

For Those Who Didn't Mean It

Exodus: Called Out to Conquer

By William J. Sturm

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: Exodus 21:12-14; Hebrews 7:26-29

Preached on: Wednesday, March 20, 2013

Berean Baptist Church

517 Glensford Drive

Fayetteville, NC 28314

Website: www.bereanbaptistchurch.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/bereanbaptistch

Exodus 21 is where we are this evening and the book of God says in verse 12, "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. And if a man lie not in wait," now, this is something we read last week and I don't have amnesia, I know we read it. "And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee." "Thers's got to be another way." Well, I'm glad that you said that. Actually there is. You will notice at the end of verse 13, "if a man lie not in wait," if it's not premeditated, "but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee." A little rehearsal if we could on these details. Number 1. We are at least 45 days after the Exodus. We know that because of certain Scriptures. This is probably the fourth trip up Sinai for Moses and so we're going to preach a sermon tonight, God helping us, on "For Those Who Didn't Mean To Do It." For those who did not mean to do it.

So, let's read some Scripture together. I'd also like you to notice, please, verse 28 before we move on. "If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit," or stopped or released, if the ox died. But look at this, "But if the ox were wont," or accustomed, "to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death." That would be today called negligent homicide. Now, there are a myriad of, "Well, what if this happened? What if that happened? What if this happens? What if that happens?" As a matter fact, in verse 30, "If there be laid on him a sum of money." Well, if he's stoned because his ox gored someone, who cares if he is being charged. That means that he's not dead. There is another scenario here in verse 30, if a sum of money be laid upon him. I don't know how but maybe the judges of chapter 18 decided that there was something that wasn't exactly covered here. Remember chapter 18? Remember Jethro said to Moses, "You need judges. You need judges because the principles are case law and you're going to have times when not every situation is going to be addressed and so you need judges to take the case law of chapters 21, 22, 23 of Exodus and apply it to particular situations."

Okay, well, that's all we know about this place where people can go if they killed and didn't mean to kill. That's all we know if that's all we have is Exodus but it's not all that

we have in the Scripture. As a matter of fact, I'd like you to turn, please, over to Numbers 35. Numbers 35. I'm going to be doing some reading here and I want to just run some things by you and I want to establish some things with you. We're going to give some points about this process and I'm going to show you some things about Jesus and then we're going to be done. We're going to pray. As a matter of fact, please pray with me now.

Master, I pray that you bless the preaching of your word. There are people in here who are both ready to hear and not ready to hear. There are people who think they are ready to hear and are not ready to hear. There are things in our lives, Lord, that maybe we didn't know needed to be fixed. I pray that you would show them to us. Help us to be soft to your leadership. Often we are willing to excuse our sin. Often we will not call it covetousness, we will call it business, a desire to better ourselves. We will not call it losing our cool, we will call it righteous indignation. Often we will not call it grudging, we'll call it just telling it the way that it is. We won't call it gossip, we'll say, "I'm just saying." God, show us, please show us when we are wrong and help us to repent quickly.

In this room tonight there are people who have never been related to a murder victim or a victim of someone who was killed by accident or by virtue of anger or by virtue of negligent homicide. There are people in here who will never be affected by these particular areas but may they understand, Lord, that you have implicated all of us if we have ever hated our brother. Your Scripture is very clear in Matthew 5 and in 1 John 3 that if we hate our brother we are murderers so help us to see the real bottom line on this is that we are still being considered.

Now Lord, bless this word. Some of our folks in here, some of these Bereans, some of these lovers of the Lord and lovers of the word of God have never read the book of Numbers. I pray that tonight you would help us as we look in these passages of Scripture that you would help it to come alive to us and that you would breathe through the word of God to us and enrich our souls and help us to leave different than the way we came in. I pray that you would glorify yourself and do it again that we might rejoice in you and we ask you these things in the mighty name of the one who crushed death, Jesus Christ. Amen.

So Numbers 35. Now, while you are probably settled there but let's go over some things about the culture of the day. 1. Cultural expectations regarding the avenger. You're going to see in this passage of Scripture that if someone dies in a family through apparent homicide, through death, somebody has to die. You're going to notice that. As a matter of fact, you're going to notice that the Hebrew culture is like a lot of Middle Eastern cultures and that is that it was expected that there would be a kinsman avenger. Interestingly enough, kinsman avenger is the same word that we find used as kinsman Redeemer in the book of Ruth. Did you all hear that? We're dealing here with a related word, a word that depending on the context can either mean a redeemer or avenger. It just so happens that in this chapter you're going to see it as avenger. If you kill my brother, you kill my daughter, you kill my wife, you kill my father, then the near kinsman, whoever that is in

that particular situation is responsible to take vengeance within the framework of the law upon the person who took that person's life.

