



וְנִחְלָה לֹא-יִהְיֶה-לּוֹ, בְּקִרְבֵי אֶחָיו: יְהוָה
הוּא נִחְלָתוֹ, כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר-לוֹ. {ס}

Deuteronomy 18:2

Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren; the LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them

KALPESON
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Deuteronomy 18:1-8
The Lord is His Inheritance
May 30, 2021

"The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion. ² Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren; the LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them.

³ "And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, whether it is bull or sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach. ⁴ The firstfruits of your grain and your new wine and your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him. ⁵ For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons forever.

⁶ "So if a Levite comes from any of your gates, from where he dwells among all Israel, and comes with all the desire of his mind to the place which the LORD chooses, ⁷ then he may serve in the name of the LORD his God as all his brethren the Levites do, who stand there before the LORD. ⁸ They shall have equal portions to eat, besides what comes from the sale of his inheritance.

Most of us, at any given time, have something that we really yearn for. When we're hungry, a particular food may be on our mind. When we've been inside too long, we will yearn to get out and enjoy the outdoors. If we meet someone special, we may long to get the phone call we hope will come. With every passing hour, the yearning grows.

Whatever it is, it gives us a sense of anticipation that will often keep our minds from being productive at anything else. Lots of people yearn for the rapture. It is almost an obsession with them. But that has to be divided into at least two main categories –

Those who long to be out of this crummy world, meaning crummy for whatever reason – sickness, some misery or another, the depraved state of things, and so on. Or
Those who simply long to see the Lord, just because He is the Lord.

The reason for the yearning may change based on the current state of things as well. In other words, we may long just to see the Lord, but when something really major happens, we just long to get away from it – "Come soon Lord Jesus."

If so, that means that the second option may not actually be as strong of a yearning as it otherwise could be. Or maybe our desire for the Lord has simply faded over the years. That can happen to anyone at any time.

The way to keep this from happening is to fix our eyes on the Prize. As the Source of all things, the Lord is the One who is the perfection of all goodness, light, joy, blessing, and so on. If we can remember this and meditate on it, then our current state will not drive the level of our yearning for Him.

Text Verse: *How lovely is Your tabernacle,
O LORD of hosts!*

² *My soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living
God.*

³ *Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King and my God.*

⁴ *Blessed are those who dwell in Your house;
They will still be praising You. Selah*

⁵ *Blessed is the man whose strength is in
You,
Whose heart is set on pilgrimage.*

⁶ *As they pass through the Valley of Baca,
They make it a spring;
The rain also covers it with pools.*

⁷ *They go from strength to strength;
Each one appears before God in Zion.*

⁸ *O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah*

⁹ *O God, behold our shield,
And look upon the face of Your anointed.*

¹⁰ *For a day in Your courts is better than a
thousand.*

*I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house
of my God*

Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

¹¹ *For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
The LORD will give grace and glory;*

*No good thing will He withhold
From those who walk uprightly.*

¹² *O LORD of hosts,*

Blessed is the man who trusts in You!

Psalm 84

The whole psalm needed to be cited because verses, right from the beginning of it to the end of it are reflected in our passage today. The psalmist understood the beauty of the Lord, and he knew the state of those who yearned to dwell in His glory and light so much that they were set on their pilgrimage even through the Valley of Baca, or Weeping.

This life is our valley of weeping. There are good times too, but none of us are immune from the times of overwhelming grief. This is a reality of life and how we respond to it will reveal the priority of our hearts, if we are willing to search them out.

To me, one of the most wonderful experiences I know of is when I hear from someone who is going through untold pains, miseries, or trials, and who is still able to say, “Oh how I love the Lord. He is my Rock.” If nothing else will build you up, it is a person that is positive, even in the most negative of times.

“Whatever they have, that’s what I want.” What are you yearning for most of all? What is the inner impulse that is driving you at any given moment? The psalmist penned what was on his mind. Moses will tell us of another such person today.

