

01 Which Priesthood, Mosaic or Melchisedek_ (side 1)

The schedule called for a study this evening, and one that was planned next week, and I think that is still on track. At least that's my understanding. I think Dr. Oberlander will have it. I was asked to take the one this evening. I hope I don't burden you by showing up more than expected. I see some of you are continually here. Just a little announcement on the switchboard. A Mabel Gandhi from Pensacola, Florida requested prayers for her month-long heart and kidney problems. I would suggest you bear that in mind as well as others, though this might well be handed to others. I'll present it here to those who regularly attend the Bible study. In connection with the heart problem, I have a little story to tell. Maybe I shouldn't, but I'll see how many of you don't gossip. Let me put it that way. Peter Miller, as you know, one of our long-standing members who was almost 91 in August, gave us his canary to keep, to take care of, and it had a heart attack today and died. That's all that was to it. We let it out of the cage to exercise. In the last few days, it just was so happy to get out but didn't know its limitation. I only cite this as a warning that none of you start jogging too hard and long if you've not done exercises. I think what afflicts canaries can also afflict human beings, and you've heard the warning, so let this lesson sink into your ears. Anyway, it was a beautiful canary. I thought it singing was marvelous, but my wife sometimes thought it was noise. But it was really a fine bird and kept him company for many years, or several years anyway. At least he saw it in good health the last time, but it wasn't prepared to take the exercise. We have a large living room, and that did it. You could just go sailing around in there and sailing around, and you didn't know the limits of his strength. So he was back in his cage when it happened.

Just like that. Sad. Anyway, Peter Miller is with us yet, and we hope that those of you who do on occasion visit him will mention that the bird sang so well for so long. I haven't told him yet, I may. And I may not. I don't know what's good for him. This evening Mr.

Ames suggested a topic. Well, he suggested an idea sometime, and I thought it would be a value near the close of a series in which we won't be having studies for the summer.

A subject that should be clear to all of us, and yet apparently there are individuals who in the Church after years, or among us after years, and sitting among us, still do not have an understanding, as reflected in the following statement, that having left the Church, the Worldwide Church of God, this individual joined an organization that represents a previous spiritual stage and state in the work that God has done on earth. And this is the organization, of course, whose ministry and people Mr. Armstrong came among in the late 1920s. And they assured her that having left the Worldwide Church of God and the teachings of Herbert W. and Garner Ted Armstrong, that she was no longer now involved in the Mosaic priesthood, but she was now attached to the Christ of the Melchizedek priesthood. It was a nice thought. She was happy. She didn't have to do things that she thought she had to do here. I would like to analyze the subject as such, but before I do, I think we should have a preliminary view as to why some individuals, and this happens to be only one case, but I think it does reflect itself in the lack of understanding of many who can sit and hear and don't grasp the following about themselves. For many years, all members came through an experience of having to give up something of themselves or of the world. They had to deny something. They may have had to deny a job, to deny family. They may have had to deny themselves in terms of young people, grades in school because of the festivals of God, a characteristic of people for many years in this work. And Mrs. Mabel Lisman is here. I say, and she represents no small number of years in the church. I remember when I first saw her in the college library, you had to give up something because you were

coming out of the world. That was the state of affairs. Over many years, the church grows and a certain respectability comes to an institution whose members are known for one, two, three decades in a community. And so it is that gradually, in the sixties especially, and more so even into the seventies, we have people who were not trained in all the religious and theological arguments of the past, who couldn't care really one way or another what the Catholic encyclopedia may say of Christmas or Easter.

There were no arguments. These are people in many cases. I'm not referring to the children of members, though that may in some instances be a factor. I'm talking of something more basic that can refer to any one of us if it is our problem. We see church members who do certain things and have, as a result, certain characteristics, hopefully of love and peace and joy, a modicum of prosperity or at least a lack of the trials that some people have, that some people have, a social environment in the church that is so attractive that there are people who come here attracted by what other people do and stand for. Now there's nothing wrong in having your example draw other people to the Worldwide Church of God.

