

Christ Our High Priest

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I believe in these last days that God more than ever wants us to know more about Him and about His Son, Jesus Christ. We're told that we need to grow in the knowledge of God. That's in Hosea 6:6.

Hosea 6:6. *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (KJV)*

We have covered that before. We all know that we're to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ as it says in 2 Peter 3:18.

2 Peter 3:18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. (KJV)*

The question is how can we become part of the God family if we don't know about God and Christ? We can't. How can we have the mind of Christ? We are told we should do that in Philippians 2:5.

Philippians 2:5. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (KJV)*

How can we have the mind of Christ, if we don't know who Christ is? Therefore, how can we seek it if we don't really know Jesus Christ? How can we marry Christ if we can't be like Him and we don't have a vision of who He is so that we can become like Him so He will marry us? In past sermons we've gone over and studied diligently the roles, the activity of God our Father. Also, you see Christ has many titles, many roles. So, today we're going to begin a study of the titles, the roles of Jesus Christ.

By way of introduction, we've already covered this, but just as a reminder we've already found that Christ is the Creator along with the Father. Let's go to Ephesians 3:9. I'm setting the stage that Christ and the Father are both our Creators, but they each had a different role in the creation.

Ephesians 3:9. *And to make all men ... (KJV)*

"men" is in italics.

9b) *... see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: (KJV)*

So, they both had a part to play in the creation. Now let's go to Hebrews 1:1-2, which adds to this. Paul, as we're going to see shortly is talking to the Jews. He has to remind them here.

Hebrews 1:1. *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (KJV)*

God did the speaking. He inspired the prophets and they prophesied. Continue in verse 2.

2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (KJV)

God made the worlds by Jesus Christ. We have talked in the past that God is the originator; God is the initiator. Christ is the doer; Christ is the implementer. When Christ was asked when the end was going to come, He said I don't know. The angels don't know, only My Father in heaven. So, it was very clear that God is the One that throws the switch and says to Jesus Christ now is the time, go.

Today we want to talk about a different role of Jesus Christ. It's a title and it is a role. The title of the sermon is Christ Our High Priest. We don't think often of Christ as our High Priest, yet the Bible is full of it. We need to understand and appreciate and be thankful for the fact that we do have a high priest in Jesus Christ. When I began to study this, I was in for a big surprise, because the term high priest is mentioned in the Old Testament twenty-two times. I went to the Old Testament first and looked it up and then I went to the New Testament and I was thinking, well in the New Testament it's going to be less than twenty-two times knowing the Old Testament for what it is. I was totally surprised by the fact that in the New Testament high priest is mentioned fifty-five times, over twice the number in the Old Testament. We're going to see today that it is by God's design.

Point 1: The fact that Aaron was the first human high priest.

The Hebrew word for priest is Strong's number 3548. Quoting from Strong's it says "literally one officiating", the person officiating. It can mean *chief ruler or principle officer*. Let's go to Exodus 28:1 and start this investigation. This is old information, but as a refresher let's go back and see how Aaron became high priest and how God ordered it all. God is speaking to Moses.

Exodus 28:1. *And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. (KJV)*

We see here that God called Aaron and his lineage to be, as we are going to later see, the high priest. Certainly his sons, while Aaron was the high priest, were to be priests

that assisted him. Then God thought so much of the role of the priesthood that He provided a massive amount of help for the high priest. Let's turn to Numbers 3:5-10 from the New King James Version.

Numbers 3:5. *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:*

6) *"Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him."* (NKJV)

The whole tribe was to serve Aaron.

7) *"And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do the work of the tabernacle*

8) *Also they shall attend to all the furnishings of the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs of the children of Israel, to do the work of the tabernacle."* (NKJV)

Remember the tabernacle had to be broken down when they traveled and then set up when they made camp. All of the furnishings had to be taken care of. The metal ones had to be polished. The woodwork had to be taken care of. The altars had to be taken care of; massive amounts of work.

9) *"And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are given entirely to him from among the children of Israel.*

10) *So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death."* (NKJV)

Notice how serious God is. This means the outsider outside the tribe of Levi. If someone from another tribe attempted to come in and handle the utensils or to help set up the tabernacle, they were subject to death. God was very serious about who was going to help Aaron, who was going to be near the temple and who wasn't.