Let us learn from them what is of the highest value. Great lessons such as these are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. With All the Desire of His Soul (verses 1-8)

In the words that open Chapter 18, Moses turns to the state of things among the tribe of Levi. This is a logical next step in his discourse. In the previous chapter, he said the following concerning judicial matters –

“If a matter arises which is too hard for you to judge, between degrees of guilt for bloodshed, between one judgment or another, or between one punishment or another, matters of controversy within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God chooses. ⁹ And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge there in those days, and inquire of them; they shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment. ¹⁰ You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce upon you in that place which the LORD chooses. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they order you.” Deuteronomy 17:8-10

After that, in verses 14-20, he then spoke of the responsibilities of the king. The assumption was that the “judge” just mentioned in verse 9 would eventually become the position of a king. As such, his responsibilities would need to be defined.

With that thought completed, Moses will now refer to the rights of the Levites, also just mentioned in verse 9. This will go from 18:1-8. These are the earthly authorities to be sought out because they represent the Lord.

After that, verses 9-14 will give a warning about who to not seek out direction from, and that will then lead into the office of the prophet who speaks on behalf of the Lord in matters beyond, but in accord with, the law. Everything that is laid out is orderly and purposeful. With that understood, we begin with verse 1...

¹“The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel;

The words here reflect the sentiment spoken by the Lord to Aaron in Numbers 18:20 –

“You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.”
Numbers 18:20

Here in Deuteronomy, by offsetting the words “all the tribe of Levi,” the Hebrew is well expressed by the NKJV. But because of the way it reads, various skeptical scholars (such as Cambridge) say the words are “a forced attempt to reconcile” the insertion of various different authors into the narrative.

The Hebrew more exactly reads, “No shall have to the priests, the Levites – all tribe of Levi – portion and inheritance with Israel.”

What Cambridge says is that the words here make no distinction between the priests and the other Levites. Because of this, the verse was supposedly inserted by someone much later.

Such a commentary makes no sense at all. If someone was to insert something later, they wouldn't make the intent less understandable, but would instead reconcile what they were inserting to make it more understandable.

Rather, the roles of the priests and Levites have already been defined. There is no need for Moses to repeat those roles again in order to make the point he is about to make.

However, by simply turning back to the appropriate passage in Numbers, one can see that the reference to “the priests, the Levites” is speaking of them as a united body, even though they are separate entities –

“Then the LORD said to Aaron: ‘You and your sons and your father’s house with you shall bear the iniquity related to the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity associated with your priesthood. ² Also bring with you your brethren of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may be joined with you and serve you while you and your sons are with you before the tabernacle of witness. ³ They shall attend to your needs and all the needs of the tabernacle; but they shall not come near the articles of the sanctuary and the altar, lest they die—they and you also. ⁴ They shall be joined with you and attend to the needs of the tabernacle of meeting, for all the work of the tabernacle; but an outsider shall not come near you. ⁵ And you shall attend to the duties of the sanctuary and the duties of the altar, that there may be no more wrath on the children of Israel. ⁶ Behold, I Myself have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; they are a gift to you, given by the LORD, to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁷ Therefore you and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for everything at the altar and behind the veil; and you shall serve. I give your priesthood to you as a gift for service, but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death.’” Numbers 18:1-7

The Lord's words there show that the Levites are given to the priests for service of the tabernacle. For Moses now in Deuteronomy, the Levites are already joined to the priests. He is speaking from the standpoint that this is already the case. After thirty-eight years of this set up, it would make no sense for him to redefine everything all over again.

As a simple example, we could take the functioning of the White House. Each job within the White House is explained in a book. Some years later, a new idea concerning its organization is presented.

Anybody who is already aware of the various functions of the White House might just say, “The president, the cabinet secretaries – all of the White House – shall be subject to the following guidelines.