That is what it should be like. But what happens is that we have two kinds of people who are attracted, those who were previously seeking the truth and have now discovered it, and some of those who just got caught in the net and rather liked what other people were like in the church, desired in some way to emulate, and so they have sought to copy what we do. They see that we tithe, so they tithe, and we observe certain time as hallowed time and they try to do it. And everything that God has asked us to do, they try to do it because they see us doing it and think that by doing it we got the results. But it has not sunk in. That too have achieved what God's people have, they must receive the Spirit of God. And that's what made it so easy. And why some who have gone out or come up with these other arguments finally felt under such stress trying to do without faith, but it was easy for those who had faith to do. Not having faith, it is impossible to please God.

Not pleasing God, there was no genuine repentance and no Spirit of God that came. There might have been baptism and then the question that happens years later or months later is, but am I converted? How come I have these problems? I feel miserable, I feel condemned, I don't feel happy, there's no joy. All these things reflect that we have the reality among us of individuals who are attracted by what other people have become and have not been themselves perceived that you did not become like that through your own strength. This will answer I think many questions as to why people are as they are. They did not come having to give up certain things, and then when some strange idea comes along or a suggestion that you don't need to do this or that, there's no root, no depth of understanding because the individual was never having to resist something else and to get close to God. It was just the easy thing to do. In this question that I am posing here, I think that you will see that many of the mistaken ideas of people who thought we were doing the law of Moses, who thought we were under the old covenant and who finally were liberated, and there are points of view like that of people who from time to time disappear, can all be answered if we take a new look at many verses of Scripture that we're all familiar with. Now, these will not be necessarily verses you have not heard before, but I think as we close this occasion with two Bible studies, presumably two one next week, even though next Sabbath has been asked to be a fast day, but in so doing, you all ought to be here.

There won't be any reason to eat at home. You just come here and feast. And Dr. Oberlander, if I believe he was on the schedule, if I doesn't really matter to someone else, please, I don't. I think that was the case. Anyway, whoever it is, I know the person. I remember the name when I saw it visually, and that's what stuck in my mind, but I'm sure we will have a very fine closing summer study. But in this case, we need to take a look to be sure we haven't misunderstood and to be sure we have

reasons for doing what we do. I would like us to take note that I said something, I think it was Pentecost. It doesn't matter when, it might have been a Bible study previous, of how we look and study, look at and study the Bible. I'm going to start again with a small section of Matthew chapter five. And although you've heard this said many times, it does not seem that we have normally put the positive meaning that we should have on the verses. Because people then read some other verse and think the Bible contradicts itself, or Jesus said this merely because he was, quote, under the law, and he would have said something else if he were not under the law. What we have is the fact that Jesus was teaching the message of the kingdom of God, and he was announcing the kingdom of God and how it may be entered, and what a man must do, which means in principle, get yourself out of the way so that God can do something through you that you couldn't do yourself. You are to become something. You're not merely to inherit it as you were, because no man will inherit it who has not first repented and believed what God can do through him. So Jesus' message was not preaching Moses. Remember, the preaching about Moses and what he taught the people was until John, and from John's time till now, not merely Jesus, but John the Baptist, the kingdom of God is preached. Moses had those who read him, the readers in the synagogue, every Sabbath.

