

Today we're going to focus on a subject that can often times reveal a great deal about ourselves and how we think toward God. And since we have so many who are new and we haven't covered this subject in a while I thought this would be a good time. It isn't a matter that I just thought about it; I understand God gives it to me. It's something that needs to be addressed so that people can think about it because it's a broad subject and it does reveal a lot about human nature and battles we have and so forth and there are reasons why God instituted this in the way that He did and has addressed it in many places in scripture. This sermon is the subject of tithes and offerings and that's what the sermon is entitled today; *Tithes and Offerings* and this is *Part 1*.

It's a fascinating subject and actually we're going to go into things that I've never really gone into in the past. We're going to spend a little bit of time going through this because it is really quite revealing, and it's exciting to see how God leads, guides and directs us, and moulds and fashions us anyway. And this has been a powerful tool through time as a part of that: because that's the thing that so often tries us. The Sabbath day by itself in this world, when people are called and drawn to it – that's a big trial because as a whole there aren't that many people in the world that are tuned into a Sabbath, especially in what we'd call Traditional Christianity when we talk about the 7th Day Sabbath; and it reveals much about ourselves then and whether or not we are truly responding to a calling that God is giving to us, because you have to make decisions and choices. There are a lot of people who *work* on that day. There are a lot of people who have many other *activities* on that day. And there are many people then that look down upon you because if you adopt that day, embrace that day because it's different from the world around you you're going to be treated differently. And so it really tests people and tries people as to what you truly believe and as to what you're going to stand up to and whether you're really going to put God first in your life.

Keeping the Sabbath can try you in many ways and one of those ways, if you do work on that day of the week, is finances. It affects our lives mightily and how we think then; and so do tithes and offerings. Over and over again I've seen in God's Church where people have had battles with some of these things and there are people who's minds have been opened up to the truth, but because they couldn't address this because it affects their pocket, it affects their lives...and just like I was counselling someone this morning via internet about marriage and telling them that as I had talked to them in times past, I'd mentioned to them the *importance* of making sure, before you enter into such a relationship, that you have your finances in order, that you're financially stable and able to do this because that can cause a great strain. In the beginning of a marriage you don't want to put unnecessary strain. Those battles are hard enough in family, in life, but especially in the beginning of a relationship like that. And so it is that when people come into God's Church sometimes that can put a strain on people's relationships – especially if both aren't feeling the same way about what is being given and revealed. And so there are all kinds of situations that arise.

So this is really an interesting subject and an exciting subject especially as you go through some of the Old Testament. We're going to begin by looking at the subject from the very beginning going back to Genesis 14. This is going to be a series so we'll probably have at least two, probably three sermons on this – maybe more; I don't know where it's fully headed here at this point. Depends on what God gives at this point. But again, a lot on this subject in the Bible – there truly is.

So let's pick it up here in **Genesis 14**. This is the account of Abram at this particular time, before his name was changed to Abraham. **Genesis 14:8 - And the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboim, and the king of...all these different areas of that part of the world at that time... Bela (that is Zoar;) went out and joined together in battle in the valley of Siddim;** which is the Dead Sea area, **against Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings against five. Now the valley of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled. Some fell there; and the remainder fled to the mountain. Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the provisions, and went their way.** This is a particular battle in this region, different kings are siding with different ones in an alliance and it goes on to say here in this particular case as this battle was going on.

Verse 12 – They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. Then one who had escaped, came and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt by the terebinth tree of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and they were allies with Abram. Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive he armoured three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house and went in pursuit as far as Dan. Some of these alliances in those times were unique. You had an individual like Abram who had many servants, he had great wealth at this point in time and different ones that were born there as well that had incredible loyalties and the like and they would go out if there was a battle and fight and join together in this case here, like they did.

Verse 15 - He divided his forces against them by night and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is near Damascus. So he brought back all the goods and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods as well as the women and the people. So here's the account; Abram goes out, his servants and different ones that he allied with and they fought and they defeated those who had come up against them in that particular region and they brought back *all* the goods of that particular region.

Verse 17 – And the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh, that is the kings valley, after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him. Then Melchizedek, King of Salem...awesome here what took place! We've had sermons about this in times past when we went into this subject, especially back in 2005. But here is this individual whose name, whose title at this point in time... Then Melchizedek, King of Salem, King of peace, brought out bread and wine. So here's this battle that's been fought, here this individual comes along...is there before them and brings out bread and wine. It says, **He, the priest,** or as King James says, **was the priest.** As we have talked about in times past, **He the priest of,** as it says in the King James, again, **God most High.** Well, He was the priest *to* Abram – the Most High God. He was the Most High God and He revealed and manifested Himself to Abram as a priest, as this Melchizedek.

This is difficult sometimes for people to comprehend and understand, especially things that are written in the Old Testament and for those who are new we're going to go into this a little bit. No one can see God. No human being has the ability to see God Almighty. God is spirit and *you can't see spirit.* Some people think that sometimes they've seen spirits, but they haven't. You know, that which exists in a demonic world, their frustration, things that they try to get other people to see sometimes, they try to mess with human beings and they have this kind of foggy thing that appears and so forth because they can mess with some things in the world, but they don't have the ability to manifest themselves, to make themselves be seen in the way that God has given to angelic beings at different times in history. God *gives* that ability to them. And so when He has had different ones come and *appear* to deliver

messages, people see someone that is fully as a human being standing before them, talking to them. And yet there is this kind of ghostly thing that demons have because they've been stripped of the majority of their power; and they want people to fear them and so they have these apparitions, these things that sometimes people see and so forth; and they can mess with some things as far as that which is physical is concerned... but they *cannot* manifest themselves.

I think of different things we've gone through recently and how Jesus Christ, after He had been resurrected from the dead, appeared very early on to Mary and we read that particular account and He told Mary, "Don't touch Me." Because He hadn't fulfilled His job; His responsibility as of yet as the Wave-sheaf offering. And so He said, "Don't touch Me." That He had to go and present Himself, He said, to My Father and your Father. And He said, "Go back and tell the disciples this." And so later on that same day you'll see the account then, of course, where He said, "Touch Me!" Because He had already presented Himself as the Wave-sheaf to God and been accepted as the Wave-sheaf offering.

Incredible stories as you put them all together and you understand God's plan and what God does. He appeared later on in the midst of them. The door was locked; and here Jesus Christ stands right in the middle of them, and it says that some thought they'd seen a ghost, they'd seen some apparition, something they didn't understand that had taken place. How could this be? Here's someone standing in the midst of them. And we don't understand all those things, but He was there and they knew then, it was given to them, this is Jesus Christ. But they couldn't see Jesus Christ in His true form because He was no longer physical – He's spirit. He's a *spirit being*, just as God the Father is spirit. No human being can see spirit. And so God the Father in times past has had Himself appear to human beings in a physical form. He can't be contained in a physical form but He can manifest Himself that way. Awesome things that God has revealed of how His Family is going to work with human beings in the future.

I think of the 1,000 years that's coming –they're spirit beings, members of the God Family, but they're going to manifest themselves as physical human beings and they can appear and disappear just as Jesus Christ did. It's going to be a different world to live in at that time. And so just as Jesus Christ was with them, He disappeared in the same manner. He was gone! Far beyond Star Trek and some of those things where at least you saw some little white lights for a little while then they were gone. Here it's just there and gone. Kind of unnerving in some ways because we're not accustomed to that kind of thing. What's amazing is as you go into the Millennium, in time everyone's going to be accustomed to that. Young people that are born and grow up in that world – that's going to be their norm. That's why at the end of a thousand years it's going to be easier for people to do what they do... because it's their norm. And like human nature, you begin to take things for granted. That which is taken for granted, people in time can make choices to reject. And that's why there's such a great rebellion toward the end of a thousand years. And that can be hard to comprehend.

And so here is Melchizedek; God Almighty, manifesting Himself in order to teach Abram. In order to work with Abram He manifests Himself as a priest of God. It was God, but this is how He's working with Abram to teach him, to work with him, to mould and fashion him in the beginning. You have to remember that before this there was one other individual that God had worked directly with in a very powerful way; and that was Noah. Incredible! You go back in history and you see some of these things – Noah and the flood and it wasn't until 10 generations later, and Noah's still alive and his great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandson, ten generations down the line there is born – Abram. Noah's still alive until Abram reaches about 54, and at that point then Noah dies and God begins to work with Abram. There's a great distance here between those and all the other people who didn't choose God's way of life – not even Noah's own sons. And so we come on the scene here where

God begins to work with and chooses two individuals that He is going to give incredible promises to because now His plan is to go way beyond what He'd done before. He's getting ready to begin to work with a nation of people. Starts out with two... Abram and Sarah. And He starts working with two in time to build a nation, to have a nation of people to work with, to teach even more – the Israelites.

