

WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL

Fundamentals of the Faith

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LESSON #28 — JESUS IS OUR HIGH PRIEST, PART 1

I'm thankful for the opportunity that we have to continue our study of lesson two. We're talking about Man's problem with sin from the beginning of time, and God's solution for sin, His abundant love as seen and embodied in His beloved Son, Jesus the Christ.

Last class, we began to look into some of the things that Jesus is to the Christian, His relationship to us, and our relationship to Him. We noticed, first of all, that He is God. That is, He is deity. He has divine characteristics and attributes. Secondly, we saw that He is Lord and Christ. And we studied the meaning of the word translated "Lord," and saw that it meant owner, master, ruler, one who has earned the right to have authority over others. And we saw that Jesus earned that right, by the giving of His body and His blood for you and me. And then we saw that He was Christ, and that means Messiah, Savior, the Anointed One, the coming King who had come to be the Savior of the world.

Now we want to look at another relationship or another way that we are related to the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is that He is our King. And of course, when we think about King, we think about one who has power, one who has authority over others, one who rules over those in his kingdom. And of course, we know in the New Testament, that Jesus' Kingdom is his church (Matthew 16, verse 18 and 19). Jesus is ruler over His church as head of His church.

But let's look at a passage of scripture on this subject that Jesus is our king. In Revelation, chapter 17, verse 14. The book of Revelation, the 17th chapter, verse 14. "These will make war with the Lamb and the Lamb will overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings. And those who are with Him are called chosen and faithful." Here we have in the picture language of the book of Revelation, a scene of conflict, conflict between those who are opposed to the Christ, the Messiah, the King, the Lamb, as He's identified here. And he says that they will make war with the Lamb, but the Lamb we know is victorious, won the victory over sin and over death, through His perfect life, His death and His resurrection. But God refers to Him here as King of kings and Lord of lords. In other words, there are kings in the world, over various countries, but there is only one king who is overall, and that is Jesus. And that's the point that we want to grasp from this particular scripture. Thus, if He is the king, then we are the subjects in the kingdom. We are the ones who are subject to His will. We should submit to His will, and to His authority. Just as we saw that in our relationship as servants to our Lord. That's the same kind of picture that God is giving here. We should be in submission to our King. Just as Ephesians chapter five talks about the church is subject to and submits to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So Jesus is God. He is Lord. He is the Christ and He is king.

Another thing that we need to keep in our minds another relationship is that He is our Great High Priest. Our Great High Priest. And when we think about the richness of that position in the Old Testament times, that title, that relationship, should really impress something upon our mind. What was the function of the high priest? He was the

representative of the people to God. He would go and make sacrifices for the sins of the people. So let's keep that in our minds as we think about and study these scriptures, on the subject that Jesus is our Great High Priest.

Let's look first in the book of Hebrews, in the second chapter, verses 17 and 18. Hebrews 2, verse 17, and 18. "Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted." Here God brings to our mind the fact that Jesus became like His brethren. In this chapter, in chapter 2, verse 11, it's clear that Jesus is not ashamed to call faithful Christians His brethren. And so he's talking about Jesus came to this earth, lived as a man, took on flesh and blood just as you and I have. And he did this so that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest.

Think of God's mercy. Mercy is when God does not give us what we deserve. We deserve to die for our sins, immediately, as soon as we commit those sins. But God has mercy on us. And His Son is our merciful High Priest, full of mercy. That's a wonderful thought to know that we have as our High Priest, one who is full of mercy. But he also describes him as our faithful High Priest. When we think of the word faithful, we think of dependable, one who can be counted upon one who can be trusted. We can depend on Jesus. He will never leave nor forsake us, the Hebrew writer says, in the 13th, chapter, and verse 5 and 6. So we have a merciful, and a faithful, High Priest. And it says that He made propitiation for the sins of the people. That is, He provided the means of covering our sins. And of course, that was the blood of Jesus that covers our sins and removes our sins from our soul, when we meet the conditions that God established.

And then in verse 18, the Hebrew writer talks about: Jesus suffered. He was tempted, just like we're tempted, and that makes it possible for us to be aided, to be comforted, by Jesus. The fact that we can know that He has been through what we are going through, gives us aid, gives us comfort, helps us relate to Him in a better way. So what a wonderful passage, what great verses these are, that tell us that Jesus is our merciful and faithful High Priest, Who made it possible for us to have the forgiveness of our sins. Who lived on this earth, in His own body and flesh and blood, and experienced the same things that we can, that we do, and that comforts us.

Then in the book of Hebrews, also, the fourth chapter this time, verses 14 through 16. Hebrews 4, verses 14 through 16. "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 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. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Here, the Hebrew writer says, "We have a great High Priest, better than all high priests who came before." And he says, "He's not one who is in the tomb somewhere." This great High Priest, Jesus, has passed through into the heavens, and is in heaven at the right hand of the Father. And He's there to represent every faithful Child of God, every faithful Christian. So if you're a Christian, and I'm a Christian, we have a great High Priest who is in heaven, not in the tomb somewhere, like all past high priests. And he says that because we have that assurance, we should hold fast to our

profession of faith, to our confession, that we believe in Jesus the Christ. We can stand on solid ground and know that He is there in heaven, representing us.

And notice verse 15: God says we don't have a High Priest who can't sympathize with our weaknesses. Why? Because He came and lived in the flesh. And he underwent the same temptations that you and I experience. Yet, He was without sin. Unlike us, He didn't fall and commit sin, transgression, violation of God's law. He lived perfectly, and that made Him the perfect High Priest.

