

LESSON 5



JESUS WAS A PRIEST

Scripture Text: *Hebrews 8:1-10*

Being the Mediator set between God and man, Jesus reaches both ways. He is the Prophet representing God to man. He is the Priest representing man to God. Both are required to accomplish our salvation.

Christ is our High Priest offering Himself to God as the Supreme Sacrifice to pay for our sins and interceding with God for us. We must accept Him as our Sacrifice and Intercessor. Today we study His priesthood. (Read Hebrews, Chapter 9.)

MEMORY VERSE: *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Hebrews 4:14*

The Superiority of Christ's Priesthood

Hebrews 8:1-2 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: The writer had been telling about the Levitical priesthood in Chapter 7. He told how another priest would rise up and that the priesthood being changed would cause a change to be necessary in the law. Also, this priest would bring in a more powerful and unchangeable priesthood. He ties up the loose ends and comes to a clear conclusion—**We have such an high priest . . .** Though we have sinned we are not completely cut off from God. By faith we have a Spokesman Who presents our case before the Father. This pathway to God was opened when Jesus suffered and shed His blood for us on Calvary. The veil of the temple was then rent in two, opening the way between the people and the holiest place (Ephesians 2:13-16). No more would man need to go to God through a carnal priest but would draw nigh to God through this **high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne . . . in the heavens.** Our priest sits where He can present our case directly. He serves in the **sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle.** This is not a material building built by man. It is the sanctuary of the heart where God dwells, the tabernacle set up by **the Lord . . . and not man** (Luke 17:20-21). Jesus is our Advocate with God (John 2:1).

Jesus the High Priest

Hebrews 8:3 Israel under the law had priests and high priests. Priests kept the altar fire burning, offered sacrifices, kept oil in the golden candlestick, changed the shewbread and offered incense on the altar. They taught God's law to the people and prayed for them.

The high priest was above the regular priest. He alone was allowed to enter the holiest place, and that but once a year. No man was to be in the holy place (the first room of the tabernacle) when the high priest was in the holiest place (the inner room). High priests under the law were types of the perfect High Priest, Jesus Christ. The sacrifices they offered were types of the perfect sacrifices of **Himself** which Jesus was to offer.

The Old Covenant

Hebrews 8:4-9 The material tabernacle and furniture, the sacrifices, the forms and ceremonies of the law, all were earthly types of **heavenly things**. This is why it was so necessary that Moses make every detail of the tabernacle **according to the pattern** God showed him. The type must give a true picture.

Earth had sufficient human priests. Their service was an **example and shadow** or a type of **heavenly things** and not the reality of them. **For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins** (Hebrews 10:4). The need was too great. A better sacrifice, a better system than the law was necessary. The law was faulty. It could not bring salvation but only point to it. Then Jesus came fulfilling the law in a **more excellent ministry**. He brought a **better covenant** and **better promises**.

The New Covenant

Hebrews 8:10 The better covenant Jesus made was: **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts**. Through the new birth He would change men's hearts and minds to think as He thinks and desire what He desires. He gave them His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). He gave the Holy Spirit to instruct and guide. In this new covenant God and His people are joined in love and fellowship. Jesus sealed the new covenant with His own blood (Matthew 26:28). He offered Himself as the pure and living Sacrifice to bind it.

When Jesus ascended to Heaven He entered the true holy of holies. There as High Priest He meets the Father and pleads our cause. There His sacrifice is accepted as payment for our debt. There **he ever liveth to make intercession for them . . . that come unto God by him** (Hebrews 7:25). We must **hold fast our profession** as the memory verse states. It remains only for us to trust in the payment and the intercession Jesus made for us. Keep trusting, keep obeying, and keep praying and communing with Him. The unity of our world depends upon the realization that Christ, and Christ alone, is the One Who can unite mankind (Ephesians 2:14).

JUST A THOUGHT

**Jesus was God brought down to man so that
man could be lifted up to God.**