But beginning with John, the forerunner of Jesus, the kingdom of God is preached. Mr. Armstrong said that years ago in the 1950s. Garnet Armstrong said that many years, and he did the broadcast when we were going through the Gospels. That is fundamental. It does not say that Moses is preached to the cross, and since that time the kingdom of God is preached. Now that's fundamental. But down here we have a view of how Jesus tells us to handle the Bible as New Testament Christians. I've said it before, and I think I need to repeat it, because if you understand this, most of your problems suddenly vanish in the area, because here's the fundamental approach. I say unto you, we'll start right now, and we'll tell you right with verse 18, till heaven and earth pass, Matthew 5, one letter, the smallest one in Hebrew, the yacht, or one addition, decorative addition to a letter, one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the text of the law. That's the meaning of it. The law that you have here in the Bible, the whole Old Testament, can be called the law. The law can be called the first five books, the law and the prophets, or sometimes the law. In any case, he does refer to law and prophets in the previous seventeenth verse, so we will limit ourselves here to, let's say, the focus on the form of law given in the first five books of the Bible, which Jesus did not come to decanonize or in any way destroy, but to fulfill, until heaven and earth, not a single change, and when he speaks of tittle, he's talking about the text, the written form, shall in any wise pass from the law, therefore the text of the law, that's the yacht and the tittle of the law, shall in no wise be altered, till it all be fulfilled. And Jesus began in his life to set us an example of that fulfillment, and he has pointed up in verse nine our responsibility to do this, verse nineteen, to do the same.

Now, this part, this eighteenth part is very important. It implies that Jesus did not give as a part of the new covenant, or the New Testament, whatever English term you want to use. He did not restate anywhere a body of laws to replace the laws that Moses was given, but the laws that Moses was given, whether on tables of stone and engraved or written in whole stones or in the pages of the book, different times, is to remain as we have it in the Hebrew intact and unaltered. Now, Matthew, chapter five, verse nineteen, whosoever therefore, New Testament teaching, shall break one of these least commandments.

You decide what's the least. I don't need to decide that for you. But whatever you think is the least, whoever shall break such a one and shall teach men to do so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. His message is not shall be called least under the law.

He's talking about your relationship to the kingdom of God. Whosoever shall do and teach them the same shall be called great. That's the standard. How now do you look at the law? This is what I said

before, and I think it needs repetition here at the beginning. We know in Isaiah forty-two, twenty-one, you don't have to turn to it that Christ was to come to magnify the law and to make it honorable. Now, in making this law honorable, in raising it from the letter to the spirit, the letter stands unaltered. It is untrue that Jesus, as soon as he said that not one jot or tittle shall in any wise pass, it is untrue that Jesus suddenly knocked all the letters around and reworded the law. He left the law exactly as it is, and he has asked you, with the spirit of God, to look at that law, not to look somewhere else, not to say, well, I'll only look into the Bible after Acts chapter two, or I'll only look at it after the Gospels are all over. I'll only look at it after everything that happened at the cross has passed. And there is somebody who came along and said, well, even the book of Acts is a transition, so we won't look at anything until after the book of Acts is over, and since Paul wrote most of his letters during the account written in the book of Acts, we won't even look at Paul. Now, we have men who left, who hold such ideas, and presumably women too. Jesus didn't say any such thing. He was preaching the kingdom of God. He pointed out there will be no change in the text as thus far given that we are to look at that law, and we are both to do and to teach. And our role in so doing, even in the kingdom of God, will depend on it. Now, Jesus takes this law, unaltered, and tells you how to handle it. This is the New Testament teaching. He doesn't say, now don't look at the law. He doesn't say, now don't believe what I say, only believe what Paul says. This is the way some people teach it. Or don't believe me and Paul, but use your own judgment after you have read the story of the book of Acts. He says very clearly here, now accept your righteousness, that is, your character shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees who were very picky about every point in the law. You shall in no case enter into the kingdom of God. That is, if your righteousness is only as great as those who saw the law in the letter, you will never even inherit the kingdom of God. Because yours has to be greater than their righteousness, and if it isn't, you will in no case, without exception, the doors will be shut. That's awfully strong now. This is not a weak message. And there are some people who fall short of this because they don't want to do what Christ says. Now, you have heard that it was said by them of all time. Now, I won't go through the whole thing here because I have in times past, but I am trying to point up something fundamental lest it escape us. Now, what has been written is, thou shalt not kill. There is no alteration in that commandment. It remains exactly as it stands. There is no intent in giving a new letter of the law. One letter of the law is enough. Now you are asked to see, as Jesus saw that commandment. So he says, whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger, etc. Now we begin to take a look at the Bible, and we see that not only should we not kill, and of course, in the Old Testament, if you killed by accident, you could be forgiven as distinct from dying without mercy. So there was even an exception under the law, that thou shalt not kill, but if your axe-head flew off the handle, it was certainly unintentional, and you hit somebody else in the head, and he died, he could go to a city of refuge, and you could not be touched by the Avenger of Blood. Now, you are asked to not be touched by the Avenger of Blood, but Jesus wants us to see in that commandment something more, and so he expounds it, and this is the way it is all the way through in chapter 5, and as I have said this last section, verse 48, we are asked to be perfect even as God in heaven is perfect. Therefore, a New Testament Christian does not look to the Bible in the New Testament to find out what it is that should mold our character by reading. We don't say that if it isn't in the Book of Acts, I won't do it, or if it isn't in Paul, I won't do it, or if God hasn't restated it, I won't do it.

