***The Melchizedek Priesthood - PH92-02
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 4:14-19***

We're going to look, first of all, in Genesis 14. We are still pursuing what we originally began in Philippians 4:14-19 concerning a particular kind of spiritual offering that Christians are capable of making, which was called a sacrifice of substance, or the sacrifice of material possessions, and which the apostle Paul pointed out was, in the sight of God, a fragrant aroma which brought to mind all of the Old Testament sacrifices that were in that particular category of a fragrant aroma to God. We found that sacrifices to God require a system of priesthood.

We found that originally the priests were the men who were the heads of the families. Under the Mosaic Law system, however, there was a special priesthood provided, the Aaronic priesthood, for the nation of Israel. The nation was literally divided into laity and clergy. This particular group of clergy priests offered animal sacrifices in behalf of sinners. However, the Aaronic priesthood had a very serious defect in that it could never make a permanent atonement for sins. Therefore, the priests under the Levitical system were never allowed to sit down. Nothing in the furniture was ever provided for them to have a place to sit down. Anytime they were in that tabernacle, and later in the temple, they were always on their feet. This was symbolically conveying the fact that atonement was never provided. There was never a solution for the matter of a person's sin and separation from God. The wall was always there.

In the nature of the case, the Aaronic priesthood, consequently, had obviously to be replaced in time by a priesthood which could do the job. The Aaronic priesthood could not solve the problem of sin, and it could not remove the barrier between God and man. So there was a priesthood somewhere down the line which had to be provided which could do this. In the providence of God, this is exactly what happened.

**The Melchizedek Priesthood**

The name of this priesthood is the Melchizedek Priesthood. In Genesis 14:18-20, we have a rather fascinating presentation of a character who just flashes like a falling star on the scene of human history. Melchizedek just zooms on the scene for a moment; a few things are said about him; and, then he disappears from the pages of Scripture. Later, Scripture refers back to him, but never again do we see him, and never again do we hear of him. So here he is as he flashes on the scene of history.

"And Melchizedek King of Salem brought forth bread and wine, and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed be the most high God, who has delivered your enemies into your hands.' And he gave him tithes of all."

The occasion of all this was that Abram's nephew Lot had been taken captive by a confederation of kings. Abram had a military force of young men that he had trained in his own household. They were really a crack team of soldiers, and they were in the form of shock troops, so that a small number of them could accomplish a great deal. There was a time when liberalism and the unbelieving mind scoffed at this particular passage of Scripture in Genesis 14 which described how Abram took these young men servants whom he had trained, which were in his own household (318 of them), and had actually mounted a military campaign which was able to defeat a confederation of several kings. The idea was that people could not conduct military campaigns at this time.

Well, since, of course, secular history has amply confirmed that military campaigns were conducted, and that Abram was fully able to do just such a thing. Well, under the guidance and the providence of God, he won the battle, and he secured the release of his nephew Lot. It was as he was returning from this very great victory that he met this priest of God called Melchizedek. That's what we have in Genesis 14:18. The name Melchizedek itself means "King of righteousness." We have this explained for us in the tremendous book of Hebrews, one of the fascinating books of the New Testament, but one that you will not readily understand until you have secured a grasp on the things that we've been studying about the Old Testament sacrifices and the Levitical system of worship. In Hebrews 7:2, we read, "To whom also Abram gave a tenth part of all, first being by interpretation (that is, the interpreting of this man's name) King of Righteousness. After that, also King of Salem, which is King of Peace." The word "Salem" referred to the city that we know today as Jerusalem. The word "Salem" is related to the Hebrew word for "peace."

So Melchizedek here has a twofold title. We know he is a king. His name is King of Righteousness. He rules over a place called Salem. His authority is associated with peace. He is also identified as the priest of the most high God. This is one of the names of God which is here first revealed. It is the name of God "El Elyon." That is the Hebrew for the most high God. It is identified here as belonging to the God who possesses heaven and earth; that is, the one who is actually the creator – Melchizedek; King of Salem; and, King of Righteousness. He is the priest of El Elyon, the most high God.

This Melchizedek was the head of a priesthood. It is referred to in Psalm 110:4. This psalm, mind you, was written 900 years after the incident of Abram winning the battle against the kings and meeting, on his way home, this gentile priest of God, Melchizedek. 900 later, David, who wrote Psalm 110, refers back to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not repent. You are (speaking of the coming Messiah) a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. And what I want you to notice here is the term "order of Melchizedek." We are acquainted with the order of Aaron and of the Aaronic priesthood, but there was another priesthood, and that is that the Scripture recognizes a totally different order of priesthood called the order of Melchizedek.

