

引言 INTRODUCTION

“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” So goes the saying. The quote came from Bert Lance, who worked in the administration of President Jimmy Carter. Lance complained that the government often misplaces its focus. Officials spend time and effort to change things that do not need to be changed, and vice versa. There is some wisdom to that. It explains why some men keep wearing T-shirts with holes on them or ignore a warning light on the dashboard of their cars until the engine dies. Sometimes there is a thin line between frugal and cheap. Busy is a good excuse for being lazy too! But on the other end of the spectrum there are people who believe that newer is always better. Some people cannot wait for the next iPhone. They gladly dump the old and get the new as soon as it is available. We often make bad choices at wrong times. But God always makes right plans for His glory and for our benefits. God does not only fix what is broken. He prepares something better for us ahead of time. Last time we mentioned that Jesus became our superior high priest after the order of Melchizedek. In our passage today, the author explains why God set up a new order of priesthood. As we go through our study, you can visualize things in two columns. On one side there is the priesthood after Aaron. For simplicity, we will call it the old way. On the other side we have Jesus as our superior high priest. We will call it the new way. Jesus is better than the old way because He is the only way to reconcile us with God.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 大能的制度 A Potent System

First of all, Jesus is better because He brings about a potent system to bring us to God. Let us read from **verse 11 to 19**. Why God fixed it if it ain’t broke? The author uses the word “perfection” in verse 11 to summarize the reason. The Greek word for perfection have a double meaning. First, it has a sense of completeness. For example, we say some clothes fit a person perfectly as if they were tailor-made. Secondly, perfection refers to effectiveness. When I was little I heard some silly folks’ remedies that are useless. For example, people suggest putting soy-sauce or toothpaste on the wound if you suffer from a burn. You do not need to be a doctor to know that those treatments will not work. The old way of animal sacrifice is imperfect because both the priests and the ceremony have flaws. The system helps maintain a peaceful relationship between God and His people. When people sinned, they would ask a priest to burn an animal on the altar. It is like paying a fine. According to the Law, only the descendants of Aaron were allowed to serve as priests. Jesus broke the rule when He became our superior high priest. Jesus belonged to the tribe of Judah. He was not a Levite. The author proposes that one resolution was to change the Law to accommodate the exception. Our God is full of wisdom. He had a better plan in place all along. Verse 16 says: **who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life**. Jesus superseded the Law. His priesthood did not follow the order of Aaron but Melchizedek’s. Jesus lives forever like Melchizedek did. Hence, Jesus can serve as a priest forever. Some may argue that Aaron came after Melchizedek. Therefore, Aaron’s priesthood must be better. The fact is that long before God gave Moses the Law, He had foreordained Jesus to come. Melchizedek

served as a priest more than 600 years before Aaron did. God knew that the old way was imperfect. The priests were prone to sin just like the people they served. Aaron made a golden calf and enticed the Israelites into idol worship. God judged two sons of Aaron because they burned incense in an unauthorized way. Only Jesus provides a perfect way to remove our sins because He is without sin. Verse 18-19 tell us the result: **18 For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness 19 (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.** The Law was weak and useless because it could not take away people's sins completely. It became obsolete when Jesus came. Only Jesus can help us achieve the perfection God requests. In Jesus, all of our sins are forgiven. All those who put their trust in Jesus has unlimited access to God in this life. Moreover, they have a living hope that they will be with God forever. The implication to the readers is this: why go back to the old and useless way? Why return to animal sacrifice if it could not take away your sins? We as Christians may slip back to the old way too. While we do not burn animals on an altar, we may resort to alternative means to seek God's approval. Many Christians think that they are saved because they prayed a sinner's prayer or they are baptized. They believe from now on they can do whatever they want because they get a ticket to heaven already. Or perhaps they mistakenly believe that God owes them a favor because of their good work. They offer money to and they serve in a church, and they try to live a noble life. Then suddenly they are hit by calamity. Or their kids are not accepted by renowned colleges. They give birth to baby girls instead of boys. Then they grumble that God does not bless them. Some Christians still hold onto superstitious beliefs. When they get a new phone number, it must contain certain digits. When they buy a house, they check for certain features to ensure good luck. Do not go back to the old way. Jesus is all that we need for this life and for eternity. Receive Him and follow Him, then we will be blessed.

