

BE PERFECT

Sunday Morning: October 21, 2001

Text: Hebrews 6:1 "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, **let us go on unto perfection** [completion]; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,"

We are encouraged to go on to perfection here in Hebrews 6:1. This exhortation is sandwiched between Christ being made an high priest after the order of Melchisedec in chapter 5 and Abraham being blessed in chapter 7. We find the need and the exhortation to go on to perfection and that can only be done by and through the Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. We find in Hebrews that perfection is emphasized over and over in Hebrews chapters 5 – 7 and 9 - 12.

With the high priestly office of our Lord Jesus Christ we could not become perfect or complete.

When will we be complete? I believe we will be complete when we stand approved and qualified to reign with Christ in the millennium. The millennium is known as the third day. Jesus will be made perfect or complete in the third day according to Luke 13:32 "And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the **third day** I shall be **perfected**."

FULL AGE

Hebrews 5:14 "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of **full age** [perfect], *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

The word *full age* in this verse comes from the same root word as the word *perfection* comes from. The word perfection does not carry the same mean that we associate with perfection. It has the meaning of *accomplishing a set goal*. Becoming a *man* or of *full age* means that there is no further growth required to become an adult.

NOT THE ENGLISH MEANING

There is no Greek word that carries the meaning of **perfection as used** in the English language. "Going on unto perfection" carries the meaning of finishing or completing a task.

The root Greek word which is not used in the New Testament means *to set out for a goal*.

The other words that come under the root Greek word carries the thought of: *to finish, fill up, of full age, man, accomplish, perfect, to the end, finisher, uttermost, end, finally, expire*.

PERFECTION BY MELCHISEDEC

Hebrews 7:11-12 "If therefore **perfection** [completion] were by the **Levitical priesthood**, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that **another priest** should rise after the order of **Melchisedec**, and not be called after the order of Aaron?"

A study of the high priestly order of Melchisedec is a study of a different priestly order. Under Moses we had the Aaronic priesthood. When Jesus Christ became our high priest the Aaronic priesthood was set aside. The reason it was set aside was because the Aaronic priesthood would not bring unto completion. There was something lacking under the Aaronic priesthood. All that was required was obedience. Under the Aaronic priesthood there was no goal in mind for those who were under that priesthood. Keep in mind when we are studying the Aaronic or the Melchisedecian priesthood we are not studying about lost people but saved people and their fellowship with God. Those who were under Moses were saved people coming to the tabernacle to maintain their fellowship with God. Before they could come to the tabernacle they had to make sure they were clean and that was taken care outside the camp. There was always something

lacking, they did not feel that they were complete. In fact their consciences were all the time bothering them. Under the Mosaic law you were not guilty unless you were caught in the act of the sin. If you were not caught you were allowed to come to the tabernacle yet your conscience bothered you because you knew what you had done.

Under the priestly order of Melchisedec when we are cleansed we can be assured that the sins that we did and we confessed would be forgiven by God through the shed blood of Christ.

MODIFICATION OF THE LAW

12. For the **priesthood being changed**, there is made of necessity a **change also of the law.**"

The priesthood changed when God placed Christ in that office, so there needed to be a modification of the law. The service of God was done at the tabernacle and temple by the priest under the Aaronic priesthood. With the change in the priesthood to that of Melchisedec the place of service was moved from the earth to heaven.

What was modified was the ceremonial part of the law and not the moral part of the law. The moral law was not set aside. People say today that they are not under the law. I ask them what sin can you commit? Can you live in immorality, can you steal, can you lie, can you covet your neighbor's wife? It is all under the law and you can't do those things and be just. This moral law has not been done away with.

LAW MADE NOTHING PERFECT

Hebrews 7:15-19 "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16. Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

17. For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Note the word *ever*. This word is not translated as it should be. It should be translated as *age*. Jesus is our high priest for *the age*. There is the definite article *the* before the word *age* and it is talking about a specific age and that age is the church age. Christ is our high priest during the church age. When the church age is over with then Christ will become our king. While his was here on the earth he was our teacher and prophet. Today he is our high priest and in the millenium he will be our king.

18. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

I included the above verses to confirm again that the carnal commands under the law of Moses were not profitable to the worshiper in the long range goal. The practice of the carnal commandments were for the present and did not have a future goal in mind.

DRAW NIGH UNTO GOD

19. **For the law made nothing perfect**, but the bringing in of a **better hope** *did*; by the which **we draw nigh unto God.**"

The law made nothing perfect or complete. Melchisedecian priesthood added another dimension to a child of God. With the words *better hope* we have something beyond an earthly inheritance. The Hope of Israel was the land. The hope of the elect is a heavenly inheritance. With the addition of the *better hope* we now have a better goal. Under the Melchisedecian priesthood we can achieve that goal. Apart from the Melchisedecian priest that goal would be impossible.

What is the *better hope* of the child of God?

When be believed on the Lord Jesus we were born into the family God. Becoming a child of God

is a present experience and hope does not enter into the salvation experience. We do not have to hope that we are saved when we accepted for ourselves the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

The hope of the child of God is to stand in His presence approved. Approval or justification is based upon faith. If we do not make shipwreck of the faith we will be found pleasing to God and will be approved at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This hope pertains to the hope of glory to be shared in the coming kingdom of Christ. This hope was a mystery that was hid from saved Gentiles until after the resurrection of Christ and is referred to in Colossians 1:27 "To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:" Christ does not indwell us but the Holy Spirit does. Christ in us is the spirit of Christ that he demonstrated here on the earth. Jesus had that spirit when he prayed Abba, Father in the garden before his crucifixion. That spirit can be lost as in the case of the Galatians. Galatians 4:19 "My little children, of whom I travail **in birth again** until **Christ be formed** in you,"

Another benefit of the Melchisedecian was that the worshiper could draw nigh unto the Holy of Holies. In the Old Testament days only the priest could go into the Holy Place. Only the priest and his family could eat the holy food, light the candle, and burn incense. Uzziah sinned when he tried to burn incense in the temple. 2 Chronicles 26:18 "And they withstood **Uzziah** the king, and said unto him, *It appertaineth* not unto thee, **Uzziah**, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither *shall it be* for thine honour from the LORD God." God judged Uzziah for doing this. 2 Chronicles 26:21 "And **Uzziah** the king was a leper unto the day of his death, . . ." Today we can draw nigh unto God because of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD

Ephesians 2:12-15 "That at that time **ye** (Gentiles) were without Christ (a promised Messiah), being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of [the] promise [singular], **having no hope**, and without God (He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) in the world:

Paul is addressing two peoples, saved Jews, and saved Gentiles. These saved Jews and Gentiles all come under the category of the elect or chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world.

Gentiles being without Christ did not mean they were not saved or could be saved. Gentiles have always been able to be saved. God did not promise saved Gentiles a Messiah as he did the nation of Israel. To be without Christ is to be without a promised Messiah.

Gentiles were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. The commonwealth of Israel had to do with the land promised them by Abraham and Moses. Gentiles were not given a land to inherit.

Gentiles were strangers from the covenants of the promise. God did not make any covenants with Gentiles. He made his covenants with the Father of the nation of Israel.

The nation of Israel only had an earthly hope and Gentiles were not given this hope. Gentiles would have an inheritance among the tribe in which they dwelt. Their inheritance was not sure and could be moved as in the case of Caleb.

Gentiles being without God did not mean that they could not worship the God of Abraham and by putting their trust in him they would be saved. Being without God meant that the creator of heaven and earth was not to be associated with Gentiles but to Abraham and his descendents. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and not the God of Abimelech or Ruth, etc.

Saved Gentiles embraced the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and not their own.

