



A Priest Forever

Hebrews 5:1-10

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Overview: In light of the Advent season, we are celebrating Jesus as our hope fulfilled, namely our Prophet, Priest, and King. The institution of the priesthood in the Old Testament was based on the need for a mediator between a holy God and sinful humanity with an aim toward eternal reconciliation. The fifth chapter of Hebrews describes the high priest as one who is appointed by God, acts on behalf of others in relation to God, and is able to sympathize with others in light of his own weaknesses. The members of the priesthood were ultimately unable to reconcile people to God in that the priests themselves were no less sinful than the people they served. However, Jesus fulfills the office and purpose of the priesthood as One who has been appointed by God, whose obedience in life and death qualifies Him to reconcile people to God, and whose life experience enables Him to sympathize with the children of God.

01. Since Jesus is our great high priest appointed by God, let us hold fast to our confession that He is the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

02. Since Jesus is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, let us come to Him with confidence that we may receive mercy and grace to help in times of need.

Christ, Our Hope Fulfilled

1. What comes to mind when you think about priests? Does your background include a priest as an official in the church who was viewed as necessary for you to have access to God? How is the role of a pastor in a Protestant church different from that of a priest in the Catholic church? Which is more biblical?

2. What was the role of a priest in the Old Testament? Why were sacrifices required for sins in the Old Testament? What was the process and meaning behind the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16? How does Leviticus 16 foreshadow the work of Christ on our behalf?

3. What are the requirements of the high priest according to Hebrews 5:1-4? Could anyone simply choose to be a priest, or must they be appointed by God and recognized by others? In what way was Jesus appointed to the priesthood? How does this appointment lead to/require the incarnation of Christ?

4. In what ways are people both "ignorant and wayward" when it comes to sin? How is the priest expected to deal with such people? What is the reason for the priest's sympathy? Are you amazed that Jesus deals with ignorant and wayward people gently, even though He never gave in to sin?

5. If Jesus learned obedience through suffering, what might be the purpose of our own suffering and trials? How was Jesus' prayer for deliverance ultimately answered? What confidence does this provide to you when you are suffering for your faith? See Psalm 22 for further insight.

For Further Reading: David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *A Faithful and Merciful High Priest: Studies in the Book of Hebrews* (Crossway, 2019).

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