

# HEBREWS: THE INFINITE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS CHRIST

## VII. Christ's Infinite Superiority As Our High Priest

(Hebrews 5:1-10)

### I. Introduction

- A. We live in an era of great need for an encouraging word amid man's discouraging spiritual failure, so a word from God on the infinite supremacy and sufficiency of His Son Jesus Christ is both desirable and fitting.
- B. The Epistle to the Hebrews offers it, and Hebrews 5:1-10 teaches Christ's infinitely superior qualifications as our high priest as compared to that of any other high priest. We view this passage for insight and edification:

### II. Christ's Infinite Superiority As Our High Priest, Hebrews 5:1-10.

- A. The author of Hebrews had briefly mentioned Christ's office as high priest (Hebrews 2:17; 4:15-16), but that logically required that he demonstrate Christ's qualifications for that office, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 790.
- B. Since his readers were tempted to revert to a Judaistic cult, the author presented the general qualifications for a Hebrew Aaronic high priest in Hebrews 5:1-4 (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Heb. 5:1-10) as follows:
  1. A high priest was a man from a group of people who represented them in matters relating to God relative to their gifts of worship and their sacrifices for sins, Hebrews 5:1; *Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 791.
  2. Such a high priest must have the capacity to "moderate one's feelings, deal gently" (*metriopatheo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 516) with the "ignorant and wayward" (ESV) since he himself is "subject to, hung about, beset with" (*perikeimai*, *Ibid.*, p. 653) weaknesses, Hebrews 5:2 ESV.
  3. Due to such weaknesses and sinful failings in his own case, the mortal human high priest is obligated to offer sacrifices for his own sins just as he does for the people he represents before God, Hebrews 5:3.
  4. In addition, no one takes the honor of being a high priest for himself, but rather (*alla*, strong adversative, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 755) he serves only if he is called of God to do so like Aaron, Hebrews 5:4.
- C. However, Christ's high priestly office was infinitely superior to the Aaronic high priestly office, Heb. 5:5-10:
  1. Jesus Christ was called of God to a far superior calling than was any Aaronic high priest, Hebrews 5:5-6:
    - a. Christ did not glorify Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by God the Father Who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you," a quotation of Psalm 2:7 (Heb. 5:5). This refers to the Davidic Covenant where God declared that He would be the Father to Israel's king (2 Sam. 7:14), *Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., N. T. Thus, Jesus Christ is far more than a High Priest, for He is also a King.
    - b. God also said that Christ would be a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, Hebrews 5:6. This reference to the Psalm 110:4 alluded to the oath taken by God the Father that Messiah, Israel's king (Psalm 110:1), would also be a priest unlike other Davidic kings who, being of David's tribe of Judah, could not serve in the Aaronic priesthood that came through the tribe of Levi. (*Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., N. T.)
    - c. [We will later learn of the vast superiority of the Melchizedekan priesthood to the Aaronic one since Father Abraham, Aaron's ancestor, paid tithes to the greater man in Melchizedek, Hebrews 7:4-10.]
  2. Jesus Christ also offered up an infinitely superior offering as our High Priest, Hebrews 5:7:
    - a. The KJV verb "offered up" in Hebrews 5:7 translates the same Greek verb *prosphero* used in Hebrews 5:1 of the Aaronic priest's offering, and those prayers and petitions offered up with loud cries and tears to the One Who could save Him from death evidently refer to Christ's sufferings on the cross in which He was offering Himself up as an offering for sin, *Ibid.*
    - b. Thus, for His reverent submission to the Father's will (*eulabeias*), Jesus was heard, His infinitely invaluable offering being accepted by God the Father. He thus emerged from His sufferings and death through His triumphant resurrection from the dead in proof of God's acceptance of His offering, *Ibid.*
  3. The author used a play on words to teach that Christ **learned** (*amathen*) from what He **suffered** (*epathen*) on the cross for an effective ministry to His suffering people as their infinitely sympathetic High Priest, Hebrews 5:8-9a, *Ibid.*, p. 792. Accordingly, He was made perfect for His role as His people's everlasting Captain and High Priest in infinite superiority over the Aaronic high priest, Heb, 5:9b-10; *Ibid.*

***Lesson:*** Christ is infinitely superior to the Aaronic high priest as a King and Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, having learned by His suffering on the cross to be infinitely more sympathetic to His suffering people than any other high priest, Who was thus also sinless and thus fully acceptable as a high priest to God the Father.

***Application:*** (1) May we view the High Priestly ministry of Christ as God's infinitely superior ministry to any other human high priestly ministry, that we (2) pray to God through Christ alone for all matters of sins and weaknesses.