Gentiles were bankrupt as far as having the blessing of God even though they could be saved and have an inheritance among the tribe in which they dwelt.

13. But now in Christ Jesus **ye** (Gentiles) who sometimes were far off are **made nigh by the blood** of Christ.

What does it mean that the Gentiles were far off? In the Old Testament days there was a court for the Gentiles and a court for the Jews. The Gentile court was further away from the door of the temple than that of the Jews. Remember when the Apostle Paul was accused of bringing a Gentile into the temple, it was the inner court that was off limits for Gentiles regardless of how pious they may be.

Both Jew and Gentile are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Even saved Jews who were not of the priesthood could come as close as the priest, but now both of us can draw nigh unto the Holy of Holies.

14. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the **middle wall of partition** *between us*;

There was a distinction between Jew and Gentiles up until the resurrection of Christ. Jesus made that distinction when he told his disciples not to go with the message of the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens to saved Gentiles.

The offer of the better hope of an heavenly inheritance has now been open to both saved Jew and Gentile alike. There is no wall of separation.

15. Having **abolished** in his flesh the enmity, *even the law of commandments contained in ordinances*; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;"

Jesus Christ has abolished the law of commandments found in the ordinances. He did this through his flesh when he was nailed to the cross. Both Jew and Gentile that are elect are on the same level.

OUR HIGH PRIEST

Ephesians 2:17-18 "And came and preached peace to **you** (save Gentiles) which **were afar off**, and to **them** (saved Jews) that were nigh.

18. For through **him** (Melchisedec) we (Jew and Gentile) both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

Both Jew and Gentiles alike now have access to the Father. The reference to *him* is a reference to the high priestly order of Melchisedec. Melchisedec is at the right hand of God the Father making intercession for us that we might glorify the Father in the Son.

HONORABLE LIFE IN THE KINGDOM

Galatians 3:21-24 "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that **the promise** [singular in number] by faith of Jesus Christ **might be given** to them that **believe** [present active participle].

The word *promise* is singular and with the definite article *the* Paul is talking about a particular promise which has to do with life in the kingdom of the heavens. 1 John 2:25. It is given to those who believe in the present tense, which is significant. The reason believing in the present tense is significant is because what the phrase *might be given* means. What it means is that it might

not be given to them because they might stop believing in the present tense and make shipwreck of the faith.

23. But **before faith** came, we were kept under the **law**, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Being kept under the law meant that the only thing you could do would be obedient and by being obedient to the law would be just. You can't please God by being just. The Lord wants us to go beyond being just and that takes faith. Galatians 3:11 "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, The **just** shall **live** by **faith**." You can't live by faith if you are unjust. If you are immoral you can please God by trying to live by faith.

The reason there was a changing of the priesthood was the introduction of faith. Faith was shut up or out until after the law. Before the law faith was not revealed. Paul tells us in Romans 4:9 ". . . for we say that **faith** was **reckoned** to Abraham for righteousness." Faith was not revealed in Abraham's day. Because it was not revealed in Abraham's day, faith had to be reckoned to Abraham. God gave Abraham credit for having faith even though he did not know about faith. We are saved by the verb believe and we live by the noun faith. Our salvation does not automatically give us justification. Justification is on the basis of faith and if we are justified by faith, then, when we depart from the faith, then we are no longer pleasing God and will not be justified. The key verse to this truth is found in Galatians 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ (to be saved first), that we **might** be **justified** (after salvation) by the **faith** of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

24. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto **Christ** [Melchisedec], that we might be **justified by faith**."

The law and the concept of the Old Testament priesthood would bring us into an appreciation of the Melchisedecian priesthood. Under the law we could not be justified because there was no faith. Faith under the law was shut out or not revealed, so it could not be used to help us come to completion or to be perfect in Christ. Colossians 1:28 "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man **perfect** in **Christ** Jesus:" Hebrews 10:1 "For the law having a **shadow** of **good things to come**, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those **sacrifices** which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto **perfect**."

