

“We are Perfected through Reverent Submission”

Hebrews 5: 1-10 (7-10)

Facilitator: Min. Joseph Williams

Historical Background and Biblical Context:

There is one central theme that runs throughout the Book of Hebrews that offers truths of Jesus Christ, the Son of God as our Great High Priest. Along with the reigning son of David, the High Priest was the theocratic power in the land; together they were representatives of Israel before God. Therefore, when Jesus is revealed as the Son of God, a son of David and the Great High Priest, we find in Him the only one who is totally and completely qualified to represent us before the Father. And when we add to this the revelation of Him as restored Man, the second man replacing Adam, the salvation picture is complete.

The idea of Jesus Christ as our great High Priest is realized as the Apostle Paul describes Him as ‘God’s Son’ who reveals the fullness of what God is (Creator and Sustainer) (*Heb. 1:1-3*). He is declared to be the revealer of ‘Who’ God is and that He ‘makes purification for sins’ (a function of the High Priest).

This idea is taken further in chapter 2 following a passage where Jesus’ death and saving work has been described, stressing that He is High Priest as supreme Man. There the idea is completed by a description of Jesus as our ‘merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people’ (*Hebrews 2:17*). In both places the emphasis is on His priestly work connected with the offering of a sacrifice for the purpose of atonement, both to cleanse and to reconcile; first as the ‘Son’ from Heaven, and second as ‘Jesus’, the perfect Man.

This thought is continued in Hebrews 3:1 where Jesus is acknowledged as ‘our Apostle and High Priest’. This emphasizes His faithfulness and accomplishments as being greater than those of Moses. His purpose is revealed as to bring us into ‘rest’.

Thus, in Jesus is found cleansing of sin, reconciliation, and a gracious, empathetic response to our needs. In this chapter we learn that He is a High Priest who has also been appointed God's Son, who is of the house of David, and is therefore 'a priest after the order (likeness) of Melchizedek'. He is a royal priest, of a priesthood older than that of Aaron, and superior to both Moses and Aaron.

The Lesson "We are Perfected Through Reverent Submission"

I. vv. 1-5. The nature and work of the high priesthood is defined in this verse. The high priest is selected from the people. He is appointed to act for men. Yet his position is exalted in that he is appointed to act for them in relation to God and in things pertaining to God. He is the earthly mediator between man and God. He acted from men to God in the sphere of offering gifts and sacrifices for sins as a man approaching God seeking mercy. 'Gifts and sacrifices for sins' covers the whole range of Old Testament required offerings. He was also the recipient of God's word to mankind. The High Priest acted in all matters relating to God; specifically, all things that pertain to true relationship with God. The High Priest acted in these matters in order to maintain man's relationship with God.

What do we know about the High Priest?

1. He was chosen from among his peers (Mankind)
2. His primary function was to be the intermediary between his peers and God
3. Another function was to offer sacrifices and gifts to God on behalf of his peers for their sins
4. Because he was not a perfect man, he also had to offer the same for himself
5. He had to be one that was non-condemning, having a humble spirit that allowed him to know that all fall short of the glory of God and are in need of forgiveness and has a deep desire to see all people reconciled unto God
6. The position/duty of high priest was not one that he could claim for himself, but God called him from among his peers as was Aaron. It is a divine calling which comes from God and which he cannot refuse.

He is in that position simply because God required it of him; and because God required it, He had no choice in the matter.

In contrast Jesus is shown as having come from Heaven, as having humbled Himself without being sinful, was totally faithful and while being appointed by God for the offering of a once-for-all sacrifice, did not have to offer it for Himself, but did so only for the people. It is clear therefore that He is of a superior, heavenly priesthood.

Contrast Jesus as the Great High Priest (Does Jesus fit the bill?)

1. Jesus was fully human
2. As He now sits at the right hand of the Father, He intercedes for all who believe and obey Him
3. He gave His body and blood as the **“one for all”** sacrifice for the sins of mankind
4. As one bearing the righteousness, the radiance and perfection of God, Jesus did not need to give sacrifice for himself because He endured humanity without sin
5. Because He was fully man, had endured and overcome every pain and temptation of mankind, Jesus is able to understand our weaknesses and deal with us, not harsh manner we deserve but with the gentleness and compassion of a loving and merciful friend
6. Jesus did not appoint Himself High Priest. He did not glorify Himself. In His High Priesthood He was not self-appointed. He was declared to be so by God. The same words that indicated His Sonship (Psalms 2:7, see on Hebrews 1:5) also indicated His Priesthood. As the appointed heir of David, chosen and begotten by God, He was automatically both a king and a priest after the order of Melchizedek,

II. vv. 6. In the order (likeness) of Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20)

1. The name Melchizedek is translated, *“king of righteousness”*
2. Melchizedek was the king of Salem (believed to be Jerusalem), when translated the name means *“king of peace”*
3. Melchizedek was the priest of God Most High

4. Melchizedek greeted Abraham with sustenance as Abraham returned from a victorious battle
5. Melchizedek blessed Abraham
6. Melchizedek received from Abraham ten percent (free will tithe) of the spoils from the battle
7. There is no mention of the genealogy or birth of Melchizedek. There is no mention of the death of Melchizedek, but He is proclaimed by David at Psalm 110: 4 to be "*priest forever*".
8. The priesthood of Melchizedek precedes that of Aaron and has no apparent ending.

III. vv. 7-10. "We are Perfected through "*Reverent Submission*""

vv. 7. During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

'The effectual fervent prayers of the righteous avails much'. There are none more righteous than Jesus Christ. He prayed to the Father continually and fervently. This passage does not speak of a single prayer but describes Jesus' continual reliance on and kept relationship with the Father. It speaks of the reverence (godly fear) with which Jesus prayed. Jesus' prayers honored the will of the Father. There are none more evident of the honor that Jesus showed towards the Father's will, than His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed to be relieved of the anguish and pain he would have to endure on the cross and bearing the filth of the sin of all mankind. Jesus was aware of the brutal pain and suffering He would endure. Yet in this brief moment of weakness is strengthened by an angel from heaven (*Luke 22:43*) and with godly fear and in obedience to the will of the Father He willingly submitted to that will. Jesus denied His humanly instincts so as to "honor the will of the Father" and to sacrifice Himself for the will of the Father to be completed.

Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane was specifically subjected to the will of God and finally was a prayer for strength to face what God willed for Him. In this His prayer was successful. He was heard because of His godly fear, His obedience, His reverent submission. Jesus went into death, and through it,

and emerged again as the Lord of life. He had been saved from death. Death had lost its sting.

IV. vv. 8–10. *Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.*

The Apostle Paul sums up these passages with a description of all that Jesus achieved due to His obedient suffering sacrifice on the cross. Although He was the Son of God, He learned obedience from His suffering (sacrifice).

‘Once made perfect’ – Jesus lived a life of perfection as one that did not sin. However, His sacrifice at Calvary completed His perfection. He became the perfect “Sanctifier, the perfect Leader to the Father, the perfect Sacrifice and the perfect “Deliverer” from our fear of death. Jesus performed the greatest duty of His High Priesthood by humbling Himself and taking on the sins of all who would obey Him. Because of His sacrifice, because of his suffering, Jesus became the author of **“Eternal Salvation”** to all who would obey Him. His exaltation to God’s right hand where He reigns forever completed His perfection.