

Jesus, Revealed To The Hebrews - Pt. 2

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I. Jesus, Our High Priest.

In this lesson, we will be discussing Jesus, as our High Priest. In the Old Testament the High Priest was the man appointed to represent the people before God. He was the man who dealt with sins and weaknesses by offering the necessary sacrifices for sins.

Hebrews 5:1-3 *For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. {2}He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. {3}Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins.*

- As a link between **God** and **man**, the Old Testament priest was never enough. He was a shadow representing the coming perfect Priest.

Romans 8:3 *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

- Because Jesus is both God and Man, He is an **adequate** link between us and the Father. So the Scripture says, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

When we fail and are ashamed, or when we are overwhelmed and need help desperately, we need never draw back, because Jesus is able to understand and sympathize with our **weaknesses** having dwelt in human flesh himself.

- It is important, when we have heard the voice of God calling us to act, and still feel inadequate, that we turn to Jesus as High Priest and realize all that He is able to do for us. In this lesson we should be able to get a greater understanding of Jesus as our High Priest so that we can rely on Him whatever the situation calls for.

1. The **Priestly** Ministry - Hebrews 5:1-10.

- Priestly Ministry **Function** and **Qualifications** - Hebrews 5:1-3.

Hebrews 5:1-3 *For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. {2}He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. {3}Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins.*

- The priest represented other men "in **matters** related to God" and offered "gifts and sacrifices for sins."

Jesus of course offered Himself, and by that one sacrifice, opened the door to permanent **relationship** with God. Jesus fulfills everything that the Old Testament hinted at concerning relationship with God.

- The high priest of the Old Testament had to be "selected among men" and be "able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness."

Jesus was chosen from among men, for He became a Man. But what about "subject to weakness"?

Hebrews 4:15 *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

Weakness does not refer to our human tendency to give in to temptation, but to our capacity to feel it! Our weakness is **human frailty** itself: the hungers, the desires, the pains to which we are subject and which push and pull against our wills. Jesus, in taking on human nature, took on our weaknesses as well. At every point in every way, Jesus was tested as we are. In fact, He was tempted beyond the point at which we give in!

Because Jesus was tempted beyond what we are, He knows more about human frailty than we do. He really understands how terrible it is to be weak.

- In Gethsemane Jesus knew a desperate **extremity** which drove Him to pray "with loud cries and tears"

Hebrews 5:7 *who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,*

Luke 22:42-44 *saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." {43}Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. {44}And being in agony, He prayed more*

*earnestly. Then His sweat became like **great drops of blood** falling down to the ground.*

Q: Why was Jesus in such agony that He was sweating great drops of blood?

This full and total **identification** with us enables Jesus to "deal gently" with us when we go astray. The Greek word, *metriopatheia*, suggests a balanced involvement and suggests both feeling with the injured, yet being detached enough to react and to act for the other's good.

- Hebrews 5:7 also says Jesus met His dying with "reverent submission," which enabled Him to learn obedience through the things He suffered.

Hebrews 5:7b-8 *...who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.*

We never **benefit** from our trials or sufferings when we react rebelliously or in panic. God seeks to strengthen us through every experience of life. Meeting life with reverent submission frees us from being overwhelmed, and helps us grow in our own ability to feel with those who are hurt without becoming so "sympathetic" that we are unable to help.

- Jesus was made **perfect** through His suffering.

Hebrews 5:9 *And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,*

The phrase does not suggest that Jesus fell short, as God or as a human being. The Greek word, *teleios*, speaks of a perfection that is related to the purpose or function for which a thing or person is designed.

5048. teleioo, tel-i-o'-o; from G5046; to complete, i.e. (lit.) accomplish, or (fig.) consummate (in character):--consecrate, finish, fulfil, (make) perfect.

In the task of being fitted to be our High Priest, Jesus learned the pain of being human and the **cost** of obedience when suffering is involved. As a result He became a truly qualified Person appointed by God, who alone has the right to determine who will be High Priest to His people.