When I read this verse about the law being our schoolmaster or teacher to bring us unto Christ, I know that it was not talking about our common salvation. We believe on the Lord Jesus to be saved and when it comes to faith we deal with the Christ our high priest. The word Christ means anointed. We will see that it was Christ that was made high priest after the order of Melchisedec in Hebrews 5.

CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST

Hebrews 5:5 "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee."

When you include verse 6 you see that Christ was made a priest for the church age after the order of Melchisedec. Hebrews 5:5-6 "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6. As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH

Romans 1:17 "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is writ-

ten, The **just shall live by faith.**"

The just, that is those who are obedient to the law, live by faith to please him. Hebrews 11:6 "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: . . ." Under the Old Testament you could not live by faith, all you could be was just. God did chose to reckon faith to some of those in Hebrews 11, but this was by his design to teach us New Testament truth. Romans 4:6 "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,"

THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH

Galatians 3:11-12 "But that no man is justified by the **law** in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The **just shall live by faith.** 12. And the **law** is not of **faith**: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them."

The word justified does not have to do with being saved. It has to do with saved people standing approved before the Lord and the Judgment Seat of Christ. We are not approved by God by simply behaving. Don't get me wrong, you have to behave first before you can live by faith. Bible teachers want to make all those in Galatia lost and living under the law. Just remember Mary, Joseph, Simeon, Anna, Zacharias, and Elisabeth all were under the law and saved.

Just thinking about Mary, the mother of Jesus, being a just person also brings to mind that she was not living faith. Faith had not been revealed. Mary did trust the Lord and was obedient to the law of Moses and God used her.

Another person that was just was Cornelius the Gentile Centurion. Acts 10:22 "And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a **just** man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee." The door of faith was about to open to him and other Gentiles under Peter's ministry.

If you are a lost person and are obedient to the moral law, you were a good lost person. The word *just* can not be applied to a lost person who is obedient to the moral law.

JUST BEFORE GOD

Luke 1:6 "And they were both **righteous** [just] before God, **walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.**"

The word *righteous* would be better translated *just* to be consistent with what it means and how it is translated in other places. This defines what it means to be just. It does include the ordinances of the law, but our emphasis is on the moral law. They were just because they were obedient to what the Lord had given them to do.

THE LAW HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED

Romans 3:31 "Do we then make void the **law** through faith? God forbid: yea, we **establish** the **law.**"

The law can not be made void. The moral law is establish because you have to keep the moral law if you expect to live by faith. The reason you want to live by faith is so you can please God. If we please God we will stand justified in his presence.

THAT OF THE LAW

Matthew 5:20 "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall **exceed** *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in **no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**"

This verse is dealing with entering into the kingdom and not just seeing the kingdom. If you are saved you will see the kingdom. If a man is not born from above he can not see the kingdom

according to John 3:3. This verse says that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees you will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens. To enter into the kingdom of the heavens is to rule and reign with Christ. The only way you can rule and reign with Christ is to stand approved and hear "Well done thou good and faithful servant." The righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees is that of the law. They were just and because they were before faith came, that is all that they could be apart from God reckoning faith to them as he did to Abraham. The point here is for our righteousness to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees is to live by faith. They resisted this truth and so can we.

GOOD THINGS TO COME

Hebrews 9:11-15 "But Christ being come an **high priest of good things to come**, by a greater and more **perfect** tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Notice it is *Christ* that has become our high priest. Notice also that he is our high priest of *good things to come*. The phrase *things to come* is found in Hebrews 11:20.

THEIR INHERITANCE

Hebrews 11:20 "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning **things to come**."

Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning *things to come*. What did the things to come have to do with? As it was in the case of Jacob and Esau it had to do with the family blessing and the inheriting the wealth of the family. Jacob received a double portion over Esau. This blessing is by choice and not on the basis of who is better than the other. This choice of placing Jacob over Esau took place before they were born.