2. 永久的僕人 A Permanent Servant

In Jesus, we have a potent system to draw near God. Second, Jesus is better than the priests because He is a permanent servant. We will continue to read **verse 20-25**. Jesus' permanent status as a priest is demonstrated in several ways. First, Jesus' term of service is forever. Unlike the priests in the old way, Jesus was appointed with an oath by God. In verse 21, the author quotes from Psalm 110:4 again. This time the emphasis is on the part that God would not change His mind since He swore by Himself. Jesus was like a special ambassador assigned directly by a king. Second, Jesus can serve eternally because He lives forever. In comparison, the Levitical priests were humans with limited lifespan. Therefore, new priests had to be installed continually. According to an ancient Jewish historian Josephus, there were 83 high priests from Aaron to A.D. 70 when the Jerusalem temple was destroyed. There was only one high priest at a time. That would be about an average of 18 years for each term. According to a Jewish website, when a high priest died or retired, one of his sons would be the successor. If no son was available or qualified to serve, then the king or a religious body would name a suitable replacement. But Jesus does not need any successor because He lives forever. A long duration means very little if the quality of service is inferior. A tool with a lifetime warranty will give you constant headache if it breaks down every now and then. We can name quite a few dictators in human history who remain in their seats for a long time. They cause more harm than benefits to the people they rule over. But Jesus provides long-term blessings to those He serves. In verse 22, the author describes Jesus as **"the guarantor of a better covenant"** in. Nowadays, the role of a guarantor is to provide

additional assurance for a business transaction. For example, a guarantor cosigns a loan. If a borrower is unable to repay the money, then the bank will go after the guarantor. Jesus is the Guarantor between His believers and the Father. He guarantees an eternal relationship between the two parties. At the Last Supper, Jesus told His disciples that He would use His blood to make a new covenant. It would supersede all the covenants in the Old Testament. All who receive Jesus by faith are in this new covenant. Their sins are forgiven and they become children of God. They have unlimited access to God through Jesus. Jesus guarantees us that God will forgive us next time we sin if we make a confession by faith. Verse 25 says: **Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.** The Greek term translated as “uttermost” here is a compound word that combines the terms for “all” and the “end.” Together, it means that Jesus is able to save us from all sins to the end of our life. Jesus’ redemption is so complete that He can remove the most wicked sins. His grace is always available whenever we need it. We know in theory that our sins are forgiven the moment we put our trust in Jesus. However, very often we are haunted by our guilt, especially when we fall again and again in the same sins. Satan loves to unsettle our faith in God. Do not believe in his lies! Our faith may become weak and our love for God may come and go. But Jesus is always there for us. There should not be any doubt. We should go back to the throne of grace, confess our sins and receive God’s cleansing power. No sin is big enough to cut off our eternal relationship with God. The covenant Jesus made with us by His blood lasts forever. It will never change regardless of our circumstances. Jesus promised that He will be with us to the end of the age. He said that He will never leave us nor forsake us. God listens to our prayer even though we cannot see Him. We can experience His presence in our life.