And so here is the occasion where God begins to work with him and so He manifests, He appears, He brings forth bread and wine; He brings these things out to them and He talks to Abram. First account we have of this, of this manner... He **brought out bread and wine: He, the priest, God Most High;** is how it should be. **And He blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High,** showing how his existence, how it's possible, how he exists; and that blessings that were going to be given him...**possessor of heaven and earth.** God reveals from the very get go here – **God Almighty, your God, possessor of heaven and earth.** Everything belongs to God. Everything is God's; and that's something that human beings have to come to understand in the very beginning as God begins to work with them – that everything is of God, everything exists because of God. Nothing exists without God! God sustains everything! And it helps us to have more of a humble attitude and spirit and a willingness and a desire that we should have of being led, guided, directed – and to have the mindset to say, “God, what would You have *me* do? I am Yours. I exist because of You. Every breath of air I have is because of You.” Nothing do we deserve! ...but it's a part of a plan. What is that plan? “What is it You desire of me, my God?” So it's a matter of an attitude of mind and that's what God desires. He wants what's inside here (our mind). He doesn't want to force it upon us; He doesn't want to do it by constraint; He wants us to do it by choice! And so He gives us choices! Awesome! ...and He draws us and works with us and is very *patient* with us, very merciful to us. I'm dumbfounded sometimes at the *patience* and the mercy of God, for me, and for you, because we're all in the same boat – we all have the same human nature. We all resist and have these battles in our mind with God, we truly do. Human beings do! It's what Paul said after 25 years. Awesome! After 25 years he said, “Oh wretched man that I am...who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”¹ Because he saw a battle going on there of the human mind; and as long as we're human we will continue to have those battles.

It's good to go back to some basic things because of new people that continue to come along in God's Church and we all need these to review and think about these things and think about the awesomeness of God Almighty and His great plan for us and what He's doing. And so one of the first things that Melchizedek does... He tells Abram, “Your God, the possessor of heaven and earth...” **and blessed be God Most High who has delivered your enemies into your hand.** “You didn't do this Abram... *God* gave you this. God gave you this victory. He has blessed you to have this victory.” **And he, Abram, gave Him a tithe of all.** Means a tenth in Hebrew; that's all it means, a tenth, ten percent. And so Abram, right then and there gave Him a tenth of everything. Why? He understood something. He understood something he had learned a long time ago from his great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandfather Noah; because God's laws are things that God has given to mankind regarding how to live, and those things have existed for any who have want, have a desire and have worked to obey God, as they strive to obey God.

There were those things that Abraham already knew and when this was revealed to him, most assuredly he had this desire already inside of him, that which he already knew to give to God that which was God's because God is possessor of heaven and earth and he *knew* all that God desires in return is a tithe, a tenth. “All this is Mine...” Do you remember the parable that we read about not too long ago in one of the series regarding an individual who owned all this property and He rented it out to different ones and

¹ Romans 7:24

He only wanted a certain amount back, which any landlord would desire. And He gave them all these blessings of things that they could have and they weren't paying, they weren't giving what they should have been giving for the land they were on. It wasn't their land, but they were blessed to be able to be on it to raise crops, to do all the things they were doing. And so He said He sent different servants and it says, "They killed them." He says, "Surely, if I send My Son, they'll have respect unto My Son and they'll give to Him."² What's the story about? Well, it's about Jesus Christ.

So God uses something even of this nature here to teach us awesome things and to help us to understand that everything belongs to God. He created everything and He's given us everything, given it to us on a silver platter, a golden platter if you will... and says, "Dress it and keep it." That's what He told Adam and Eve, "Dress it and keep it."³ Simple. "Take care of what I've given to you." And we don't even do that as human beings.

Verse 21 – Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the people, the ones that Abram rescued, and take the goods for yourself. He was thankful...in other words, his attitude was that he'd take everybody that had been taken captive, servants and so forth, and he said... basically it wasn't a matter that Abram wasn't going to give him the people back or the ones that they had working for them. It was a matter of letting him know, we want you to keep everything, all the rest that you've rescued – keep. They were appreciative, they were thankful. But notice the response... **But Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have raised my hand to the Eternal.** Do you know what that means? I have made an *oath* before God. I have stated certain things to God Almighty! This is what I've said... **I have raised my hand to the Eternal, God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth...** he understood! **...that I will take nothing,** in other words, his motive was to rescue, his motive was to help, his motive was to give. It wasn't what he was going to get out of this at any point in time. He gave a tenth to God; but that which belonged to different ones – the rest he gave to them, except as it goes on to say here... **I will take nothing from a thread to a sandal strap and that I will not take anything that is yours lest you should say, I have made Abram rich.** He knew where everything he had came from. It came from God, and that's what he was acknowledging. And he didn't want any of this to be in the way of all this. And he says, **unless you would say, I have made Abram rich: (verse 24) and accept only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.** So it was just a matter of a portion for their effort, for their work and what they had done but Abram took no goods. Quite an incredible story here of what had taken place here.

Going on, **Genesis 15:1 – And these things, the word of the Eternal came to Abram in a vision, saying, Do not be afraid Abram, I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward. But Abram said, Lord God, what will You give me seeing I go childless?** This conversation is going on; it's this meeting with Melchizedek and the things that were taking place before this and what God was revealing to him and so forth... and then he had this particular vision that went beyond Melchizedek now that was something that God gave. Some of these things are sometimes difficult because... What is this vision? What does it consist of? God isn't working with people that way now. He's worked in many different ways, as it says, at different times with people.⁴ But on this occasion here He clearly was talking to him in a vision and told him, **Don't be afraid, I am your shield, your exceeding great reward. But Abram said, Lord God, what will you give me seeing I go childless and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? And**

² Matthew 21:33-39

³ Genesis 2:15

⁴ I Corinthians 12:5-6

Abram said, Look, you have given me no offspring: indeed one born in my house is my heir. And behold the word of the Eternal came to him saying, This one shall not be your heir; but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.

And so again here, God begins to work with him and begins to show him something greater of why He was working with him. We have the incident here of an encounter with God, of Abraham's attitude back toward God, and then God revealing more to him, what He's going to be doing with him and how He's going to be working with him in all of this, making it clear to him, no, it's not going to be servants – he's going to *come from you*, Abram. What God intends for him. **Then He took him outside and said, Look now toward heaven**, and so again, how is all this stuff done? I don't understand, but this was what was taking place.

...Look now toward heaven and count the stars if you're able to number them: and He said to him, So shall your descendants be. So we know the story about Abram and how God began to work with Sarah and himself and the different promises and different times; but this is the beginning of the account here and of Abram's response back to Him. Quite an incredible story here because God makes it very clear the *awesomeness* of it; look out there, look at the number of stars. Are you able to number them? You can't begin to... you can try to do the best in counting stars, but for Him to say something like this is really incredibly awesome! **Look now toward heaven and count the stars if you're able to number them: and He said to him, So shall your descendants be.** In other words, you can't number them. You can't even number them because it's so many!

And he believed the Eternal; not just 'believe in' as some translations have it. He believed what God said...**and He**, God Almighty, **accounted this to Abram as righteousness.** Remember where different accounts... where Paul talks about this? ...and he talks about Abraham, and how that because Abraham believed God it was accounted to him for righteousness? Because we are not righteous! There was only one who ever lived a righteous life and that was Jesus Christ; and all the rest of us... there's no one that has lived a perfectly righteous life. Human beings can't. And so it is through this process whereby we're saved; by believing God, and thereby because we believe God we live by faith, in other words we strive to live by what we have been given to believe... God accounts that to us for righteousness because you can't live it perfectly...but we strive to, and we believe what God says. Just like with God's plan; we see it. You try to tell this to other people, what God is doing, that Jesus Christ is going to return, that He came the first time.