So, we see here that all priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests. Now let's go to Numbers 18:20-21. Notice again what God provides.

Numbers 18:20. *And the LORD spake unto Aaron: "Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land" ...* (NKJV)

This means they didn't have a parcel of land like the other tribes had.

20b) *... "neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel."* (KJV)

What an honor for God to say that.

21) *“And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth (tithe) in Israel for an inheritance, for their service (support) which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.” (KJV)*

We see here in these passages that God picked Aaron to be the first high priest. When he died, one of his sons became the high priest. God gave them the entire tribe of Levi to help them do the service of the tabernacle and later the temple.

Let's ask the question, what was one of the high priest's prime functions or jobs? We know that the tabernacle and later the temple symbolized God's throne in heaven and that the holy of holies, the last third of the tabernacle or the temple represented God's very throne. This is where God resides. God came to reside in the holy of holies in the tabernacle and in the temple. We've already covered that in the sermon entitled "The Veil Is Rent", given on August 19, 2017. Let's go to Hebrews 9:1-8 and notice what Paul says about the priesthood, about the tabernacle.

Hebrews 9:1. *Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. (KJV)*

This means it was physical. It was made by the hands of humans under God's inspiration obviously.

2) For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. (KJV)

That's the holy place, the first two-thirds of the tabernacle when you go through the first veil and walk into the holy place, the sanctuary.

3) And after the second veil ... (KJV)

That is the veil that separates the holy place from the holy of holies.

*3b) ... the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;
4) Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant [Ten Commandments];
5) And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. (KJV)*

They had disappeared over time.

6) Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle ... (KJV)

That's the holy place, the first two-thirds.

6b) ... accomplishing the service of God.

7) But into the second [the holy of holies] went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: (KJV)

Alone and with blood is significant, because of Christ's coming sacrifice.

8) The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all [the holy of holies] was not yet made manifest ... (KJV)

It wasn't apparent back in those days.

8b) ... while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: (KJV)

Christ had yet to die and the veil had yet to be split in two. Continue in verse 9 out of the New King James Version.

9) It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service [the high priest or the priesthood in general] perfect in regard to the conscience — (NKJV)

In other words those offerings are not going to save anybody. Continue in verse 10 from the King James Version. The tabernacle and later the temple:

10) Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. (KJV)

This means the time that Christ would come. We see here that the only time the high priest could go into the holy of holies was once a year on the Day of Atonement. He did it alone and he brought the blood of the goat on which the Lord's lot fell for the sins of the people and he sprinkled it on the mercy seat. Let's go to Leviticus 16:7-9. We rehearsed this on Atonement, but in the context of Aaron being the high priest and in the context of the design of the temple and the tabernacle let's just review this very quickly.

Leviticus 16:7. *And he [Aaron as high priest] shall take the two goats, and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

8) And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord [represents Jesus Christ], and the other lot for the scapegoat. (KJV)

The Hebrew for scapegoat is "Azazel" and it means *goat of departure*.

9) And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. (KJV)

Continue in verses 15-16.

15) Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil [into the holy of holies], and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock ... (KJV)

He had previously offered a bullock's blood for his own personal sins, because Aaron couldn't go into the holy of holies without blood for him so that he is cleansed and then he is reconciled and then he could offer it for the people.

*15b) ... and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:
16) And he shall make an atonement ... (KJV)*

The Hebrew for "atonement" can also mean *reconciliation*.

16b) ... for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness [their sins]. (KJV)

We see here that the physical high priest went into the holy of holies once a year by himself to make atonement for the nation and to reconcile the people to God. He had to do so with blood, which was symbolic of what was later to come in Jesus Christ.

Point 2: There was a priest of God earlier than Aaron.

We have covered that in previous sermons, but in this context let's go back as a reminder. Turn to Genesis 14:17-20. I've always wondered why God would plo p this in the middle of Genesis, because it just seems to come out of left field in baseball terms. We're going to see one reason why today.

Genesis 14:17. *And the king of Sodom went out to meet him [Abram] after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. (KJV)*

All of a sudden something happens. A being appears.

18) And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. (KJV)

We've previously established that the Most High God refers to the Father, so this Melchizedek is priest of the Most High God.

