron and Miriam that He would talk to Moses face-to-face. But any other prophet from that time forward He would speak in dreams and revelations. So, here we have a situation, now,

where God is establishing the Aaronic priesthood with the Levites to help. The same One Who was Melchisedec. And that’s the whole point that Paul is making here.

Numbers 18:21: “And behold, I have given the sons of Levi **all the tithe** in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Let’s look at a couple of things here concerning that. God *gave it* to them. It was His to give. So it tells you that this is something that God owns. Whatever God owns He can give to whomever He wants. So He gave it to them. Let’s also understand another thing. He says, “...all the tithe...”—which He does not restrict to agricultural or animal products. All the tenth is not restricted to agricultural products or animal products, because the earth and the fullness is God’s, and He made it. And everything that we do anyway is derived out of the ground—isn’t it? If you produce oil, it’s out of the ground. If you produce a metal, it’s out of the ground. If you work with woodwork, it’s out of the ground. It all comes from the earth. God well knew that it was going to be more than just on the agricultural products. That’s why He said, “...**all** the tithe...”—whatever the tithe was.

So here we have established that Melchisedec in the person of the LORD God, because that’s Who it was, then took the tithe which was rightfully His by the fact that He was God, and gave it to the Levites and to Aaron. We will see that that is the whole point of what Paul is writing about here: that *Melchisedec is far superior* to the Aaronic priesthood. They are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people. Now then, since God owns it, then whatever the tithe is, *is the thing that belongs to God.* And that’s why Jesus said, ‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and render to God the things that are God’s.’

Hebrews 7:5: “...that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham” So, even in spite of the fact that they are on a human level, equal, He did not give the tithe to anyone but to Aaron and the Levites. Now then, he’s making a contrast here between the authority of the law, because they are commanded by the law. What Abraham gave to Melchisedec was on the authority of eternal life. Which is a higher authority, law or eternal life? *Eternal life is!*

Verse 6: “But on the other hand, He Who was not descended from them received tithes from Abraham...” He’s making a point here very importantly. He is showing very clearly that the tithes given to the Levitical system was temporary. That’s why we have the prophecy, ‘You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec...’ (Psa. 110:4) showing that that system of the Levitical and

Aaronic priesthood was coming to an end. And we covered on how the Levitical and Aaronic priesthood is corruptible, because they are human, and how that the very first time that Moses didn't come back from the mountain, and the people said, 'Make us calves,' Aaron was corrupted the first time (Hebrews Series #21).

Here we have, based upon a Priest Who lives forever, Who does not die, Who has greater authority, and Who in fact was the One Who gave the tithes and the commandment to the sons of Levi in the first place. So therefore, you cannot make the argument in any case that the only ones who were to receive the tithes were the priests or the Levites. Abraham never gave it to a priest of Aaron or Levi, because in fact they were still in his loins. Showing the superiority of the effort of Abraham and the superiority of the priesthood of Melchisedec, both.

And furthermore, v 6: "...and blessed him who had the promises. What were the promises? *Two major promises*—right?

1. promises of *physical seed*; as the sand of the sea
2. promises of *spiritual seed*; the Church

And if you are Christ's then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. So you have both.

If you are an Israelite and you're looking back at your roots, then you would have to say that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are your forefathers, and those are your roots. But when you come to Abraham, Abraham had a relationship with God *long before* the promises were given, at least ten years. And he had a continuous, faithful relationship with God all through his life, and obeyed His voice and kept His charge and His commandments, laws and statutes. This shows that Abraham, as a person, had a higher relationship with God than they did. And his relationship with God was on a *spiritual* basis. That's why when he believed God it was counted to him for righteousness. ***He had faith! He obeyed!***

Yes, he did offer some sacrifices—didn't he? But the sacrifices he offered were burnt offerings. Nowhere do we find that Abraham offered a sin offering. So, that means with his direct relationship with God, whatever sins he committed he could repent just like we do, because he had that access to God. That's why he is the *father of the faithful*.

The children given to Abraham as physical descendants, are in a lesser position with God than Abraham was. And they had a temple, or tabernacle, to worship at. They could not have a relationship with God like Abraham had, or like those who God calls now, and we, being of Jesus Christ. So this is

what he's saying. This is the whole point that he is making here. He "...blessed him who had the promises" (v 6) That shows that He was *superior* to Aaron and the Levites.

