

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

A PRIEST FOREVER

For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Hebrews 7:17

Apart from the testimony which is recorded in the scriptures, those who are the called according to HIS purpose, have no basis upon which to believe that HE is the SAVIOR of sinners. Thus it has pleased the LORD to awaken them by HIS SPIRIT and then to reveal HIMSELF to them through the preaching of the GOSPEL. (see Rom. 10:13-17; II Tim. 1:9-11; I Cor. 1:17-21)

This testimony is woven throughout the Old Testament in type, foreshadow, and prophecy, and forms the very fabric upon which the clearer manifestation of CHRIST come in the flesh is declared. *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."* (Heb 1:1-4)

The FAITH of GOD's elect has been the same in all ages, yet those who have lived since the Incarnation of CHRIST and the plain revelation of HIS person and finished work do enjoy a more glorious understanding of redemption than those who came before. *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."* (Heb 11:13) *"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* (Heb 11:39-40)

This truth is embodied and illustrated to us in the words of our LORD when HE said, *"For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."* (Luke 7:28) John saw the SAVIOR (see John 1:29) yet he died without a clear understanding of how CHRIST would secure the redemption of HIS people, establish HIS kingdom in the earth, and without having seen the glory of HIS resurrection as the affirmation of all of the promises given to the elect in all ages.

The Jews assumed (as do many who profess to be the followers of CHRIST), that the giving of the Law to Moses was an end in itself. Yet the unfolding of the gospel reveals that this Law was merely a temporary measure designed to bring the sons of GOD to HIM who is the true LAWGIVER and the SAVIOR of sinners. *"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."* (Gal 3:23-25) *"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."* (Rom 8:2)

The work which CHRIST came to perform was in part to satisfy the demands of the justice of GOD which HE revealed in this Mosaic Law. Yet to demonstrate HIS ownership of that Law and the temporary nature thereof, HE ordained that the PRIEST who should offer up HIMSELF as an offering for sin should not arise out of the Levitical priesthood, which Moses' law required, but rather of an order which was far superior than that carnal order could ever supply. *"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house."* (Heb 3:3)

The law of Moses, the offerings ordained therein, nor all of its priests combined could ever take away one sin. *"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins."* (Heb. 10:11) No sin was ever abrogated by any sin offering made by any Levitical priest since sin is a much greater issue than that which is revealed by the Mosaic law. Sin existed and was condemned long before the Mosaic law was ever instituted. Sin is a condition of the heart rather than simply a breaking of a code.

Therefore the removal of sin required a much greater sacrifice than any which was described in the law of Moses. *"The soul that sinneth shall die"* is a principle (or law) which was established at the very inception of man upon the earth as the LORD decreed to Adam, *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* (Gen 2:17)

Much can be learned from the Law of Moses but sin is only revealed thereby and can never be cancelled by the fulfillment of its requirements or an adherence to its precepts. So it was necessary that any "offering" (for the purpose of sin's cancellation) must be performed by ONE who was fitted for the task and not one simply performing an activity as a result of his carnal lineage or the fulfillment of some temporary code.

This ONE who came after the order of Melchisedek, was just such a PRIEST having the power of an endless life and being a MAN with a perfect character, *"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* (Heb 10:12-14) *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* (Heb 9:11-12)

HE is a PRIEST forever. HE did not become a PRIEST as an afterthought or according to some plan HE hatched up to effect a remedy. Rather HE is that *"LAMB slain from the foundation of the world."* HE came into the world as a PRIEST of the most high GOD, the only BEGOTTEN SON of GOD, to perform the PRIESTLY work of sacrifice. As such HE has ever been the REPRESENTATIVE of HIS people hidden in HIM from before the foundation of the world. HIS elect have never been without a PRIEST before the throne of GOD.

HE is a PRIEST forever. While the ages roll, HE shall continue in this same PRIESTLY office and be glorified forever as that LAMB slain, worthy of all exaltation. *"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."* (Heb 7:24-25) The priests of this world can only make intercession by groanings and prayers but this HIGH PRIEST over the house of GOD makes intercession for the saints of GOD by HIS very presence in the heavens.

HE is a PRIEST forever. No sinner who has fled to HIM for refuge need ever fear being cast from HIS presence for HE pitieth them and they shall never be ashamed nor confounded, since HE is their RIGHTEOUSNESS before the throne of GOD where HE sits as a KING. *"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."* (Gen 49:10-12) mam