3. 完美的祭物 A Perfect Sacrifice

Jesus set up a potent system for us to go into God’s presence. He serves as a permanent servant forever. Thirdly, Jesus also offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice. We will read from **verse 26-28**. In the old way, priests presented animals for temporary atonement of sins. In the new way, Jesus is both our superior high priest and a perfect sacrifice. The author tells us in verse 26 that Jesus is superior because He is **“holy, innocent and unstained.”** We can use the word “pure” to summarize all three characteristics. Jesus is without sin, He is not polluted by the corruption of this world and He lived a completely obedient life when He came. Jesus is pure in His conducts, words and thoughts. In the old way, animals that were sacrificed on the altar must be without blemish. They cannot be crippled in one leg, one eye blinded or about to die from some diseases. Since God is perfect, He only accepts the best offering. It works the same way in human relationships. Once a man asked his kids: “Guys, mom’s birthday is coming up. How much should I spend on a gift? Is a hundred dollars enough?” One child replied: “Does mom only deserve that much?” Jesus presented Himself as the perfect sacrifice for us. He gives us eternal life as the best gift we can ever receive in this life. Then why are we so hesitant when we commit our time, effort and money to God’s Kingdom? Someone said it correctly: Don’t give God what is left (your leftover) but give God what is right (the appropriate portions). Jesus is not only pure, He is also **“separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.”** Those two expressions may refer to the status of Jesus after He went back to heaven. He is now at the right-hand side of the Father. He deserves all the glory and honor from our worship. But before that, Jesus entered into our fallen world. Jesus said that He came to seek and save the lost. He welcomed sinners to approach Him. Jesus mingled with sinners so that He could identify with them. Jesus knows our

frailty and struggles. He does not look like some government officials who were born with a silver spoon in their mouths. They do not have to worry about job security, bills and inflation. But Jesus became a man and so He knows exactly how to help us. He never despises us because of our imperfection. Jesus is a friend of sinners. Come as you are. Do not pray like the hypocrite in Jesus' parable: "Hey Lord! See how good I'm. I didn't do all the bad things like the tax-collector over there. I fast twice a week and I donate my tithes." But pray like the person the self-righteous man looks down on: "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." Every time we come before God, we must remember His salvation grace. God's love should humble us. Because Jesus is sinless, He does not need to atone for His own sins like other priests did. They must present sacrifice for their sins first before they could approach God. Every time they burnt animals on the altar they would be reminded that they were prone to sin too. In comparison, Jesus offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice on the cross. He only had to die once because His redemption is perfect. This concept of once-and-for-all sacrifice will be further elaborated in later chapters. The cross was supposed to be a tool for death sentence. But now whenever Christians see the symbol, it will remind them of God's amazing grace. Jesus' salvation work had been completed. It is a done deal. The readers should not go back to the old way. The priests were weak. The ceremony was limited. No one could obey the Law perfectly to achieve salvation. The cross of Jesus takes away our pride. We can never save ourselves by our own merits. It does not matter how rich, how educated and how capable we are. Nothing can exchange for God's acceptance. God receives us on behalf of Jesus' perfect sacrifice. We cannot take pride in ourselves. We are but sinners saved by God's grace.

結論 CONCLUSION

Jesus is better than the old way because He is the only way to reconcile us with God. A question then comes up: why did God establish the Law and the animal sacrifice if the system could not save anyone? God wanted people to realize the flaws of the old way, so that they would hope for a better way. They desired for a long-lasting rather than a temporary way to remove sins. They hoped to come close to God in-person, instead of watching the priest perform religious ceremonies from a distance. The old way was established to foreshadow the new way. Jesus is not only a replacement of the old way but the fulfillment of a better way.

引言 INTRODUCTION

有一句英文的俗話說：「如果東西還沒有壞，那麼便不需要修理它。」這句話來自伯特蘭斯，他是吉米卡特總統的一位官員。蘭斯埋怨說，政府經常把注意力搞錯。人們花時間和精力去改變不需要改變的東西。他的論點有一些道理。這就解釋為什麼有些男士一直穿著有洞的衣服，或者忽略汽車儀表板上的警告燈，直到車子死火。有時節儉和小器只有一線之差。忙碌也是懶惰的好藉口！但另一方面，有些人認為新的東西一定是更好。有些人等不及下一部 iPhone，新手機一上市他們便不要舊的。我們經常在錯誤的時間做出錯誤的決定。但神總是為祂的榮耀和我們的利益實行祂的計劃。神不僅修補破壞的東西，祂也預先為我們準備了更好的東西。上次我們提到耶穌按照麥基洗德的等次成為我們的大祭司。在今天的經文中，作者解釋為什麼神設立了一個新的祭司制度。在我們的討論中，你可以想像兩邊的對比。一方面是亞倫後代的祭司。我們把它稱為舊的方式。另一方面，我們有耶穌作為我們的大祭司。我們把它稱為新的方式。耶穌比舊的方式更超越，因為祂是使我們與神和好的唯一途徑。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 大能的制度 A Potent System