Verse 7: "Now it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* [Abraham] is blessed by the superior *One* [God].... [this is both true physically and spiritually] ...And in the first case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is* witnessed that He lives *forever* (vs 7-8). This also tells us something concerning receiving tithes in the New Testament. The tithes were to be received to help people with eternal life. That's what it's for, to minister unto them the Word of God unto eternal life. Whereas the tithes that the Levites received were not unto eternal life. So the tithing that Melchisedec has, which we also have in the New Testament, is based upon everlasting life. The tithing that was given to Israel was temporary, because God for the time and duration of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood gave it to them. Now we're going to see how God handled that when we get to the section concerning Paul's authority in tithing. So we'll just bypass it from there.

Now, to make the point, v 9: "And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes... [the priests who were there at the temple] ...also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him" (vs 9-10). What we have with this: this very act, then, was a prophecy of the subordination of the Levitical priesthood to the Melchisedec priesthood. That's what it's showing us. Here is the reason for the change.

Verse 11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—" What do you mean by perfection? *That is, pointing to eternal life!* Paul also covers this in Galatians, showing that eternal life is a gift of God. And the power and authority of eternal life is greater than the authority that was given to the Levites.

Galatians 3:21: "*Is* the law then contrary to the promises of God?... [This is the whole Old Covenant. That's what it's talking about here when it says *the law*.] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! For if a law had been given that had the power to give life... [eternal life] ...*then* righteousness would indeed have been by law"—or *true perfection*.

Law tells you what is right and what is wrong. Yes, if you love God you're going to keep His commandments. That's absolutely true. But you've missed the whole point of law if you don't understand that that is to lead you to Christ. And when you come to Christ you don't give up the law-keeping and commandment-keeping; rather it is all now spiritually magnified and in keeping the commandments of God. That's why when it talks about annulling the law there in Heb. 7, it's not

talking about doing away with all law. It was talking about the law as related to the priesthood. Those had to be changed. So there is no law that brings perfection. *Law gives us the knowledge of sin!* Law tells us what is right and wrong. The Holy Spirit from God the Father through Jesus Christ brings us eternal life, and we receive that by promise. And that's the promise that was given Abraham, which is extended to us.

Now let's look at a couple Scriptures here showing a little bit more about perfection, which Christ even said in the Sermon on the Mount. Of course, no law can make you perfect; no law can give you life. That's why salvation comes through what? *Repentance and baptism, and belief, and walking in the way of God!* It does not come because you open a book of the law and it says if you do these laws you will receive eternal life. And if that were the case then, you could earn it. ***But you can't earn eternal life!*** That's why it's not by law. That's why Paul said, "...if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* righteousness would indeed have been by law" (v 21). And that righteousness means *the righteousness of perfection*, which comes through eternal life.

Matthew 5:48, where He summed up this first section of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." The only way that can be done is through the gift of eternal life—is that not correct? ***Yes! Perfection comes by God's Spirit!*** Perfection does not come by law-keeping. And it's so difficult for people to understand that you must keep the commandments of God, yet, that does not give you eternal life. Howbeit, it's got to be a condition of eternal life—does it not? Let's come back here to the very last chapter of Revelation, and we will see that it is a condition. God can put conditions on it. You can't buy it. It's not a condition that you buy. It's a condition of something that you do.

Let's come here to Revelation 22:12: "And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be.... [We are to have good works. God created them that we should walk in theme.] ...I am Alpha and Omega, *the Beginning and the End*, the First and the Last.... [What He's saying here is that there's 'no way you're going to get eternal life by going around Me.'] ...Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments... [practice and keep] ...that they may have the right to *eat of* the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city" (vs 12-14). Commandment-keeping *is* required, but commandment-keeping *cannot* give life, because commandment-keeping *is not* receiving the Holy Spirit.

Is it possible to keep the commandments of God though you're not converted? Can you keep them in the letter? *Of course, you can! To keep them in the Spirit is another challenge*, because you're dealing with the mind and you're dealing with overcoming lust, and you're dealing with overcoming human nature. The whole spiritual keeping of the commandments of God is another whole different story.

