

Series: God & Abraham #1210

Title: Hebrews 10

Christ's Superior Priesthood, Part 3

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. It is good to have you here with us on a Friday. If you have been with us then you are well aware we are speaking of six ways in which the priesthood of Christ, in the order of Melchizedek, is superior to and greater than the Levitical Priesthood. And last time we got into the third way, which is this: **Christ brings permanent righteousness and peace, whereas the Levitical Priesthood never offered permanent righteousness or peace.**

And I gave you several Scriptures to support this. Righteousness and peace definitely go very well together in the Person of Jesus Christ. Psalm chapter 85, and verse 10 says that in Christ the Messiah **"righteousness and peace have kissed each other."** Isaiah chapter 32 and verse 17 says, **"The work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever."** That is, when Christ makes you righteous, then you will have peace forever. The service of righteousness is quietness and confidence again forever. This is not temporary, but permanent.

How many people – maybe even you listening to me right now – are devoid of quietness and confidence and peace? And the reason is you do not possess the righteousness of Christ. Only Jesus can make you a righteous person and if you reject Him, if you resist Christ, then you are *unrighteous* and lacking in peace. My friend, you can try a million and one different ways to possess peace and you will never have it, *until* you embrace Jesus. I promise you He will give you peace that truly does pass understanding. But not until you submit yourself to Him. How do I know that? Two ways: first, personal experience. Second, this is what the Bible says. So, look to Christ and invite Him to give you His righteousness and His peace.

Romans 5, verse 1 says, **"Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."** To be justified means that we have been made righteous. Jesus has made us righteous by putting us into a right relationship with God. So that having been justified, having been made righteous, *by faith*, we have peace with God. The only way to have peace with God is to be righteous. And it is Christ alone who gives us His righteousness when we put our faith in *Him!*

Aaron and his descendants, who formed the Levitical Priesthood we have been talking about this week, by performing the sacrifices in the Old Testament, could offer a temporary righteousness and peace, but *not* a *permanent* righteousness and peace and this makes them a lesser priesthood than Christ's priesthood. Let me give further explanation. And for this, we will need to open our Bibles to the tenth chapter of the Book of Hebrews. Hebrews is towards the end of the New Testament and today we are interested in chapter 10.

We do not have time today to go back into the Old Testament to read texts that demonstrate the depth of the sin of the Israelite people. We only have to look inside ourselves. They and we are the same: sinners. Through and through we are sinners in desperate need of God's forgiveness. *All* of us. And to our rescue, the Lord comes! In the first Testament, He established the sacrificial system in which the blood of unblemished animals, properly killed by the priests in the Levitical Priesthood, would cover over the sins of the people of God. Hebrews chapter 9 and verse 22 says, **"<sup>22</sup> And according to the Law...all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."** So God accepted the blood of those animals as the way for Him to forgive human sin.

In this sense, it gave the sinner for whom that animal had been sacrificed, it made the sinner righteous and gave him or her a sense of God's peace. The sinner was then able to live again in right relationship to the God they had previously wronged by disobedience. *But* this was not a *permanent* righteousness or peace, because just as soon as the man or woman sinned again, another sacrifice was required. And on and on this went – repeatedly. Listen to the words of Hebrews 10, verses 1 and 11 in this regard.

Hebrews chapter 10, let me give just part of verse 1, **“By the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year...”** Here, we get the sense of the perpetual and ongoing need of the sacrifice for sin. Or, down in verse 11 – still in Hebrews chapter 10 – (quote), **“Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices...”** Continually, year by year, every priest, daily, time after time, the same sacrifices. This shows how laborious this was. Sin and then sacrifice and then sin and then sacrifice and on and on this went. Read the Hebrew Scriptures. You’ll see it.

This is why the sacrificial system that God established in the Old Testament was a sign of *the once and for all* sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for sin in the New Testament. The Old points to the New. Listen from the top of Hebrews chapter 10, beginning in verse 1. I am reading Hebrews 10, verse 1, **“For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and not* the very form of things...”** Let me pause here. Did you catch it? The Law was “only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things...” This speaks of Christ! Christ’s permanent sacrifice for sin. The permanent righteousness and peace He offers those who believe in Him, these are the good things to come, the very form of things.

Back to Hebrews 10, verse 1, **“For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and not* the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.”** There it is! Those repeated sacrifices did not make perfect the people who drew near to God. Verse 2, **“<sup>2</sup> Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?”** The writer to the Hebrews is using logic. If the sacrifice, once made, had *permanently* satisfied holy God. If the sinner, once cleansed of sin, had *permanent* forgiveness, then why the ongoing consciousness of sins and the ever persistent need to make sacrifice?

Verse 3, **“<sup>3</sup> But in those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins year by year.”** The sacrifices for sin, under the Levitical Priesthood, did *not* deliver a permanent righteousness and peace to the people of God. And verse 4 of Hebrews chapter 10 really cinches the argument. Do not miss this! Hebrews 10, verse 4, **“<sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”** Hebrews 10, verse 4, “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”

That verse sharply contrasts what went on in the Levitical Priesthood versus what Christ did in His Priesthood. Let me put this to you in the form of a question: if it is impossible for unblemished animals to take away sins, then what does take away sins? Hebrews chapter 10 answers the question. Drop down with me in the text to verse 10. Hebrews 10.10 says, **“<sup>10</sup> By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”** Jesus Christ takes away sins. And He does so “once for all,” He does so *permanently*.

Hebrews 10, verses 11, 12 and part of verse 14 seals it (quote), **“<sup>11</sup> Every [Levitical] priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; <sup>12</sup> but [Jesus], having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time...<sup>14</sup> For by one offering [Christ] has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.”**

Hebrews 10 supports our main point. Christ brings permanent righteousness and peace, whereas the Levitical Priesthood never offered *permanent* righteousness or peace.

I wish we had more time. We do not. But we will pick up here again next time. Get this as a podcast and listen again – we packed in a lot – and then join us Monday because God Is!

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