

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXI The Order of Melchisedec

(Chapters 6-7)
Fred R. Coulter

Heb. 6:20 builds on everything going clear up to Heb. 10:26. It starts out with our access to God the Father, but let's back up to:

Hebrews 6:18: "So that by two immutable things, in which *it was impossible for* God to lie, we who have fled for refuge... [flee from the world and all the things concerning it] ...might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been set before us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul..." (vs 18-19). In other words, how you're going to remain faithful and steadfast, is:

- to always know the hope of your calling
- to always understand the great, fantastic thing that God has for us
- to know that we are going to be the children of God
- to know that we're going to share in spiritually eternal life and live with God the Father and Jesus Christ and all the saints forever and ever in New Jerusalem

That's the hope!

"...both secure and steadfast..." (v 19). In other words, because of the promises of God by the two immutable things that He swore: that He cannot lie, and because Jesus has already given Himself as that sacrifice and is our High Priest, it is secure and steadfast, and meaning *nothing can shake it*. Our way of worshiping God:

- is not in ritual
- is not in sacrifice
- is not in form and ceremony

Our way of worshiping God is direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ into the Holy of Holies in the temple in heaven! And the whole purpose of everything from here on, whatever he says between this and Heb. 10:26, is to show how *superior*—not just better—but *superior* the New Covenant is to the Old Covenant, and hence, superior to any other form of worship or any other religion. ***Only those that have the Spirit of God have this hope!***

It is true that if anyone will truly pray to Jesus, though they are not converted and baptized, and they believe, God will answer their prayers *according to their faith at their level*. Why would He do that? *To encourage them more toward conversion and coming to God!* That's why. So, the thing to say that Jesus only hears the prayers of those who are converted is not a correct statement. However, it is a

true statement that ***only those who have the Spirit of Christ will receive eternal life!*** God can answer prayers for anyone. *Answering a prayer does not mean eternal life!* It just means that God answered the prayer. If they go on and they're thankful and they pick up the Bible and really want to know and learn and study, then God's Spirit can be with them and lead them and, hopefully, they would be led to repentance and baptism.

But as far as those who are in the Church we have to where God has absolutely drawn the line:

Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit..." This is how God is viewing you, because, obviously, you are still in the flesh. You still have the pulls of the flesh to overcome. But this is your relationship with God. It is *spiritual*.

Here's the dividing line: "...if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, **he does not belong to Him**" (v 9).

God is not making a mistake on what He is doing. Those who have the Holy Spirit are His. They are the ones who are called to salvation. So, if you have others out there who know of God, heard of God, heard of the name of Christ, if they pray to Jesus and He answers their prayer, that's fine. It is not giving them eternal life. You do not have to have the Spirit of God in order to have your prayers answered. Otherwise, how would anyone ever be able to approach God at all? *You couldn't!* Then you would have to have a system set up where they would have to come to some man to have their sins forgiven before they could even pray. Can you imagine what a church would do with that?

Here's our relationship with God, Hebrews 6:19: "...and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil." Now you're able to understand this a little bit more, so I guess it worked out just fine showing you, or having you see the tabernacle again, where you could see the two compartments of the tabernacle, where you have the Holy place and then you have the Holy of Holies. "...within the veil..." is into the Holy of Holies where the mercy seat of God is; in other words, to the very throne of God.

Notice how this is almost a repeat. This is the summary that begins the whole topic (Heb. 6:20). Here's the conclusion of everything:

Hebrews 10:19: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful” (vs 19-23). It *begins* with hope (Heb 6:19-20), and it *ends* with hope (Heb. 10:23).

Hebrews 6:20: “Where Jesus has entered for us *as* a forerunner, having **become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.**” We are going to start with that today, and there’s a reason why. This is all based upon what we find in Psa. 110:4 is repeated many times in the New Testament. This is the whole basis of the foundation of the New Covenant and the worship of God under the New Covenant, and our access to God the Father, and Jesus Christ and the High Priest that we have.

Psalms 110:1: “The LORD said unto my Lord...” We know David had no lord over him. So this is one of those places in the Old Testament that *reveals* the Father as well as Christ.

