reference to the fact of his receiving tithes  
of Abraham. As Bleek well remarks, if  
the *dying* applies personally to the sons of  
Levi, the *living* must also apply personally  
to Melchisedec).

**9.]** The Jew might reply, that it was nothing to him, if Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec; for Abraham was no priest, and therefore paid  
tithes naturally to a priest: the Writer  
therefore proceeds to a *third proof*, shewing that *in Abraham even Levi himself*, the patriarch of the Jewish priesthood,  
*paid tithes*. **And so to speak** (the phrase  
is used when any thing is about to be said  
that is unexpected, or somewhat strained,  
not likely to be universally recognized, at  
least in the general way in which it is  
asserted. It may be here regarded as introducing and softening a strong saying), **by means of Abraham Levi also, who  
receiveth tithes** (who is the head and  
representative of the tithe-taking tribe.  
Indeed the name here is almost a collective  
one, the personal reference being taken up  
in the next clause), **hath been taken tithes  
of** (on the perfect, see above, ver. 6).

**10.] For he was yet in the loins of his  
father** (i.e. his forefather, Abraham: for  
Isaac was not yet born, much less Jacob.  
On the expression, compare ver. 5), **when  
Melchisedec met him.**

**11–25.]** *Further proof of the perfection of Christ's priesthood,* as compared  
with the Levitical: (11–14) *in that He  
sprang from a tribe not recognized as a  
priestly one by the law, thus setting aside  
the law:* (15—19) *in that He was constituted priest not after the law of a  
carnal commandment, but after the power  
of an endless life, thus impugning the  
former commandment as weak and unprofitable:* (20—22) *in that He was made  
with an oath, they without one:* (23, 21) *in that they by reason of their transitoriness were many, whereas He was one and  
unchangeable.*  
**11.] If again** (this takes up the reasoning, not from the point immediately  
preceding, but from the main line of argument, of which what has just preceded has been merely a co-ordinate illustration. So that it is not necessary to say here, as some have attempted to do,  
from what point in the preceding chapters  
the reasoning is resumed. The main line  
of thought is again referred to, dependently  
on the promise of Ps. cx. 4, as made to our  
Lord and verified in Him) **perfection** (in  
the widest sense: *the bringing of man to  
his highest state*, viz. that of salvation and  
sanctification: see on ver. 19) **were by  
means of** (could be brought about by the  
instrumentality of) **the Levitical priesthood,—for upon it** (i.e. the Levitical  
priesthood: not, as many Commentators,  
*for the sake of obtaining perfection*. On  
the various meanings assigned, see the  
note in my Greek Test. If we consider  
the priesthood as the basis on which the  
law was constructed, so that not the  
priests only, but the *people* also [compare  
the same, in ch. ix. 19] were involved in  
the question of the dignity and finality of  
the priesthood, then a sufficient reason  
seems to he gained for inserting this parenthesis: as if it were said, not only they, but the whole system of which the priesthood  
was the basis and centre) **the people**(emphatic) **hath received the law** (the  
perfect is used, as indicating the fact that  
the people was still remaining, and observing the law),—**what farther need**(**was there**) (what need *after that,—any  
longer*, that being so) **that a different  
priest** (more than *“another”*—not only another, but of a different kind) **should**