

Hebrews

4:14-5:10

Superiority of Jesus' Priestly Office

Review of last weeks “two rests”

- Gr- *sabbatismos* – rest – *ONLY Hebrews 4:9*
- Gr- *sabbaton* – rest – Exodus 16:30, Leviticus 23:3
- Heb- *shabath* – rest – Genesis 2:2, same as above
- Gr – *katapausis* – rest (9 occurrences in the New Testament 8 of which are in Hebrews) Acts 7:49

Encouragement to Hold Fast

- These 3 verses act as a transition from our previous discussions to this next discussion – Jesus as High Priest
- Because of Jesus' greatness – "Let us hold fast our confession"
- Because of Jesus' human experience – "Let's approach the throne of grace with confidence"

Encouragement to Hold Fast

- “We have a great high priest...”
 - Jesus was called our high priest in 2:17, 3:1, and 4:10
 - This demonstrates that in Jesus we have something better than the Jewish priests – even Aaron – no Jewish high priest was called “great”
- “...Who has passed through the heavens...”
 - A Jew would understand this reference to the DAY OF ATONEMENT

Encouragement to Hold Fast

- “Jesus the Son of God”
 - Jesus the human
 - Son of God the deity
 - The great High Priest of the Christians is not just a human being, a physical descendant of Aaron , but a much greater “Son of God”
- “Let us hold fast to our confession.”
 - An exhortation not to slip back into the Jewish religion. Renouncing Jesus is renouncing the “great high priest”

Encouragement to Hold Fast

- “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses”
 - Jesus understands us. He personally endured the weakness of humans, our needs, our desires.
- “but One who has been tempted in all things, just as we are...”
 - God cannot be tempted to sin, but as Jesus was human He was tempted just as we are.
- “yet without sin” – He did not succumb to sin

Encouragement to Hold Fast

- “Therefore let’s approach the throne of grace with confidence...”
 - Therefore – Since Jesus is exalted and able to be sympathetic to our plight of temptation
 - Urging a continuation of an action already going on – making use of Jesus’ role as mediator for us – Great High Priest – Don’t give Him up!
 - We have confidence (no fear of rejection) we will be reconciled to God – a throne of grace rather than a judgement seat.

Encouragement to Hold Fast

- “...so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of our need.”
 - The attitude we find when we approach Jesus on His throne – grace – forgiveness undeserved
 - Mercy upon us sinners from the One who was tempted like us but remained sinless
 - Grace received from the throne of grace – The help we so desperately need from our sins, temptations, weaknesses, trials. Our Great High Priest can help us.

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest – The qualifications of Aaron

- “For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of people...”
 - Since Aaron is mentioned in verse 4 it is most likely we are discussing the Levitical priesthood in 1-3
 - ***Qualification #1*** - The high priest had to be one of the people whom he represented. (Exodus 28:1)
 - The high priest was appointed by God to benefit men not to benefit God – God has no need of a mediator but sinning men do. (Exodus 29)

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest –The qualifications of Aaron

- “...in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;”
 - A reference to things necessary to sustain God’s holiness and His government
 - Gifts were usually grain offerings, where sacrifices usually denote the spilling of animal blood.
 - The priest offered to God the gifts and sacrifices brought by the worshippers.

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest –The qualifications of Aaron

- “he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided since he himself also is clothed in weakness;”
 - ***Qualification #2*** – Compassion – the middle course between apathy and anger. The high priest could not be indifferent to sin nor could he be too harsh.
 - The priest could be gentle since he himself shares in the same weaknesses – aware of his own physical and moral frailties, he is qualified to minister.

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest –The qualifications of Aaron

- “and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins for himself, as well as the people.”
 - The Day of Atonement was arranged by God to require the high priest to make atonement for his own sins before he could make atonement for the sins of the people. (Leviticus 9:7)

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest –The qualifications of Aaron

- “And no one takes the honor for himself, but receives it when he is called by God, just as Aaron also was.”
 - ***Qualification #3*** – divine appointment to the office
 - It would be presumptuous for any sinner to assume the office of his own initiative. The appointment must depend WHOLLY on God’s instruction.
 - God CLEARLY appointed Aaron in scripture. (Exodus 28:1-3, Leviticus 8,9) Succession – (Numbers 16:40, 18:1-7)

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest – Jesus Christ is superior to Aaron

- The qualifications of Jesus Christ given – in reverse order.

- ***Qualification #1*** – He was appointed by God – He did not choose Himself.

- Christ WAS NOT of the tribe of Levi but the tribe of Judah

- Nevertheless he was not an intruder because:

- The OT taught the Messiah would be a high priest

- The Messiah would be of the ***order of Melchizedek*** not Aaron

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest – Jesus Christ is superior to Aaron

- The qualifications of Jesus Christ given – in reverse order.
 - ***Qualification #2*** – Oneness with those He represents so he can sympathize with them.
 - His prayers were to God and His obedience was to God
 - He knew God could save Him from death and could let Him avoid the cross but also knew God could raise Him
 - He brought His human will in line with His divine will.

Jesus is better qualified than Aaron to be our High Priest – Jesus Christ is superior to Aaron

- The qualifications of Jesus Christ given – in reverse order.
 - ***Qualification #3*** – Compassion
 - He offered prayers and pleas with loud crying and tears
 - He learned obedience through suffering
- Jesus was perfected and is now the source of eternal salvation - conditionally – for all those who obey Him

Next Week

- Hebrews 5:11-6:20
 - Third Warning Passage