Physically speaking, Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?'.... [Jesus said to him, 'Just believe. All you have to do is believe...' (sarcastically)] ...And He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.'.... [The young man said to Him, because he figured 'I've been doing that. I've been good, Lord, I've been good.'] ...Then he said to Him, 'Which?' And Jesus said, 'You shall not commit murder... [haven't done that] ...you shall not commit adultery... [haven't done that] ...you shall not steal... [haven't done that; boy, I must be getting close] ...you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The young man said to Him, 'I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?'" (vs. 16-20).

What does he lack? *He lacks the Holy Spirit!* So this is showing that it's more than just the physical keeping of the law. But it also shows this: It shows that, yes, you can keep the commandments in the letter, and that in keeping them in the letter there is no spiritual perfection. Why? ***God expects that of every human being!*** That's why.

Verse 21: "Jesus said to him, 'If you desire to be perfect... [There we go; this is for eternal life.] ...go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor... [Get rid of your idols on the earth. That's what He's saying. Whatever your idol on the earth is. In his case, it was money.] ...and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.' But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions" (vs 21-22). So, we can conclude by this, commandment-keeping is required. And Jesus never said it was wrong at any time. As a matter of fact, He said He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill. But we also find here that commandment-keeping, though God requires it, is a basic fundamental. It does not perfect you spiritually.

Now let's look and see why He said that. What Paul is doing is he's helping put everything in perspective. It again talks about selling all that you have. There is a way to sell all that you have and still be able to use it. That may sound a little contradictory, but it's not.

Matthew 13:45: “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; who, after finding one very precious pearl, went and sold everything that he had, and bought it” (vs 45-46). This is showing a complete dedication of your life.

Let’s come to Luke 14—the *repentance and counting the cost* chapter. Here is how you need to sell the things. Selling them alone and then wishing you had never sold them, or selling them, and then complaining that God said to sell them. Selling it and not repenting and coming close to God and not doing the spiritual things isn’t going to help you either, because Paul said, ‘Though I give all my goods...’ The *King James* says, ‘to the poor,’ but it’s *you can give it to different causes* ‘and have not love, it profits me nothing’

When we come to Heb. 7 this is the kind of perfection that he is showing. That under the Levitical priesthood you could not have perfection of the heart and mind and spirit:

1. because the Holy Spirit was not given
2. because the system under the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood never allowed for salvation of eternal life

Luke 14:25: “And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (vs 25-26).

That’s what was the problem with the young rich man, not that he couldn’t have sold his goods. He could have sold his goods. But he wasn’t willing to give himself. So if you give yourself, and count yourself this way to God, this is called counting the cost and so forth. And just realize that, as Paul said, ‘In whatever circumstances you are, whether you are abound, or whether you are abased, you always trust in God’ That’s the spiritual attitude that God wants us to have. So if you don’t have that, Jesus said, ‘He cannot be My disciple.’

Verse 27: “And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” Now a cross is whatever trial, a difficulty, whatever thing that you have to give up. Some people have to give up more than money. The two things people get all concerned about is

1. their lives
2. their money

And we see that interplaying throughout all of this that we’re talking about.

So, it is possible, if you count everything but loss for Christ, that you don’t have to sell everything you own, because you have already in your own

mind divorced yourself from all the physical things around you, and count them but dung. That doesn’t mean that you don’t take care of the physical things around you. That just means to serve God there isn’t one physical thing that is going to hold you back. You’re always going to be yielding to God. In some cases it’s going to be hard. Other cases it will be easier.

Let’s look at this perfection again, and here is the whole spiritual process. That’s why Paul said in writing Hebrews, that perfection did not come by law. ***Perfection, or eternal life, comes by gift, and comes by the Holy Spirit!***

Ephesians 4:11: “And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints...” (vs 11-12).

The ministry of Christ—Who was High Priest after the order of Melchisedec—their work is what? *A spiritual work! You have part with Christ!* And also, all of those who are baptized have a part with Christ and eternal life. And the whole purpose and goal and meaning for having those who serve is for the perfecting of the saints, *that they may receive eternal life!*

“...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ; until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ...” (vs 11-13). You can put in your margin right there Matt. 5:48, because that then gives the definition of how to be as ‘perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.’ It is a spiritual thing that must take place. So Christ gave the command and Paul shows how. Now, that’s quite a thing to grow into—isn’t it? And eternal life is a fantastic and wonderful thing, so much that, as Paul said, we ‘look through a glass darkly.’ He tells them to grow up. And I think this is what needs to be for a lot of people in the Church of God today.

