

Sermon Notes & References

“Jesus’ Qualifications As High Priest”

Hebrews 5:5-10

June 15, 2014

A. The Need of a Priest

1. What Qualified a Jewish Priest? ^{A.}

2. Why Do We Need a Priest? ^{B.}

B. Christ’s Appointment

5:5-6, 10

1. Designated by God

a. As Son (verse 5) ^{C.}

b. As Priest (verse 6)

2. Order of Melchizedek (verse 10)

C. Christ’s Humanity

5:7-8

1. His Prayer Life (verse 7) ^{D.}

2. His Obedience in Suffering (verse 8)

D. Christ’s Priestly Work

7:9

1. Perfected as Priest (verse 9a) ^{E.}

2. Providing Salvation (verse 9b)

E. Conclusion

1. Eternal Salvation Is Available

2. There Is a Condition ^{F.}

^A Hebrews 5:1-4

^B Job 16:21, 9:32-33; Psalm 51:5; John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Ephesians 2:14, 16, 18, 3:12; 1 Peter 2:9; Isaiah 59:2, 1 John 1:6-9

^C John 8:54; Galatians 4:4; Philippians 2:7; Matthew 3:16-17

^D John 11:35; Luke 19:41-44, 22:42, 44; 2 Peter 3:9

^E Hebrews 2:10, 1:3, 8:1

^F 2 Thessalonians 1:8

A. The Need of a Priest

1. What Qualified a Jewish Priest?

- a. last Sunday, we looked at the first 4 verses of this chapter to discover the qualifications whereby a person could be a priest, and specifically, a Jewish priest
- b. we found that these encompassed three requirements
 - (A) they must be part of humanity – and thus show humaneness
 - (B) they bore a specific responsibility – of intermediation with God
 - (C) they must be appointed – and that by God
 - (D) let us review these three points to clarify them in our minds
- c. their humanity:
 - (A) verse 1 tells us they are ‘**taken from among men**’ which seems obvious but is also critical, for this is an office that only a man can fill – no angel could do it and verse 2 tells us why:
 - (B) for it says that it is so ‘**he can deal gently ... since he himself is also beset with weakness**’ – it is the recognition of his own failings that qualifies a priest to be gentle with the failings of others
- d. their responsibility:
 - (A) in those verses is seen to be two fold:
 - (B) verse 1 tells us that these involve the ‘**things pertaining to God**’ which, as the OT shows, was instructing the people in the law and will of God – representing God to man
 - (C) that verse, along with verse 3, also says his duties are ‘**on behalf of men**’ – so that the the priest represented man to God in the offering up for sins of gifts and sacrifices
 - (D) so their responsibility was mediatorial, and in particular, the mediation by sacrifice for man’s sin for forgiveness by God
- e. their appointment:
 - (A) was not of their own volition, nor even by others
 - (B) but was received ‘**when he is called by God**’
 - (C) even Aaron was only qualified on that account, and indeed even his descendants after him were

not necessarily allowed to be priest

(D) so the key was that a high priest must be appointed by God

(E) and those who sought priesthood otherwise were punished for it

2. Why Do We Need a Priest?

a. we have that need because of the great gulf between man and God

(A) Job, who is to be accounted as an OT, but not a Jewish, priest, in the time of his own being tested expressed his need in this way:

(B) "O that a man might plead with God As a man with his neighbour!" (Job 16:21)

(C) "32 For He (that is to say, God) is not a man as I am that I may answer Him, That we may go to court together. 33 There is no umpire between us, Who may lay his hand upon us both." (Job 9:32-33)

b. the cause of that gulf between man and God is sin

(A) when King David said, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." (Psalms 51:5) he was not saying that his mother was in immoral woman, nor that the conception of children was a wicked act

(B) but rather that through his parents he had inherited, in common with all mankind, the sinful nature that resulted from the sin of Adam and Even in the garden of Eden

(C) so that in the first instance, sinful man needs a mediator, to come before a holy God in order to find salvation

(D) so Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6)

(E) and Paul, "5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6a who gave Himself as a ransom for all, ..." (1 Timothy 2:5-6a)

c. but what about those who have come to God through Christ?

