

"Our Great High Priest"

Part 26

Hebrews 4:14-8:5

Introduction: Tonight in our study of the book of Hebrews we have now come to the 8th chapter. In the verses that are before us the writer is still presenting Jesus Christ as our Great High Priest and here in these verses he is going to bring us to the very point he has been leading up to.

Notice Hebrews 8:1a

This verse is the introduction for the point which the writer is about to make but before we step into the writer's main point there are a few thoughts which we need to keep in mind.

I. The Writer's Previous Thoughts

We need to review what the writer has said from Hebrews 4:14 up to this point because what we are about to look at is the SUM of all of this. Let me sum up what the writer has presented in this section so far. He has been on a mission to help his readers to see that Jesus' Priesthood is Superior to the priesthood of Aaron's. He has given to his readers several points to help them to see this.

The Priesthood of Jesus is Superior because:

1. He has done what the priesthood of Aaron could never do and that was Jesus has provided a way for man to come into the presence of God and into complete communion with God.
2. His Priesthood is eternal. The priesthood of Aaron was a temporary priesthood.
3. His ONE Sacrifice took away our sins where as the blood of the animals sacrificed under the Levitical priesthood could only cover sin.
4. He is able and He does save those who come unto God by Him to the UTTERMOST/COMPLETELY.
5. He is the GUARANTEE that anyone who comes unto Him will one day be delivered into the presence of the Father.

6. He is sinless and perfect and at the same time He can completely identify with us who are sinners.
7. His Priesthood is confirmed by an oath which means He is FOREVER our High Priest and His present ministry is to intercede on our behalf.

The writer will now go on and take us even higher in thought concerning our Great High Priest and as he does he will list several points of Jesus as the SUPERIOR High Priest.

A. He is Superior because of His POSITION.

Notice Hebrews 8:1

There are 2 points in this verse which we need to see.

1. We see here that Jesus is SEATED.

This is the meaning of the word "set". Now to the Hebrews this was unheard of in the ministry of the high priest. There were no seats in the tabernacle nor were there any seats in the Temple. The Levitical high priests were never able to sit down because their work was never done.

Hebrews 10:11-14

¹¹ *And every priest **standeth daily** ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:*

¹² *But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, **sat down** on the right hand of God;*

¹³ *From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.*

¹⁴ *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

The Levitical priests were constantly busy offering sacrifices and so they were never able to sit down because their work was never done. But Jesus sat down. After He offered the Greatest Sacrifice of all He sat down because it was with that One Sacrifice that Jesus paid the penalty for ALL sin. Remember the words of Jesus from the cross?

John 19:30

³⁰ *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished**: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

The words "it is finished" are not talking about the life of Jesus. When Jesus spoke these words He was speaking of salvation. The Supreme Offering for sin had been offered and now the sacrifice was complete. All sin had been paid for by His one offering of His own life upon the cross. The work of our salvation was now FINISHED and so when Jesus ascended to heaven He was able to sit down because the SACRIFICIAL work was done.

Now with that said it brings a question into my mind, "How can Jesus say, "It is finished", and how can He sit down when we read in 7:25 that He ever liveth to make intercession for us?"

His REDEMPITIVE work is done while His INTERCESSORY work continues on. You see the Levitical priests could never sit down because there were always sacrifices to offer but when Jesus offered the Supreme Sacrifice He was able to sit down because there are no other sacrifices needed.

2. We see here that Jesus is seated at the RIGHT HAND of God.

Notice Hebrews 8:1

The Bible tells us over and over that Jesus is seated at the Right Hand of the Father.

Romans 8:34

³⁴ *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

Colossians 3:1

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Now some people would ask, "What is so significant about Jesus being seated at the Right Hand of God?"

The Right Hand speaks of POWER. So when the Bible tells us that He is seated at the RIGHT HAND of the Father it refers to Jesus being in the position of POWER.

Mark 14:60-62

⁶⁰ *And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?*

⁶¹ *But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?*

⁶² *And Jesus said, I am: and **ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power**, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*

Now just hold on to that thought for a moment because there is more.

In the days when the book of Hebrews was written there was a group of 70 men known as the Jewish Sanhedrin. They were a group of men who carried out the justice and the judgment for the judicial system in Israel. They were the high court. The Sanhedrin would sit in a semicircle so that they could see each other. In front of them were placed 2 scribes or notaries. There was a scribe placed on the left hand and a scribe placed on the right hand. The scribe on the left hand always wrote the condemnations. In other words it was the scribe on the left hand who recorded the crimes and the sentencing for those who were guilty. But the scribe on the RIGHT HAND always wrote the ACQUITTALS. In other words the scribe on the RIGHT HAND would always record the innocence of the one who was on trial.