Verse 14: “So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine...” And, oh boy, do we get *every wind of doctrine*, every kind of question, everything! They come in cycles. If we hadn’t had a certain question for a certain time, know for sure it’s going to come up. The whole thing that is important here is if those who are teaching the brethren *teach* them the Word of God, and *help* them grow up in Christ, then the brethren are not going to be any more children. And instead of being tossed to and fro and saying, ‘Oh, isn’t that interesting! Tell me about it.’ You’ll be able to say:

- that’s right
- that’s wrong
- here’s why it’s right

- here's why it's wrong

—because you will have the mind of Christ to do so. That's the whole purpose in it. And all too often it comes down to a matter of force, and personality, and rules, and regulations. And then what should have been to Christ becomes a religion to men. And we've all lived through that—haven't we? *Yes!*

It's very interesting here, v 14: "...every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error... [In other words, they were going to systematize it into a 'religion.' Has that been done? *Yes!* So much so, that as I've mentioned, I have a book called *Christianity Without God*. And it is true that Christianity today is without God, because why? It has been totally undermined and replaced by the *systematizing of the error*. And now they have a religion.

Verse 15: "But holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ." How much does God want us to grow spiritually? *As much as we yield to God and choose to do so!* That's how! He's not giving any limitation. There's no difficult law for you to do that you must complete, and if you don't complete that law you're not going to have eternal life; or you won't be perfected. If you believe Christ and walk in His way, and have the Spirit of God, and continually repent of your sins and grow in grace and knowledge and overcome, you are going to grow up into Him in all things. And then you can be part of those who had the five talents and increased five, or the two talents and increased two. So it's quite a thing here—*isn't it?* Then he talks about the whole Church growing up into that, and so forth.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood..." Verse 19: "Because **the law** brought nothing to perfection..."—*the law* is a principle of law. But what we are talking about here, we're talking about the law, concerning the priesthood in serving the people. Otherwise, there is an annulment of the law, there's a changing of the law.

Yet Jesus said in Matthew 5:17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets..." And hence, you would have a great contradiction—wouldn't you? Since the law came from God, can any man annul it? Can any man change it? Oh, they can say they can. But in reality, do they, in fact, do it? *No!* What God has given, He can take. What God has commanded, He can change.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—for *the law* that the people had received was *based* on it—what further need *was there* for another priest

to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron?".... [If you had something that was perfect, why would you want to replace it? You wouldn't want to.] ...For since the priesthood has changed... [He is stating it as a fact.] (If you have a different priesthood): ...it is obligatory *that* a change of *the* law also take place" (vs 11-12).

Now the change of the law means the laws relating to the priesthood, directly. Secondly, it can include all the laws are brought to their spiritual fullness. So they were changed in that sense. But they were not changed in the sense of the change in the priesthood law. A change had to take place. How was that change accomplished? Well, He's preparing the way. The change has already taken place. Instead of worshiping in Jerusalem, Jesus said, 'You shall worship God *in spirit and in truth*. Not in Jerusalem, nor in Samaria. For God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must *worship in spirit and in truth*.

You change the form of worship. Under the covenant with the Aaronic priesthood, they came and brought a sacrifice. They recited certain words, bowed the head, and the priest blessed them and they went on their way. Now it's entirely different. You have the Spirit of God, and you develop a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

So therefore, you have to have a change in the priesthood, you have to have a change in the temple.

- Instead of the temple on earth, it's the temple in heaven above
- Instead of the Holy of Holies on earth, it's the Holy of Holies in heaven above
- Instead of animal sacrifices, there are two sacrifices that are required:
 1. the sacrifice of Christ
 2. your baptism

—because you literally die in that watery grave. Entirely different than repeating the sacrifices over and over again, as he covers there in Heb. 10. Entirely different! It also requires a change to whom the tithe belongs to. God is the One Who gave it—didn't He? *Yes!*

We're going to look at 1-Corinthians 9, because it fits right in here. So all of the laws *relating to the worship of God under the covenant with Israel* were changed or annulled. Not having to do with the Ten Commandments, not having to do with tithing. But having to do with the form of worship, from worship at a temple to a spiritual relationship with God with the Holy Spirit in your mind where you worship Him *in spirit and in truth*.

Now one thing I'm going to cover is why Paul did not use that authority. He had the authority

to use it, but he didn't use it. We'll understand that when we get to it, which I'll cover separately.

