

## Lesson 48 - The Priestly Office of Christ

**Ps. 110:4** - *"The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever **after the order of Melchizedek.**"* - Here the priestly office and work of Christ was foretold

Heb. 5:6 - *"Thou art a priest for ever **after the order of Melchizedek**"*

Heb. 5:10 - *"named of God a high priest **after the order of Melchizedek.**"*

Heb. 6:20 - *"whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest for ever **after the order of Melchizedek.**"*

**Who was Melchizedek?** Gen. 14

Heb. 7:1-3 - *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. 3 He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever.*

**Heb. 2:17** - *"Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."*

**Heb. 7:20-28** - *"And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, 21 but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him:*

*"The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever.'" (Ps. 110:4)*

**Heb. 7:22-26** - 22 *This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.*

23 *The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, 24 but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. 25 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.*

26 *For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. 28 For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever."*

**Heb. 9:23-28** - *“Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. 25 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26 for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”*

**It is evident that the book of Hebrews treats especially of the Priesthood of Christ and is something of a commentary on the book of Leviticus - the priesthood of Christ is FAR BETTER!**

In John 1:18 - *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. .... 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.”*

No one has ever seen God. As we discussed last week, **one reason** why the WORD became flesh and dwelt among us was so that He might, in His capacity of **PROPHET**, **reveal** God to man.

We also read in 1 John 3:8 - *“The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.”*

A **second reason** why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us was so that He might, in His capacity of **KING**, destroy the works of the devil, deliver His people from the bondage of sin and death, and bring many sons unto glory.

Heb. 2:9-10 - *“But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.”*

1 Cor. 15:25-26 - *“For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”*

A **third reason** why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us was so that He might acquaint Himself with our frailties, and thus qualify Himself to act as our merciful and faithful High Priest:

Heb. 2:14-18 - *“Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. 16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.”*

When we speak of a “PRIEST” we are using the term in a scriptural sense, not perhaps in the worldly usage of the term. **A priest, according to scripture, is a person divinely appointed to transact with God on behalf of man.**

A priest must possess three essential qualities:

1. power or authority - the right, granted by God to serve in the role
2. purity - the ability to stand before God (God is pure light)
3. sympathy - The act or power of sharing the feelings of another.

### 1. His power or authority -

Matt. 9:6 - *“But that you may know that the Son of Man has **authority on earth** to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Rise, pick up your bed and go home.””*

Matt. 28:18 - *“And Jesus came and said to them, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”***

Heb. 7:24 - *“but he holds his priesthood **permanently**, because he continues forever.”*

His authority is “not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life” (ASV) or “not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.” (ESV) (Heb. 7:16), that is, His authority is inherent in His Divine nature as the eternal Word, the only begotten Son of God.

*Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” (John 8:58)*

*When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. (rev. 1:17-18)*

### 2. His purity

Heb. 7:26 - *“For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.”*

Heb. 7:28 - "For the law appoints men in their **weakness** as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made **perfect** forever."

### 3. His **sympathy** -

Heb. 2:17-18 - *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to **sympathize** with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."*

Heb. 2:17-18 - *"Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For **because** he himself has **suffered** when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."*

All of these qualities: **power or authority, purity, and sympathy** exist **essentially**, and **permanently** in Christ **pre-eminently** and **perfectly**

A priest must possess these three essential qualities, and **has two essential functions** according to the Scriptures:

1. To offer sacrifice
2. Make intercession - to intervene on behalf of another, and agent

Christ offered up Himself as the Supreme **Sacrifice** and as the Perfect Atonement for the **sin of the world**

The priests of the Mosaic dispensation offered up imperfect sacrifices first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people.

Heb. 7:27 - *"He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when **he offered up himself**."*

Heb. 9:24-26 - *"For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. 25 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26 for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the **sacrifice of himself**."*

Heb. 10:12 - *"But when Christ had offered for all time **a single sacrifice for sins**, he sat down at the right hand of God,"*

While this Supreme Sin-offering was made for all mankind, its benefits and blessings are only for those who accept Him as their savior and obey his commands. Salvation is a gift. When

someone offers me a gift, I am not able to enjoy that gift unless I accept it. Any sort of **gift** must be **accepted** to be **enjoyed**.

Heb. 5:9 - *"And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation **to all who obey him,**"*

- Note that the scripture does NOT teach that Jesus became the source of eternal salvation to those that DO NOT obey him, yet, the effect of many purported Christian doctrines asserts exactly that - that salvation is a gift that does not need to be accepted with obedience.