And the Hebrew writer draws a conclusion in verse 16. Because of these facts, that our great High Priest is in heaven, that He was tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin, we can have confidence. Now, he's not talking about arrogance, or self righteousness. But he's talking about confidence based on Jesus. Not based on our own inadequacies, and weaknesses, but our confidence based upon our relationship with Jesus. Because of that, we can have boldness to come to the throne of grace. Here he's making an obvious reference to prayer. We can approach God and His throne, from whence all grace flows. And he says we can obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. What a wonderful privilege that is, and a blessing that the Christian can approach the throne of grace in prayer. Approach the Father, through His Son, and through our merciful and faithful High Priest. And we can know that we can obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need. What joy that should bring to our hearts as we think about how God has blessed us with our Great High Priest.

Then in this same book of Hebrews, the seventh chapter, verse 23, and verse 24. Hebrews 7, verse 23 and verse 24. "Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood." Here, as was often done in the Hebrew letter, the inspired author made a contrast between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Those Old Testament priests were men, they were mortal, they were subject to death, they all died. Jesus is different. He died in the flesh, but He was raised again. And He was raised to eternal life in Heaven. And He continues for forever. And because He continues forever, He has an unchangeable priesthood. That is, he will never be replaced as the great High Priest. We have a large religious group that exists throughout the world that teaches a priesthood after Jesus' priesthood. But this passage very clearly says, Jesus has an unchangeable priesthood. There is one and only one from the time that Jesus rose and ascended into heaven. That's Jesus, the Christ. And because He's eternal, He has an unchangeable priesthood.

Then let's look in the eighth chapter of Hebrews, verse 1, Hebrews 8, verse 1. "Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." The Hebrew writer here begins to summarize some of the major points that he's made concerning Jesus, and His better priesthood, His superior priesthood, superior to the priesthood of Melchizedek, and to Aaron, and others. And he says that He is at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. What better position could our High Priest be in? God says that Jesus is at His right hand, and He's making intercession for those who are faithful Christians, and come to the Father, through Jesus, the Son (Hebrews, chapter 7, verse 25). So our Great High Priest is not in a tomb somewhere. He's in heaven. He's at the throne, at the majesty, the great power,

Almighty God in heaven, and he's there for you. And he's there for me, and all who will come to Him in obedience.

Then another passage, this time in the ninth chapter, in Hebrews 9, verse 12. Hebrews 9, verse 12. "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, He entered the most holy place, once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." Again, the Hebrew writer makes a contrast between Old and New Testament. He's referring to the fact that under the Old Testament, those priests would offer the blood of goats and of calves and other animals as a way of providing forgiveness of sins in their minds. God would provide forgiveness of sins only through the blood of Christ. But under that Old Testament system, that's what God had them working with. That they needed the blood of goats and calves, and they needed to make those sacrifices by those priests. But Jesus is better. He is superior. He didn't offer the blood of goats and of calves. He offered His own blood and His own body. But the Hebrew writer also talks about that He entered the Most Holy Place. Now to get the picture as clearly as we possibly can, it's necessary to bring our minds back to the Old Testament system, the Old Testament temple. And to do that, we would like to go to the board where we've drawn a very simple illustration of the temple, to show the two major compartments that existed in the temple at that time. Let's go to the board and look at this point.

God talked about in the Old Testament times, the Holy Place, and He talked about the Most Holy Place, and there was a division between the two. The priests would work in the Holy Place all throughout the year. But God said that only the high priest could enter into the Most Holy Place, and that could be done on only one day, and that was the Day of Atonement, as found in Leviticus chapter 16. Before the high priest could come into the Most Holy Place, he would have to make a sacrifice for his sins, he would offer a young bull as a sacrifice for his sins. And then he would take his blood, and he would, the blood of that bull, and he would sprinkle it on the inside of the Most Holy Place. And then he would make an offering of a goat for the sins of the people of Israel, and to cleanse the Holy Place. But that high priest could only come in to the most holy place one time a year. And he did that with the shedding of blood of bulls and of goats. In the scriptures, we know that the Holy Place in the Old Testament represented the church in the New Testament, and that the Most Holy Place represented heaven. So there was some symbolism involved in the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place.

Well, this passage says that Jesus entered in, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood into the Most Holy Place. Well, was he talking about physically, He entered into the Most Holy Place? No, the Hebrew writer is saying, He entered into heaven, not with the blood of an animal, but with His own precious blood. And we ought to be thankful to God that he has done something better in the New Testament times than He did in the Old Testament times. He had a better Priest, the great High Priest, Jesus, His only begotten Son, and He entered into heaven, for us, the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies. And He did it, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, precious blood, the only thing that would obtain for us forgiveness of sins.

And notice also, in this verse, the Hebrew writer says, that he entered into the Most Holy Place, once for all. Not once a day. Not once a year, as under the Old Testament system to be repeated time and time again. Once for all. Literally, the word translated "once for all," means,

“once, never to be repeated again.” So Jesus entered into heaven for us, once, never to be repeated again. There He is now, and there He shall ever be.

But notice, also, the Hebrew writer said in verse 12, that He obtained eternal redemption. When Jesus brought His body and His blood, and presented them in Heaven, to the Father, eternal redemption was made possible through that loving sacrifice. And we ought to thank and praise God, and rejoice in the fact that we can participate in that eternal redemption. We can receive that eternal redemption, through the love, and the mercy, and the grace of God, and through our loving and faithful obedience to the gospel, including our baptism into Christ, as we've seen.