首先，耶穌更超越，因為祂帶來一個大能的制度，將我們引到神面前。我們先來看第 11-19 節。如果東西沒有壞，為什麼神會修理它？作者在第 11 節中使用「完全」這個字來概括原因。完全在希臘文有雙重含義。首先，它的意思是完美。例如，我們說一件衣服非常合身，就好像是量身定做的一樣完美。其次，完全是指有效。當我小的時候，我聽說過一些挺奇怪的偏方。例如，如果你被燙傷，人們建議在傷口上塗抹醬油或牙膏。你不需要是醫生也知道這些方法沒有效。獻動物這個舊的方式是不完全的，因為祭司和儀式都有缺陷。這個制度是用來維持神與人之間的和諧關係。當人們犯罪時，他們會請祭司在祭壇上獻上一隻動物。這就像付罰款一樣。根據律法，只有亞倫的後裔可以擔任祭司。當耶穌成為我們的大祭司時，祂打破了規則。耶穌屬於猶大支派，祂不是利未人。作者提出破例的解決方法是修改律法。我們的神充滿智慧，祂早已定出更好的計劃。第 16 節說：他成為祭司，並不是照屬肉體的條例，乃是照無窮之生命的大能。耶穌超越了律法。祂作為祭司不是按照亞倫的等次，而是按照麥基洗德的等次。耶穌像麥基洗德一樣永遠活著。因此，耶穌可以永遠擔任祭司。

有些人可能會爭辯說亞倫是在麥基洗德之後來的。因此，亞倫的等次必然是更好的。事實上，早在神賜給摩西律法之前，祂就已經預定耶穌會來。麥基洗德擔任祭司比亞倫早 600 多年。神知道舊的方式是不完全的。祭司會犯罪，就像他們所服事的人一樣。亞倫造了一隻金牛犢，引誘以色列人敬拜偶像。神審判了亞倫的兩個兒子，因為他們未經許可燒香。只有耶穌提供了一個完美的方法來消除我們的罪，因為是祂無罪的。第 18-19 節告訴我們結果：**18 先前的條例，因軟弱無益，所以廢掉了，19（律法原來一無所成）就引進了更美的指望；靠這指望，我們便可以進到神面前。**律法是軟弱無用的，因為它不能完全除去人的罪。當耶穌來的時候，律法便失去效用了。只有耶穌可以幫助我們達到神所要求的完美。在耶穌裡，我們所有的罪都被赦免了。凡信靠耶穌的人在今生都可以接近神。此外，他們有一個長存的盼望，他們將永遠與神同在。對讀者的含義是：為什麼要回到舊的和無用的方式？如果它不能消除你的罪，為什麼還要回到動物獻祭呢？作為基督徒，我們也可能會回到舊路。雖然我們不會在祭壇上焚燒動物，但我們可能會用其他方式希望得到神的接納。許多基督徒認為他們得救是因為他們做了一個罪人的禱告，或者他們已經受浸。他們相信從現在開始他們可以我行我素，因為他們已經拿到了通往天堂的門票。或者他們以為神欠他們一個人情，因為他們有好行為。他們奉獻金錢並在教會事奉，並努力過敬虔的生活。然後他們忽然遭遇到困難。或者他們的孩子沒有被名校錄取。他們生的是女嬰而不是男嬰。然後他們埋怨神沒有祝福他們。一些基督徒仍然被迷信綑綁。當他們辦新的電話號碼時，它必須包含某些數字。當他們買房子時，他們會檢查風水以確保能帶來好運。不要回去舊的方式。耶穌是我們今生和永恆所需要的一切。接受祂並跟隨祂，我們就會蒙福。