I think of this Jewish individual that I had mentioned not too long ago that has had some communication with us and talking about that as I read part of his letter to you; someone who has a deep understanding of their religion and the like. And yet he can't understand. You can't give this to anyone! ...and yet when you're called God gives you the ability to see a plan that starts with Passover and ends on the Last Great Day, as far as the plan is concerned. And we can grasp and comprehend that Jesus Christ came the first time to be our Passover. You can't explain that to Jewish people and they believe it. They full well reject it! It's beyond their comprehension until God puts it in their mind and helps them to be able to say, "It's been right in front of me the whole time and I couldn't see it."

And so Jewish people with their background steeped in the Old Testament as it is, they begin their season of the year as we do with the Passover season...but they misunderstand it. And yet all of God's plan starts there and it goes into the Days of Unleavened Bread with coming out of sin and Pentecost and the giving of the law and then the giving of God's spirit so that we can *keep* the law, *keep* God's way of life...and then we go into Trumpets, we go into Atonement, we go into the Feast of Tabernacles, we

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picture 6,000 years of mankind, we picture 1,000 years behind it... and *we understand* that Jesus Christ is about to return. The world doesn't believe that and you can't give it to them. And so we see it in a very powerful way, how that He came the first time 4,000 years after man had been on the earth. 4,000 years; right on schedule, right on time He came and paid the price of a Passover lamb. And people didn't understand that He's going to come back again 2,000 years later to fulfill another part of God's plan – King of kings, and Lord of lords. He couldn't do that the first time, but this time He's coming back as King of kings and Lord of lords. Then we have a Millennial period, 1,000 years. And you can see it, and it's *powerful* in your mind and you make choices and decisions based on what God has given you to believe.

I was talking to an individual here before services that has been awakened recently... it's happened to all of us if our past was in Worldwide. Everyone of us has had to be awakened out of spiritual sleep and it's like the first time you're called, in one respect. The first time you were called and your mind is opened up it wasn't because you figured it out, it isn't because you were intellectual, it isn't because of how much you've studied your Bible in your lifetime, or how good you are with using a Strong's Concordance or all the other kind of study helps you can use on the internet. You can't figure out God's plan. No human being has ever been able to. God just communicates with the spirit that's in your mind which all human beings have, that make us different from the animal world; that essence that's in every human being who's ever lived – that's how God communicates. He communicates to that spirit essence that's in you. It's not by something that's verbal – it's by the spirit. And so He communicates to us and we see something.

That's why I tell the Church – never forget your calling! Never forget how God first called you and how He began to work with you. I remember the night my mind was opened. It was around 10 o'clock when I went home. I remember my father talking to me about the Sabbath and the Holy Days and Israel and their travels and how the United States was Manasseh. I didn't have to crack a Bible. I believed every word of it. At that moment, that night, my mind was opened. I didn't figure it out. I didn't know it. And if I'd heard it a few months earlier I'd have thought... "What's he been smoking? He's really flipped his lid!" I wouldn't have listened to him; but I had to be humbled first – I had to go through about 6 months of humbling so that when I went home I would be of an attitude of mind of a willingness to listen.

Every one of us has a different experience: but God just gives it to you. And the same thing applies when we're awakened, those who are a part of our past, and those who are going to come along later... they can't come along, they can't see, they are asleep until God awakens them. And then it's just like the beginning... except now, all this past is great treasure and it comes back up to the forefront, being able to see and understand God's plan in a greater way than ever before and it's an awesome experience. I have lived it; many of you in this room have lived it. You *know* and no one can take that from you. It's between you and God.

And so we live through incredible things; but you can't give this to anyone else. So God began to work with Abram and began to reveal to him a great plan. "From *you* are going to be descendants that are going to be as the stars of the heavens... you can't count them. You can't number them it is so vast and so great." And if we understand the whole story we understand it's not just about *physical* Israel, because that which was going to descend from Abram (later Abraham) was going to be a matter of *all human life* – your descendants Abram... that which comes from you. Because in time it's not just about physical Israel, it's about *spiritual* Israel and the *promised seed* that was to come was Jesus Christ and *all nations* it said would be blessed through him; every people that has ever existed. And so the promise

given to Abraham is exceedingly great, far above and beyond so often what we even begin to comprehend.

This is just the beginning of a story about a process of God working with Abram and how it began with tithing in the sense of what is given to us to understand; and Abram's response to God in understanding He is the possessor of heaven and earth – everything is His and this is His portion given back out of our gratitude and thankfulness and appreciation for what God has given to us – so that God can feed us. Because that's what it's about – as we're going to see as we go along here. Because it's not something that God needs; it's all God's anyway... but there's something He uses in that in a very powerful way to teach us. It's about *our response to God*. It's how *we think* toward God and whether we *grasp the big picture* that everything is God's and we're so blessed to have life; what a small thing to give in return, out of gratitude, thankfulness and appreciation. And then to know that it all comes back to us again anyway, above and beyond what we could ever give.

Let's go over to **Hebrews 7** and cut into the story flow here a little bit where some of this is spoken of, things that sometimes people have a difficult time understanding in the book of Hebrews in the New Testament here. There are those who like to talk about how they think that certain things are done away with and how certain things are “nailed to the cross” and they *just don't understand*. Let's go back here and see when it talks about Melchizedek. **Hebrews 7:1** – it's talking about this occasion with this encounter with Abram: It says, **for this Melchizedek, King of Salem**, that's where Jerusalem derives its name, a place of peace, and here it's talking about *King of Peace*, **priest of the Most High God**, that's how He was manifested; but He was the Most High God; and again, because of the translation there in the Old Testament it really is **priest, The Most High God**. He revealed Himself as priest, as a priest and began to work with and mould and fashion Abram. ...**who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him**. God *Almighty* blessed him. *All blessings* have to come from God Almighty when it's talking about things of this nature. They have to come from God Almighty. There may be different messengers that are sent at times to give those, but in this case here God manifested Himself as Melchizedek and gave these directly to Abraham. Later on God gave more to Abram; and He revealed, as He came along with a couple of angels, that He *was* God Almighty; in physical form, in a physical manifestation. Abraham recognized Him for who He was as time went along – developed a relationship with God, uniquely so.

It goes on to say in **verse 2 – To whom also Abraham gave a tenth/a tithe/a tenth part of all**; using this occasion here to show a unique relationship that he had with God. **First being by interpretation King of Righteousness**: throughout the Old Testament there is one who is referred to as the King of Kings, the King of Righteousness and He's referred to as a King in many different respects; and in times past I think of things that we thought and believed, we thought that might be speaking of Jesus Christ, King of kings... No, God Almighty is first and foremost and there are titles He's given to His Son; but God Almighty, Yahweh Elohim throughout the Old Testament, is spoken of in terms like this and so here is one of those occasions too: **King of Righteousness** – only God Almighty is the King of Righteousness...and after that **King of Salem/King of Peace**. That's why even as Jesus Christ came as His Son He said, “Peace I give to you, not as the world gives peace⁵,” in other words, the peace of mankind is not peace at all. The peace that mankind tries to give through the United Nations or that nations try to give at different times is generally through war and through oppression, through control. And that's not the kind of peace that God gives.

⁵ John 14:27

Again, **also King of Salem**, which is King of Peace, **without father, without mother, without descent having neither beginning of days nor end of life**. There is only *one* who fits into that description; only one – the Self-Existing One, the One of all Eternity – God Almighty. Incredible!

But made like unto the Son of God. So this Melchizedek, making it very clear here who He was, says here that **He's made like unto the Son of God...**and so God is revealing another part of His plan and does so through Melchizedek – that God intends that there should be a High Priest who would *always* sit in that place, in that position under God the Father; and it was intended for His *Son* to fulfill that in time. And so there is, as it talks about here, **but made like unto the Son of God; abides a priest continually**. That was God's plan from the very beginning of time – that there would be a *great High Priest* in God's Kingdom, in God's Family – only one. Only one! Just as much as there is only to be one Eternal Self-Existing God for all eternity, there would be one who would be at His right side who would be the High Priest for all eternity – from that point forward whenever that began. Hebrews says that we have a faithful High Priest in Jesus Christ.

And so again, Melchizedek was a *type* of what God intended to fulfill in time through Jesus Christ. It's an awesome picture; it's an awesome story. And so we have a High Priest that abides continually.