19) And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: (KJV)

Melchizedek passes on God's blessings to Abram.

20) And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. (KJV)

He gave tithes of all the spoil and all the booty and the bounty from this great victory. Who was this priest of the Most High God? The Bible in the Old Testament gives us the answer. Let's go to Psalms 110:1 and let the Bible define the Bible.

***Psalms 110:1.** The LORD said unto my [David's] Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (KJV)*

The church has always correctly understood that this is referring to God and Christ and their relationship. Continue in verse 4,

4) The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou ... (KJV)

This is David's "my Lord," Jesus Christ.

4b) ... art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (KJV)

If David's "my Lord" is a priest forever meaning no end, then who could it be but Jesus Christ? It couldn't be a human being. Angels don't fill the role of a priest. It is very clear, even from this one scripture. We're going to see that there are many others. Why did God send Melchizedek? It seems like this one account gets set in the story flow and what's the purpose of it? That's been a head scratcher for me for a long, long time.

I'm sure God had many reasons and someday we'll find out all of the reasons. One reason is to teach the Jews about Christ as High Priest. We're going to see how Melchizedek played an essential role in teaching the Jews about who the new high priest was in the New Testament.

Point 3: We want to establish the fact that Christ is identified as the High Priest to those of us whom God has called and who He will call down through the ages.

We have to keep in mind that the book of Hebrews was written to the Jews and we have to have the mindset of Jews in reading the book of Hebrews, because that is to whom it is addressed. Paul, as we're going to see is trying to change the mindset of the Jews. Turn to Hebrews 5:1-5. Notice what he says. He is relating Christ to the fact that there is a high priest.

Hebrews 5:1. *For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: (KJV)*

That was a function of the high priest. The Greek word for “high priest” is Strong’s number 749. It’s a combination of two words, 746 which means *first* and 2409 which means *priest*. Literally it means first priest. Quoting Strong’s it says “the high priest literally of the Jews, typically Christ, by extension a chief priest.” Paul is saying every high priest taken from men is ordained by God to fulfill certain roles.

2) Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way [lost their way]; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. (KJV)

He is a human being.

3) And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. (KJV)

The high priest had to offer offerings for his sins, as well as the sins of the people. We see here that the high priest and the people for whom he offered offerings and sacrifices were all human and imperfect.

4) And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. (KJV)

God called Aaron. God appointed Aaron. Just as we are called no one can force God to call anybody. No one can force God to call somebody as high priest. No one can force God to call anybody today, as we understand the term being called into God’s church. Paul next makes a transition and he drops a bomb right in the lap of the Jews.

5) So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; ... (KJV)

Wow! There is a high priest living in Jerusalem. Paul is saying you have it all wrong here and he drops Abram right in their lap.

5b) ... but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. (KJV)

He is quoting Psalms 2: The Jews knew the scripture by heart. We don’t know all of the scripture by heart, so let’s just go and see what Paul is referring to in Psalms 2:1-2. You remember the beginning of this, I’m sure. It’s relating to Christ as High Priest..

Psalms 2:1. *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?
2) The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, (KJV)*

We see right here in the Old Testament the Psalms referring to the LORD and His anointed. It's clear that both were involved, the Father and the Son, God and Jesus Christ were involved from the very beginning. Continue in verses 7-12.

7) I will declare the decree [a prophecy]: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son [Jesus Christ]; this day have I begotten thee. (KJV)

Paul was just quoting that, referring to Jesus Christ as our high priest.

8) Ask of me, and I shall give thee [Christ] the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

9) Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10) Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11) Serve the LORD [God] with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12) Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him [Christ]. (KJV)

We see here in the Old Testament that there is mention of both of them and Paul quotes this. Let's go back to Hebrews 5:6-10

Hebrews 5:6. *As he [God] saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (KJV)*

This is quoting Psalms 110:4 above. What is God referring to with the phrase "after the order of Melchizedek?" The Greek word for "order" is Strong's number 5010. It is the Greek word "taxis" and it means *a fixed succession of rank or character*. We see here that the fixed succession is from Melchizedek to Christ. They have the same rank. They have the same character. One leads to the other. If Christ is the same rank as Melchizedek, how could Melchizedek be a human or an angel? He can't. If they are both the same character, both the same rank, Melchizedek could not be a human or could not be an angel. Both Melchizedek and Jesus Christ who walked this earth are the same being. Christ our High Priest, as Paul is going to explain is the same being.