Nobody in their right mind would say, “Oh whoever said that doesn’t understand that the president and the secretaries are two different offices.” It is perfectly understood. Why would anyone recite all of the pages and pages of duties before stating the new requirement? Nothing would ever get done!

But this is what skeptical scholars do with the Bible all the time. They attempt to call into question the reliability of the Bible for whatever perverse reason goes through their heads.

Maybe they just want to appear more intellectual or informed, but they rather make themselves look foolish, and they harm the faith of others in the process. Moses is simply stating that those who serve at the tabernacle, meaning those of the tribe of Levi, shall have no inheritance (meaning a land grant) among the tribes of Israel. And there is a reason for this...

¹ (con’t) **they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion.**

There is a stress in the Hebrew, an emphasis, on the word “eat”: *ishsheh Yehovah v’nakhalato yokelun* – “fire offerings Yehovah and (“and” meaning “even”) His inheritance, they shall (certainly) eat.”

In other words, the offerings made by fire are to the Lord. They are called “fire offerings” because a part of the animal was burnt on the altar of sacrifice to the Lord.

After that, and depending on what type of offerings they are, parts of them are given to the priests. Those parts are the Lord’s portion, but as representatives of the Lord, those sacred parts are (certainly) eaten by them. The emphasis is given to highlight this fact.

In essence, the tribe of Levi has no inheritance among Israel because the inheritance of the Lord is their inheritance. That is then explicitly stated in the next words...

² **Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren;**

As a point of clarification, Deuteronomy 10:9 said, “Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord *is* his inheritance, just as the Lord your God promised him.)” As this verse is speaking of “all the tribe of Levi” just as it was in 10:9, it should be translated in the singular as well – “**he** shall have no inheritance among **his** brethren.”

Also, the words are emphatic: *v'nakhalah lo yihyeh lo b'qerev ekhav* – “and inheritance **no** shall be in midst his brothers.” This thought from verse 1 is stated again to provide emphasis. Levi is set apart and there is to be a set distinction between him and his brothers. The division of the land is to exclude a portion for Levi. This is because...

² (con't) **the LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them.**

There is again an emphasis which is missing in the translation: *Yehovah, hu, nakhalato* – “Yehovah, **He**, *is* their inheritance.” As it is so, a land grant would be meaningless in comparison to this honor. The people of Israel were to find their sustenance from their land, but Levi was to find it from what belonged to the Lord from that same land – the Lord’s portion. That portion is...

³ **“And this shall be the priest’s due from the people,**

It has already been established that the priest is to receive a portion of each sacrifice that is made by the people. Moses will now restate this and expand upon it. It is to be...

³ (con't) **from those who offer a sacrifice,**

meet zobekhe ha'zebakh – “from sacrifice the sacrifice.” It is a comprehensive statement where every animal that is sacrificed is included. However, as this is the priest’s due from the people, what is that speaking of? The parts of the animal that were for the expiatory sacrifices and peace offerings have already been defined in Leviticus.

What this is surely referring to is the portion of those things that are eaten by the offeror as defined in Deuteronomy concerning the freewill offerings, tithes, heave offerings, and so on which are brought during the pilgrim feasts. The reason this must be so is seen in the next words...

³ (con't) **whether *it is* bull or sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach.**

As noted, the sacred portion for the priests was already defined for the expiatory sacrifices and peace offerings in Leviticus and Numbers. For example –

“The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place, you, your sons, and your daughters with you; for they are your due and your sons’ due, which are given from the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel.” Leviticus 10:14

“This shall be yours of the most holy things reserved from the fire: every offering of theirs, every grain offering and every sin offering and every trespass offering which they render to Me, shall be most holy for you and your sons.” Numbers 18:9

However, Deuteronomy refers to offerings other than the peace offerings –

“You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd or your flock, of any of your offerings which you vow, of your freewill offerings, or of the heave offering of your hand.” Deuteronomy 12:17

“Only the holy things which you have, and your vowed offerings, you shall take and go to the place which the LORD chooses. ²⁷ And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the meat and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, and you shall eat the meat.” Deuteronomy 12:26, 27

These were mentioned in Numbers 18:11, but no detail was given at that time. The detail is now being explained by Moses. The reason why it is important to make the distinction between the parts of the animal from the various sacrifices and offerings defined in Leviticus and these things in Deuteronomy is that different parts are mentioned. Without making this distinction, one would find a contradiction in what Moses is saying. And, in fact, this is what is claimed by some.