1,000 years after David wrote Psalm 110, there are again references to this king. We have this in Hebrews 5:6, Hebrews 5:10, Hebrews 6:20, and Hebrews 7:1-21. In those verses, nine separate times this Melchizedek order of priesthood is referred to.

All of this is really quite amazing when you stop to think of where this man Melchizedek lived. He lived in Canaan. He lived in one of the vilest places that ever existed on the face of the earth – one of the most morally decrepit and one of the most demonically dominated areas on the earth. Here he speaks of God as El Elyon, because in the society in which he lived, he wanted to stress the fact that there was one Almighty God. That's what El Elyon means: God Almighty. There was only one. That was the true God Jehovah Elohim – not all of these shoddy idol imitating demon gods that surrounded him in Canaan.

Furthermore, as speaking of this El Elyon as possessor of heaven and earth, he was stressing the fact that he was the creator who had made all this.

One of the things that's interesting about Melchizedek is that the Bible observes that there is no record about him of any kind. All of a sudden, there he is. It doesn't tell us where he was born. It doesn't give us any genealogy of his family line. It doesn't tell us anything about his death. He's just there, and then he's gone. There's a reason why God the Holy Spirit did that in that specific way.

Let's go back again to Hebrews, our explaining book, in chapter 7:3, describing Melchizedek with these words: "Without father; without mother; without dissent; having neither beginning of days; nor, end of life, but made like unto the Son of God abides the priest continually." This, of course, is a descriptive poetical way of speaking about this man. He actually did have a father and mother. Obviously, he would have had to. But what this verse means is, as you look upon the pages of Scripture, the Bible makes no reference to this. From the Bible itself, you cannot tell a thing about this man. It's just as if there he is – like he existed forever. And that's exactly the point. That's what God the Holy Spirit wanted to convey: to present Melchizedek in the guise of an eternal being – somebody who has always been there, and always will be there. He's eternal, because, ultimately, as you perhaps have already guessed, Melchizedek will be representing our great High Priest, Jesus Christ.

The thing that is important here back in Genesis 14 again, is that when Abram met this gentile priest of God, Melchizedek, Abram recognized him as a true and bona fide genuine priest. Furthermore, he had a priesthood which was to be respected. When Melchizedek met Abram, the Scripture tells us that he shared bread and wine with him. We're not sure whether that was in a ceremonial way or simply in the form of refreshments to Abram as he was returning from the field of battle. Melchizedek has offered, in any case, this communion of one kind or another with the bread and the wine. Then verse 19 points out to us that Melchizedek blessed Abram. Then verse 20 tells us that Abram, in turn, honored Melchizedek by giving him 10% of the spoils of battle that they had just taken.

The thing to note here is the principle that the superior blesses the inferior. The inferior does not bless the superior. Immediately, we have indicated something to us that Melchizedek is in a relationship of a priesthood order to God that places him above Abram. Abram recognizes this. Abram presents the tithes in token of recognition of the superiority of Melchizedek. Melchizedek, in turn, pronounces the blessing of God upon Abram and his household. That is a very important piece of historical information that is going to then be used in Hebrews – the book written to Jews who were deviating from Christianity and from the New Testament church order of things, and were trying to go back to the old days.

So Hebrews was written to explain to them how all the Old Testament Aaronic priesthood procedures and techniques were all symbols of the reality which they now possess in Jesus Christ. If they're going to go back to the shadows, they're going back to nothing, from the realities that they have been introduced to. So the whole book of Hebrews is trying to convey the fact that the Aaronic priesthood could never solve anything. However, there was a priesthood that did solve something, and they were part of that priesthood – that they had come into contact with the priesthood that could solve the problem forever of personal sin.

Hebrews 7:4: "Now consider how great this man (that is, Melchizedek) was, unto whom even the patriarch Abram gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abram."

The priestly tribe of Levi had no land. They had no source of income. Their support was the religious income tax, which was imposed upon all the people – the 10% tithe. That's how they lived. Here are Levites who are descended from Abram, who had been placed in the position of superiority over the rest of the Jews. This was indicated by the fact that they could collect tithes from those Jews. Obviously, the government of the United States demonstrates its authority over its citizens by being able to enforce the collecting of income tax from the citizens. That, in the nature of the case, indicates who's superior in authority, and who's inferior in authority. So here he's recognizing that the Levitical priesthood itself was over the rest of the Jews with the authority to collect this money.