“...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’ The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion *saying*, ‘Rule in the midst of Your enemies’” (vs 1-2). Isn’t that something? ***The enemies of God can only do what God allows.*** They don’t even realize how restricted and how held back they are by God.

Psa. 2—here’s their attitude; here’s the attitude of them today. This is what they are wanting to do with all of the new religions, and now with this book that I mentioned earlier, *Christianity Without God*. God is going to let this world go its way, and they think they’re getting away with it. Then one day BAM! In the heavens there’s going to appear the sign of the Son of Man, and they’re going to be astonished at what’s going to happen. It’s going to be something.

Psalms 2:1: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ, saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder... [God has no hold on us] ...and cast away Their cords from us.’ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. ‘Yea, I have set

My King upon Zion, My Holy mountain. I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You.’ Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (vs 1-9).

When it says that He rules ‘in the midst of His enemies,’ that’s something to have great hope in. Yes, there are times that God lets the enemies conquer His people; that is true. That’s what they’re going to figure that they are doing in the last days when the martyrdoms occur. What is going to be the ultimate reality of the fulfillment of Psa. 2? When they think that they have finally won? The enemies are going to think that they have finally won *when they kill the two witnesses*, because look what they do after that:

Revelation 11:9: “Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs...”

After they’ve tormented them with plagues and everything like this, and they can call fire down from heaven, and hold back the rain, and everything. God is going to let them kill them [two witnesses]. Whereas before, if they tried to kill them, what would happen? Fire would come out of the mouth of the two witnesses and devour them. They are going to think, ‘Boy, we finally got it! These guys are dead!’

They “...shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth” (vs 9-10).

So, for three and a half days they’re going to think they’re victorious. Really not very long at all! Then right after that, they are raised, the seventh trumpet is blown, and the resurrection takes place.

Never worry about the enemy. Yes, we’re to be ‘wise as serpents and harmless as doves,’ that’s true. But never worry about the enemy, because God *rules* in their midst, and if He lets them rise very high; guess what, *they have further to fall!* Always remember Pharaoh. God said, ‘I raised him up for this very purpose: to show My power and My glory, that will be known in all the earth’ Yes, it was, and still is.

Wherever the Bible is, and you read it, it's still known in all the earth that God took him down. But He let him be raised up in great glory. He let him oppress the children of Israel. Then God intervened. And Pharaoh learned one thing—even though he didn't have any of the technological marvels that we supposedly have with our weapons today—that *you can't fight against the plagues of God!* You can't be a very good warrior when you're covered with boils and blains. You can't concentrate on what you're doing if flies, frogs and lice and all of these things are bothering you. God has a good way of taking care of them. God does rule in the midst of His enemies.

Psalm 110:3: "Your people will offer themselves in the day of Your power..." That's something! When is the day of His power? *Whenever He intervenes on behalf of His people*, whether it is *before* the second coming or *at* the second coming. Of course, the second coming is going to be the greatest manifestation of it.

"...in the beauties of Holiness from the womb of the morning: Yours is the dew of Your youth.... [this is just sort of a symbolic expression of eternal life] ...The LORD has sworn and **will not repent**, 'You... ['the LORD said to my Lord'] ...are a priest forever **after the order of Melchisedec**" (vs 3-4).

One thing that's very important here that we need to understand is *when this was given*. This was given while the Aaronic priesthood and the Levites were in full blossom in Jerusalem. This is already telling us while that priesthood was functioning that it was going to be out of date sometime in the future and *be replaced by the order of Melchisedec*. So, this is what we will see.

Verse 5: "The LORD at Your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.... [this shows His second coming] ...He shall judge among the nations... [He's constantly doing that] ...He shall fill them with dead bodies; He shall shatter chief men over the broad earth. He shall drink of the brook by the way... [likening unto the Holy Spirit] ...therefore, He shall lift up the head" (vs 5-7)—lift up Himself for battle; His second return.

Hebrews 7:1: "For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, Who met Abraham *as he was* returning from *his* slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, and to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace; without father, without mother, without genealogy;

having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God, remains a Priest forever. But consider how great this One *was* to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils" (vs 1-4).