1-Corinthians 9:11, Paul wrote: "If we have sown to you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your physical things? If others participate in this authority ['exousia'], over you, much more surely *should* not we? Nevertheless, we have not used this authority... [Why? *Because they were carnal!* That's why! Didn't he say, you're carnal, and not spiritual? *Yes!*] ...but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the Gospel of Christ. Don't you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple, *and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar? In the same way also, the Lord **did command...**" (vs 11-14)—'diatasso'—which means, *to command, to ordain, to direct*.

If the Lord commanded, or directed, or ordained, "...that those who preach the Gospel are to live of the Gospel" (v 14)—how should they live of it? *As the priest who waited in the temple and served at the altar!* And what did they receive? *Tithes and offerings!* So here is a clear-cut Scripture which shows that in the New Testament, yes, it is an authority that should be used.

That's why it had to be changed. Because, when we read back there in Num. 18, God gave it to the Levites. Now that He is doing away with the Levitical priesthood, God has the tithes and the offerings, so then He designates to whom He gives it. And He just did, right there in 1-Cor. 9. It's designated! The Lord commanded, ordained, or appointed that that's how it should be done. And I found it very interesting that all those who don't believe in tithing very rarely go to 1-Cor. 9 and the verses that I read. Yes, they read the verses which have not to do with tithing, but have to do with the varying degrees of a person's ability to give. And Paul even said, 'You don't even treat me as good as an ox.'

So it's like everything else. If you don't love God, and if you don't want to serve Him from your heart, and if you don't want to do what is right, then, you just have to examine your heart before God, that's all. No one can make you do it. All the letters, all the envelops, all the beatings, all of the fear and everything else. But it's still true, if you take the things that belong to God, you're stealing from God. It's just that simple. And there are some people who are upset if I read that verse in Mal. 3, because they've been so traumatized in their own mind over tithing, and corruption of men, that they have forgotten that it is the commandment of God. It's that simple.

The Protestants like to read Hebrews 7:12 as the change in the law, so therefore, that does away

with the law. "For since the priesthood has changed... [that's what it's talking about] ...It is obligatory *that* a change of *the* law also take place... [And you can put there, *regulating the Levitical priesthood*. That's what it's talking about.] ...because the one of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe..." (vs 12-13). So that means it's Christ. Is this not also telling us that Melchisedec was Christ? Is that not true? *Yes indeed!*

"...from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar. For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah... [This ties it right in. The Lord, from Judah; Melchisedec Son of God, a Priest forever. All of those tie together.] ...of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood" (vs 12-14). Therefore, God had to make a change. If He was going to take it from the Levites and give it to someone else, God had to make the change—didn't He? *Yes, He did!* And the command there is in 1-Cor. 9.

Verse 15. "And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the* law of a fleshly commandment, but by *the* power of indestructible life" (vs 15-16). And that's why what I said is absolutely true. The authority for Melchisedec to collect the tithes is based upon eternal life. The authority for Levi to collect the tithes is based upon a temporary command, which God gave to Levi until Christ came.

That's why he says, v 17: "For He testifies, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'" Melchisedec was appointed by a swearing of an oath 'I have sworn, You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.' (Psa. 110:4).

That was never said of Levi—was it? They were never appointed by an oath. They succeeded by physical inheritance. If you were of the house of Aaron, you were a priest, or able to be a priest when you reached the proper age. If you were of the tribe of Levi, but not of the house of Aaron, then you were a Levite and you were to serve the priesthood, and you were to serve the people as teacher, and so forth. That's why God gave the tithe to Levi. Now then, we have something greater that is to be done. That is, to teach the way of eternal life.

Verse 16: "...by *the* power of indestructible life. For He testifies, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.' For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron...* [that's what it's talking about, the difference between Aaron and Melchisedec] ...because of its weakness and unprofitableness, because the law... [of the priesthood] ...brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought

about by a superior hope...” (vs 16-19). And that’s what the Greek means—not a better hope—*superior*. Not something that is just better. *It is superior!* Let’s liken it this way: today, the physical descendents of Judah are waiting to have another temple spot so they can build another temple. And where do they go? And every year it is, ‘Next year in Jerusalem. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.’ Well, that prayer has never been answered because they have rejected the King of Peace Who is Christ.