Jesus' sacrifice was a PERFECT sin-offering because He Himself, the Lamb of God, was "holy, guileless and undefiled" (ASV), "holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners" (ESV) Heb. 7:26

Heb. 9:14 - *"how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself **without blemish** to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."*

The other work that Christ does for His people in His capacity as our High Priest is to make INTERCESSION for us at the right hand of God.

The Priesthood of Christ does not cease with His work of atonement, but continues forever. In the presence of God He fulfills the second office of the priest, namely that of intercession.

Heb. 7:23-25 - *"The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, 24 but he holds his priesthood **permanently**, because he **continues forever**. 25 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."*

1 John 1:7-9 - *"if we walk in the light, as he 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 we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

*Purchase req. illustration:* One of the procedures at the company I work for is to get authorization for the purchase of an expected recurring item - maybe a utility, like phone, electricity, water. Each month, when I receive the bill for the usage, I attach the previous authorization to the bill and submit it for payment - no new authorization is made.

In like manner, Jesus, with the one-time sacrifice of Himself, is able to make continued authorized full payment on our sin-debt to God - to continually cleanse us as we walk in the light. You and I are guilty of new sin but as we continually go to God and confess those sins - we present a bill of debt to our Intercessor, Jesus. To that record of debt, Jesus attaches His

atoning sacrifice and the father faithfully replies “PAID IN FULL”

Note that any bills left un-submitted, remain unpaid and continue as a record of debt!

Go to God, confess your sins, and ask for forgiveness - for the debt to be paid!

1 John 2:1 - *“If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”*

Rom. 8:34 - ***“Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is **interceding for us.**”***

How should this be received by us?

So in view of this continuous intercession of our unchangeable, forever High Priest, we should, as Christians, do as the Heb. writer says:

*“have boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water”*  
(Heb. 10:19-22)

Since Christ then is High Priest, who is His subordinate priests under the New Covenant?

The scriptures teach that all Christians are priests.

As the Levitical priesthood defined varying and different roles for the priests to maintain and support the house of God and the functions of worship - so also we as a spiritual priesthood under Christ have various duties and roles as living stones in the house of God.

1 Pet. 2:5 - *“you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”*

verse 9 - *“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”*

Neh. 13:11 - *“Why is the house of God neglected?”*

*The people of Israel, including the Levites, are to bring their contributions of grain, new wine and olive oil to the storerooms, where the articles for the sanctuary and for the ministering priests, the gatekeepers and the musicians are also kept. “We will not neglect the house of our God.”*  
Nehemiah 10:39

*All of the Israelites had recommitted their lives back to God. They agreed to not doing various*

*sins that they had previously committed and agreed to provide for the temple of God. They said that they would no longer neglect the house of God.*

*The needs of the house of God during Nehemiah's time, were grain, new wine, and olive oil. These were needed to make the bread and keep the lamps burning continually. The people were to provide these needed supplies on a regular basis.*

*There is another house of God that is often neglected. This house of God is the church. The needs here are not the physical needs, but the spiritual needs that are being neglected. The spiritual sacrifices.*

*Many believers do not take time each day to read and study God's Word. They do not take time to hide His Word in their heart. They do not take time to pray continually. They do not strive to resist the devil and flee from all sin.*

*As a believer, you are God's temple. You are the new sanctuary where God can dwell here on this earth.*

*As a human being, you are careful not to neglect the physical needs of your body—food, clothing and shelter. However, are you guilty of neglecting the spiritual needs of your soul?*

*It is the spiritual side of your life that is the temple of God. You must not neglect the needs of your spirit. God's Holy Spirit will guide you in this. God will take care of those needs if you allow Him too by staying in His Word, praying daily and fleeing sin.*

*1 Pet. 2:5 - "you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."*

*Rev. 1:5-6 - "and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood 6 and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."*

*Last...*

*There is neither command nor precedent for a special order of priests under the Covenant of Grace.*

*In the same way that Jesus with a word destroys the doctrine of the Sadducees, so he also prophetically and preemptively teaches of the heresy of earthly special priests:*

*Matt. 23:9 - "Call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven."*

It is a privilege and joy as priests to offer up to God our spiritual service - sacrifices of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, devotion, and service.

Heb. 13:15 - *“Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.”*