Now let's go back and look at the priesthood of Melchisedec. Let's first of all understand what it says here in Heb. 7:1 *that He is King and Priest*. Under the system that Israel had, the priest could not be king. You had the kingship, which would come down through the line of David; you had the priesthood, which would come down through the line of Aaron. A king could not become a priest, and a priest could not become a king. But here we have both offices together in Melchisedec. The reason that this is so is *to show the superiority of the priesthood of Melchisedec, Who is Christ*—that's what it's showing.

Let's go back and see the account in Gen. 14; this is all we have concerning Melchisedec in the Old Testament. This becomes a very important precedent when we understand that Melchisedec (Gen. 14) was actually the One Who became Jesus Christ. Every other man has *a mother, a father, a beginning of days and an end of life!*

Some commentaries like to say that Melchisedec was Shem. Why could it not be Shem? It's very, very simple, the Bible records Shem's birth.: *Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah!* So, he had a father and mother; he had a beginning of days, and he had an end of life. Therefore, just as God appeared to those in the Old Testament time in different manners, there's a time later when He came to Abraham and He appeared as a man. Here's a time where He appears as a High Priest. Now this becomes very important, because this occurred *before* the priesthood of Aaron and the Levitical system. That means that it has precedence over the covenant with Israel.

When they came back from the slaughter of the kings, Genesis 14:17: "And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter... [the king of Sodom didn't go out and fight. He stayed home] ...of Chedorlaomer and of the kings with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which *is* the king's valley. And Melchisedec the King of Salem..." (vs 17-18).

This tells us this is a preview of the only ceremony that we have where we use physical things. That ceremony is *the Passover!* This King of Salem, Priest of the Most High, did not accept animal sacrifices, did not accept any other form of worship. Here we have right here—by what He did—was a prophecy of what would be when it comes time for the Passover. This may not have

been at the Passover time. It doesn't tell us whether it was or whether it wasn't.

Verse 18: "And Melchisedec the King of Salem brought forth bread and wine. And He *was* the Priest of the Most High God."

When it talks about the Most High in the Old Testament, that is talking about God the Father. So, there are these some few references in the Old Testament concerning God the Father. In Dan. 7 He is called the *Ancient of Days*. Here He is the *Priest of the Most High God*, and that means God the Father. Though the king of Sodom may have been there, there's no indication that he participated in this service with Abraham and Melchisedec.

Notice what happened, v 19: "And He blessed him, and said, 'Blessed *be* Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed *be* the Most High God, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.' And he gave Him tithes of all" (vs 19-20).

This becomes a very important thing. This also shows that tithes were required *before* the Levitical priesthood. We won't get into tithing today, but we'll sort of set the stage here with it. Was Abraham a righteous man? *Yes!* He's called *righteous Abraham!* Which meant *that he kept the commandments of God!* But more importantly, what made him more righteous than others was this: ***he obeyed the voice of God without question, and with a willing heart and obedience!***

Here we have the blessing passed on from Abraham to Isaac, and God tells Isaac, Genesis 26:3: "Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed, I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father."

Isaac remembered that oath. He was one of the participants at the time when God asked Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering. He understood fully what was being said here. He remembered the swearing that God said, 'In blessing I will bless, and multiplying I will multiply.'

So, He reiterates it here in v 4: "And I will multiply your seed [Isaac] as the stars of the heavens and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because Abraham obeyed My voice** and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (vs 4-5).

These had to be the very same that He gave to the children of Israel at a later date. Why can we be so sure of that? *Well simply because Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and 'I, the*

LORD, change not!' If His commandments are righteousness, which they are; and if obedience is required of them, which He does; then *they had to be the exact same laws*. Otherwise, how would Abraham know how to tithe unless God had commanded him to tithe? Though we only have this one account of spoil, that doesn't mean that that was the only time that Abraham tithed. It gives this one account to establish a precedent that the priesthood of Melchisedec was:

- in operation before the priesthood of Aaron
- has superiority over the priesthood of Aaron
- that the priesthood of Aaron and the Levitical system was to come to an end at a future date

That's why these things are there.