Verse 6: "But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abram, and blessed him that had the promises." This is referring to Melchizedek. Melchizedek wasn't even of the line of Abram. He was a gentile. He was outside the line. Yet, Abram was the man who had the promises. What promises? Well, those promises that you read about back in Genesis – about what God said he was going to do with Abram and the nation of Jews that he was going to produce, and what He was going to do with that nation. This included the kingdom that He was going to give them; the king; the land; and, so on.

Abram had all the promises, and yet he is giving tithes, and thereby recognizing the superiority of Melchizedek. Verse 7: "And without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better." That indicated that Melchizedek was superior to Abram. "And here men that die receive tithes, but there he received them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. And as I may so say, Levi also, who received ties, paid tithes in Abram."

Here again is a significant principle. Verse 9 tells us that when Abram paid those tides to Melchizedek, and said, "I recognize you in your priesthood as above me, and I recognize you as the channel of God's blessing to me," that Abram represented the Jewish people. The nation was in his loins. That means that it was in the body of Abram yet unborn. It was to be from the sperm of Abram that the Jewish nation was to descend. When Abram acted, in God's eyes, every Jew was doing obeisance before Melchizedek.

That's the point of verse 10: "For he was yet (that is, the tribe of Levi) in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him." So the point of Hebrews is that there are two priesthoods: the Aaronic priesthood; and, the Melchizedek Priesthood. One is superior and one is subordinate. The subordinate one was the Aaronic priesthood. The superior was the Melchizedek. This was demonstrated by the fact that Abram, representing the Jews who were to come from him, was doing obeisance and paying tithes to Melchizedek. You pay tithes to your superior.

This particular verse, incidentally, is the basis upon the principle of what we call the federal headship of Adam. Sometimes people say, "Well, suppose that a person is born into the human race, and somehow he was able to reproduce the experience of Jesus Christ. Suppose that he never sinned in thought or deed once. Would that person go to heaven?" What would you say? Here's a person born into the human race, and from the time that he's an infant to the time that he's grown, all the days of his life, to the time of his death, he never sinned. He had no mental attitude sins or overt active sins. Would he go to heaven?

Well, he would not go to heaven. That's true. He would indeed go to the lake of fire, because he already sinned. When? When did he sin? He bit into an apple that Eve offered to him. When did he do that? He did it when Adam bit into that apple. When Adam acted in the Garden of Eden, we were all unborn in the loins of Adam. In the eyes of God, when Adam sinned in that garden, you did it with him. That happens to be why you die spiritually. It is because you are in Adam, and you ate of that apple. That's why you die physically. You were in Adam, and you ate of that apple.

Therefore, if you never sin in your own right, you have already sinned by your representative head, Adam. Now, the thing that's important about that is that we have another representative head. One of the blocks separating man from God is the block of being in Adam. That's what it means to be in Adam. You have sinned in Adam, by the fact you were brought into the race. But we have to be changed to what? How do we remove that block? By being placed in Christ. So Jesus Christ now is the federal head of all born again people. So when God sees you and me, He sees us in Christ. Therefore, it is what Jesus did that is accrued to our account.

We can apply this to government. What happens in Washington under the direction of the federal government is the 50 states being represented and acting in behalf of those states. If the federal government says, "We go to war," the 50 states have just said, "We're going to war." If the federal government says, "We're going to print money to cover our deficits," the 50 states have just printed money to cover their deficits; and; so on. The federal government represents the states. When it acts, it is the states which are, in effect, taking that very same identical action.

So this is an important Scripture because it will help you to understand the principle of the federal headship of Adam, which causes us all to be lost; and, the federal headship of Jesus Christ, which causes us all to be born again and saved. So the critical issue for every human being is to get out of Adam in the eyes of God, and to get into Christ. You do that by simply trusting in Jesus as Savior; receiving His sacrifice on behalf of your sins; and, accepting it by faith. You just believe the gospel, and immediately the transfer is made in the records of God.

So the Aaronic priesthood, descended from Abram, showed its subordination to the Melchizedek priesthood by the fact that the Aaronic priesthood gave tithes to the Melchizedek priesthood in the form of its father, Abram.

Melchizedek is a type of Jesus Christ. Today we have a High Priest. All the high priests of the Aaronic order are long since gone and dead. But there is a High Priest, the one and final High Priest, Jesus Christ, who is in heaven and who is after the priesthood of Melchizedek. In Hebrews 5:5, we read, "So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest, but He that said unto Him, 'You are My Son. Today I have begotten You."