That's the carnal mind. Jesus said, I am not restating anything, it stands just as it was, but I am giving you, if you please, spiritual insight so that in examining the whole law you do not use the excuses that were used by those who were a part of an old covenant relationship, who saw nothing but the letter. Therefore, if a commandment in the Old Testament, the first five books let us limit ourselves to at this point, is not repeated in the New, it means nothing, because Jesus told you that if you're going

to teach and do even the least you're going to have to look into the Old Testament to find out what you ought to do.

He has not restated anything in the land. He has told you to go back into the Bible and to look at it, and to see it, if you please, not just as David did, who had to meditate and ponder these things, but to see it in the extra light that is added here, that David didn't have directly in written form in chapter five of Matthew. David had to discern this from experience. We have an authoritative teacher who has told us how to look at it.

Therefore, any argument predicated on the premise that if something is not repeated again in the New Testament Greek, it shouldn't be done by Christians, is fallacious. The New Testament is to give us added insight in handling the written material that is in the Old.

And so we read, as you do know from Jeremiah, nothing new, but I think it very fundamental in how you approach a study of the Bible. The days come that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with man and beast, and as God once dealt with them to destroy, He now deals with them to build them up. And this is a different time that the penalty is visited on each one individually and not on descendants. The days come, verse 31, chapter 31, that I will make a new arrangement, a new covenant with Israel and Judah. It will differ from the one that I made before. This one, instead of having the New Covenant, rather, written in the New Testament Greek and having another letter of the law, this covenant is based on having the laws given as a part of the Sinai Covenant, now called the Old Covenant, written in our inward parts, my law, no change in the laws recorded there, just that law, but written in the human being, in their hearts and in their minds, in such a way that they perceive God and that they truly are His people. Therefore, it is that law now, according to its spirit and intent and purpose. I know that there are many who like the idea because it's all a part of the isms around us, that they would like to get rid of practically everything except four points in the book of Acts or nine of the Ten Commandments. But if you're going to study the Bible, you're going to look at that law and you're going to see it as Jesus defines it. You can read the rest. There will also be forgiveness, verse 34, so we have no doubt the period of time we are speaking of. Now in this connection, when you've had chapter 5 of Matthew expounded, I won't expound it at the moment, but I will turn briefly to a section in Hebrews. Now our new covenant relationship involves something very important. It involves certain ceremonies, that is, that as New Testament Christians, whether Jews or Greeks or Americans, Armenians, whatever, we recognize that in looking at the law in the first five books of the Bible, there is a priesthood. But we note that that priesthood didn't accomplish anything permanent with respect to conscience. But we are told to look at the priesthood just as much as what we call the moral law, or what Seventh-day Adventists more often call the moral law, we usually use the word spiritual law. But we're told to look at everything, including the laws of Moses, whatever you want, and there we find that there is a priesthood.