Hebrews 7:2: "And to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace." This is a literal declaration of His title (Gen. 14), and it is a prophetic reference of His titles when Christ sets up the Kingdom of God. We will see that all the way through when we're going through this.

Verse 3: "Without father, without mother..." No human being can be without father or mother. *This has to be the One Who became Christ!*

"...without genealogy..." (v 3). There is no genealogy in the Old Testament you can't go back where it says, 'This is the genealogy of Melchisedec, the Priest of the Most High God.' Whereas, you could go back into the Old Testament in you could find the genealogy of the Aaronic priesthood and the Levites, beginning with *Moses and Aaron!* *Yes indeed!*

"...having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God..." (v 3). When Melchisedec appeared as the Priest of the Most High God, He presented Himself in a form that He would look like when He became Christ. Now as the Son of God, He remains a Priest forever. This becomes so very important, because it means that *there is no interruption of the service of His Priesthood!* He does not need a successor because He is there *forever* it says.

"...remains a Priest forever" (v 3). And that's continually, without interruption. How much better a priesthood is this, than a priesthood of men who through history have shown that they have become corrupted? And that corruption was previewed by *the wilderness*, when the people came

to Aaron and said, 'As for this man Moses, we don't know where he is. Aaron, make us gods.'

So, the corruptible nature of the Aaronic priesthood was revealed immediately in Aaron himself. Aaron didn't say, 'Now look, we know we heard the voice of God. We know that He said *you shall not make any idols or graven images of anything, and you shall not bow down and worship them!* So therefore, no, I'm not going to do this. And since my brother Moses is up there talking to God, if you so much as raise a finger to make an idol, I'm going to have the soldiers over here thrust you through with a spear.' Which is what he should have done, but he didn't. That whole episode of making the golden calves was not only a sin at that time, but it was also a *prophecy of the coming corruption of the Aaronic priesthood!* You can go back and read how corrupt they became. Here we have a King of Righteousness:

- Who has no corruption
- Who lives forever
- Who is the right hand of God
- Who has given us permission to come into the Holy of Holies in the temple above to God the Father, and Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God

That's why it's so superior!

- We have God the Father Who lives forever
- God the Son Who lives forever
- Who can never be corrupted
- Who are always righteous
 - ✓ gives us of His Holy Spirit
 - ✓ gives us hope
 - ✓ gives us understanding
 - ✓ gives us of His Word
 - ✓ gives of His Truth
- ✓ we can have direct contact with Them in heaven above

That's contrasted with the Aaronic and Levitical system, where they had to come to the priest. They didn't have direct access to God the Father in heaven above. Only certain of the prophets and the patriarchs had direct access to God. What a tremendous privilege that is, brethren!

That's why Paul spent so much time on this, so when he comes to the end of this in Heb. 10, he says, 'If you trample under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith you are sanctified as an unholy thing, it's over with,' because this is a tremendous, absolute privilege here. ***He remains a Priest forever!***

Why would he say, 'the King of Righteousness,' rather than 'the Priest of Righteousness'? Very important! He's called the

King of Righteousness, the King of Salem, which is the King of Peace, because not only as High Priest, He has the two offices: He is King and He is Priest—which then is a *special office* not granted to other human beings. This is to show that actually ***He is God!*** Because no one can be King of Righteousness unless he is God.

Revelation 19:11 shows His activity in righteousness here even in making war: "And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war."

Only the King of Righteousness can judge and make war this way. Then it talks about Him and His glorified form, and He's called The Word of God.

Verse 16: "And on *His* garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords." Being King of Righteousness and King of Peace, *and* Priest at the same time, is a *far greater office* than the priesthood of Aaron, because he was only a priest and he was physical. Whereas we now have a Priest *forever* Who is also King, Who is also Ruler.

You can tie Isa. 9 in there with it. The very purpose why Christ came, and it shows all of these things all tied together. Here it doesn't show His *priestly office*. Here it shows His *kingly office*.

Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders..." The *kingly office* is being exalted here. In Psa. 110 we have the *priestly office*. Then in Heb. 7 we have them *combined together* for the very first time, because ***Christ was the only One Who was righteous enough to be King and Priest!*** Foretold by being King of Salem and Priest of the Most High back in Gen. 14.