7) Who in the days of his flesh [Christ's first coming], when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him [God the Father] that was able to save him from death [by resurrecting him], and was heard in that he feared;

8) Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; (KJV)

Christ obviously learned things as a human, because he was a human and he had not experienced that before.

9) *And being made perfect ... (KJV)*

That word “perfect” means *complete*. Christ was already perfect. It’s not that he became perfect.

9b) *... he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*
10) *Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. (KJV)*

Paul is not letting this thing go. He’s saying Melchizedek walked this earth. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. Christ walked this earth. Melchizedek and Christ are the same being. Let’s go to Hebrews 6:18-20 from the New King James Version.

Hebrews 6:18. *that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. (NKJV)*

That hope is Jesus Christ, as we’re going to see.

19) *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul ... (NKJV)*

The King James Version and the New King James Version say that “soul” is the Greek word “psuche” and it means *life*. He says this hope, which is Jesus Christ, is an anchor to our very life.

19b) *... both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence [God] behind the veil, (NKJV)*

Christ entered into that presence when he offered his blood to God the Father.

20) *where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. (NKJV)*

Paul is pounding this and pounding this and pounding this home to the Jews saying that Christ is now the new High Priest. He is a Priest forever. He has no beginning. He has no end. He doesn’t have to be succeeded by somebody when He dies. Can you imagine the mind warp that’s going through the Jews’ heads when they are trying to get their heads around this concept? This has been going on for thousands of years. It has been passed down for millennia the fact that they look to the high priest. They looked to the temple. They looked to the tabernacle. Paul is dropping this bomb in their lap. Continue in Hebrews 7:1-7.

Hebrews 7:1. *For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God ... (KJV)*

We read about that in Genesis, Priest of the Father, the Most High God.

1b) ... who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, (KJV)

Paul is validating what happened in the Old Testament, repeating it. It is going to help some of the Jews understand this new teaching that Christ is now the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. They knew all about Melchizedek. They read those scriptures

2) To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being translated "King of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "King of peace," (KJV)

These are two other titles of Christ. Christ has a lot of titles.

3) Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life ... (KJV).

He is saying Melchizedek is eternal.

3b) ... but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually. (KJV)

Now he is referring to Jesus Christ. Continually is without end, not to be replaced when somebody dies.

We see here that Paul is driving home the point that Melchizedek and Christ are the same beings. Who you read about and who Abraham gave a tenth to and who blessed Abraham, this being is Jesus Christ who you guys killed. He is trying to get that across.

4) Now consider how great this man was ... (KJV)

The Greek word for "man" can also mean "he" and we know Melchizedek is not a man because he is eternal. He has no beginning or no end.

4b) ... unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. (KJV)

The Jews revered Abraham. What Paul is saying is look, Abraham gave tithes to this Melchizedek.

5) And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they [Levites] come out of the loins of [descended] Abraham:

6) But he [Christ and Melchizedek] whose descent is not counted from them ... (KJV)

This means that Christ was not a Levite.

- 6b) ... received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.
7) And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. (KJV)*

Here is a principle. He is saying since Melchizedek blessed Abraham that Abraham is less than Melchizedek. Melchizedek is better than Abraham, greater than Abraham. He is establishing this point. Remember the Jews worshiped Abraham. They kept talking about our fathers and the faith of our fathers. We have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all of that. It is kind of like today. The Protestants reject God and worship Christ. The same thing happened in Christ's day. The Jews rejected Christ and worshiped Abraham. How ironic is that? So Paul is going after the Jews and saying look you worship Abraham, but this Melchizedek was greater than Abraham. He received tithes of Abraham. He blessed Abraham. Continue in verses 8-10. Remember the temple was still active at that time.

- 8) And here men that die receive tithes [the Levites]; but there ... (KJV)*

This means at the time of Melchizedek.

- 8b) ... he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. (KJV)*

He says Melchizedek was real. He was there.

- 9) And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.
10) For he was yet in the loins of his father [Abraham], when Melchisedec met him. (KJV)*

Levi was descended from Abraham. Continue in verses 11-28. He is painting a picture here that's very important.

