

• *An infinitely greater priestly work*

**1. The Mosaic system could not produce completely adequate worshippers**

• *God wants 'complete', 'mature' people*

**2. The Mosaic law and the Aaronic priesthood are linked**

**3. The Mosaic system is entirely abolished**

• *It prefigured the gospel*

• *Temporary*

• *Prophetic*

• *Partial*

**4. 'Mosaism' is hopelessly inadequate**

• *No peace with God*

Why should anyone need a new priest if the old one is good enough? But the priests of the Old Testament were not good enough! Jesus' priestly work 'in the order of Melchizedek' is infinitely greater than what was available to ancient Israel.

**1. The Mosaic system could not produce completely adequate worshippers.** <sup>11</sup>*Now if perfection came through the Levitical priesthood – for the people received the law under this priesthood – what further need was there – according to the order of Melchizedek – for another priesthood to arise and not be spoken of according to the order of Aaron?* The Mosaic law could not bring anything to be completely the way God wanted it to be. God wanted a perfect Saviour. He wanted completely adequate servants and worshippers, people with a totally clear conscience. When the writer uses this word 'perfection', he refers to the complete fulfilment of God's plan of salvation. God needed a Saviour fully able to bring us back to God – Hebrews 2:10; 5:9. He needed 'complete' or 'mature' believers (people fully able to have a good conscience before God, able to live the life of love and service, people fully able to achieve God's call upon their lives in unhindered fellowship with him<sup>1</sup>). But none of this could be done by relying on the priests of the Mosaic system, or upon the animal sacrifices.

<sup>1</sup> see 9:9

**2. The Mosaic law and the Aaronic priesthood are linked.** The shedding of the blood and the provision of sacrifice for sin made possible the giving of the law. The Mosaic law came into being as part of the system of national life that involved the tabernacle and the sacrifices and the priests.

**3. The Mosaic system is entirely abolished.** The Old Testament predictions envisaged a total abolition of the precise system of law and worship that governed Israel. It is not that the Mosaic system is evil. It came from God not from Satan. But it prefigured the gospel; it was not the gospel itself. The God of the law is the God of the gospel; law and gospel did not come from two gods! They are pointing in the same direction; law and gospel both point to Christ. But the law was temporary; Jesus is permanent. Law is prophetic; Jesus is fulfilment. Law is partial and inadequate. Not only is the priesthood changed; the entire system of approaching God through the Mosaic system had to be replaced by something else. <sup>12</sup>*For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must of necessity also be a change of the law.* The two were so tied together that where one changed the other changed.

**4. 'Mosaism' is hopelessly inadequate.** Their ceremonies were not adequate in themselves to give peace with God. The moral standards of the Mosaic law were too low. We think of its tolerance of polygamy and easy divorce, its command to slaughter Canaanites, and so on. In one sense the law is too easy. Even people without faith could feel that they had kept it (as Paul once did<sup>1</sup>). But if the tenth commandment was taken seriously it brought total despair (which is the point of Romans 7:7–25). The law rouses sin and gives it greater strength than ever. The more you struggle to be godly under the

• **Moral standards too low**

• **Law rouses sin and gives it strength**

• **Now replaced by the Holy Spirit**

**5. Jesus makes 'perfection' possible**

• **Advocate and friend**

• **Intercessor**

• **Teacher**

• **Brings things to our memory**

• **Changes our heart**

• **Enables us to draw near to God**

Mosaic law, the more ungodly you become! And its religion focuses on buildings and holy days and regulations about food and hygiene. It operates by fear of punishment and gives no spiritual help. It temporarily kept Israel up to a certain level of morality and stopped the nation from being destroyed like the Canaanites. But it did not produce a perfect Saviour, nor completely confident worshippers. The place once occupied by the law among the people of God is now occupied by the Holy Spirit. The Day of Pentecost was the anniversary of the giving of the law. But God did not give a new law; he gave the Holy Spirit.

**5. Jesus makes 'perfection' possible.** It is the Lord Jesus Christ who does all the things the law could not do. It is Jesus by his 'indestructible life'<sup>1</sup> who gives us what the law could never have given us. He gives us the Holy Spirit, a blessing that is never given by our being 'under the law'. Then he becomes our advocate and friend. Through the intercession of Jesus, the Father gives us the Holy Spirit to be with us for ever<sup>2</sup>. He teaches us all things and brings to our memory the teaching of Jesus as we need it<sup>3</sup>. He reveals Jesus to us and leads us to experience all that Jesus has for us. By the Holy Spirit Jesus changes our hearts, gives us full assurance of salvation, guides us and guards us, sanctifies us and leads us, works into our hearts faith and hope and love. This is the kind of 'perfection' or 'maturity' that was never possible by the law. No doubt there were people in Old Testament times who had high levels of experience of God, but they did not get it by the law or by the temple. They could only know God in that way by going straight to God in faith. Even then there was a limit to how closely they could 'draw near' to God. But no longer do we have to know God only 'afar off'. We have a level of completeness or perfection that could never have been known simply by living on the institutions of the sacrifices and priestly ministries of the law of Moses. We may draw near with sure and certain faith.

<sup>1</sup> Philippians 3:6

<sup>1</sup> 7:16  
<sup>2</sup> John 14:16  
<sup>3</sup> John 14:26



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