Jesus is seated at the RIGHT HAND of the Father. This was the position of the scribe who wrote the acquittals so this is the perfect position for our Great High Priest to be in. When the enemy comes to accuse us because of our failures it is our Great High Priest that acquits us or in other words He pronounces us free from the charge brought against us. Let me show you what the Bible says about Satan.

Revelation 12:10

¹⁰ *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the **accuser of our brethren** is cast down, which **accused them before our God day and night**.*

Satan is so set upon our destruction that he is always going to God to accuse you and I of the sins which we commit in our lives. But we have a Great High Priest who is seated at the Right Hand of the Father and every time Satan brings an accusation against us Jesus pronounces us free from any condemnation.

And because His position is the position of Power there is no one who is greater that can remove Him and thus condemn us.

Let me show you some verses and when they are combined with these thoughts they come into focus so much more.

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

⁴ *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

⁵ *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Romans 8:31-34

³¹ *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

³² *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

³³ *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

³⁴ *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

b. Jesus is Superior because of the PLACE where He Serves

Notice Hebrews 8:2-4

Here in these verses we see that Jesus is a minister of the sanctuary that is heaven and not on earth. Jesus could not be a Priest on earth because He was not of the tribe of Levi. Therefore He did not qualify to be a Priest of the Levitical system but He does qualify to be a Priest in heaven.

Notice Hebrews 8:5

The earthly tabernacle was a shadow of the True Tabernacle which is located in heaven. Now in order to grasp the ideas of the writer here we need to think like the Hebrews would think.

Some of the Hebrews desired to go back to the Levitical priesthood and because the Temple was still standing and the sacrificial system was still functioning there was the temptation to return to the Old Covenant. But here in these verses we can see that the writer has used the Old Testament Scriptures in verse 5 to help the Hebrews to see that the tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple of their day were both patterns made after the True Tabernacle in heaven. The writer quoted from Exodus.

Exodus 25:40

⁴⁰ *And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.*

So the writer is showing his readers that Jesus is Superior because He does not minister in an earthly tabernacle but He ministers in THE Heavenly Tabernacle.

The Levitical priests would sacrifice the animal and they would take the blood of the sacrifice and they would enter into the Holy of Holies and there the priest would sprinkle the blood upon the mercy seat for atonement for sin. In the same way Jesus made the Greatest Sacrifice on the cross when He gave His life. He then passed through the heavens and He entered into the Holy of Holies which is heaven. He then sat down on the Right Hand of the Father.

There is something else which our Lord is doing as He sits at the Father's Right Hand.

Notice Hebrews 8:3 again.

The Levitical priests offered not only sacrifices to God but they also offered gifts. These would be the offerings which were bloodless.

The verse tells us that EVERY high priest offers sacrifices and gifts. Now we know that Jesus made THE Sacrifice for our sins and therefore we can conclude that Jesus also offers GIFTS to the Father. But what are the GIFTS?

I would like to share with you what I believe the GIFTS are which Jesus presents to the Father.

I believe the GIFTS are the believers which He GUARANTEES will make it onto the presence of the Father. This all started when Jesus died upon the cross and He then ascended into Paradise. He then took all the believers from Paradise and He presented them to the Father.

Ephesians 4:7-10

⁷ *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

⁸ *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

⁹ *(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)*

¹⁰ *He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

No believer who died before Jesus Christ ever ascended into the presence of the Father. The believers who died went to a place known as Paradise. When Jesus died He went into Paradise and he led those who were in Paradise into the presence of the Father and I believe they were presented to the Father as GIFTS.

Now someone would ask, "What are the GIFTS that Jesus presents to the Father daily as He serves as the Great High Priest?"

The daily GIFTS are the believers who die.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

⁶ *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

⁷ *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

⁸ *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

Conclusion:

Jesus is therefore Superior because He is seated in position of power at the Father's Right Hand. The fact that He entered into the Holy of Holies tells us 2 things:

1. He was qualified to be our High Priest.
2. The Father accepted the sacrifice which He offered.

The second reason we see that He is Superior is because of the tabernacle He ministers in. He is in the TRUE Tabernacle. The one on earth was just a shadow of the True Tabernacle. The question for the Hebrews would be, "Why would you desire to go back to the Old Covenant when you can worship the Great High Priest who ministers for you in heaven?" The question for you and me is, "Why would we ever want to turn to the world since we understand that everything which Jesus has done is so that we can enjoy fellowship with our Heavenly Father?"