Here it talks about the *kingly element* of it, "...the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful..." [all of these are names of God, qualities of God] ...Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.... [He's called the King of Peace (Heb. 7)] ...of the increase of *His* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David..." (vs 6-7)—showing that though He is Prince of Peace, He will be King of Peace because He's going to sit on the throne of David.

"...and over His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this" (v 7). There we have the *kingly* part of the Melchisedec, being King and

High Priest.

Now, let's cover a couple of things concerning Melchisedec Who established it? *The Lord established it Himself, the Most High!* Melchisedec was Priest of the Most High. That means that God the Father established this, and it was before the establishment of the covenant in Gen. 15; that was on the Passover Day. How long it continued to exist we don't know. If it went beyond the days of Abraham to Isaac; we have nothing other than what it tells us in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

That's why Paul spends the time here, saying, Hebrews 7:3: "Without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God..." That could be translated *assimilated into*, meaning ***the very office of Melchisedec was assimilated into the function of the Son of God***, Who was Christ.

- He is a Priest forever, because He lives forever
- He is King forever, because He lives forever

Verse 4: "But consider how great this One was..." This is important to understand, because what is it that the Jews today look to as the most important man? *Moses!* They also understand about Abraham, but they look to Moses more. Abraham preceded Moses. This is why he's going back to this historical setting to show that the precedent of Melchisedec *as Priest and as King* was established *before* the covenant with Abraham.

Paul says, v 4: "But consider how great this One was, to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth from the spoils." The reason he brings this out is because under the covenant with Israel no one was to receive the tenth other than the Levites and the priests. So, he is showing here the giving of the tenth, and also it shows that God required a tenth *long before Israel and, undoubtedly, long before Abraham!*

We don't know, but we could make a guess, so we'll have to say part of this is a guess and part of it is fact. God does expect us to use our minds in a proper way and to think things through with Scripture to come to understand what His Word is. Most of the time God does not necessarily repeat everything over again in exactly the same way. And this is what bugs people to death to no end concerning the New Testament, because they say, 'Well, there's no command to keep the Sabbath.'

But yes there is when you come to understand it, likewise here when we read about Cain and Abel.

If you keep the commandments of God and obey His voice and keep His charge, His statutes, His commandments and His laws, you are righteous. '*All Your commandments are righteousness.*' If you do not do that, and you break the commandments, we know that sin is 'the transgression of law'; therefore, *sin is the breaking of the commandments!* We understand that. Let's come here and read this account with Cain and Abel, and this will help us understand.

Let's give just little background before we start reading. Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden and two cherubim were put at the entrance of the East gate. This is very similar to what, as we went through and showed concerning the tabernacle, how the tabernacle was constructed. In the Holy of Holies, the inner part of the tabernacle, or the temple, was where the Ark was, or, the throne of God, or where the presence of God was. Now, after Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden, who lived in the Garden of Eden? *God still did!* He didn't destroy it. He put the cherubim there to protect the *Tree of Life* so that they could not get in there.

In symbolism under the covenant with Israel, the high priest was allowed to go into the Holy of Holies of the temple once a year. He would come into the outer chamber every day. In the outer chamber we have:

- the seven lamp stands
- the things for washing
- the table of showbread with the six loaves on each side of the table

All of that is reflective back here to the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve and Abel would want to have contact with God, where would they go? Probably at the set time, probably on the Sabbath Day they would meet the Lord at the entrance of the Garden of Eden. Just outside the entrance of the Garden of Eden there had to be some sort of altar. Just like outside the entrance to the temple you had the altar of burnt offerings. Inside the first part you also had the altar of incense. Instead of a temple, we have the Garden of Eden and the two cherubim; out from there we have an altar, and there had to be an altar because of what we're going to read here in Gen. 4.

The Lord also functioned not only as King, but as Priest. *He would have to with Abel and Cain, and Adam and Eve!* This maybe reflects back on the office of Melchisedec going clear back here, because obviously the Lord had no beginning of days, or end

of life, nor any genealogy. What happened after Cain and Abel were born:

Genesis 4:3 “It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground.”