Now consider how great this Man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of his spoils; so He manifested Himself as a physical human being, although He wasn't. But it goes on to say, **and verily they who are the sons of Levi, who receive the office of priesthood, they have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law**. Now we're going to look at those laws later on in this sermon series, but here it's making it very clear that the Levites who came much later, because we had to go through a bit of a history here first; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, nation of Israel... and then finally God bringing them out of Egypt and establishing the nations and establishing the Levites and so forth in the priestly system, as He did. And it says, **they were given a commandment by the law to take tithes of the people**, and so they did. So this is what it's talking about here. It says, **they had a commandment**. Here's Levi, by the commandments given to them, **tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham**. Paul is making a point as he's writing this. **But He whose descent is not counted from them**, the Levites, **received tithes of Abraham and blessed him that had the promises**. This is showing that Melchizedek received tithes of Abraham and the Levites came out of Abraham in time. And yet it's showing how great this individual was, this being that manifested Himself to Abraham. As a whole, the world has been in the dark as to who it is. Sometimes people have stumbled on to the truth in some of those things; other times people are generally highly confused by it.

Verse 7 – And without all contradiction the less, speaking of Abraham, **is blessed of the better**, obviously Melchizedek. **And here men that die receive tithes;** the Levites, **but there He receives them, of whom it is witnessed that He lives**. He doesn't die – without beginning, without end, no descent, no father... speaking of the Eternal Self-Existing One, God Almighty. He's making the point here for those who are given the ability to see, eyes and ears that can see and hear, because otherwise a person can't receive this way anyway...and most assuredly the Hebrews couldn't except for those whom God called.

Verse 9 – and as I may say, Levi also who receives tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. It's a beautiful picture, **for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him**. **If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law)**, in other words, he's making it clear to the Hebrews who, if you understand Judaism, steeped in things of the Old Testament, they have a certain kind of thinking and it's difficult to break through that because they think they have this

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special relationship with God Almighty and there are things of their own history they *just don't understand* of what God is doing with *them* and with *all mankind*. And so they have this battle because they think that there's certain perfection that comes through the law, or as this individual I've been going back and forth with, talking about the Talmud and so forth, and when they go through and talk about all the writings that are even outside the books of the law if you will, they think that things starting to be written back in the time of Babylon and so forth that the Jews have written – that this is as strong as scripture and it's not. And they don't understand.

If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood...perfection comes through the *Passover* and that's their stumbling block. Jesus Christ, their *Passover*, incredible... the one who was to die for them – that's their big stumbling block. **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 rise after the order of Melchizedek?** If you can already receive perfection from the Old Testament, from the law, from a Levitical system here of bringing sacrifices and offering them on the altar... if that's what purifies you and makes you right with God and cleanses you and so forth – then what need was there that God would bring, as it says here, **what need is there for another who would be made after the order of Melchizedek? ...and not called under the order of Aaron.** So he's showing here what's greater.

For the priesthood being changed; the priesthood was changed, *not the law*. There are those who like to say *the law* was changed, or *the law* was “nailed to the cross”, or it's been done away with in Christ and the law of *tithing* is no longer required. We've heard that one. I remember when the big apostasy took place in 1994. They did away with clean and unclean meats and somehow it was okay now to eat catfish and things of that nature. All of a sudden somehow they're made clean and some of the reasoning behind that was (because now they had to rush to come up with reasons)... one of the reasons was because now we get catfish out of these tank farms and they feed them grain. They're eating good food and so because of that they're okay to eat. It's like somehow God made their flesh clean for human beings. It's like saying you could take a pig into your home too and feed it meals off your plate and let it live with you and keep the place clean... but it's still a pig. You're not supposed to eat it.

So it's not a matter that the law's been changed. The law hasn't been changed. There was a change made in the priesthood... from what? From the Levitical system, from the Levites, from the high priest over the Levites *to* our High Priest, to Jesus Christ: that was the change that was made when Jesus came and died. See, Jesus Christ, up to the very end, when it came to the *Passover*... What did He do? He kept it the Old Testament way. They had a lamb. They cut its throat. They prepared it on that night to be eaten the way God said it should be eaten; He sent two disciples ahead to roast it, to take care of all those things and then they all came together later in that evening to eat the lamb, to keep the *Passover*: because they were keeping it the way it was done in the Old Testament. From *that* moment on, the change was made. There was no purpose any longer to ever keep the *Passover* in the Old Testament way. *All* of it was being changed. Jesus Christ was fulfilling every bit of it. He was fulfilling everything to do with all of the Old Testament sacrificial system. That's why Hebrews goes on to talk about 'the blood of bulls and goats doesn't take away sin.' The book of Hebrews is a very powerful book explaining those things.

This is a part of that process here of explaining some of this as Paul gets into it, because it's later on here when he starts talking about some of these things, about Jesus Christ in **Hebrews 9:11** where it says, **but Christ being come a High Priest of good things to come via a greater and more perfect tabernacles not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and of calves, but Tithes and Offerings – Pt. 1**

by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place having attained eternal redemption for us. A beautiful picture that's revealed as you go forward here and I want to take it a little bit farther.

Hebrews 10:1 – For the law having a shadow of good things to come. It's the sacrificial system. I get so perturbed sometimes (and I know they can't help it,) but sometimes in the Protestant world where they try to say this is the 10 Commandments, that this is the law and it's been done away with and it was a shadow of something better to come, but now you're not under it... until you ask them, "Oh, it's okay to murder? It's okay to steal? I can go out and take your car? ...commit adultery?" "Oh no, those are good laws."

It's the Sabbath they can't stand. **For the law having a shadow of good things to come...** it was the Levitical priesthood. It is an awesome things as you grow...and we haven't had many sermons of that nature because God hasn't given those to be given yet at this time, but some of the things you've read or have read in some of our literature and so forth, some of the things Mr. Armstrong wrote going back and talking about the Levitical system. When you understand the sacrificial system... *every bit of it* pictures a part of God's plan foreshadowing things that are to be done that God is going to fulfill through time. There wasn't a *thing* done in the tabernacle that didn't have great significance. It's a beautiful picture.

I think of the Day of Atonement and the separation of the tabernacle itself. I'll read that in a moment... I guess I could just explain part of it for those who are new. The tabernacle was divided into two sections. In the first two-thirds of it was an area where the priests went every day to perform service, that was pictured as service toward God; but there was a veil separating the last third; that was where the ark of the covenant and where the law was, the tablets, and, as it talks about, Aarons rod that budded, the manna, the jar, and all those things that were there... two angelic beings covering the ark that picture God's throne. And it said, the high priest was only able to go in there once a year; and we know when that was, it was on the Day of Atonement. They had no service that they were to do back there day by day like they did in the first section. And it talks about how that the way to the Holiest of Holies had not yet been made manifest until Jesus Christ came. And that's why that curtain, that partition *ripped* upon the death of Jesus Christ. It's a beautiful picture in the temple, because now it showed, and God revealed to mankind, now there is a way – day by day by day before God's very throne into the Holiest of Holies through Jesus Christ. Awesome! But everything in the tabernacle pictured something as a part of God's plan and when you study into some of those things, or when you learn about some of those things there isn't a thing in the tabernacle service that didn't have incredible meaning and purpose of something to be fulfilled later on.

So that's what it's talking about here when it's talking about a 'shadow' for the law, **the law of sacrifices**, the sacrificial system is what it's talking about...**having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of those things, can never with those sacrifices...**so it's talking about the sacrifices, **which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.** It *never gave perfection* to anyone! It never forgave sins! And then it goes on to explain more of the story here of the entire process. Beautiful picture!

Verse 19 – Having therefore, brethren, boldness, and that word means 'liberty, freedom', **to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Christ.** That's what's been given. We have that ability through Christ to enter in before God. You can pray at any moment, at any time in your life and if you have repented, been forgiven of your sins, received the impregnation of God's spirit, it's God's promise, it's His covenant with you as you made a covenant with Him at baptism – that you're always able to enter in before His throne and be able to continue to be forgiven of sin and to continue to have God live and

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dwell within you. It's God's promise. And so it is a freedom, **to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Christ, by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us, that is, as it shows here, through the veil, that was rent in two, that is to say, His flesh.** That's what He gave so that we could have this given to us.