Then, in verse 10: "Called of God the high priest after the order of Melchizedek." You may add to that Hebrew 6:20 and Hebrew 7:15-17. Those verses reiterate that Jesus Christ is today a high priest, but not after the Aaronic priesthood, but after that Melchizedek priesthood.

Of course, Jesus could never have been a priest in the Aaronic line. Do you know why? Because you had to be born into the tribe of Levi, and He was born into the tribe of Judah. Therefore, he was automatically disqualified from priesthood. Yet, the Bible says that He is a High Priest. But he is a High Priest of a different order of priesthood. His priesthood is significant in that it is eternal in nature. All the other high priests eventually died and had to be replaced. Hebrews 7:17: "For He testifies You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Verse 21: "For those priests were made without an oath, but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, God Himself making an oath to this effect. The Lord swore, and will not repent. You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

In other words, Jesus will never die in this priesthood as did the other priests of the Aaronic order. Hebrews 7:24: "But this man, because He continues ever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them."

Of course, you can apply pretty well on your own what you have learned thus far about this priest king Melchizedek. You can see the analogy to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was also a king priest. He was eternal, just as Melchizedek is presented in the Bible as one who is eternal. He was appointed to this office. He did not simply assume it on His own (Hebrews 5:4-6). Jesus Christ was absolute righteousness as Melchizedek was King of Righteousness. Jesus was Prince of Peace as Melchizedek was King of Peace. The eternal Melchizedek priesthood under Jesus Christ, as the final high priest, therefore, was able to secure salvation once and for all for mankind, where the Aaronic priesthood could not. Again, Hebrews 7:11 says, "If, therefore, perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, for under it, the people received the law, what further need was there that another priest should arise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron?"

The writer of Hebrews says, "If the Aaronic priesthood could have done the job of salvation, why would there have been a need for another priesthood? Obviously, the answer is because the Aaronic priesthood couldn't do the job. That's why we needed the Melchizedek priesthood. We also have this in Hebrews 7:18-19 and Hebrews 5:9-10.

God himself, we read a moment ago, declared under oath the superiority of the Melchizedek priesthood over the Aaronic (Hebrews 7:20-22). Jesus Christ, as the High Priest, had a better sacrifice to offer. Every priest had to have a sacrifice to offer. That was part of the priesthood. Jesus, as our high priest, offered for sins, once and for all, Himself. Hebrews 8:3: "For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices. Wherefore it is of necessity that this Man, Jesus Christ, should have somewhat also to offer."

Hebrews 9:14-15: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works (human good) to serve a living God? And for this cause, He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

Hebrews 9:28: "So Christ has once offered to bear the sins of many, and onto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." We're looking for the Lord to return, but we are not looking for Him, as the Jews were looking for Him to come to solve the sin question. We're looking for Him again, but when He comes again, it will be apart from the issue of sin. Why? Because, as the High Priest of the order of Melchizedek, He has taken care of that problem.

Therefore, our high priest of this order is seated in heaven. His work is completed. He does not stand as did the priests of the Aaronic order. Hebrews 10:11-14 describe for us this very problem that the priest had to constantly stand, and that their work was never done. But then along comes the High Priest of the Melchizedek order; He offered one sacrifice for sins forever; and, He sat down at the right hand of God. Thus, this was indicating that the sacrifice that He made was all that was necessary. So Jesus Christ, our high priest, has based His ministry on His own sacrifice and on His own blood rather than that of an animal (Hebrews 9:12, Hebrews 9:24-26).

**The Christian Priesthood**

With this background of the Melchizedek priesthood, we now come to where it really touches us directly; that is, the Christian priesthood – the priesthood that you are a part of. Again, I remind you that God has given you this priesthood in order to create something with your life. You are put here to create a ministry. You are put here to create a body of divine good. You will be receiving a name in heaven according to how productive you were or were not.

In 1 Peter 2:4, we have presented to us the New Testament priesthood. This priesthood, because it is based upon our union with our High Priest, Jesus Christ, is after the order of Melchizedek: "To Whom (that is, Jesus Christ), coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious." Here are some critical words in this passage. The first is the word "living." Jesus Christ is described here as a living stone after the order of Melchizedek. This book of 1 Peter was obviously written by Peter the apostle, as the name shows you. Peter the apostle was primarily the apostle to the Jewish people.