Are you to bring certain offerings of the ground to God? *Yes, you are!* You’re to bring the firstfruits. You’re to bring the tithe of it. The same laws apply. We can take the laws that God gave to Israel, and they have to be the same ones back here. Even though you brought an offering from the ground, was that sufficient? If you brought an offering of the ground that was not the firstfruits, or that was not the tithe of the ground, that still was not an offering in the sense that it was an animal sacrifice. There are a lot of things we can derive out of this when we understand the rest of the Bible.

Verse 4: “And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it...” What are the firstlings? *They are the firstborn!* Where do we find the law of the firstborn? *Exodus and Deuteronomy!* ‘All that opens the matrix being males are Mine, says the LORD.’

Were these offered at the same time? *It doesn’t say that they were offered at the same time,* and you don’t put the firstfruits on the altar, and you don’t put the tithe of the ground on the altar. The only thing you put on the altar is an animal sacrifice. But also, because of the nature of man, what was it that God required of Israel when they approached Him? *To bring an offering for sin! Only by the shedding of blood is there remission of sin! That’s correct today through the blood of Christ!* That was correct with Israel with the animal sacrifices they had. Therefore, we can say it had to be also correct with Abel and Cain, otherwise, God then would have different standards for different people when there is only one law, and one standard, and one Lord. So, this is how we are to reason with the Scriptures.

Verse 4: “And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it...” It could be offered for a firstborn; it could also be offered for a sin offering, either way.

“...And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering” (v 4). People look at that and they think, ‘Well, now, Cain tried.’ This was before New Age philosophy. ‘If he was sincere and he tried, therefore, God was being discriminatory because He accepted Abel’s sacrifice and not Cain’s. After all, from the goodness of his heart, Cain must have done this.’ *No!* We don’t find that at all.

Verse 5: “But He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering....” Why? *If it would have*

been done according to the laws that God gave them it would have been accepted! If you do something according to the Law of God, does He not accept it? *Yes, He does!* That’s what He said is acceptable. You even read there of the sacrifices in Lev. 1, it says *when any man brings a voluntary offering of his own will.* He has to initiate it. Then when he initiates it He gives all of the commands on how that is to be offered at the altar. So likewise, we’ve got to have the same thing in play here. When did God not accept an offering by the priest and the Levites? (Mal. 1). You bring the blind and halted and the maimed, and that which God rejects, and you expect Him to accept it. So, God didn’t have any respect to that.

Whatever it was that Cain brought and did, he did not do it according to the commandment of God. So therefore, God did not have respect unto it. Now then, from this we can learn a great principle, which covers everything: ***Unless you do it God’s way, He is not bound to respect what you do!*** We can just think on that! That’s true! After all, is not God, *God?* Since He *is* God—not *if*—He is the One Who commands men. *Men do not command God!* So, what we have here is Cain doing his own way, coming to God and asking God to accept something that was done contrary to the Law; otherwise, it would have been accepted.

Let’s come back to the book of Jude and tie this in with relationship to New Testament faith. We’ve read this many times before, but let’s put this in a little different light.

Jude 3: “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints.” Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments.’ We can go through all of that, too.

Verse 4: “For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment.... [that means their condemnation of old was written about] *...They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 3-4).

After he talks about what happened to the children of Israel, and Sodom and Gomorrah, and the angels that sinned, and so forth, v 10: “As for these... [men who are turning the grace of God into licentiousness] ...whatever things they do not understand... [they don’t understand them] ...they blaspheme; but whatever things they understand by

instinct, as irrational brute beasts, they are corrupting themselves in these things. Woe to them! For they have walked in the way of Cain..." (vs 10-11).

This defines the way of Cain. The way of Cain is contrary to the commandments of God, contrary to the faith of Christ. While Abel is called righteous, Cain is called wicked in this way, and it is the way of Cain, because he established something after the account there in Gen. 4.

Verse 11: "...and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam's delusion, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah."

What was the thing of Balaam? *Balaam wanted to be paid for his services!* 'Yes, I will come and curse if you pay me.' And he says, 'Whatever you ask.' God let him have it. He gave him a warning with the angel and the jackass.