And *having* a High Priest over the House of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

What does that mean? It means you're able to be forgiven of your sin. That's why I talk about so often, when you go before God's throne asking for forgiveness of sin – generally I like to keep that right up front, to ask God to forgive me of my sins; because *I want to be heard by God* and I realize that's the only thing that can get in the way, that can block that communication, that can *hurt* that relationship with God, it is sin! That's what cuts us off from God. And so very early on, seeking forgiveness of whatever sins – because we sin as human beings. I don't care how long you're in God's Church and are refined in your life –you still have sin. You have human nature and as long as you have human nature you will sin! You're going to think wrong toward someone else; you're going to say something wrong; but most assuredly you're going to think wrong at different times.

That's why I try to get it down to simple language sometimes that we can all understand. I don't care if you're driving down the road; it doesn't take very long out here in Dallas, Texas driving on the freeway, to sin, to think badly about someone else, toward someone else. To be walking in a shopping mall and before long if you're not careful you're going to have a wrong thought and a wrong attitude about someone else that's wrong, that needs to be repented of. It doesn't take long does it?

Hebrews 7, this is building up to the things that Paul is going to be showing to the Hebrews, to those who have that background in Judaism. Chapter 7 is building up to that, talking about Melchizedek, talking about the need for a new way...because they didn't grasp the need for the Passover who was *made* the High Priest. They didn't grasp that and didn't understand that so he's using much reasoning that has to do with Judaism and the teachings that they have to show what is true.

Hebrews 7:12 - ...the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also in the law. For He of whom these things are spoken pertains to another tribe of which no man gave attendance at the altar. Paul is talking about the Levitical system back and forth here. **For it is evident**, now it's talking about Christ...**For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah.** He was a Jew! He was of the tribe of Judah. He wasn't of the tribe of Levi who received tithes. Here's an individual that wasn't even of the Levites who is the High Priest to whom tithes are to be given to, the Body of Christ, the Church of God – that's what it's talking about here. **For it's evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood**, but Jesus Christ had to come from the lineage of David and of the tribe of Judah. And so it's making a point here about priesthood. Here is one who wasn't of the priestly tribe.

Verse 15 – And it is yet far more evident; for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there arises another priest, after the likeness of. He wasn't Melchizedek. It would have been easy to say, "Melchizedek arises again... He's risen again." It wasn't about Jesus Christ being Melchizedek, but God's showing a plan about a High Priest that God intended from the very beginning. And so, **one made like unto Melchizedek there arises another priest, who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment**, not after the sacrificial system and the laws that they had here that are... if you go back in the Old Testament and read about that; all the sacrificial system and the intricacy of all those laws

that were associated with it and how they were to do various things – it was quite meticulous, but all picturing something very great.

Verse 16 - Who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For He testifies, You *are* a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. It's a beautiful picture – that which God gave to Abraham when He began to work with one individual and then two that would lead into a nation of people and then lead finally into one being born who was to receive all this through Him for *all* mankind, but still coming from the lineage of Abraham and He talks about this process then, **You *are* a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek**, that there would be a High Priest that would fulfill what God began to reveal from the very beginning.

Verse 18 – For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. Not of the 10 Commandments! They're powerful! It's a way of life. I feel sorry for people when they go through and they try to use scriptures like this and say, "See, it says that the law... there's a disannulling of it, a doing away with it. It's *unprofitable*, and it's weak. It's better to just love Jesus and have faith in Him." And they don't understand, No, that has everything to do with the law; how you live your life toward other people, how you treat, how you respond toward God...that *He* is first. The first 4 Commandments and how you worship God; and the Sabbath being one of those. If you want to have a right relationship with God you do what God says on the time that God gives to you – the Sabbath, the High Days, the Holy Days and on and on it goes. ...And then of course the last 6 Commandments having to do with a relationship with one another. And then Jesus Christ came along and showed the spirit of that, and refined it even more to show about our attitudes – that it's not just the outward thing of killing someone that's murder. God says, "If you fail to love your brother, *you* are a murderer!" Those are powerful words. We've just gone through another series haven't we, talking about relationships, talking about our Passover and talking about the importance of how we think toward one another. Especially within the Body, within the Church; and toward people in the world. If you understand somebody can't understand the truth, you're not going to treat them in a wrong way – you're going to have mercy upon them because they can't see what you see. You're not going to judge them harshly and be cruel to them. You're going to look forward to the day that they're going to see what you see. That's love. And because of that you're going to treat them differently, you're going to have patience and mercy that you otherwise might not normally have. And then with one another in the Body even more so, to love each other.

What an awesome thing that God shows – the spirit of the law to not murder someone is that if we fail to love them when we know how to love, when God has shown us how to love and we fail to do it – God says, "You're a murderer and a liar." I don't want to be a murderer and I don't want to be a liar. None of us do. So that means we have to repent when we see we have wrong attitudes and wrong thinking toward anyone. That's why it blows my mind sometimes when someone isn't getting along with someone else in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God. I *understand* how it happens, but it's so *contrary* to this way of life, it is so diametrically opposite of what we profess, of what we *believe* that it's sometimes difficult to comprehend and understand (yeah, I do) why it exists; because *it just shouldn't exist in the Church of God – ever!* How we can take the Passover and that week have something contentious happen with someone else in the Body – maybe your own mate!! It's *wrong!* It's *sick!* ...and it's murder. And it's hard for us to see things the way God wants us to see them.

For the law made nothing perfect, that's right, the whole sacrificial system never made anyone perfect. Only by choice are we made perfect through time, we'll never be perfect in this physical life. It's an amazing thing isn't it? What an awesome thing that you can be baptized, you go under the water and

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you're able to be forgiven of all your sins; and you come up out of that water and you're clean. Before God you *are* clean. Not because you are, but because of God's plan and because of what it means in the spirit – that you understand why you went under the water, that you wanted to bury the old self and you want to come up out of the water and you have determined, your desire is, your commitment is, "I want to walk in newness of life. I don't want to live the way I've lived in the past. I don't want to live in rebellion against God. I don't want to live in disobedience before God in anything." And so we begin with the Sabbath, we begin with the Holy Days, we begin with things like tithing and then everything else begins to be added into it because those are the areas where we're tried and tested first. We start this process and soon afterwards – it might take a little while in some cases...till maybe if it's in a swimming pool somewhere and there are a bunch of people around and they're never going to see you again and somebody puts you under the water and says certain things to you and you come up out of the water and then you go off someplace else and they lay hands upon you and they ask God to give you the impregnation of His holy spirit. That's when you're begotten of God. That's when, with the spirit essence that's in your mind, that God *couples it* with His holy spirit, with the spirit essence of life that begins to grow in you. And that's something that's difficult for us to comprehend. You see, if a woman becomes pregnant in time you begin to see the change. In us, it's different. You don't see a physical change; you don't experience something that's physical. It's by what God gives you in your understanding, in your mind and you begin to make change. But you begin to grow and God gave that example of something that's very physical to understand something that is very *spiritual* of how God works in our life. A process begins of growth – a new life. *A new life!* How awesome is that? ...that you begin in your very mind, in your very being to have a new life that's growing in you. And just like the umbilical cord – there is that relationship with God Almighty and the spirit that is able to continue to come into your life.

That's why I love how it's translated in so many different words in the New Testament: the word 'to abide'; same Greek word as 'to remain' as 'to dwell in' as 'to continue in'. Those words that are translated into English – the same Greek word to express something that happens in our lives – that God's spirit, once it begins coming into our life, continues to come into our life. *God dwells in us!* That's why Jesus Christ died! Isn't that what it says in John 14-15-16-and 17 over and over and over again? Beautiful scriptures! ...where God reveals that His desire is to live in human life, to dwell in us, to make us something different – by our own free choice and because we say we want it, "I want that. I want to be in Your Family." And so God starts a life within us after baptism – an impregnation, that's what He calls it, a begettal; and from that moment on we have choices to make and we have this battle that we fight and we resist because of our human nature. "The carnal mind," it says, "is enmity to God." An enemy to God! "It's not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."⁶ ...until we're impregnated with that spirit. And then we can begin fighting that battle that Paul talks about.