Peter is closely associated, therefore, with the Jewish gospel, the gospel of Matthew. It may be that Peter, when he called Jesus a living stone, had in mind an incident which is recorded in the gospel of Matthew 16:13:

"When Jesus came into the borders of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the son of man am?' And they said, 'Some say that you are John the Baptist; some Elijah; and, others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said unto them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered, and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed that unto you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I say also unto you that you are Peter (the little stone), and upon this rock (the large stone of your confession of recognizing that I am the Son of the living God), I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.'"

Jesus is asking His disciples on this occasion, "Who do people think I am?" And they give them various answers, all of them wrong. People don't understand who He is. His disciples, however, did, and Peter expresses it perfectly: "You're the Messiah. You're the Son of the living God. Therefore, if you are the Son of the living God, You Yourself are a living Son." Jesus confirmed to Peter that that was exactly who He was. He was the living Son of the living God. It may be that back here in 1 Peter 2, when Peter was writing his letter, that that incident popped into his mind. And under the direction of the Spirit of God, he viewed Jesus in the guise of the living rock – the living stone.

So verse 4 speaks about coming unto Jesus Christ as the living stone. Verse 5 says, "You also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house and holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Then verse 6: "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he that believes on Him shall not be confounded (ashamed). Unto you, therefore, who believe, He is precious, but unto them who are disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner."

**A Royal Priesthood**

So here we have Jesus Christ, the living stone, the living rock, viewed as the foundation of the church age priesthood. The believer here has nothing to do with laying the foundation of this holy priesthood. Jesus Christ is viewed as the cornerstone of this spiritual building, which is made up of believers who are living stones themselves. Why are they living stones? Because they're related to Jesus Christ, the living Son of God. Therefore, anybody who seeks to add anything to what Christ has already provided here in the form of the foundation that He Himself is, is creating a travesty. You cannot add anything to the living rock foundation of the spiritual house, which is what we believers form, as living stones. We form a spiritual house which is called a royal priesthood.

**We are Priests**

So let's look at verse 5 again, and the structure of the Christian priesthood. "You also as living stones," because you are in a union with Jesus Christ, the living stone, you share His risen life. You're built into this foundation, so you form a holy priesthood. Therefore, this passage tells us that every born again believer in the church age is a holy priest of God.

Let's establish that. This is one of the great truths that came out of the Reformation. Every now and then, you'll run into someone who wears his collar backwards. He automatically identifies himself as being of the clergy. He is of a group called the Priest Caste. He is a priest. He is presenting himself as something that the rest of you as believers in Jesus Christ are not. 1 Peter 2:9, however, says, "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." That is you who are living stones.

Let's add one more verse to that in Revelation 1:6: "And has made us a kingdom of priests unto God and His Father. To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." So the first thing I want you to notice is that the Bible is very clear about the fact that we in this age of grace are all priests. Only the people who reject the living rock, Jesus Christ, are not priests of God. This is simply because they are not born again. They have been disobedient to this stone. So verse 1 Peter 2:8 says, "And so a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense (instead of a living rock, He is a rock of offense) even to them who stumble (that is the Word – the gospel), being disobedient where unto also they were appointed."

So the Bible does not recognize the division of believers into clergy and laity. The priests in the Old Testament were all male. Obviously, if the priests were going to reflect the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the living rock, they had to be male. You could not have used a female priest. Only the heathen used female priests. Now, in this age, since we no longer minister in behalf of others, the women are also priests or priestesses. You, whatever your gender is, are a priest of God. So we are speaking to men and women equally. However, in these denominational liturgical groups that still worship God in front of an altar where they believe God meets them, and who have a priestly system of clergy and laity, to be consistent, again, only males should be appointed to that priesthood.

If you've been following the news, you are aware of the fact that in these churches, the women (as one of the expressions of the ERA amendment and the feminist movement) are coming into the priesthood. They have now, in denominations that previously resisted them, actually appointed women to be priests. I don't know what on earth possesses the thinking of those ecclesiastical leaders. I can only conclude that they have gone absolutely spiritually insane, because there is no ground whatsoever that you could even defend such a thing. If you're going to have the claim of a priestly system between man and God, at least consistency should be maintained that it has to be men. Anytime the bible refers to a woman in a place of spiritual leadership over men, it describes her as putting leaven (the symbol of falsehood) into society. All the great cults uniformly have been founded by women. That's very consistent with Scripture – that when a woman takes charge to lead in spiritual things, then she is an offense to God and is out of line.