The parts of these particular sacrifices include the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach. The first is the *zeroa*. This signifies arm, shoulder, or strength. The word comes from *zara*, to scatter seed.

The next is the *lekhi*. It is the jaw or cheek, coming from an unused root meaning to be soft, like the fleshiness of the cheek.

The third is a word found only here in all of Scripture, the *qevah*. It is not entirely sure what it is, but it is believed to be the stomach. The word comes from *qevav*, meaning a curse because such a curse is as if you scoop out (hollow out) the one you are cursing. As the stomach is a cavity, this is where the connection lies.

These three parts come from the three principal parts of the animal – the head, the limbs, and the body. Thus, they represent the consecration of the whole. But these parts anticipate the dedication of aspects of a person to God. The shoulder, or arm, represents the limbs and thus the acts of a person –

“And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.” Romans 6:13

The jaw or cheek represents the words of the person –

“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.” 1 Timothy 4:6

And the stomach represents the expression of the innermost being of the person –

“The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being [stomach] will flow rivers of living water.’” John 7:38 (NASB)

These are the parts of the animal that belonged to the priest from these particular sacrifices now mentioned in Deuteronomy. Along with them, the people were also instructed...

⁴The firstfruits of your grain and your new wine and your oil,

reshit deganekha tiroshkha v'yitsharekha – “First of your grain, your new wine, and your oil.” This was previously mentioned in Numbers 18:12, 13 –

“All the best of the oil, all the best of the new wine and the grain, their firstfruits which they offer to the LORD, I have given them to you. ¹³ Whatever first ripe fruit is in their land, which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.”

The amount is not stated, but if everyone brought a meal-sized amount of each, the cumulative amount would be immense.

The root of these three words gives us insight into the work of Christ. The grain comes from a word meaning “increase.” The new wine comes from a word signifying “to inherit” or “to disinherit” depending on the context. The oil comes from the same root as the word *tsohar*, signifying midday or noon. In Psalm 37, that is then equated to purity of justice –

“He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.” Psalm 37:6

Together these first offerings to the priest form a picture of the Lord. He is the first and thus emblematic of the harvest to come. He is the One through Whom God provides the increase. He both is the Inheritor of the nations while at the same time disinheriting the devil. And He is the purity of God’s justice as His light shines forth.

When these firsts are gathered up, a special ritual concerning them was to be conducted. That is found in Chapter 26 –

“And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, ²that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. ³And you shall go to the one who is priest in those days, and say to him, ‘I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the country which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.’

⁴“Then the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. ⁵And you shall answer and say before the LORD your God: ‘My father was a Syrian, about to perish, and he went down to Egypt and dwelt there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. ⁶But the Egyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us. ⁷Then we cried out to the LORD God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labor and our oppression. ⁸So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders. ⁹He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, “a land flowing with milk and honey”; ¹⁰and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me.’

“Then you shall set it before the LORD your God, and worship before the LORD your God. ¹¹So you shall rejoice in every good thing which the LORD your God has given to you and your house, you and the Levite and the stranger who is among you.

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Along with the grain, new wine, and oil, something not previously mentioned is set aside for the priests by Moses –

⁴ (con’t) **and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him.**

v'reshit gez sonekha titen lo – “and first fleece of your sheep you shall give him.” This requirement is only stated here. Nothing else concerning it is even referred to elsewhere. As it is an offering to the priest, it must have a typological significance.