What a process that God gives to us! And so we begin to live such a life and we begin to grow and through time we can look back at our life and *see* growth – and hopefully others around us can *see* growth as we grow. And we make changes. That's what encourages my wife and I so much when we go around to different areas. With some areas we may not be there for several months and we go back and we see changes in people's lives, we see growth – and it's *encouraging*, it's *inspiring* to see what God is doing with the Church and the changes that take place in people's lives and how through conversation or through their actions in their life and so forth there are things we see. And we see the Body becoming closer, knit together more closely, greater unity; and it's a beautiful thing. But sometimes in our life we may not see certain things and we have to be reminded to look back; and it's

⁶ Romans 8:7

good for us sometimes to look back and see where God has brought us...and what we see now that we didn't see a few months ago or a few years ago. Those of you who were here in 2005 – there have been a lot of things that have happened since 2005. Since 2007... Since 2008! A lot of things have happened; growth within the Church and growth in our own lives. What an awesome thing! Jesus Christ died so that He and His Father could dwell in us and the only thing that gets in the way of that is self – sin. And when you sin you cut off the flow, just like the umbilical cord, of that life giving power to you, to that which is growing in you. That's a horribly dangerous state. That's why we have to repent as quickly as we can of sin – so He'll continue to dwell within us.

An incredible process that we continue to go through; and it is beautiful. Everything is so beautiful that God has given and how we're made perfect in time. We grow more and more in character. Something that's awesome to understand – every time you repent, do you know what you're acknowledging? You're actually growing every time you can admit and accept *your own* guilt, *your own* fault, *your own* flaws and tell God Almighty, "*I am guilty of breaking Your law. Forgive me please! Help me so that I don't think that way! Help me so that I don't do those things! Help me so that I'll not sin!*" And you may have to do that several times in the same day on the same thing. And you grow and you become stronger through time and you keep fighting that battle and you keep acknowledging that; but every time you acknowledge that you're able to grow spiritually. You're growing in character. God can't give you character; you have to grow in that. God can't just make us spirit beings in His Family, otherwise we would have rebellion like what happened in the angelic realm. That's why He's insuring that it can never happen in Elohim; it can never happen in the God Family. Everyone who comes into the God Family will have grown to a point where God is able to say just like He did to Abraham, "Now I know you. I know you." So that when He changes that body and gives him eternal life, He knows what he will do with that same mind, with that same spirit because he's already gone through the process of choices.

Every time you make a choice and you say that you're wrong and God is right you're agreeing with God's law, you're coming into greater unity with God – that God is right and you are wrong, your nature is wrong, your resistance is wrong. We don't want it, we abhor it, we abhor when we resist God; but in human life we resist and fight against God, we truly do. That's what Paul talked about, "Oh wretched man that I am..." I marvel that God used that same word that's used in Romans when He talked to Laodicea, the last era of God's Church that we lived through and He said, "because you can't see that you are wretched..."⁷ What a horrible thing when human beings can no longer grasp and comprehend their wretched spirit as a human being. You don't want to save this. I don't want to save this carnal human nature! I don't want to save this attitude! I don't want to save this kind of carnal thinking. That's why Paul said, when he's in essence, the same mind, "I rejoice in the inner man." In other words, with what God is giving in the mind. That's what we rejoice in and what God is giving up here. And that's what we hold onto. That's what I want! I want the unity and oneness of life that comes in agreement with God! To understand that it's *His* laws that bring about *peace*, eternal peace, *fullness* of life that human beings can't give each other, that human beings can never have of and by themselves. That's why no government has ever succeeded on this earth; because it's carnal, selfish.

What do we see in the world? I am so sick and tired of what I see in human nature and government, the politics; and that just spells something great to me. It says lying and cheating and all the other things that go with it! That's what politics is. If you have politics in your life then you're forced into a position of making choices and decisions that aren't based on a matter of something that is absolute, because of it being in agreement with what is right or God's law. It causes people to *compromise*. And you can't

⁷ Revelation 3:17

compromise with God's law. But human beings compromise all the time and they make deals. Politics; the best politicians in the world are those who know how to make deals. You scratch my back and when the time comes I'll scratch yours. You vote for this and I'll vote for that; and that's how life is and it stinks because it isn't right.

Only God in a thousand years of government can give what is right in government to man. What a beautiful thing when we understand that; and yet the world resists God, resists that government and that's why it has to come in the form that it does; that man has to be brought down so low and humbled so greatly by what's going to come, to where we have no government, to where we have no dollar.

I think of the 1st Trumpet. It just goes on and on because man has... this is the *biggest* lesson that people in this nation are going to learn. Green is very powerful, it truly is. Green has tremendous sway; not over just this country but every country in this world. This whole system today is a system of Babylon in a way the world has never known. It's international in scope today where in times past it wasn't always so. During WWII it wasn't that way. The British pound was big, and then the dollar took over and became the currency of the world, or the economy of the world in time. It became greater and greater. And now the whole world, it's an awesome thing to understand, is so tied into it that they have to juggle things. China plays it's games, has to juggle because it can't totally pull out of it; they'd cut their own throat if they do. And neither can some of the other nations of the world. And the euro is now so large that they're stuck. They can't even pull out of certain things – they're stuck. You are watching things that are awesomely incredible right now, but one of the greatest lessons that this nation has to learn and the rest of the world will follow in time, of what it means when it's totally taken away – the dollar, the green. It's going to be a great fall and it's going to force nations then to do things quickly that they wouldn't otherwise do. Incredible where we live in time.

Verse 19 - For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by which we draw nearer unto God. Our hope; it's in what God has given to us through Christ in the Church, that we *can* change, that we don't have to stay this way, that we *can* become different, that we *can* walk in newness of life and that this nature *can* be changed. And we can make *big* changes in our lives. The more we draw closer to God, the more at one with God, the greater life becomes, the more meaningful, the more exciting life become. It truly does. The *better* relationships become, in marriage and family and in life that you can't begin to come close to in a physical world, in a physical life, in physical families otherwise.

Verse 20 – And inasmuch as not without an oath *He was made priest*: (for those priests were made without an oath...) the Levites. That couldn't take away sin anyway; the entire sacrificial system didn't make people right with God. (**...but this with an oath by Him who said unto Him, The Lord swore and will not repent...**) will not change in other words, (**...You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.**) That comes from Psalm 110:1, 4. God made it clear, inspired David to see and understand something was given prophetically to show what was to be given to the Christ, to the Messiah, to the Passover Lamb, that He would be a priest forever, *after* the order of Melchizedek. He wasn't Melchizedek, but after the order of – something that God gave in the very beginning that we read about that was shown to Abram...that this is how God works with man; through a High Priest and it's through that High Priest that we're able to become a part of the God Family in time.

By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant. See? Can't be saved through that which was in the Old Testament. You can't be saved by how well you keep the Levitical system and obey the law and everything else; because you can't do it right, you can't do it perfectly; and what do you do

when there's sin? And there's plenty of sin; and nothing takes away the sin, and if you can't take away the sin then where is your hope?

Verse 23 – And they truly were many priests, because they were not allowed to continue by reason of death. So again here, it's talking about a process here that went on generation after generation... **but this**, as it says here *man*, **because He continues forever**, continues on, there's no ending, **has an unchangeable priesthood.** But the other priesthood, it did. Different ones coming along, different ones and so forth... **wherefore He is able also to save them to the uppermost that come unto God by/through Him seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.** So for the last 2,000 years Jesus Christ has been doing a great work. That's why I love going through Leviticus 16 on Atonement and read about everything the high priest did on that day; the two goats, the one that was for the azazel, and the one that was going to be put out in the wilderness and so forth; the other one that was to represent Christ and how that the high priest... all these things that were pictured by things that the high priest did, pictured Jesus Christ. Everything he did in Leviticus 16, we'll just go back there...

Leviticus 16; it's easier just to read it. It talks about different offerings and so forth that were given and different things the high priest did. I love **verse 11 – And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself and for his house.** So here the high priest is making an atonement, first of all for himself, *and* for his house; and it pictures Jesus Christ, of what He had to do first of all and what He had to go through in His life to become our High Priest, taking upon Himself the sins of *all* the world, of all mankind, dying for the sins of all. And then there was something He was to do for His House, the Body of Christ, the Church of God. He was made the head of the Body of Christ, of the Church of God. And this is a part of what it's talking about here and it goes through and talks about some of these things and then we go farther down and it brings up **verse 16 – And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of the transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.** So again, things that were being done by the offerings here, by the high priest and so forth.

And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goes in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he comes out, until He returns. It's talking about the work He's been doing for *2,000 years* for the Church. The vast majority of the 144,000 who are coming out of that period of time and it says, **until he come out and has made an atonement for himself and for his household and for all the congregation of Israel.** It's a beautiful picture in what's being given here.