However, in this age, women can be priests, within the Melchizedek priesthood for the simple reason that today everybody is a priest, and you represent only one person, and that is yourself. You do not represent anybody else to God, and for that reason your priesthood is a very personal matter between you and God. That is why you do not get up here in this church and stand up here and tell us all your sins. It would make an interesting service if you were to do that. And for some of you, I know you well enough that it would make a real interesting service. But this is a violation of the principle of priesthood. You are not to stand up here and be an exhibitionist. We've got enough preachers in pulpits who are exhibitionists, who portray themselves and their inward personal qualities and attitudes mostly to praise themselves and make themselves look good in the eyes of people. But for the congregation (the sheep) to catch on that bad habit is even more horrendous.

So remember that you women, you are priests, but don't go to God in behalf of interceding for your husband, because you're going to get in trouble. Just go there and intercede in behalf of yourself. Nor can he go to intercede in behalf of you – to deal with your sin for you.

So the believers here are all declared to be priests of God. They are not told to strive to become priests. You already are. Everybody is. How do you become a priest? By spiritual birth. How did Aaron's sons become priests? By the sheer fact that they were born into the family of Aaron. And you and I become priests in this age of grace by simple spiritual regeneration. When you're born into the family of God, you're born as a priest, as a living stone in the house of God. We priests have access to God through Jesus Christ. We saw how when the veil was torn from top to bottom, and the Holy of Holies was thrown open to public view, that that symbolically demonstrated that now we have direct access to God through only one person, for the veil represented our High Priest, Jesus Christ of the Melchizedek order. We have access directly into God's presence through that veil. And we recognize that God who sat there in the Holy of Holies as the supreme power of the universe, and we are His priests, representing ourselves before Him.

Therefore, remember what they did to the priest. When they consecrated him to his office, they put blood on his ear, on his right thumb, and on the big toe of his right foot, in order to symbolically demonstrate that he was under the cleansing power of El Elyon Almighty God, and that he was to act; he was to listen; he was to use his hands in service; and, he was to walk, and his life was to be wholly in recognition of Who it is that was behind that curtain in the Holy of Holies.

**Curse Words**

There is, as you know, another power base in the universe, and that is Satan. God is here, and Satan is here. There are two power centers in the universe. One of the sacrifices, as we will see on another occasion (just leaping ahead) is the sacrifice that you perform with your mouth. In just a few days, we are going to gather at a Thanksgiving Day service. It will be a classic occasion for you to perform the sacrifice of your lips. With those same lips, as James recognizes, we can perform a most hideous thing by recognizing the other power base. You'll have to get the studies for full details on this and on the commandment that says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord God in vain." We've gone into this in more detail. But I just want to remind you that, as a priest of God, you can be a huge disgrace and an insult to God by using curse words.

When was the last time you told somebody to, "Go to hell" in your indignation? What have you done? You have said, "It is my wish to consign you to the lake of fire, and I call upon the power base of Satan in expressing that wish." When was the last time you damned somebody or something? You are a priest of El Elyon after the order of Melchizedek, and you have called upon Satan's power base as the authority to execute something because to damn people is associated with Satan's realm. When was the last time you use an obscene word – human excrement; or, obscenities of one kind or another? Don't ever forget you're calling upon Satan's power base and his authority and you are recognizing him. So when you've lost your control, and you've lost your temper, and you have done that, I remind you that you've got a lot of confessing to do. It is pitiful if you do it in your home where your children can hear it, and they're smart enough to know that they have a parent who's raising his hands and calling upon Satan in his realm and in his power to execute a curse in effect, just because you've lost control of yourself.

Well, when you do, just remember who you are, dear Christian. You're after the order of Melchizedek, the eternal priesthood, representing the High Priest, Jesus Christ, under the authority of El Elyon God Almighty. We have direct access through the Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest, into the presence of this God. The Aaronic priesthood never had that access. Even the high priest could only go into that room once a year on the Great Day of Atonement.

Hebrews 10:19 says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us through the veil (that is to say – His flesh), and having a High Priest over the house of God. Let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." So don't come into the presence as God's priest with your conscience contaminated with evil. You represent yourself before God. That is your privilege. That is your right.

At the next session, we're going to look a little bit at the nature of the Christian priesthood – a priest in the order of Melchizedek under the high priest, Jesus Christ, serving El Elyon God Almighty. Following this, we will get down to the real issue of the sacrifices themselves so that I hope that you will know how to go about performing the Christian sacrifices.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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