2. 永久的僕人 A Permanent Servant

在耶穌裡，我們有一個大能的制度來親近神。其次，耶穌比祭司更超越，因為祂是個永久的僕人。我們將繼續閱讀**第 20-25 節**。耶穌作為祭司的永久地位以多種方式得到證明。首先，耶穌的任期是永遠的。與舊方式的祭司不同，耶穌是由神起誓立的。在第 21 節，作者再次引用詩篇 110:4。這一次的重點是神不會改變主意，因為祂曾經起誓。耶穌就像一位王直接委派的大使。其次，耶穌可以永遠服務，因為祂永遠活著。相比之下，利未人的祭司壽命有限。因此，必須不斷地選立新的祭師。根據古代猶太歷史學家約瑟夫，從亞倫到公元 70 年耶路撒冷聖殿被毀時，共有 83 位大祭司。每次只有一位大祭司。因此每位大祭司平均服事 18 年。根據一個猶太網站，當一位大祭司去世或退休時，他的一個兒子會接替。如果沒有兒子或沒有合資格的人選，那麼王或宗教團體會來作決定。但耶穌不需要繼任者，因為祂永遠活著。如果服務素質差，那麼長時間便沒有意義了。如果永久保用的工具經常故障，只會讓你頭痛。在人類歷史上，

我們可以舉出不少獨裁者，他們長期在位。他們對他們人民帶來的傷害多於好處。但是耶穌賜給我們長遠的祝福。在第 22 節中，作者將耶穌描述為「更美之約的中保」。如今，見證人的角色是為商業交易提供額外的保障。例如，擔保人簽署貸款。如果借款人無法償還這筆錢，那麼銀行便向擔保人追討。耶穌是祂的信徒和天父之間的中保。祂保證兩方之間的永恆關係。在最後的晚餐中，耶穌告訴門徒，祂用祂的血來立新約。它將取代舊約中的所有約。所有以信心接受耶穌的人都在這個新約中。他們的罪被赦免，他們成為神的兒女。他們可以藉著耶穌接近神。耶穌向我們保證，如果我們憑信心認罪，下次我們犯罪時，神會赦免我們。25 節說：凡靠著他進到神面前的人，他都能拯救到底；因為他是長遠活著，替他們祈求。這裡的「到底」在希臘文是一個複合詞，結合了「所有」和「盡頭」這兩個字。這意味著耶穌能夠拯救我們離開一切的罪，直到生命的結束。耶穌的救贖如此徹底，祂能除去最邪惡的罪。當我們需要耶穌時，祂的恩典總是夠用的。我們從理論上知道，當我們信靠耶穌的那一刻，我們的罪就被赦免了。然而，我們常常被罪惡感所困擾，尤其是當我們一次又一次地陷入同樣的罪中時。撒旦喜歡動搖我們對神的信心。不要相信他的謊言！我們的信心可能會軟弱，我們對神的愛可能會忽冷忽熱。但我們不應該有任何疑惑，耶穌總是在我們身邊。我們應該回到施恩的寶座前，認罪，接受神的潔淨能力。沒有任何罪大到足以切斷我們與神永恆的關係。耶穌用祂的血與我們所立的約永遠長存。無論我們的情況如何，它都不會改變。耶穌應許祂會與我們同在直到世界的末了。祂永遠不會離開我們，也不會拋棄我們。神會聽我們的禱告，縱使我們看不見祂。我們可以在生活中體驗祂的同在。