So what is one of the things that they want to do? They want to get to the physical place. If they can get to the Western Wailing Wall and scribble out a little prayer...as a matter of fact, you could even fax a prayer to Jerusalem, and they will put it on a little, thin piece of paper, and they will take it up and scrunch it into a crack in the Western Wailing Wall. Now, which is superior? That you can get on your knees and have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ wherever you are; and you don’t have to do like the Muslims, pray toward Mecca five times a day.

Here’s what it is, v 19: “...**through which we draw near to God.**” What do you have to do to draw near to God?

Let’s come to James 1. This is by faith. We are told Jesus gave the promise. He said, ‘**Ask**, and you shall receive; **seek**, and you shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened.’ That’s the kind of access that you have to God by prayer and by belief. If you believe God, don’t worry about the circumstances around you. Take care of it the best that you can. You have to trust God to intervene for you. You do your part. *You believe God*, and continue to believe Him, even though a prayer may not be answered in the timeframe you think it should be. And when that happens, you know that’s not the timeframe of God. And don’t look at the circumstances around you as being so dire that they are not recoverable, because with God, all things are possible. That’s why it’s a *superior hope*.

James 1:1 concerning faith: “James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings! Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.... [that means *the proving of your faith works patience*; the same word for *endurance*.] ...But let [patience] endurance have *its* perfect work...” (vs 1-4).

What happens if you get impatient? You’re cutting off patience [endurance]. It’s that simple. You’ve got to let patience have its perfect work. Maybe God has something else in mind, rather than what you have in mind, or what I have in mind. Put it all in God’s hands, He’ll work it out. If you believe, *He will answer*. He will answer in His time

and in His way, because we have a *superior hope*, because we draw close to God.

So it says, v 4: “...let endurance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything.... [This is the whole process of perfection that the law is not able to do.] ...However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the* sea that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*” (vs 4-6). We also know that, not only driven by the wind, but also enhanced by tsunamis, and enhanced by earthquakes—and the water responds.

“Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord. *He is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (vs 7-8). When that happens then you are not trusting in God.

James 4:7 talks about it again: “Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil... [we have our work we need to do] ...and he will flee from you.... [we’re to resist him in the faith] ...Draw near to God... [because that’s what it’s talking about in Heb. 7:19, a *superior hope* through which we draw near to God.] (here James is saying): ...Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded! Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (vs 7-10). God will do it!

So this is a greater relationship with God. And what is so fantastic about this is that, it is not dependent upon whom you are. It is not dependent upon whether you are one of the twelve tribes of Israel; it is not dependent upon whether you are circumcised in the flesh; *it is dependent upon whether you are circumcised in the heart*, and have had the baptism of Christ. That’s how we draw near to God.

Hebrews 7:19: “...*perfection* is brought about by a superior hope, through which we draw near to God. And according to this *superior measure*... [that’s how we are to measure it] ...*it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest*. (For those *who descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath but *He was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath by Him Who says concerning Him, ‘*The Lord swore and will not revoke His Word, “You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.”*’)” (vs 19-210).

Now, if you truly, truly understand this, you won’t be bothered with problems of Judaizing. If

you truly understand this, you won't be bothered with a lot of problems that people have, because then you are going to be living by that *superior hope*, and always have that before you. So that's something!

Verse 22: "By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a superior covenant." Through the priesthood of Melchisedec, through being the perfect sacrifice of God, ***that is a superior covenant!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 7:4-10, 5
- 2) Numbers 18:20
- 3) John 13:6-8
- 4) Acts 1:24-26
- 5) Acts 8:19-21
- 6) Numbers 18:21
- 7) Hebrews 7:5-11
- 8) Galatians 3:21
- 9) Matthew 5:48
- 10) Revelation 22:12-14
- 11) Matthew 19:16-22
- 12) Matthew 13:45-46
- 13) Luke 14:25-27
- 14) Ephesians 4:11-15
- 15) Hebrews 7:11, 19
- 16) Matthew 5:17
- 17) Hebrews 7:11-12
- 18) 1 Corinthians 9:11-14
- 19) Hebrews 7:12-17, 16-19
- 20) James 1:1-8
- 21) James 4:7-10
- 22) Hebrews 7:19-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 14
- Psalm 110:4
- Hebrews 10:26
- Malachi 3

Also referenced:

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Book: *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering

Transcribed: 01/31/2003
MDS/cis/rel
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—5-1-11