JESUS: THE QUALIFIED GREAT HIGH PRIEST

**DATE: 12/4/2013 Wed.**

**TEXT: Hebrews 5:5-9**

**INTRODUCTION**

In our last study we looked at the Qualifications of the High Priest

There were 3 primary requirements

- First, he was called, appointed, and ordained of God

- Secondly, he was to represent man to God and God to man

- Thirdly, he was to be sympathetic and compassionate

In the closing of **chapter 4** we saw Jesus being declared Our Great High Priest

Now in **5:5-10** we see that He is Qualified to be our Great High Priest

Just as the earthly high priests met certain qualifications,

Jesus Supersedes these Qualifications and therefore is …

***“Our Qualified Great High Priest”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

Jesus is the Qualified Great High Priest because He is -

**I. “SUPERIOR”**

As we have often seen in our study of Hebrews

The Primary Theme of the book is that Jesus is Better or Superior

We have already seen that He is Better than the Prophets, Angels, Moses, and Joshua

Now we will see that He is Better than Aaron

In our last study we saw that the office of the High Priest was appointed by God

In **v. 4** we read –

***“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron”***

Aaron did not become a High Priest by Choice

He was ***“called”*** to be a High Priest

In the same fashion, Jesus was appointed by God to be our Great High Priest

We read in **v. 5 –**

***“So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee”***

Like the earthly priesthood, Jesus was Appointed by God to be our High Priest

However, Christ has a Superior calling to Aaron / others

He is Superior in His Appointment because of -

**A. The Eternal Nature of His ‘Sonship’**

Too no *earthly* priest did God ever say –

**v. 5 - *“Thou art My Son, to day have I begotten Thee”***

These words are a quote from **Psalms 2:7 –**

***“I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto Me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee”***

They declare Jesus to be the Eternal Son

No earthly priest bore that distinction

They were all sons of God, but they were not The Son of God

**The Eternal Nature of His ‘Sonship’**

Furthermore, Jesus is Superior because of -

**B. The Eternal Nature of His ‘Priesthood’**

We read in **v. 6 –**

***“As He saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”***

This is a quote from **Psalms 110:4 –**

***“The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent,***

***Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek”***

Jewish readers knew that both **Psalms 2:7** and **110:4** were passages that referred to the Messiah

(It also substantiates the Inspiration of Scripture)

They are Known as Messianic Psalms

**1.** Jesus is the Messiah

The writer is declaring that Jesus, being Messiah

Is a far Superior High Priest

Earthly priests, as Aaron, were appointed for life

However, we read that Jesus was appointed -

***“forever”***

His priesthood is more than an Earthly duration

His is a priesthood of Eternal duration

He will ***“forever”*** be our Great High Priest

**2.** Another feature of His Superiority

Is seen in that Christ was appointed a High Priest …

***“after the order of Melchizedek”***

Melchizedek is a fascinating character

We will look more closely at him in **Chp. 7**

But let me say a few things about him here

- He lived at the time of Abraham

We read in **Hebrews 7:1 –**

*“****For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him”***

- His ancestry is completely unknown

**Hebrews 7:3 – *“Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;”***

- He was king of Salem (ancient name for Jerusalem)

As well as a priest of the Most High God

We read in **Genesis 14:18 –**

*“****And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God”***

He lived many centuries before the Aaronic priesthood was established

- His priesthood was unending

**Hebrews 7:3 –** ***“but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually”***

Unlike the Line of Aaron, which began at the time of Moses and ended in 70 a.d. when the Temple was destroyed

- Melchizedek’s priesthood, therefore, was Superior to Aaron's

Melchizedek was a king, whereas Aaron was not

Secondly, his priesthood was perpetual, whereas Aaron's was temporary

We read in **v. 10**, that Jesus was -

***“Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek”***

Christ, being a High Priest Like the order of Melchizedek's priesthood, therefore, is better than Aaron

Literally hundreds, yea thousands of high priests would serve through the generations

However, Christ is Better and Superior than all combined

Why?