The Hebrew word for fleece is *gez*. That is derived from the verb *gazaz*, meaning to shear. But it is also used figuratively in regard to destroying (cutting down) an enemy –

“Thus says the LORD:
‘Though they are safe, and likewise many,
Yet in this manner they will be cut down
When he passes through.’” Nahum 1:12

With this, it can be assumed that the fleece being brought to the priest is a picture of Christ being the one to cut down the enemies of God. Just as the fleece of a sheep is cut off and presented to the priest, the mediator before the Lord, so will the enemies of the Lord be cut off by the Messiah, God’s true High Priest.

⁵ For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes

Aaron was chosen as the high priest. His sons ministered as priests with him. After him, his sons were designated to continue in the priesthood. Only they were set apart for this out of all of the tribes. As this is so, then any change in priesthood would indicate a changing of the law. This is referred to in Hebrews 7.

The point of what is being said, though, isn’t just for the sake of the priests, but of the Levites who are joined to the priest. It is the members of this tribe who have been chosen...

^{5 (con’t)} to stand to minister in the name of the LORD,

Again, Hebrews refers to this, specifically Hebrews 10 that speaks of the priest standing and ministering daily before the Lord. Their duties were ongoing and without end. This is clearly stated in the next words...

^{5 (con’t)} him and his sons forever.

hu u-banav kal ha’yammim – “him and his sons all the days.” The idea of a priesthood is that of mediation before God. A person needs mediation with God because there is a dispute between the two parties. What these words are telling us is that the dispute between the people and God is not resolved by the mediation of Aaron. If it was, they would no longer be needed to mediate.

However, this says that they continue to minister “all the days.” The process would never end through their ministrations. But the word does not mean “forever” in the absolute sense. It simply means that as long as the people require mediation under the Covenant, the priests would continue to provide that mediation.

Throughout those days, it may be that a Levite from one of the Levitical cities wanted to assist the priests in the duties. Moses now makes provision for this...

6 “So if a Levite comes from any of your gates,

v’ki yabo ha’Levi me-ekhad shearekha – “And if comes the Levite from one of your gates.” The meaning is that this is a Levite who has lived in one of the Levitical cities, or it also may refer to one who resides within one of the towns of Israel, performing the duties of a judge or minister for the people.

6 (con’t) from where he dwells among all Israel,

mikal yisrael asher hu gar sham – “from all Israel which he sojourns there.” The words “from all Israel” are emphatic, and the word *gar* signifies to sojourn, being normally applied to someone who has turned aside from the road, as in a stranger or alien.

The idea is that the Levite is such a sojourner among Israel because he, as a Levite, has no land inheritance among the tribes. Even if he lives in a Levitical city, it is not a place of inheritance. Rather, the inheritance of Levi is the Lord, as was stated in verse 2. In this state, he feels impelled to join himself to the place of his inheritance...

6 (con’t) and comes with all the desire of his mind to the place which the LORD chooses,

The Hebrew reads, “with all *the* desire of his soul.” Unlike the mind, which is the seat of reasoning, the soul is what animates the person. It is as if he has an inner urge pulling at him to join to the service of the Lord at the tabernacle. This is the idea conveyed.

The wording is perfectly described in the 84th psalm, our text verse, a psalm written by the sons of Korah, meaning Levites who had this same inner urge to dwell at the tabernacle in the presence of the Lord. If such a Levite has this inner impulse...

7 then he may serve in the name of the LORD his God as all his brethren the Levites do,

This means that he is not to be turned away from this privilege. He is to be accepted into the Lord’s service at the tabernacle. This would seemingly be a rather rare occurrence. The Levites would grow up in their cities, and like anyone, they would feel at home there.

They would have their family around them, the comforts of the security of the home environment, and surely a certain amount of prestige in the areas they ministered. To leave all that behind to maybe be a doorkeeper at the sanctuary of the Lord would be a true calling. And this is highlighted by the next words...