"...and have perished in the rebellion of Korah" (v 11). Korah did what?

- they were the ones who wanted to usurp the priesthood
- they were the ones who wanted to offer incense
- they were the ones who wanted to get rid of Aaron

So, you have that same thing connected with Cain, Balaam, and Korah. What was it that Cain did back here? Isn't this typical?

Genesis 4:5: "...And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell." He wanted *his* way.

Try the same thing on any Sunday-keeper, and say, 'You ought to keep the Sabbath.' They'll get mad and their countenance wroth, fallen. They will be, 'How dare you!' There's one man who sent an e-mail, I forget what it was, but I called Ron Cary, and I had Ron Cary give him a little note and send him the *Rome's Challenge To The Protestants*. And boy, I got back a hot e-mail. 'I never knew you were SDA [Seventh Day Adventist]!' *Well, we're not SDA.* 'You SDAs always hide under other names!' *We're not SDAs, and we're not hiding under other names.* We have it very clearly stated, Christian Biblical Church of God. That's not another name. Then he says, 'Jesus gave us the first day of the week by being resurrected on the first day of the week.' All mad! All angry! Didn't want the Truth.

That's exactly what Cain was. So, God gave him a chance, v 6: "And the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, shall you not be accepted?....'" (vs 6-7).

Whatever he did was not right, because it says that the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, which means that God accepted it. He's saying to Cain, 'You didn't do this in a right manner. Had you done it in a right manner you would have been accepted.'

Verse 7: "...But if you do not do well... [if you do not what is right] ...sin... [which is the transgression of Law] ...lies at the door..." That's a very interesting statement there. This I'm sure has reference to the entrance into the Garden of Eden where God would come out and He would manifest Himself. Maybe that's when the priesthood of Melchisedec began. The altar was at the entrance, or the door, to the Garden of Eden. Here he's bringing sin. "...**sin lies at the door**..."—right at the entrance where God lives. That's what He's saying.

"...Its desire *is* for you..." (v 7). In other words, if you give in to it—you give in to your lust—it's going to get you. What is the wages of sin? *Death!*

"...but you must rule over it!" (v 7). That's what it should read. In other words, you are to overcome sin. What did God do when Cain sinned? *He called him to repentance!* Isn't that what God commanded Israel? *Yes, indeed!*

Since he brought an offering of the ground, and he brought it to the altar, could it be that he brought it and put it on the altar in place of a burnt offering? In other words, on the altar of God instead of a sacrifice of a lamb or a goat, as we know would be allowable. He brought the fruit of the ground and put it on the altar and expected God to accept that as a burnt offering. Can you burn wheat? *Yes, you can put a bundle of wheat up on an altar with the fire and it will burn!* It's possible. Again, we don't know. We can't say for sure, but something like that must have been the case, because it was called sin.

So therefore, we know it was not firstfruit offering; we know it was not a tithe offering. Another possibility just brought up, which is a good comment. Since Cain would have to bring an animal for a sin offering, he probably would have had to trade with his brother Abel to get a lamb to do that, and he didn't want to do it. So, he was going to force his way upon God. Either way you look at it, whatever Cain did was *to force his way upon God*. That's totally the opposite of repentance.

Let's see the same thing here. Whenever there is sin, God defines it, and God calls to repentance. God instructs what needs to be done after repentance, and that's the same thing that He did with Cain. You go back and analyze that.

Isaiah 1:10: “Hear the Word of the LORD, rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah. ‘To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?’ says the LORD....” (vs 10-11).

Even the animal sacrifices, if they were not offered correctly, or if they were not according to what God had said, or if you come with an evil heart there in the book of Micah, that you’re going to have greater favor with God. You can even take God’s way and so pervert it and still say that you’re doing it to God, even in the temple of God, but you’re living in sin. That’s what they were doing.

“...‘I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I do not delight in *the blood of bulls*, or of lambs, or of he-goats” (v 11). Yet, He commanded it. But they were doing it with sin.