**The Eternal Nature of His ‘Sonship’**

**The Eternal Nature of His ‘Priesthood’**

**JESUS IS “SUPERIOR”**

Secondly, He is Qualified to be the Great High Priest because He is -

**II. “SYMPATHETIC”**

The earthly high priest must not only be called or appointed by God,

But they must also be Sympathetic and Compassionate toward those to whom they represented - **5:2**

We have already seen Jesus is a Sympathetic and Compassionate High Priest

This is a result of His identification with us as man **- 4:15**

Now the writer speaks of His Sympathy as an Affirmation of His Qualifications to be High Priest

We read in **v. 7 –**

***“Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared”***

The writer is speaking of His Sufferings as man that enabled Him to fully understand man and be Compassionate and Sympathetic toward man

As we look closer at His Sufferings we see -

**A. The ‘Experience’ of His Sufferings** (4 thoughts)

The writer speaks of ***“the days of His flesh”***

The writer once again reminds us of the Humanity of the Lord Jesus

He then directs our attention to a particular event in His life in which He suffered

He speaks of ***“when he had offered up prayers and supplications”***

This (I believe) is an reference to the Garden of Gethsemane

It’s interesting that the writer draws our attention to His praying in the garden

(…to relate to His Suffering, he could have taken us to the Cross)

In **Matthew 26:36** we read – ***“Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder”***

Jesus withdrew Himself from the disciples that He might be alone with the Father -

**Matt. 26: 39 - *“And He went a little further, and fell on His face, and prayed…”***

The Gospel writers, tell us *That* Jesus prayed

The writer of Hebrews tells us *How* He prayed

**First,** he says that Jesus ***“offered up prayers and supplications”***

The words ***“offered up”*** are descriptive of a priest offering up sacrifices on the altar

The writer of Hebrews portrays Him as the Great High Priest praying in a priestly fashion

The word ***“prayers”*** speaks of *special, definite requests*

The word means *I want, I need*

It speaks of what is being asked for *as Especially needed*

The word ***“supplications”*** means *to beg, out of need*

It has the idea of *genuine earnestness, sincerity*

This refers to the prayers that focus upon special needs / deep and intense needs

When we see Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane,

He is carrying His needs before His Father with a great sense of urgency and pleading and begging for the meeting of those needs

**Then** the writer of Hebrews tells us that He offered up these prayers and supplications

***“with strong crying and tears”***

**Luke 22:44** describes the scene - ***“And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground”***

He prayed in anguish, His tears flowed freely, every tear a reflection of the anguish and suffering He felt in his heart

He could be heard praying as He cried out to God in the anguish of His soul

The word ***“agony”*** here speaks of the *utmost agony*

Luke tells us that the extent of His suffering was

…so great that ***“His sweat was as it were great drops of blood”***

**Ill:** Although this medical condition is relatively rare, according to Dr. Frederick Zugibe (Chief Medical Examiner of Rockland County, New York) it is well-known, and there have been many cases of it. The clinical term is “*hematohidrosis*.” *“Around the sweat glands, there are multiple blood vessels in a net-like form.”* Under the pressure of great stress the vessels constrict. Then as the anxiety passes *“the blood vessels dilate to the point of rupture. The blood goes into the sweat glands.”* As the sweat glands are producing a lot of sweat, it pushes the blood to the surface - coming out as droplets of blood mixed with sweat.

The agony the Lord suffered was to such an extent that He sweat drops of blood

**Next, Mark 14:34** states - ***“And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch”***

His agony was to such an extent it were as if He were dying

His suffering began long before He was nailed to the cross

The Garden of Gethsemane was a place of great suffering for Christ,

Suffering that goes beyond our imagination and understanding

**Lastly,** The writer of Hebrews speaks of how His prayers and supplications were offered …

***“unto Him that was able to save Him from death”***

**Matthew 26:39** says - ***“And He went a little further, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”***

The ***“cup”*** was a metaphor for His death,

Therefore, many seem to think that Jesus was asking the Father to not let Him die;

And that if there was another way for this to be done, let it be

This was not the case at all

There are two Greek words for the word ***“from”***

The first is ***apo***which means *from the edge of*

The other is ***ek***and means *out from within*

It is the word ***ek***that Jesus uses here

He was praying to be saved *“out from within death”*

What’s He talking about?

If He had used ***apo*** (from the edge of)

He would have been praying to be saved from His physical death

But when He used ***ek*** (out from within)

He was praying that He would be saved from within death

In other words, once He died, …

He would be saved from the death He died

It was a prayer for His resurrection!

When the Lord knelt in Gethsemane, He knew that He would die and in so doing, paid the penalty for sin

He also knew that He would be raised from the dead

His prayer was a prayer for His resurrection

Take special note that **Hebrews 5:7** states that His prayer was answered - ***“and was heard”***

If He had been praying to be delivered from physical death,

Then His prayer would not have been answered, for He was not saved from physical death

We all know He died on the cross

He by faith, saw His resurrection from the dead, which we know was answered!