⁷ (con't) **who stand there before the LORD.**

ha'omedim sham liphne Yehovah – “the standers there before Yehovah.” The idea is that of service. To stand means to be ready, to be prepared, and to be engaged. It thus means service. In this case, it is the service of the Lord –

Behold, bless the LORD, All you servants of the LORD, Who by night stand in the house of the LORD! ² Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, And bless the LORD. ³ The LORD who made heaven and earth Bless you from Zion! Psalm 134

Such a Levite, with such an inward desire pressed upon his soul, was to be taken in, and he was to be given exactly what the others at the sanctuary were given. This is codified into law so that it was understood. He had given up much to come to be among the others, and whatever benefit he received from selling his inheritance was not to be required of him. As Moses says...

⁸ **They shall have equal portions to eat,**

kheleq k'kheleq yokelu – “portion for portion they shall eat.” Just as anyone else who previously served at the sanctuary, so this Levite was to be welcomed in and given an equal portion to that of all the others. This is probably the verse on Paul's mind when giving instruction concerning those who preach –

“Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? ¹⁴ Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.” 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14

The person had left his home to serve, and he was to be given his portion like all others...

^{*8} (fin) **besides what comes from the sale of his inheritance.**

l'bad mimkarav al ha'avot – “to separate sale of the fathers.” In other words, the sale of that which was inherited from his fathers was to remain his. It was not to be exacted from him to pay for his keep. This would be a protection for him should he ever decide to return to his

home, if there was a need in his family, and so on. What was his when he came was to remain his after his coming.

*This is the priest's portion of each offering
But what does it really mean?
Time and again, one brings forth his proffering
Time and again, the same person is seen*

*Why does this cycle never come to an end?
We minister to the same people time and again
Haven't I seen you here before my friend?
Will this job ever finish? If so, when?*

*If returning to Eden requires no sin
And if people keep coming back time and again
It appears that we are all done in
So, it seems. Can I get an "Amen?"*

*Something is lacking that I just can't see
Surely, someday Messiah will explain it to me*

II. A Better Priesthood

The abrupt nature of the ending of the passage calls for us to venture into the New Testament in order to obtain a few points of doctrine mentioned in passing as we looked at the verses today. While looking at verse 5, I said that any change in priesthood from Levi would necessarily indicate a changing of the law. This is one of the main points of Hebrews 7. There, the author says –

“Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? ¹² For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. ¹³ For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. ¹⁵ And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest ¹⁶ who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. ¹⁷ For He testifies: ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’

¹⁸ For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹ for the law made nothing perfect; on the other

hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”
Hebrews 7:14-19

The author of Hebrews cited the 110th Psalm to demonstrate that the Messiah would not only be a priest, but He would be a priest completely different than that found in the Levitical priesthood. He is basing his argument under the assumption that the Psalms are inspired by God. If not, then his argument has no basis.

But because he takes it as an axiom that what they say is inspired, then it means that the term “all the days” referring to the Levitical priesthood in verse 5 does not mean “forever.” This is because the psalmist, David in this case, spoke of a coming priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek came long before Aaron, and his priesthood had nothing to do with the service of the Law of Moses. Therefore, if David speaks of a future priest who is of a different order, meaning a different priesthood, then it necessarily follows that there will be a change from the Law of Moses, which was ministered to by Levi.

The author then states that this priest is Jesus, a Descendant of Judah, not Levi. Not only does Moses say nothing of Judah in this regard, the Mosaic law forbid anyone but Levi from ministering as a priest under that law.

As this is so, he directly states – without any ambiguity at all – that the “former commandment,” meaning the Law of Moses, is annulled. He then explains the reason it is so, saying it was both weak and unprofitable. In its place he says a “better hope” is brought in, referring to the New Covenant in Christ.

That was seen in our verses today. It was weak because it could not perfect anyone. To understand a part of its weakness, Hebrews 10 says –

“For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” Hebrews 10:1-4

His logic is impeccable. What the Law of Moses did was to provide shadows, or representations, of what Christ would do. But those shadows actually did nothing. Bulls and goats are in a different category than humans. Thus, their blood is unable to cleanse.