- 11) If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?
(KJV)*

If the Aaronic priesthood was perfect, we wouldn't need any other priesthood he said. We wouldn't need Melchizedek. We wouldn't need Christ if the Aaronic priesthood was perfect. Since the Aaronic priesthood and the priests themselves were imperfect, because they had to offer sacrifices for their own sins, there was need of a different priesthood, a permanent priesthood, a spiritual priesthood. Paul is trying to get this across to the Jews. Imagine the shift in thinking that was necessary for the Jews when they got this epistle. Just put yourself in their position.

- 12) For the priesthood being changed ... (KJV)*

He drops a bomb right in their lap.

12b) ... there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

13) For he [Christ] of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14) For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. (KJV)

He said this new High Priest is not a Levite.

15) And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, (KJV)

Melchizedek we're told had no beginning or no end. After the same character, the same nature arises another priest. You see he's trying to get them to make the connection between Melchizedek to Jesus Christ. Both are the same being and for them to get around this notion of worshipping Abraham, worshipping the temple, worshipping the priesthood.

16) Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. (KJV)

Melchizedek was eternal and Paul is telling the Jews that Christ is eternal.

17) For he [God] testifieth, Thou [Christ] art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (KJV)

He is quoting Psalms 110:4 again, pounding it home, not letting it go.

18) For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. (KJV)

This means the Aaronic priesthood was physical. The Aaronic priesthood was composed of human beings that were imperfect and sinned, just like the people.

19) For the law made nothing perfect ... (KJV)

You could sacrifice all you want and you would not be made perfect.

19b) ... but the bringing in of a better hope did; ... (KJV)

The better hope could make human beings perfect.

19 continued) ... by the which [this hope] we draw nigh unto God.

20) *And inasmuch as not without an oath he [Christ] was made priest:
21) (For those priests were made without an oath;) ... (KJV)*

You didn't take an oath to be a priest. It was part of a heritage of your tribe or of the line of Aaron.

21b) *... (but this [Christ] with an oath by him [God] that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) (KJV)*

He is quoting Psalms 110:4 again. He will not let this go. He is pounding it home time after time.

22) *By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.
23) And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: (KJV)*

There were thousands of priests and they were continually replenished as the older ones died and the newer ones came up.

24) *But this man ... (KJV)*

Man is in italics here.

24b) *... because he continueth ever [forever], hath an unchangeable priesthood. (KJV)*

People don't die and then get replaced. This is unchangeable he's telling the Jews, trying to get them to get their heads around it.

25) *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (KJV)*

"Intercession" means *to entreat*. Intercessor is another role of Jesus Christ. That's a whole sermon in itself. Now what the Catholics do is they deny Christ and have made Mary the intercessor claiming that well, she was the mother of Christ. She has more sympathy for the human condition. The Father will listen to Mary and she will make an appeal to Him and all of that. They deny Christ's role as intercessor, which we are told plainly that's what his role is. They substitute Mary. Satan will do anything to get people's minds off of the truth and to make substitutes instead of the truth.

26) *For such an high priest [Christ] became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; (KJV)*

Christ didn't fight back, never sinned. He is sitting on the right hand of his Father.

27) Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. (KJV)

This is the fulfillment of Aaron going in once a year into the holy of holies with blood. Christ offered Himself up once and He went back to God, the real holy of holies, with offering, not the blood of a goat, but his own blood. Paul is making that connection and hoping it resonates in the mind of the Jews.

28) For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity [imperfect]; but the word of the oath, which was since [after] the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore. (KJV)

Continue in Hebrews 8:1-6 out of the New King James Version. Paul is trying to summarize what he's saying.

Hebrews 8:1. *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 [God] in the heavens, (NKJV)*

This is going back again to Psalms 110:1, which we read earlier.

2) a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle [in heaven] which the LORD erected, and not man.

3) For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One [Christ] also have something to offer.

4) For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest ... (NKJV)

This is because he wasn't a Levite.

4b) ... since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law;

5) who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things ... (NKJV)

You see the tabernacle and the temple were just a copy, a shadow of what was in heaven.

5b) ... as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He [God] said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." (NKJV)

Here Paul, knowing his scriptures, quotes Exodus 25:40 and Numbers 8:6.

6) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. (NKJV)

Here is another role of Jesus Christ, Mediator. The Greek word for “mediator” is Strong’s number 3316. It means *a go between or by implication a reconciler*. That’s exactly what Christ did. When He died, the veil was rent and that meant all humanity was ultimately reconciled to the Father. That had never happened before. So one of Christ’s prime roles, titles, is as a reconciler that occurred by the tearing of the veil. Let’s go to Hebrews 9:11-15. We’re ending up this third point that Christ is our High Priest.

Hebrews 9:11. *But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (KJV)*

Paul is trying to get the Jews’ minds off of the physical tabernacle showing that it was just a shadow, a type, a representation of God’s heavenly tabernacle, His heavenly throne. He is saying you now have a high priest that’s spiritual just like God’s throne in heaven is spiritual.

12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (KJV)

Here is another role of Jesus Christ. He is the redemption.

13) For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: (KJV)

All of that is physical stuff.

14) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot [sinless] to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (KJV)

God in heaven is the living God and He said Christ’s blood purges all of your sins and reconciles us to the living God.

15) And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (KJV)

Of course, he’s talking of they which are called. Ultimately all of mankind is going to be called, but then only the ones God was calling at that time. We’re blessed to be part of that group that continues to be called as we get closer to Christ’s second coming.

Winding up this third point we see the whole purpose of the book of Hebrews is that Paul is trying to establish Christ as High Priest after the order, the character, the nature of Melchizedek. He hits it over and over and over again, quoting Psalms 110, quoting Psalms 2, quoting Genesis 17. We see clearly that Christ is our High Priest.

Point 4: One important duty of Jesus Christ as our High Priest is to reconcile the people to God.

He has many duties, but we're going to talk about one as we close things out. Remember, one of the roles of the physical high priest was to do what? It was to reconcile the people to God. Aaron went in once a year, offered the blood of the goat and sprinkled it on the mercy seat. That atoned for all of the sins of Israel for the previous year. He made reconciliation of the people to God once a year. That was one of the prime functions of the high priest. Let's turn to Hebrews 2:17.

***Hebrews 2:17.** Wherefore in all things it behoved him [Christ] to be made like unto his brethren ... (KJV)*

This means to come to earth as a physical human being.

17b) ... that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (KJV)

The New International Version translates "reconciliation" as "atonement". It can go either way. They're almost identical. Unlike Aaron, you see, Christ is our sin free High Priest and He is eternal. Now let's go to Romans 5:10-11 out of the New King James Version. Again, Paul is talking to the Romans about reconciliation, pounding home to the New Testament church that one of the functions of Jesus Christ is to reconcile people to God, just as the high priest once a year reconciled people to God.

***Romans 5:10.** For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son ... (NKJV)*

This is one of Christ's prime functions as High Priest.

10b) ... much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (NKJV)

That's another title of Christ, Savior.

11) And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. (NKJV)

The King James Version says "the atonement" instead of "reconciliation." What a blessing. It's not something that has to be done every year. It's one time and Christ is

our eternal High Priest. Let's go to 2 Corinthians 5:17-19. This is throughout the New Testament that Christ through his sacrifice reconciles us to God.

2 Corinthians 5:17. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: ... (KJV)*

What he's talking about is that we change from the old person to the new person. It's made possible through the power of the holy spirit.

*17b) ... old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
18) And all things are of God ... (KJV)*

Remember God is the originator.

18b) ... who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ ... (KJV)

Christ is the doer. He is the redemption and that redemption reconciles us to the Father.

*18 continued) ... and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;
19) To wit, that God was in Christ ... (KJV)*

We know that. They are both one. John 10:30 tells us that. So God had to be in Jesus Christ and Christ had to be in the Father in the sense they share the same nature and the same character and the same spirit.

19b) ... reconciling the world unto himself ... (KJV)

The world ultimately will be reconciled to God and Jesus Christ is the doer, the One that did it.

19 continued) ... not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (KJV)

You see, as the high priest reconciled the nation of Israel to God once a year, Christ offered a once forever sacrifice that rent the veil and reconciles us to God the Father. Now let's turn to Ephesians 2:13-16. You can look at verse 11 and see that Paul is speaking to the Gentiles. Here is a very important principle that Paul wants to bring out regarding the Gentiles and the Jews, because they were at war with each other, had been for centuries. If a Jew's sleeve touched a Gentile, he had to go home and wash, if they were a Pharisee anyway.