How do you know that Jesus Christ is your high priest? Because you find that there one has to be one, and that's laid out clearly in the law. That's how you know this is a role he fulfilled. Now, Jesus could not be of what they call a mosaic priesthood because it never was a mosaic priesthood. It was an Aaronic or a Levitical priesthood. Moses was of the family of Levi. But that priesthood pertained to a tribe, and Jesus didn't come from that tribe. Jesus had no right to the physical priesthood. The question is, why was that priesthood given? Did it have a meaning? Does there exist therefore a present priest, that is, is Christ or is there someone playing a role in terms of the New Covenant relationship as Aaron and his descendants did with respect to the old? Now, we have such a high priest, as Paul to the Hebrews, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens. He's a minister of the sanctuary. Now, Mr. Armstrong will be going over this if there is a replay of the tapes on the book of Hebrews of his series. So I'm just breaking into it for a reason. He's

a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man. Now, which one did man pitch? Well, man pitched the one that was in Sinai, and it was a copy of one that was raised up in heaven at the throne of God, invisible, presently to human eyes. So we know, in fact, that the original was only a copy. The original at Sinai was only a copy. That should tell us that if the original is at the throne of God in heaven, then a high priest ought to be functioning there in a new covenant relationship. But unless you read the law and to see what was the duplication on earth, you don't know what the original in heaven is like. I think most Christians have never given a serious thought to that. If you want to understand the role of Christ, you must understand the role of Levi and the role of Aaron. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices. So it was necessary that this man, Jesus, have somewhat also to offer. I'm reading the King James Version as a whole. Now, if he were on earth, if this is where he's going to serve in this role, there would be no need for him to be a priest because we already have priests to make gifts according to the law. It's all taken care of.

We need honor. In an earthly tabernacle is already taken care of. There was no further reason for Jesus to put your animals and to offer them on the altar of burnt offering.

These men serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. As Moses was admonished when he was about to make the tabernacle, see that you make it according to the pattern showed you in the mount, which was a copy of what was in heaven. But now has he obtained that as Jesus a more excellent ministry by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which is established upon better promises. So now we understand that Jesus took a look at the law and is improving, if you please, upon certain aspects, something better, better promises and a better arrangement. The arrangement takes into consideration better promises. Now, the first covenant at Sinai, if it had been faultless, there should no place have been sought for the second covenant. Now, the covenant is an agreement about law.

You keep it exactly as it's written and you receive the following blessings if you do and curses if you don't. That's the way it was arranged. But finding fault with them says the King James Version from some Greek manuscripts. The Greek text that's Byzantine and officially recognized does not imply that the fault was only with the people. It implies that there was also a fault in the covenant itself, as you will now see. And it says, but finding fault with it, he says, the days come that I will make a new arrangement. Now, the fault was in the fact that the covenant couldn't achieve what it was meant to. The law was weak in that it could not accomplish what it was designed to in the flesh. That takes the spirit of God. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand and they continued not in that covenant and I regarded them not, but this is the one that I will do. This arrangement is going to put my laws into their mind. This is quoted from Jeremiah 31, 31. The first covenant had one fundamental flaw. It put the law on tables of stone. It put the law in a book. This one is going to be arranged differently. The flaw in the covenant is being corrected, if you please. It's one way to put it. Now, God intended it to be that way originally to show that human beings couldn't achieve with all their strength what man is called upon to be like. So I'm going this time to put my laws in their mind and write it in their hearts and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people. Now they're going to know these things. So we have a new covenant, verse 13 says, he's made the first old. It's now then commonly called in our language, not merely a first covenant, but an old one, because another one newer and forever new is going to occur. But this isn't all. Now, verily, when you read the law, when you look in the Old Testament at every jot and tittle, you will discover that the first covenant had ordinances of divine service. You don't dismiss it. You take a look at it. It had a worldly sanctuary and there was a tabernacle made. The first wherein was the candlestick. Can I mention on the day of Pentecost the importance of the fact that in