KINSMAN REDEEMER

12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal [age-lasting] **redemption** for us.

Jesus Christ is our kinsman redeemer beautifully illustrated in the book of Ruth. Kinsman redeemers redeem those who are in the family. They do not redeem those who are in some one else's family and bring them into their family. It is by his own blood that we are redeemed from the servitude of the world, flesh, and the devil. They will cause us to serve sin. If we are serving sin we are not just and we can't live by faith.

FOR SAVED JEW AND GENTILES

13. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

As the blood of bulls and goats were used for cleansing the ceremonially unclean saved person under the law of Moses, how much more the blood of Christ (v. 14) will cleanse a child of God who will confess his sin, 1 John 1:9.

SHED FOR MANY

14. How much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal [age-lasting] Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your **conscience** from **dead works** to **serve** the living God?

Not only will Christ's blood cleanse us for fellowship but it will cleanse our conscience as well. We do not have to feel guilty any more when we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ. If we serve Christ on the basis of a guilty conscience then we are serving in the flesh and not by faith.

GUILTY, BUT NOT CAUGHT

John 8:7 "So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is **without sin** among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

This passage in John 8 about the woman caught in adultery shows the idea about the judgment of an individual caught in sin under the law. By saying *He that is without sin* was appealing to the conscience of those who were accusing her. If there had been one there who was not guilty of her sin, then they would have been justified in stoning her. That was the law of Moses. Jesus had not caught her in the sin of adultery, even though he knew she was guilty, so he could not cast the first stone under the law of Moses. The law of Moses covered sin, but it did not take care of the conscience

FOR THE MANY THAT ARE CALLED

15. And for this cause he is the mediator of the **new testament**, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [transgressors who were saved] *that were* under the first testament, **they which are called** might receive **the promise** [singular] of eternal [agelasting] **inheritance**."

It was by means of death that our high priest is able to be the executor of the New Testament (will). He also redeems the transgressors that were under the Old Testament. For this reason the blessing of the New Testament is offered to both Jew and Gentile that have been called unto his kingdom and glory. It is the called that may or may not receive the promise of agelasting or kingdom life of ruling and reigning with Christ.

IF THOU WILT BE PERFECT

Matthew 19:16-22 "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have **eternal** (kingdom age) **life**?

We have been exhorted to go on to perfection in Hebrews 6:1. Going on to perfection is to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. This story of the one who was rich and coming to Jesus to find out how he could **enter** into the kingdom of the heavens. Matthew 19:23 "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly **enter** into the kingdom of heaven." Any rich man can be saved but it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. When this rich man asked what he had to do to have agelasting life, he was not asking the question the Philippian jailor was asking Paul. This man wanted treasure in heaven.

BE JUST

17. And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God:* but if thou wilt enter into life, **keep the commandments**.

Jesus told him the first thing that you have to do is to be just, keep the commandments.

18. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

The man asks which one, and Jesus told him that there was more than one and he even included the one that covers all of them and that is "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

19. Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

The man said that he had kept all of the commandments and those that Jesus listed for him. This made the rich man just. The rich man knew that was not enough, therefore he asked the next question, "What lack I yet?"

THE DOERS ARE JUST

Romans 2:13 "(For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

Paul tells us that the just before God are those who hear the law and do it. This rich man was one who learned the law and obeyed it.

TO BE PERFECT

21. Jesus said unto him, **If thou wilt be perfect** [complete], go *and sell that thou hast*, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have **treasure in heaven**: and come *and follow* me.

Jesus told him what was lacking in his life. Jesus restated his question of *what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal (kingdom age) life* several times in this passage. First, Jesus restated his question when he said "If thou wilt enter into life." Enter into life is the same as having age-lasting life. Secondly, Jesus said "If thou wilt be perfect." Being perfect will allow you to enter into life or have age-lasting life. The man needed to be complete and just being just is not enough to make you perfect or complete. The word perfect is a word that comes from the family of words that we started with in Hebrews 6:1. Let us go on to be complete or perfection. If we will go on to perfection we will have treasure in heaven.