3. 完美的祭物 A Perfect Sacrifice

耶穌為我們建立了一個大能的制度，使我們來到神的面前。耶穌成為永久的僕人。第三，耶穌獻上自己作為完美的祭物。我們將閱讀第 26-28 節。在舊的方式，祭司獻上動物來暫時贖罪。在新的方式中，耶穌既是我們的大祭司，又是完美的祭物。作者在第 26 節告訴我們，耶穌是超越的，因為祂是「聖潔、無邪惡、無玷污」。我們可以用「純潔」這個字來概括這三個特徵。耶穌沒有罪，祂也沒有被這個世界的敗壞所污染，祂來到世上時過著完全順服的生活。耶穌在祂的行為、言語和思想上都是純潔的。在舊的方式中，祭壇上的動物必須沒有瑕疵。牠們不能一隻腳殘廢、一隻眼睛失明或患有疾病。由於神是完美的，祂只接受最好的奉獻。在人際關係中也是如此。有一次，一位男士問他的孩子：「媽媽的生日快到了。我應該花多少錢買禮物？一百塊錢夠嗎？」一個孩子回答說：「媽媽就只值這麼多嗎？」耶穌為我們獻上自己為完美的祭物。祂賜給我們永生，那是我們今生所能得到的最好禮物。那麼，當我們把時間、精力和金錢奉獻給神之時，為什麼我們要討價還價呢？有人說得對：不要把剩下

的給神，而是把合宜的給神。耶穌不僅是純潔的，祂也是「遠離罪人、高過諸天」。這兩個形容可能是指到耶穌升天後的地位。祂現在在天父的右手邊。祂配得所有的榮耀和尊貴。但在那之前，耶穌進入我們墮落的世界。耶穌說祂來是要尋找拯救失喪的人。祂歡迎罪人靠近祂。耶穌與罪人來往，以便與他們認同。耶穌知道我們的軟弱和掙扎。祂不像是一些含著金湯匙出生的政府官員。他們不必擔心工作保障、賬單和通貨膨脹。但是耶穌成為一個人，祂知道如何幫助我們。祂從不因為我們的不完美而輕看我們。耶穌是罪人的朋友。坦誠地來到祂面前。不要像耶穌比喻中那個假冒偽善的人那樣禱告：「主啊！看我多好。我沒有像那個稅吏那樣做壞事。我每週禁食兩次，並捐獻十分之一金錢。」但要像自以為義的人所看不起的那個人那樣禱告：「主啊，可憐我這個罪人吧。」每次我們來到神面前，我們都必須記住祂的救贖恩典。神的愛應該使我們謙卑下來。因為耶穌是無罪的，祂不需要像其他祭司那樣先為自己贖罪。他們必須先為自己的罪獻上祭物，然後才能親近神。每次他們在祭壇上焚燒動物時，都會想起自己也會容易跌倒。相比之下，耶穌在十字架上獻上自己作為完美的贖罪祭。祂只需要死一次，因為祂的救贖是完美的。這個一次犧牲的概念將在後面的經文中進一步解釋。十字架本來是死刑的工具。但現在，每當基督徒看到這個標誌時，便會想到神的奇妙恩典。耶穌的救恩工作已經完成。讀者們不應該回到舊的方式。祭司們很軟弱，儀式也是有限的。沒有人能完全遵守律法來獲得救恩。耶穌的十字架挪去了我們的驕傲。我們永遠不能靠自己的功勞來救自己。無論我們多麼富有、學問多高、多麼有才幹也沒用。沒有什麼條件可以換取神的接納。神透過耶穌完美的犧牲接納我們。我們一無所誇。我們不過是蒙神恩典的罪人而已。

結論 CONCLUSION

耶穌比舊的方式更超越，因為祂是使我們與神和好的唯一途徑。那麼問題來了：如果律法和獻動物根本無法救人，為什麼神要設立這個制度？神希望人們意識到舊方式的缺陷，使他們盼望有更好的方式。他們渴望持久而非暫時的除罪方式。他們希望能夠親自靠近神，而不是遠遠地看著祭司舉行宗教儀式。舊的方式是預表新的方式。耶穌不僅代替了舊的方式，祂而且實現了更好的新方式。