Ephesians 2:13. *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
14) For he is our peace ... (KJV)*

Remember Isaiah 9:6 where Christ is called the Prince of Peace.

14b) ... who hath made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; (KJV)

At the temple there is a stone wall. It was a barrier that separated the court of the Gentiles from the holy place. The Gentiles could not go past that wall. If they did, they would be put to death. Paul is saying that you Gentiles know about this wall. What I'm telling you is that Christ has torn down that wall. It no longer exists.

15) Having abolished in his flesh the enmity [hostility], even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain [Jews and Gentiles] one new man, so making peace; (KJV)

This means a Christian. He is trying to get across that it didn't make any difference if you are a Jew or a Gentile. Making peace means the Jews and Gentiles don't have to fight each other anymore. You are one in Jesus Christ.

16) And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body [the church] by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (KJV)

In Galatians 3:28 Paul said:

Galatians 3:28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (KJV)*

That's what he is referring to here. Jews and Gentiles can come together in God's church as equals; black or white doesn't make any difference. We're all equals. Paul is trying to get this across to Gentiles and Jews which had been fighting each other and didn't want anything to do with each other. Now God calls them into the church and says Christ has taken this barrier, this stone wall away. It's gone now. Continue in Ephesians 2:17-18.

Ephesians 2:17. *And came and preached peace to you which were afar off [the Gentiles], and to them that were nigh [the Jews].*

18) For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (KJV)

The veil is rent. Christ died to make that possible. Now let's turn to Colossians 1:18-22 out of the New International Version, which is clearer. These are scriptures that talk about the fact that duty, the job, the title of High Priest Christ took that and reconciled mankind to God the Father.

Colossians 1:18. *And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead ... (NIV)*

Here is another title for Jesus Christ.

- 18b) ... so that in everything he might have the supremacy.*
- 19) For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Christ],*
- 20) and through him [Christ] to reconcile to himself all things ... (NIV)*

Through Christ's sacrifice all things are reconciled to the Father.

- 20b) ... whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*
- 21) Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. (NIV)*

All of us were exactly the same before God called us. We were alienated from God because of our sins.

- 22) But now he [God] has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— (NIV)*

This is because of the fact of Christ's sacrifice because of his blood. Sometimes we don't think about this incredible blessing of having Christ as our High Priest. We don't have a high priest that dies. We don't have a high priest that needs replacing by another human being who had to offer sacrifices not only for the people, but for himself. Our high priest doesn't have to do that. Paul is just hitting this home in the New Testament time after time after time. What a blessing. I think sometimes we don't appreciate Christ as our High Priest and the fact that one of the principle roles of being a high priest is to reconcile the people to God. He did it once and for all. He made an atonement for our sins reconciling us to God. That veil is rent and we can go right to God the Father. What a blessing and it's made possible by our eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ.

We've only seen just one role of Jesus Christ and we've mentioned several others as we've gone through scriptures. We are going to cover several of those in future sermons, especially as we get closer to Passover.

How blessed can we be? We have God our Father with Jesus Christ as High Priest sitting on His right hand. They are together. They never fight. They're in agreement and they are both love. They want us to be in God's kingdom. We have not only God our Father, but Jesus Christ as our High Priest who reconciled us once and for all to God. By His sacrifice that veil was torn which symbolically represents our access directly to the Father. It never happened before. Of course, by His sacrifice we can have eternal life. For a final scripture let's turn to John 3:16. Let's read this not from the mantra of the Protestants, but let's read this from the understanding that Christ is our High Priest and our Reconciler and our Mediator and our redemption.

John 3:16. *For God so loved the world ... (KJV)*

Remember God is love.

16b) ... that he gave his only begotten Son ... (KJV)

He gave Him to go and be a human being and to suffer and to die for us.

16 continued) ... that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (KJV)

We need to realize that God as Father gave His Son, Jesus Christ, to be a sacrifice for our sins and to give us eternal life as a result. Also, we need to remember and be appreciative of the fact that God gave His Son to be our eternal High Priest.