He told the man to sell his real estate holding so that he would have ready money to give to the poor. It would take too long to sell a house to get the money to give to someone who was hungry today. When you sell all that you have and give to the poor, you have to begin to trust God for your needs. When you begin to trust God for your needs then you are living by faith. Along with casting yourself completely upon the Lord, comes following the Lord.

WOULD NOT LIVE BY FAITH

22. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

It cost to live by faith. It may mean that you may have to do what Jesus had to do and that was to live on the street. At Bethany he had a place to stay, but when he said that birds have nest and he did not have a place to nest he meant it. Following the Lord may take away the pleasures that riches provide. Remember, Mary, Martha and Lazarus had a house where the Lord stayed when he was in their village. With that in mind, we know that we are not to take it literally that we should sell all that we have, but sell anything that would hinder us from trusting the Lord for our daily bread.

PAUL WANTED TO BE PERFECT

Philippians 3:10-14 "That I may know him, and the **power of his resurrection** [high priest of Melchisedec], and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

Paul was a man that had spent a considerable amount of time with the Lord on the backside of the desert, yet, he wanted to know him. The knowledge that Paul wanted was that of experience in his walk with the Lord. What could he expect. Paul also wanted to know the power of his resurrection. To know the power of Christ resurrection was to know the power of Melchisedec.

This thought is presented in Ephesians 1:19-20 "And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20. Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*," The power of Melchisedec is mighty and this mighty power is to us-ward who believe in the present tense.

11. If by any means I **might attain** unto the [out] **resurrection** of the dead. (The prize of the high calling, the crown of righteousness)

Paul knew that it would be through the power of Christ's resurrection that he would have what it took to attain unto the resurrection. The resurrection in this verse is not the physical resurrection but an out resurrection from among those who have perished or lost their life as far as the com-

ing kingdom and glory. The out resurrection is to be associated with the prize of the high calling and the crown of righteousness.

12. Not as though I had already **attained**, either were already **perfect**: but I follow after, if that **I may apprehend** that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Paul says that he is not already perfect. That means that he has not finished his course or race. Paul was not yet complete. To be perfect would mean that he had attained unto the out resurrection from among the dead, and that had not happened.

13. Brethren, I count **not** myself to have **apprehended**: but **this one thing I do**, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Paul had been apprehended by Christ for the purpose of being perfect or going on to perfection or completion. That perfection was to be attained and was not a gift. The apprehension was not on Paul's part but on the part of Christ Jesus, but Paul had to attain unto that perfection.

14. I **press** toward the **mark** for the **prize** (crown of righteousness) of the **high calling** of God in Christ Jesus."

The prize is the high or above calling of God in Christ Jesus. The high calling is illustrated at the wedding feast in Luke 14:10 "But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship [glory] in the presence of them that sit at meat **with thee**." The high calling is unto glory with others who have attained unto the out resurrection or prize.

ACCOMPLISHED MY COURSE

2 Timothy 4:6-8 "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7. I have fought a good fight, I have **finished** [accomplished, perfected] **my course**, I have kept the faith:

Paul was able to keep the faith because Christ had taken to the office of high priest after the order of Melchisedec. If Christ had not taken that office our faith would have been vain. We can thank the Father that he wanted those who had been called to attain unto the glory of that calling.

THE PRIZE

8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a **crown of righteousness** (the prize), which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

When will Jesus be perfected? In the third day which is the seventh day rest, which is known as the millennium. When will Jesus be perfected? When he is crowned King of kings. When will Paul be complete? When he will wear his crown of righteousness? The day of perfection is the third day or the millennial reign of Christ. Let us obey the exhortation to go on to perfection that we may in the third day obtain the prize of the above calling of God in Christ Jesus.