If it could, those who came to be cleansed would be purified and restoration with God would be complete. But the fact that they had to be observed constantly, year by year, demonstrates that they had no efficacy at all. As this was so, there was no profit in continuing in this law forever. Rather, something better was needed.

That something better was introduced already by him in Chapter 8 when he quoted the prophet Jeremiah, saying, *“Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah”* (Hebrews 8:8).

He continues explaining what this means through the rest of the chapter, finishing Chapter 8 with the words, *“In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away”* (Hebrews 8:13).

Again, the author of Hebrews is clear and unambiguous. The Law of Moses is obsolete. It no longer serves any purpose in the effectiveness of bringing man to restoration with God.

To finish the thought off for today, we can look to the supremacy of what Christ did as is recorded in the words of our passage from verse 7, where it said, *ha’omedim sham liphne Yehovah* – “the standers there before Yehovah.”

The work of the priest was never finished. Each course of the Levites involved them standing before the Lord, ready to minister at all times. In contrast to that, Hebrews says –

“And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.” Hebrews 10:11-12

Christ Jesus performed His work, fulfilling all of the types and shadows of the Mosaic covenant, and in His fulfillment of it, it says He sat down. The work is complete. The mediation has served its purpose, and reconciliation between God and man has been realized.

The “something better” that was needed was the coming of Christ. Hebrews 10:10, says that through the offering of the body of Christ we are sanctified once for all. The duties of our Great High priest were fully effectual in doing what the Law of Moses could never do. Thus, the Law of Moses was taken away, and with it, the New Covenant, the Christ Covenant, was established (Hebrews 10:9).

If you wonder why there is so much focus on these seemingly tedious aspects of the Law of Moses, it is because it is showing us the greatness of what God would do in Christ. The few verses we cited from Hebrews just now probably fill thirty or more pages of evaluation in my Hebrews commentary. And these were just a few select verses out of chapters 7-10.

The Hebrews commentary is right online for you to copy and read anytime you wish. Or, if you'd rather, we'll be getting to the book of Hebrews in our Thursday Bible class shortly. When we get there, we will go through its verses one by one and in minute detail.

Don't get bogged down by the detail in Deuteronomy. Rather, look at it as a great part of the marvelous unfolding story of God's love for you as is revealed in the coming of Christ. Without it, we would have a tremendous void in our understanding of all that He has done for us.

Theology is hard work. Proper theology is even harder. Go slow, meticulously follow the thread of glory, and be excited with each new passage. God has placed them here for us as a gift of love and blessing. Accept the gift, open it up, and be blessed in its marvelous contents.

Closing Verse: *"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ²a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man."*
Hebrews 8:1, 2

Next Week: Deuteronomy 18:9-14 *Such things as He finds distasteful are recorded in His word...* (An Abomination to the Lord) (55th Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Lord is His Inheritance

"The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—
Shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel

They shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire
And His portion – it is theirs as well

Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren

The LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them

"And this shall be the priest's due from the people

From those who offer a sacrifice; when they do
Whether it is bull or sheep
They shall give to the priest the shoulder, the cheeks
-----and the stomach too

The firstfruits of your grain
And your new wine and your oil as well
And the first of the fleece of your sheep
You shall give him, so to you I tell

For the LORD your God has chosen him
Out of all your tribes to stand
To minister in the name of the LORD
Him and his sons forever; such is what I planned

“So if a Levite comes from any of your gates
From where he dwells among all Israel
And comes with all the desire of his mind
To the place which the LORD chooses;
where the Lord does dwell

Then he may serve
In the name of the LORD his God according
to this word
As all his brethren the Levites do
Who stand there before the LORD

They shall have equal portions to eat, with
the other gents
Besides what comes from the sale of his
inheritance

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to
Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have
heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful
and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You
alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of
praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have
shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our
days

Hallelujah and Amen...