Verse 20 – and when he has made an end of reconciling the holy place and the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar and shall bring the live goat... going back and forth here over and over again, talking about Jesus Christ returning and symbolizing His return to this earth and things that He's going to do and continue on then with God's plan and that great resurrection that's going to take place in the Family, and those that He's atoned to Himself fully through time.

Powerful, powerful things that are taught throughout scripture and part of this here in **Hebrews 7.** Paul is showing here that there was that which was made by an oath. In other words, when God says something is absolute, it's absolute. When God says something is going to come to pass, it's going to come to pass. **Verse 22 - By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant. And they truly were many priests...** **verse 25 – Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uppermost that come to God through Him seeing that He ever lives to make an intercession for them.** So he continues on... **For such a High Priest became us, who is holy,** in other words, for us, **harmless, undefiled, separate Tithes and Offerings – Pt. 1**

from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needs not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins and then for the peoples; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself. So again, it's showing everything that Jesus Christ fulfilled *once*, and entered into the holy place *once* to fulfill this, to accomplish all this; where the high priest had to come in every year, once a year, and it just was pictured over and over and over again until Jesus Christ fulfilled it.

For the law makes men high priest; and so the Old Testament, there was that system, there was the sacrificial law and it made men high priests, it made the Levitical system here, established it; **which have infirmity, weakness, but the word/logos of the oath, which was since the law, makes the Son who is consecrated for evermore.** Throughout the book of Hebrews is a beautiful picture showing Jesus Christ who's become our High Priest and the change being made in the priesthood *not* in the law of tithing. Some of these things go on and talk about that which was given to Melchizedek – it's to continue to be given to Melchizedek. That never changes. The change that was made, that some in the world don't understand when they read these verses, was in the priesthood; from the Levitical system to Jesus Christ who fulfilled it all anyway. It was about Jesus Christ from the very beginning. He foreshadowed it all as our High Priest.

Let's go on to **Genesis 28**. It's amazing here; a story that goes clear back to Genesis that God brings up and talks about later on – has tremendous significance about this Melchizedek, that wasn't for a long, long time until Paul came along and wrote to the Hebrews, that meaning and the explanation of these things was given; because you can't find it in other places in scripture. You can't understand the process there until we come to the New Testament and things that Jesus Christ fulfilled and what Paul began to explain throughout the book of Hebrews actually. Here is another example – Jacob, whose name was later changed to Israel, and this unique occasion where tithing is mentioned here.

Genesis 28:1 – And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and charged him and said unto him, You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethel, your mother's father; and from there take a wife of the daughters of Laben your mother's brother. There are some who have read this in times past and think this has to do with a matter of different prejudices or thoughts of race or of family line or whatever in the sense of strictly a family line; and it's not about that at all. That's not what it's about; and people miss the mark in so much of what the Old Testament discusses when it discusses some of these things. Some people have come along in times past even, have had difficulties with some of the things because it was like if you're not an Israelite then what are you? Well, I think we're a bunch of Heinz 57, but that's not what it's all about. That's why I sometimes talk about my heritage... I haven't talked much about that part, the Czech background, but the German background; and different things that we all have. We're all different. But nowhere are there things like that that are a matter of prejudice that come from God or from situations like this concerning Abraham, or Isaac, or whatever. *It had to do with what was being taught in the families; it had to do with the principles and truths that some were still teaching and passing along; it had to do with others who had already embraced in a very powerful way false religious beliefs!* That's what God was most concerned with in these matters! Truly! Far more than the other! But sometimes people go off in left field and don't understand what God is doing and why God is doing it. And so some read things into this. There have been a lot of prejudices passed down in some things called Protestantism, or Christianity, that are *filled* with prejudice when it comes to different peoples of the world, different families of the world – sick, sick, sick; it truly is! People have used religion sometimes to try to push God into their own prejudices and make the religion around their prejudices as well. It's sick!

Verse 3 – And God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful, to multiply you so that you may become a multitude of people; and give unto you the blessing of Abraham. He's showing here there's that which is going to pass on through you – yes, a physical nation of people; but most importantly there is the one seed; there's the one seed that's going to be the blessing to all nations – speaking of that which was going to come out of Judah in time, speaking of the Christ, the Messiah. Had to come from some family, and that's where God began to work – with a family, with one, in this particular case – Abram on down, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and so forth. And so he says, and **God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful, to multiply you so that you may become a multitude of people: and give unto you the blessing of Abraham; and to your seed with you; that you may inherit the land wherein you are a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.**

Verse 5 – And Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padanaram, unto Laban son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob and Esau's mother. And when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padanaram to take him a wife from there; and that as he blessed him... so this is something that he saw, he witnessed or whenever, he became aware of it in knowledge... **and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge saying, You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; and that Jacob obeyed his father, and his mother...** there was some jealousies going on here – family jealousies and it caused a lot of problems; and this is a part of this – see; of something that he witnessed; his brother receiving something that he's not receiving, and the problems that happen in some things in family sometimes because of certain things; but this is something that God was working out and so being carnal as he was and knowing human nature – this is the spinoff of it.

Verse 7 – And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, good ole Jacob, there he goes – Daddy's favourite... going on here... sometimes people get caught up on squabbles and things that happen and they're carried down sometimes for generation to generation. There are nations that have come out of such things and things that are passed down. Incredible! I think of Reuben. I think of the coat of many colours. I think of being sold into slavery and some of the things that were passed down to generations that are still with us to this day! In attitudes that are out there... France and the U.S. and Israel and different ones... things never changed. Different prejudices, different jealousies that continued on through time. Amazing what is passed down from a family that can go on for generation after generation after generation. And so he said he saw these things that had been told to him and that Jacob was obeying his father and he'd left, he'd gone to Padanaram.

Verse 8 – Since Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please Isaac his father; then Esau went to Ishmael, his uncle, and added unto himself of the wives which he already had. So he already had some wives and he's going to pick another one, and he's going to do exactly the opposite of something that was not within the wishes obviously of what he saw that was between Isaac and Jacob here. And so he did something that he thought would, in essence, agitate, stir up problems, not try to make things better in the family. That was his response. **And so Esau went to Ishmael, in other words his uncle, and added unto himself of the wives which he already had Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.**

Verse 10 – And Jacob went out into Beersheba, and went into Haran. And he arrived at a certain place and stayed there all night because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place and put them at his head, in other words, for pillows as the King James says, to lie down. He arranged some of the stones on the ground and one particular stone here in particular he adjusted it in a certain way and that's where he put his head; because this has to do with where the head is. ... **and he layed down in that place to sleep.** An incredible story unfolds here that has tremendous significance; just like the one

about Melchizedek; but now we have another story here of someone who was heading down the road to pick a wife, obeying his father and all of a sudden he comes to this location and he sets up this area to sleep and it says, **and he had a dream; and behold a ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold the Eternal stood above it and said, I am the Eternal God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereupon you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed; and your seed shall be as the dust of the earth**, and that's a lot of dust! It's a lot of seed! Through time you can't number it; it's going to be so great – it's going to be like the dust of the earth. The point being is you can't number it, it's going to be so great, so massive and it's going to come from you, through you.

And you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and what do we see today? To the east, to the west, to the north and to the south – far beyond our understanding sometimes. ...**and in you, and in your Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.** He wasn't telling him that in his lineage, through a physical Israel – *all* the earth is going to be blessed; but rather through his seed specifically. We've read other scriptures that talk about that. It makes it very clear here that it was talking about a specific seed, a specific one who was to come in time; that through Him all nations of the earth, all peoples in time would be blessed. Because no one comes into God's Family except through this one that was to come in time – Jesus Christ; who was to come out of the tribe of Judah. Awesome story!

Verse 15 – And behold I am with you and I will keep, this word meaning 'to keep' indeed, 'to guard, to preserve' **you in all the *places* you shall go, and will again bring you into this land; for I will not leave you until I have done *that* which I have spoken to you.** And God hasn't finished it all. It's not over until it's over. And a lot of it *does* have to do with physical blessings and physical fulfillment and God did promise certain physical things that would happen all the way to the end, and even beyond – it would still be done in a physical nation of people; it's just a reality. There are certain prophecies that had to be fulfilled in time – that God hadn't even given yet, that would come in time, that would come a *long* time after Israel was dead; that would come a *long* time after the children of Israel were brought out of Egypt; that would come a long time later on – finally through prophets, through David himself as a king who was also a prophet...and then through some of the other prophets toward the end. God *foretold* things that would happen with the nation of Israel, and what would take place that would lead all the way to what we call 'the end' here, the end-time, the end of this age.

