

## Yeshua's Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood Surpasses the Levitical ~ Part 2

### Messianic Jews 7:11-19 Letter to the Messianic Jews

In my last post, we concluded examining **Messianic Jews 7:1-10** on **The Priority of the Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood**. In this post, we move on to examine Yeshua's eternal cohenhood surpassing the transitory cohenhood of **Aharon** in **Messianic Jews 7:11-19**.

#### The Transitory Cohenhood of Aharon vs. the Eternal Cohenhood of Yeshua

*<sup>11</sup> Therefore, if it had been possible to reach the goal through the system of cohanim derived from Levi (since in connection with it, the people were given the Torah), what need would there have been for another, different kind of cohen, the one spoken of as to be compared with Malki-Tzedek and not to be compared with Aharon? <sup>12</sup> For if the system of cohanim is transformed, there must of necessity occur a transformation of Torah. <sup>13</sup> The one about whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar; <sup>14</sup> for everyone knows that our Lord arose out of Y'hudah and that Moshe said nothing about this tribe when he spoke about cohanim. <sup>15</sup> It becomes even clearer if a "different kind of cohen," one like Malki-Tzedek, arises, <sup>16</sup> one who became a cohen not by virtue of a rule in th Torah concerning physical descent, but by virtue of the power of an indestructible life. <sup>17</sup> For it is stated, "You are a cohen FOREVER, to be compared with Malki-Tzedek." <sup>18</sup> Thus, on the one hand, the earlier rule is set aside because of its weakness and inefficacy <sup>19</sup> (for the Torah did not bring anything to the goal); and, on the other hand, a hope of something better is introduced, through which we are drawing near to God." ~ Messianic Jews 7:11-19 (CJB)*

As we read this passage, we have to remember the basic idea of faith which never leaves the mind of the writer to the **Messianic Jews**: access to God's presence as friends, with nothing between Him and us. The Jewish faith was designed to produce that fellowship in two ways. First, by obedience to the law. If we obey the law and we were the friend of God. Second, it was recognized that such perfect obedience was out of the question for any human; and so the sacrificial system was established.

When humanity was guilty of a breach of the law, the necessary sacrifice was supposed to heal that breach. When the writer to the **Messianic Jews** says that the people became a people of the law by the Levitical cohenhood, it means that without the Levitical sacrifices to atone for breaches of it, the law would have been entirely impossible. But, in fact, the system of Levitical sacrifices had proved ineffective to restore the lost fellowship between God and humanity. So then a new cohenhood was necessary, the cohenhood after the order of **Malki-Tzedek**.

*If it had been possible to reach the goal.* Greek **teleiôsis** is often rendered "perfection," but here it means "reaching the goal" of being reconciled with God and able to be eternally in His presence, as **Yeshua** is now. For sinful human beings to reach this goal, they must indeed become "perfect" by having their sins forgiven by God. The writer will later show that this can never come about through the Levitical cohenhood but can come about through **Yeshua's** cohenhood.

Some people might suppose that the goal can be reached through **the Torah**. This is why the writer offers as an argument for the possibility of achieving it *through the system of cohanim derived from L'vi that in connection with it, the Jewish people were given the Torah*. But, in verse 19, the writer destroys the validity of this argument by pointing out that *"the Torah did not bring anything to the goal."* This is the same point as **Sha'ul** makes when he observes that mere possession of **Torah** or legalistic observance of its commandments does not make a person righteous in God's sight, able to enter God's presence; but that *"what Torah really does is show people how sinful they are"* (Romans 3:20).

This is the only passage in the Brit Hadashah that of a *transformation of Torah*. The **Tanakh** itself records at least one change in the **Torah**, the addition of the festival of **Purim**; and also that a prominent Jewish tradition speaks of a change in **Torah** when the **Messiah** comes. The logical *necessity* for such a transformation is demonstrated by verses 11-14; and the Scriptural basis for the transformation is found in Psalm 110:4.

*Our Lord Yeshua the Messiah arose out of the tribe of Y'udah* since **Miryam** his mother was descendent of **Y'udah**, and so was **Miryam's** husband, **Yosef**. Therefore, the very fact that He was the chief **cohen** meant that the law was *set aside*. The Greek word used for *set aside* is **athetesis** which is used for annulling a treaty, for repealing a promise, for eliminating a person's name off the register, for rendering a law or regulation inoperative. The whole paraphernalia of the ceremonial law was wiped out in the cohenhood of **Yeshua**.

A second reason for the *transformation of Torah* is that the Levitical cohenhood set up by the **Torah** in the form that Moshe received it from God was based on *a rule... concerning physical descent* from **L'vi's** son **Gershon** in the case of **cohanim** in general, and from **Gershon's** great-grandson **Aharon** in the case of the *cohen hagadol*. While **Pinchas, Aharon's** grandson, was given *"the covenant of an everlasting cohenhood"* (Numbers 25:13), **Yeshua** by Himself has an everlasting cohenhood by *the power of an indestructible life* (as suggested midrashically by the life of **Malki-Tzedek**). This sets aside the need for a system of passing on the cohenhood from generation to generation, as is stated explicitly in **Messianic Jews 7:23-25**.

Finally, **Yeshua** can give us direct access to God. How does He do that? What is it that keeps humanity from having access to God?

- There is fear. So long as we are terrified of God, we can never be at home with Him. **Yeshua** came to show us the infinite tender love of the God whose name is **Abba** (Daddy). We know now that God wants us to come home, not to punishment but to the welcome of His open arms (see Luke 15:11-32).
- There is sin. **Yeshua** on His execution stake made the perfect sacrifice which atones for sin. Fear is gone; sin is conquered; the way to God is open to all who would believe.

In my next post, we'll continue in our mini-series on **Yeshua's Malki-Tzedek Cohenhood Surpasses the Levitical Part ~ Part 3**. We'll explore **Messianic Jews 7:20-28** on the **Superior Efficacy of Yeshua's Cohenhood**.