association with the two wave loaves of the Old and New Testament, we must draw the conclusion that the candlestick, a single candlestick with seven candles on top of one stick, represented the state of the church of the Old Testament, like the seven candlesticks in Revelation, represent the states of the church of the New Testament, because there were two wave loaves and the seven candlesticks of Revelation do not start prior to the New Testament. And the Old Testament tabernacle had a single candlestick and that must represent the state of affairs of the congregation of Israel through its seven major periods of experience. There was a table and showbread, which is called the sanctuary. All of this put together. Now, there was not only the outer veil around that, but there was a second veil and a tabernacle inside a dwelling area, which is called the holiest of all. Now, there are people who dismiss all this after all this is called the Law of Moses. Jesus took nothing away. He said he was making no change, but it was important that man should live by every word of God, so we take a look at it all. That's how a Christian is to study the Bible. That's how you know what Christ is doing now and what you're required to do, what has to be done for you. This holiest of all had the golden censor and the Ark of the Covenant overlaid with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, Aaron's rod that butted the tables of the Covenant, and over it the carabin of glory shadowing the mercy seat of which we cannot now speak particularly in this letter. You can get more details in reading Exodus where it's all laid out and how it was served in Leviticus and parts of Numbers. And now, when these things were thus ordained, the Levitical priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. Now, this is a New Testament message. This is what I'm saying, that if you want to know what the New Testament message is with respect to the function of Christ, you must look into the Old Testament and see what the material things pertaining to the tabernacle later temple involved. Now, into this second holiest of all in the earthly tabernacle, the High Priest alone went every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people.

Having to do it every year, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, called Holy Ghost here in the King James, an unfortunate rendition, this signified that the way into the holiest of all, that's this second compartment mentioned in verse 3, was not yet made manifest because nobody could go in but the High Priest. And this happened all the while that first tabernacle was standing. Therefore, there was no direct access to the Father in heaven, of which this was meant to be a replica. This was a figure for the time then present, during which offerings of gifts and sacrifices that could not make the one who did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience that were being presented. All during that time, every sacrifice was only a reminder of guilt. There was no cleansing of the conscience by the sacrifice. David said that, I know you don't want those sacrifices, but a true sacrifice, which is a contrite spirit and a broken heart. So David looked at the law as Paul looked at the law as we should look at the law. And we should see in what was offered, not only the death of an animal physically, but we should see therefore the death of the self and self-will. And when that self-will is not broken, every time guilt has occurred, if you don't approach God that way when you pray, which is pretty strong terminology, you are not approaching the altar in heaven, in any manner befitting the kingdom of God. Those things, however, stood only in meats and drinks. That's food and drink and diverse washings. Various physical ordinances imposed until the time of Reformation, which is now upon us, Paul is saying. And at this time, we discover, you see, that what was practiced was to bring to our attention that Christ, who is the Messiah, that's the same in the Greek as the Hebrew, Christos, meaning the anointed one, Messiah is the English translation of the Hebrew, meaning the same. He has become a high priest of good things to come, not all here yet. By a greater and more perfect tabernacle, it's all being done not in an earthly tabernacle, but in the presence of God the Father in heaven itself. This tabernacle was not made with human hands, not of this earthly building of wood, gold, dust. Neither by the blood of goats and calves does he function, but by his own blood

he offered himself. And this was once, and presented himself into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. And you remember Christ is the fulfillment of the custom of the wave sheath, that omen. And on that Sunday morning, after that sheath had been cut just after the Sabbath was over on Saturday evening, that next morning that sheath was presented after it had been parched and ground. It was presented mid-morning at the very time that Jesus ascended to heaven because by that afternoon we know he had already returned from heaven because he was held. You remember those verses. Now if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, you read that in the Old Testament account. In sprinkling the unclean sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, that is people were forgiven and they could appear at the tabernacle in later temple, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God? In other words, what has happened is that people would like to do away with what they call the moral laws that they don't want to keep and just want those that they are willing to agree with. But it is far more than that. Here is an example where if you want to even know what Christ's work is, not to mention his character, but what his work is,