Hebrews 5:4-6 *And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. {5}So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten*

You." {6}As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek";

2. On To **Maturity** - Hebrews 5:11-6:8.

Hebrews 6:1-3 *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, {2}of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. {3}And this we will do if God permits.*

■ Foundational Truths.

A foundation is a solid and secure base on which one can build. Once the foundation has been laid, we can trust ourselves to it and get on with the business of construction.

- ▶ **Repentance from dead works.** Coming to Christ we realize that our works had nothing to do with salvation or the life Jesus offers. We turn away from a "works righteousness" to a "grace righteousness."
- ▶ **Faith in God.** Trust in God is the key to salvation.
- ▶ **Instruction about baptisms.** Refers to the instruction we need to receive concerning water baptism and Spirit baptism. In the early church they were carefully taught these truths.
- ▶ **Laying on of hands.** Throughout the Bible the laying on of hands is used for imparting gifts and blessings as well as ordinations.
- ▶ **Resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.** These doctrines summarize the believer's hope.

The writer is asking us to believe so fully that when Christ came into our lives all these things were settled that we no longer worry about our relationship with the Lord. We know that He loves us. We know that we are saved.

God wants us to know that Jesus' death is enough. There is no more need for sacrifices for sin. By His one sacrifice Jesus made "perfect forever those who are being made holy."

Hebrews 10:14 *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are*

being sanctified.

Like the Hebrews, we are free to get on with the business of living for Jesus because He has resolved forever the question of our relationship with God.

- **Our Anchor.**

Hebrews 6:19-20 *This hope we have as an **anchor** of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, {20}where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*

Just to make sure we fully understand what is being said, the writer speaks of the confidence we can have in the full access won for us by Jesus. Our access is guaranteed by God's oath so that "we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.

3. The Superiority of the Melchizedek Priesthood - Hebrews 7:1-8:13.

Hebrews 7:1-3 *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, {2}to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," {3}without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.*

This mysterious figure, who was king of Jerusalem in Abraham's day, was offered tithes (the tenth part of one's goods, set apart by the Old Testament Law for the priesthood) by the patriarch himself! This demonstrates the superiority of the Melchizedekian priesthood.

- **The new Priest's ministry does not rest on family line but on "the power of an indestructible life.**

Hebrews 7:16 *who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life.*

- **The former priesthood was set aside because it was unable to provide perfect access.** In Jesus, we have "a better hope...by which we draw near to God.

Hebrews 7:19 *for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the*

bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

- **The former priests died. Jesus continues forever as a permanent Priest.**

Hebrews 7:25 *Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*

Our High Priest, Jesus, is a present reality! Because Jesus lives as our High Priest, we too have guaranteed access to God. In failure, we can claim the promised mercy. Under the daily pressures of our lives, we can claim the help of a Man who know our every need, and who knows as well the path of victory.

- **The Change in Priesthood Brought Forth A New Covenant.**

The Old Testament itself promised that one day the Old Covenant of Mosaic Law would be replaced, because it was inadequate.

Q: Why is the New Covenant under the new Priesthood so much superior to the old?

Hebrews 8:10-12 *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. {11}"None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. {12}"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."*

God now takes the laws which express righteousness and puts them on inner tablets of mind and heart rather than in external commandments. The Law can only tell us what the standards are, but it is a changed heart that enables us to live by those standards.

II. Concluding Remarks.

In human personality, the full righteousness of Commandment Law was expressed as living truth. The Jesus died. And in His death and resurrection, Jesus snatched us up and, brought us into the divine family. In making us sons, God planted deep within us something of Jesus' own personality. "Christ in you," Paul says, is "the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

The outer Commandment Laws of the old has become an inner law through the new. Jesus as our High Priest promises not only access but also renewal. He is constantly at work within us, writing His law and very personality in our inner selves.

Because of Jesus, the door to God is always open, and so we always have hope.