(A) has not the Jewish priesthood been abolished? ... certainly, as we shall see in later chapters in this book – particularly 7 through 9

(B) is there not a priesthood of all believers? ... surely so

(1) Ephesians tells us that Christ has broken down the barrier between Jew and Gentile (2:14) and

did 'reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross' (2:16) and gave to both 'access in one Spirit to the Father' (2:18) so that 'we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him' (3:12)

(2) while 1 Peter 2:9 says we are a 'royal priesthood'

(C) but that we as believers are priests, does not take away our need for Jesus as our High Priest for it is through Him we have access

(D) the reason we need Him as High Priest is the same as before we became believers and were saved: that reason is sin

(1) "But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear." (Isaiah 59:2)

(2) the truth of that OT verse underlies this NT teaching: "6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:6-9)

d. so our sinfulness in the face of God's holiness

(A) is why we need a high priest

(B) and God has supplied to us that High Priest in Jesus Christ

B. Christ's Appointment

5:5-6, 10

1. Designated by God

a. As Son (verse 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." (NKJV)'

(A) verse 4 told us that being a priest is not an honour that a person can take upon themselves – we cited some examples last week of what happened to some who tried: Korah, Kings Saul and Uzziah

(B) even so it is true to the Christ, the Messiah – the one Anointed to redeem and to lead Israel, the people of God

- (C) it is for this reason that Jesus declared to the religious rulers of His day: "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God';" (John 8:54)
 - (D) Jesus, the Son of God, "... born of a woman, born under the Law ..." (Galatians 4:4), "... emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2:7), in a very real sense laid aside all His glory
 - (E) so that even in applying the term 'Son' to Himself it was because God, the Father, had first declared Him to be so, had designated Jesus as His Son: "16 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.'" (Matthew 3:16-17)
 - (F) in like manner, then, this same God, the Father, who designated – that is named or appointed – Him as the Son, also did so ...
- b. As Priest (verse 6) – 'As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek" (NKJV)'
- (A) the writer of the Hebrews first quotes from Psalm 2, and now from Psalm 110, both of which are Messianic Psalms – Psalms telling of the Anointed King of Israel, both historically and prophetically
 - (B) you may have already noticed how often this book refers back to that book of Psalms to teach God's truth – the Psalms were the Jewish hymn and prayer book and were a wonderful, God-given way to help His people learn about and remember Him
 - (C) well, the truth here is that the same God who designated Jesus of Nazareth as His beloved Son, as prophesied in Psalm 2, is the same God who designated that same Jesus, the Christ, as priest
 - (D) not a priest for a matter of years, as was the case with the Jewish priests, the descendants of Aaron
 - (E) but the priesthood of Jesus Christ is forever – eternal
 - (F) by which we must conclude that it is
 - (1) superior to the Jewish priesthood, the sons of Aaron
 - (2) supercedes the Jewish priesthood, for the High Priestly office of Jesus Christ is forever, while Aaron's was temporary
 - (G) Christ is the High Priest of a completely different order, the ...

2. Order of Melchizedek (verse 10) – ‘called by God as High Priest “according to the order of Melchizedek,” (NKJV)’
 - a. the designation of the Christ’s High Priestly office being of a different order, that is Melchizedekian, is repeated for emphasis
 - b. let there be no mistake here: just because Jesus was descended from Judah in His human ancestry, does not preclude Him from being High Priest – it is just that He is high priest of a different order
 - c. suffice it to say that from the context of this chapter we learn
 - (A) Christ’s High Priesthood is eternal; the Aaronic, was temporal
 - (B) Christ’s High Priesthood is by the direct designation of God before He was born; the Aaronic priesthood was through natural process, being handed down from father to son
 - (C) this should be sufficient to dissuade Jewish converts (and others) – in their need – from lapsing back into Judaism and its high priests simply because Jesus was not a descendant of Aaron
 - d. but, Lord willing, we shall have more to examine of this Melchizedek when we come to later chapters in this book of Hebrews

C. Christ’s Humanity

5:7-8

1. His Prayer Life (verse 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, (NKJV)’
 - a. the tears of Jesus Christ are a testimony to His humanity
 - (A) arriving at the tomb of Lazarus, His friend, beholding the grief of the sisters Mary and Martha and those with them, knowing this to be the ultimate sorrow and fear of mankind, Jesus felt for them and with them: ‘Jesus wept.’ (John 11:35)
 - (B) on that first Palm Sunday, “41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, ‘If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. 43 For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, 44 and they

will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.'" (Luke 19:41-44) – how He felt for this people!