The answer to His prayer is indicated in the words …

***“and was heard in that He feared”***

The word ***“fear”*** is not the ordinary word for fear

The word ***“fear”*** here is a word that means *to act cautiously*, *to take hold of* or *to be careful and respectful handling a matter*

It is used here to speak of the Lord’s Pious, Devout character

His prayer takes into account not just His desire, but the will of the Father

The Father’s Will was paramount in Jesus praying

Luke described this when Jesus prayed in **Lk. 22:42 -**

*“****Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done”***

The Bible tells us in **I John 5:14 –**

*“****And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us”***

The prayer of Jesus was concerned with the Will of God and answered because it was the Will of God

Any answer to prayer is always according to the Will of God

Once again the writer is illustrating His Humanity

He is showing Jesus as a man that suffered greatly

Therefore He is able to relate to us in our suffering

And therefore Qualified to be our Great High Priest

**The ‘Experience’ of His Sufferings**

As we continue to look at His sufferings, we also see -

**B. The ‘Obedience’ of His Sufferings**

We read **in v. 8 -** ***“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered”***

As the Son of God who became the Son of man,

He was called to Suffer

Suffering was part of the Father’s will for Him

Even though He was the Son of God He was not given an exemption from suffering

By being obedient to the Father’s will …

He learned the full cost of Suffering

Suffering that led all the way to the horrible and agonizing death of the Cross

Jesus didn’t have to learn to obey, for He Himself said

**John 8:29 - *“I do always those things that please Him”***

He did not suffer because of the consequences of disobedience,

But suffered as result of His obedience

He suffered because He was doing the will of God

(That is a very interesting thought)

What He suffered in being obedient to the Father’s will,

… Enabled Him to be a sympathetic High Priest

He became man that He might identify with man

**JESUS IS “SUPERIOR”**

**JESUS IS “SYMPATHETIC”**

Thirdly, we see that He is the Qualified Great High Priest because He is -

**III. “SACRIFICIAL”**

We read in **v. 9 -** ***“And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him”***

We saw in **5:1a** that the high priest was also required to offer sacrifices

***“that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins”***

Christ is also Qualified in this area to be our Great High Priest

Because -

**A. He ‘Presented an Eternal Sacrifice’**

The earthly high priest offered Temporal sacrifices

Jesus gave Himself an Eternal sacrifice!

The Lamb of God who gave Himself as the sacrifice for sin

Jesus is Better because He was not only Qualified to offer Scarifies …

But as the High Priest *He gave Himself* as The Sacrifice to make atonement for the sin of man

The writer of Hebrews speaks of Jesus *“****being made perfect”***

The word ***“perfect”*** speaks of Jesus being brought to the goal appointed by God

The writer by no means is implying that there was some kind of imperfection in Christ prior to His death

Ten thousand times no!

He is stating that Jesus *fulfilled His divinely appointed goal* which was His substitutionary death on the Cross

Instead of offering a sacrifice, He was the sacrifice

**Hebrews 9:26 – *“For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”***

**He ‘Presented an Eternal Sacrifice’**

Furthermore, we see that by presenting Himself as an Eternal Sacrifice -

**B. He ‘Purchased an Eternal Salvation’**

We read in **v.9** that - ***“He became the author of eternal salvation”***

The word *“****author”*** speaks of *the cause of something*

Jesus is the Cause, the Originator, of our Salvation

What He did for us on Calvary is the Cause of our Salvation

It is from His death that our salvation was Purchased and Proceeds

The earthly high priest was required to offer a sacrifice every year

Jesus offered Himself once as a sacrifice

There is now no need for a sacrifice ever again

**His was the Eternal Sacrifice**

The salvation **He purchased was an Eternal Salvation**

**CONCLUSION**

Note the words in **v.9 -** ***“unto all them that obey Him”***

These words are descriptive of those who are saved

They do not present the grounds for salvation

If they did, they would contradict what has just been taught

The ***“author”*** or cause of our salvation would be our obedience, not His death

Our obedience is evidence that we are saved, not the means for our salvation

Yes, **JESUS IS THE QUALIFIED GREAT HIGH PRIEST**

He was appointed by God to be Our Great High Priest

He became man, and as a man relates to us in every way

He offered Himself as a sacrifice

He is indeed BETTER!

**HE IS “SUPERIOR”**

**HE IS “SYMPATHETIC”**

**HE WAS “SACRIFICIAL”**