Promises were given to the tribes; Ephraim, who would be a commonwealth, it talks about, of nations – great, mighty on the earth. And then there would be one, Manasseh who'd become the greatest of all in power and might – the United States.⁸ Awesome! The world doesn't see it, the world doesn't grasp; but because there are certain things that have to be done physically in the world to fulfill certain things, to accomplish certain things. It's happened through families because of a *way* that God has worked in time to bring about an end, or a beginning. And in time all people will be blessed to have an opportunity to become a part of His Family.

Everything that has to lead up to the end of this age is very much about what has happened to Israel through time, promises that God gave and the prosperity that God promised to this nation. God gave it to us. God made the United States what it is. Before that it was *Great* Britain – great! There was a time when it was *great*! Today it isn't very great! The pound... we'll we don't want to talk about the pound; the dollar isn't any better... ☺ But you know, up to WWII, incredible... the colonies, the colonization in

⁸ Genesis 48

the world and things that were done throughout the world and power that was given to them; and blessings that God gave them, and different battles and so forth. Some of the most incredible things that at times there was no other way save that God intervened to cause certain battles to be turned, to be a certain way, to have a certain fulfilment. Think of WWII. There's certain things that God gave in time. How close the Germans came to having *power* to rule the earth, that didn't come until after they were defeated, through the Soviets and through the United States – nuclear power. They came so close! That heavy water, talking about nuclear energy, nuclear power and weapons that would come out of all these things. The Germans came really close; but God didn't let them have it.

And all the things that have happened through time; not by coincidence, not by chance. We've been given everything we have. *We* didn't do it because we're a better people than other people on the earth. Such egotism! Such haughtiness! That's what God is bringing down. Nobody's better than anyone else. Some have things because of what God is doing for a purpose and for a plan that He has – and other prophecies of some of these we're going to talk about even in this series here.

Verse 16 – And Jacob woke from his sleep and he said, Surely the Eternal is in this place; he had this dream, it was so vivid, this vision, this thing that took place in his mind that was so powerful. How could you describe it? Something that God puts in your mind that is better than any flat screen TV you've ever seen; it's like you're there, you're living it and you see this and you're in the midst of it all and yet it's a dream. None of you have ever had a dream like that. But he did. And so he awoke from the dream. **...he said, Surely the Eternal, he was so moved by this... Surely the Eternal is in this place and I wasn't even aware of it!** He just happened to sleep in the place that the Eternal was! This is what he's thinking, you know? **...and he was afraid and he said, How fearful/awesome is this place! This can be none other than the dwelling place of God and the gateway to heaven!** That's how moving it was to him because of what he experienced; something of this magnitude that had just taken place in his life. He'd never heard any stories like this from his forefathers; and yet he lived this, he experienced something that no one had ever experienced! Incredible!

And Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put for his pillow and set it up as a pillar, and he poured oil upon it, anointed it! He was so moved by this...and he was moved by God's spirit too to do these things; because this was going to have great significance through time. Incredible how God inspires some things to take place and people don't even know why. And he didn't know why, *but he was moved to do exactly what he did*...and he lifted up this big stone that weighed over 300 lbs, 336# to be exact, and he poured oil on top of it and anointed it and set it up like a pillar...**and he called the name of the place Bethel:** which means 'house' or 'dwelling place of God'. Beth-el, the dwelling place of God. He was so moved because of where he was and what he experienced and he said, this rock that I layed my head upon... that's what it signifies. **...but the name of that place was first known as Luz.** 'The almond tree', the place of the almond tree. So he changed the name of it to Beth-el.

This is the rock that the Israelites carried with them through the years until the time of Jeremiah (an awesome story), when he took 'Jacob's Pillar Stone', that's what it was known as, Jacob's Pillar Stone or also known as 'The Stone of Destiny', along with Zedekiah's two daughters, eventually arriving in Ireland where they fled in time. Zedekiah had been blinded, if you know the story of the kings of Judah and their defeat and what had taken place here. They had been defeated, conquered; Zedekiah was blinded and in time died; his sons were all killed because they were going to kill off the royal line.⁹ But Jeremiah

⁹ Jeremiah 52

had escaped with the daughters who were descendants of King David, of the royalty of Judah. So it continued on; they didn't kill it out, they didn't destroy it, it continued on. And that stone, like I said, weighing 336 pounds, 156 kg, today bears the name 'The Stone of Scone'. It's farther north in Scotland. It's commonly known as 'The Stone of Destiny' again, or 'The Coronation Stone'. It's an awesome story. I remember when we went to England back in the 1970's when I went to college there, you could go to Westminster Abbey where the old throne is; it's an old, old, old, old throne where so many kings and queens have had their coronations and at the bottom of that throne they made a special slot to hold that stone. Incredible story! And that stone was there until of recent time. I think it was only 1996 when it was finally taken back to Scotland, but it's an incredible story.

It was the same stone that kings in Ireland and Scotland were coronated. King Edward I conquered Scotland in 1296 and took control of the stone at that time, removing it from the control of the Scots. I think he left it in Edinburgh if I remember the history correctly, for a time there, but kind of rubbing it in their noses that they'd been conquered by the English, in the south there, the Scots had. And so in time they took the stone away; but some had said that this wasn't the real stone – so there's this battle that goes back and forth as to whether it was the stone or not. It was taken in 1996 back to Scotland; because it had been down there in that coronation chair for a long, long time, several hundred years and anyway, it was moved back to Scotland in 1996 and before that kings and queens of Britain had been coronated using it as well. So quite an incredible story!

What an awesome thing that the very stone that had to do with Israel that was going to emerge in time, and a promise that God gave of a lineage, that there would be one who would come in time, who would be the Messiah, through the lineage of David... that He had to be of the lineage of David to be the Messiah, the Christ, the anointed one; to be what? The anointed one means The Messiah; it means to be king, to be ruler of all the earth. That's what the anointing was about; and that He would set up, in time, the Kingdom of God. And so the Jews have different ideas about that and have changed it at different times throughout history, but again here, what an incredible story to understand the lineage and what took place. And to this very day, God said that in time when Christ returned, He would take *back that throne*; that the Messiah would receive back that same throne that David sat upon, that there would be a lineage unbroken through time; that when the Messiah returned, of the same lineage – He would come back to the same throne! And if God is not alive, if God is not real, then that obviously couldn't be accomplished. But God is powerful and all mighty and He brought these things to pass. And Jesus Christ is going to return to that throne. Awesome to understand that He's going to take over that same line of order that has existed through time and coronations that have taken place through time, and that which still exists. Can you imagine? I know that they don't like it, but the royalty today is Jewish blood. They're not Ephraim. And they don't understand – what an incredible thing to understand they are of the tribe of Judah, that they're descended from King David. It's an awesome story! And to have some of that with them in history through time, that they were even coronated on top of the stone? What an awesome thing! And that from the time going back to Jacob, because of a dream he had... it's very moving, it really is. It's an awesome story!¹⁰

Continuing in the story... **Genesis 28:20 - And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothing to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Eternal be my God: And this stone, which I have set as a pillar, shall be God's house: a representation, a reminder; and of all that You shall give me I will surely give the tenth, the tithe, unto You.** It's amazing how that when you read a story like this and we

¹⁰ The United States and Britain in Prophecy

read some of the first two accounts here about tithing, of how important it is as a part of God's plan; and about a response from those with whom God is working and moulding and fashioning; and it starts out with Abram. And then we have this incredible story of something we see to this very day, of a stone, that I carry a picture of it with me in my Bible. Coronation Chair; and up until 1996, that stone was there and when I was in college it had a sign underneath it, (I think it was), 'Jacob's Pillar Stone'... to that day. Incredible! Same stone through time, passed down from generation to generation to generation and how God saved a family line because the Messiah is to return to take over that same throne. Inspiring! Awesome!

Isn't it amazing? These two stories that have such a powerful impact on things that are taught in scripture; that start out talking about Melchizedek, and it brings in the subject of tithing. Because it starts out with a comprehension that each individual must have about God; that everything belongs to God, that God indeed is God Almighty and we exist here and we are able to be blessed by what He has planned for us.

Two incredible stories that carry through in time in a very powerful way, that bring in something as simple as a subject of tithes, a tenth. We'll go into that more as we continue in the series here.

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