- b. but even more did Jesus identify Himself with mankind in His prayers
 - (A) prayers such that His disciples entreated Him to teach them
 - (B) prayer on behalf of men for healing and deliverance
 - (C) His High Priestly prayer in John 17 for His followers and church – showing that as a man He was completely dependent upon God
 - (D) but never more than in the Garden of Gethsemane did he show His humanity as He wrestled with facing death, death on the cross; when He who knew no sin would be made sin so that we might have life – "42 ... 'Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.' ... 44 And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground." (Luke 22:42, 44)
 - (E) Hebrews says that on account of His godly fear or piety, He was heard; some have claimed He was not heard because the cup was not removed ... but that only looks at a part of Christ's prayer: the prayer in its entirety is that God's will would be done – but "The Lord is ... not wishing (willing) for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) and that was answered – the Father's will was done, and salvation became available to man

2. His Obedience in Suffering (verse 8) – 'though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. (NKJV)'

- a. though Jesus Christ was in very truth the Son of God, co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father, one with Him and the Holy Spirit in the counsels of eternity, of the same essence and nature
- b. yet He entered this world as a human being, subject in common with all men to God, His heavenly Father
- c. Jesus Christ learned obedience – not like a child who is taught to stop disobeying, for Jesus was without sin, but as Adam could have learned
- d. Jesus learned this as step by step in life's situations He came to points where He had to choose to obey the commands of God or not: in being subject to His parents, in overcoming temptation by Satan, in selecting His disciples, in walking the pathway to the cross.

e. in so doing, in obeying God step by step, in encountering the pain and privations of life, Jesus Christ was in preparation so that

He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them His very own;
He bore the burden to Calv'ry
And suffered and died alone. —{2}.

f. His obedience was preparatory to

D. Christ's Priestly Work

7:9

1. Perfected as Priest (verse 9a) – '[And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, \(NKJV\)](#)'
 - a. we have previously encountered this thought of Jesus being perfected and then also in the context of His suffering: "[For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.](#)" (Hebrews 2:10)
 - b. and, as was pointed out then, this was not removing imperfection, but the culmination of Christ's carrying out His earthly ministry that took Him to the suffering of the cross and thus paid the debt of our sins
 - c. here, where, it is the High Priestly work of Christ that is discussed, that perfecting work of His ministry goes beyond the cross, beyond His resurrection from the dead, even to ascension to '[the right hand of the Majesty on high](#)' (Hebrews 1:3), where, according to Hebrews 8:1, He is even now exercising His office as our High Priest ...
2. Providing Salvation (verse 9b) – '[And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, \(NKJV\)](#)'
 - a. in a very real way, when Christ on the cross said 'It is finished,' the work of our salvation from the penalty of sin was completed
 - b. yet, that work of salvation goes on in Christ's High Priestly work in order to save us from the power and contamination of sin – even as described in those verse which we read from first John

- c. as such Jesus Christ, as eternal High Priest, is the author, the source of eternal salvation – which will one day bring about our salvation from the very presence of sin when He brings this world-age to an end

E. Conclusion

1. Eternal Salvation is Available

- a. Jesus Christ ever lives in heaven as our High Priest
- b. there He applies His ever and all-powerful sacrifice for sins; but

2. There Is a Condition

- a. it is for those who obey Him; not the obedience of good works
- b. but [`obeying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,](#) 2 Thessalonians 1:8 the obedience of faith, of trusting in Christ alone for salvation.

1. © 2014 by Garth Hutchinson, Faith Fellowship Baptist Church of Aurora (Ontario): may be distributed or quoted freely, only let this be done to the glory “of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ” (Titus ii.13). Except as noted otherwise, quotations are from the New American Standard version, used by permission. Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in (*braces*). Version identifiers are:

ASV American Standard Version of 1901
AV Authorized (King James) Version of 1769
NAS New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)
NIV New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
WEY The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

Barnes – *Notes on the New Testament, et alia*, by Rev Albert Barnes, Gall & Inglis, Edinburgh
BM – *Biblical Museum*, Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870
EBC – *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, © 1986 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 49530, Michigan
 Hebrews, by Leon Morris
EGT – *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, Hodder & Stoughton
 Hebrews, by Marcus Dods
Gill – *Exposition of the Old Testament, Exposition of the New Testament*, by John Gill, D.D.
Kerux – The sermon & illustration data base compiled by Rev. David Holwick at the web-site, www.holwick.com.
NICNT – *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*
 The Epistle to the Hebrew, by F. F. Bruce
RWP – *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, by Dr. A. T. Robertson
TYN – *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*
 Hebrews, by Donald Guthrie

2. 'My Saviour's Love,' by Charles Hutchinson Gabriel (1856–1932)