Verse 12: “When you come to appear before Me, who has required this at your hand, to trample My courts?” It sounds an awful lot like Gen. 4. You might put there Sunday-keeping. ‘Who has required you to do this? You come and say you’re doing it in the name of God. And you’re coming and saying that you have entrance to Me and My court.’ *No!*

Verse 13: “Bring no more vain sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me—new moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies...” We know that for Israel, these were *their own* sabbaths and own new moons and everything like this. ***It wasn’t God’s!*** We know when we read the rest of the book of Isaiah that they were worshiping Baal. They were following all the gods of the nations around them, offering their children in the fire to Moloch.

“...I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly!” (v 13). I tell you what, there is nothing more frustrating than to go to some meeting and it turns out to be some stupid meeting with absolutely no meaning or relevance to anything. And much more so if you come to hear the Word of God and anything but the Word of God is expressed. This is what God is telling us here.

Verse 14: “Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary to bear *them*.” He says in another place: ‘Israel, you have made Me to serve with your sins’ That’s what God did. He’s exposing their sins, and He’s telling them why. Now He’s going to tell them what to do here in just a minute.

Verse 15: “And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.” Then He brings them to repentance:

Verse 16: “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil... [that’s repentance] ...learn to do good... [that’s what you do after repentance] ...seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan; plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the LORD. ‘Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured *with the sword*’; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken *it*” (vs 14-20).

What happened to Cain? *He refused!* He went and killed Abel. Maybe he had to go to Abel to barter some of his goods of the ground to bring an animal for a sin offering or a sacrifice for a Sabbath or Holy Day. And he didn’t want to do it. There are many different things that we can read out of the account there with Abel and Cain. He was jealous. He was firstborn, therefore, he figured that whatever he did should be acceptable. So, you always have this kind of thing going on even in families today. You always know the one who is second born is always playing catch-up.

You have everything there. Even though he brought something from the ground, if it were proper according to God’s Law, he would have been accepted. None of the things from the ground can be taken for a sin offering or a burnt offering. The burnt offering is given when you’re thankful to God, and its wholly consumed on the altar, and God takes that as a real sacrifice on your part; and He commanded it, and if it’s done right, God accepts it. So there are many, many different things that you can glean and from the account with Abel and Cain.

This also ties in to tithing, and ties into the thing that people want to give offerings rather than to tithe. There are two things people get upset about:

1. their lives
2. their money

Satan is right there to take advantage of both of those! God is right there to bless you with both of those! So, before we get all huffy and puffy and before I even get to it, I know there are going to be people who will say, ‘You’re doing this because you need money.’ *No!* I’m not bringing this because the Church needs money, or I personally need money. I’m bringing it so that you will understand that if you go contrary to the commands of God in anything—including *tithes and offerings*—then you’re holding back a blessing that God would want to give you. That’s why.

If you have to live by every Word of God, which you do, then that's included. I'll just say right here, those who are retired and who are on Social Security and so forth, you do not have an active servile working increase, so therefore, to give offerings on what you receive, that's perfectly fine. I'm not trying to preach that those who are on pensions or those who have very little income, they should tithe. But nevertheless, *always remember the widow's mite*. The point was not how much she gave, the point was that *she loved God!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 6:18-19
- 2) Romans 8:9
- 3) Hebrews 6:19
- 4) Hebrews 10:19-23
- 5) Hebrews 6:20
- 6) Psalm 110:1-2
- 7) Psalm 2:1-9
- 8) Revelation 11:9-10
- 9) Psalm 110:3-7
- 10) Hebrews 7:1-4
- 11) Genesis 14:17-20
- 12) Genesis 26:3-5
- 13) Hebrews 7:2-3
- 14) Revelation 19:11, 16
- 15) Isaiah 9:6-7
- 16) Hebrews 7:3-4
- 17) Genesis 4:3-5
- 18) Jude 3-4, 10-11
- 19) Genesis 4:5-7
- 20) Isaiah 1:10-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 10:26
- Daniel 7
- Genesis 15
- Leviticus 1
- Malachi 1

Also referenced:

- Book: *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering
- Article: *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*

FRC:mds/cs/dss
Transcribed: 12/10/2002
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017