There were 6 cities, 3 on the east side of the Jordan, 3 on the west side of the Jordan and they were known as cities of refuge. They were all run by Levites. Levites were given 48 cities, 6 of them were to be cities of refuge. What were they for? Exodus 21:12 and 13, for the person who killed and didn't mean to do it until the judges could ascertain whether or not he did it carelessly even though he didn't mean to do it. Did you hear me? Was it careless or was he angry? You'll see that in this passage. He didn't mean to do it, okay, fine, he needs to live here until his day in court. But he didn't mean to do it but did he do it accidentally and was it a product of his anger or a product of carelessness?

Number 4: This is a religious system that featured a high priest for all the land. Remember, he's dealing with cities. Well, they weren't in Canaan yet, right? He's forecasting a time when they will have Canaan land and they'd divvy up the land according to tribe and there will be three cities on the east side of the Jordan where Gad, Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh decided they wanted to stay. Do you remember that? They didn't want to go into Canaan land. Everyone with me? And the other 9 1/2 tribes, I'm not naming those, wanted to go on into Canaan land. Well, they don't have that land yet and they don't have a temple yet. What do they have instead going through the wilderness? A tabernacle, that's right, a tent, if you will, okay? And in charge of that religious system under God is a high priest. Something to keep in mind.

Now, let's read Numbers 35 about this process. I want you to take a look at verse 6 with me. Before we move on, I just want to show you, number 1, what we looked at in Exodus: there is no safety for negligent homicide. Saying I didn't mean to do it doesn't mean you're off the hook, okay? Does everyone get that? Now, we have several different ways we classify that in American law because we are just such bleeding hearts. It's 17 degrees of homicide, 13 degrees of manslaughter, you know, recategorized, reorganized until no one is guilty.

Now, please look at verse 5 of Numbers 35, verse 6, "And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites there shall be six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities." So 48 total. "So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs. And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few." So all through these 12 tribes of Israel in their determined tracts of land, they were taken from them, or I should say were absconded, rescued, taken from them, I guess is the really unchurched way to say it, cities for the Levites. The Levites didn't get assigned land. Their assigned land was 48 cities with their suburbs. Are you with me? So from the bigger tribes that have lots of land, they are probably going to give up a few more cities than the smaller tribes with little land. That's the point of verse 8.

Look at verse 9, "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan; Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment." Please understand, I think we all need to understand that in every case, this congregation was represented by elders in the gate or judges in the city. You can't imagine that they are calling out the entire population of the city and trying to make a decision here on the guilt. Can you imagine that? "Alright, now that you 4,763 censused people are out here, what do you all think?" Wouldn't that be orderly? So you'll see later on that the congregation shall judge.

Verse 12, "And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment." Until he has his court date. Verse 13, "And of these cities which ye shall give six cities shall ye have for refuge. Ye shall give three cities on this side Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan, which shall be cities of refuge. These six cities shall be a refuge, both for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them: that every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither. And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death." So if it's known he meant to kill him, he hit him with a piece of iron, okay, judges, that's really simple. He might not have meant to kill him but he killed him, he's going to die. Do you all see that? In other words, there's got to be a guy coming up to your city gates that's going to say, "I did hit him with a claw hammer in the head but I didn't mean to kill him." What did you mean to do? Win a fight? Okay, you won and you killed him and you're going to die now. That's the idea.

Verse 17, "And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. Or if he smite him with an hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death." Okay, this is pretty easy to follow, isn't it? Verse 19, "The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer." The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer. So again, let's go back to our illustration. If Bob Sturm, my brother, is killed, I am the avenger, I am the near kinsman, I am supposed to go and, of course, along with raising up children in his name which, God help us, I'm also supposed to go and avenge. I'm supposed to kill his killer. You say that sounds like vigilantism. It's actually part of their law. That's not vigilantism. That's within the structure of the law. I know what you're thinking, "We Americans got it right." Do we? Do we? Over 1,000 free meals for the dude that took 3 people's lives and then mocked their families? Do you think we've got this right? Do you like that system better?

Verse 19, "The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him, he shall slay him." Well, that's pretty easy, isn't it? Verse 20, "But if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying of wait, that he die; Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death; for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him. But if he thrust him

suddenly without enmity," in other words, he's not angry, are you all with me? If he slay him and he's not angry, "or have cast upon him any thing without laying of wait." If he wasn't premeditatively trying to jump him. If he didn't ambush him. If he wasn't trying to hurt him. If he wasn't angry at him. Then he was, number 2, he was eligible for safety.

Verse 23, "Or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, seeing him not, and cast it upon him, that he die, and was not his enemy, neither sought his harm: Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments." Okay, so you have the congregation judging with these elders, these judges established in Exodus 18 over 50s, 100s, 1,000s. They decide based on these principles whether or not the man is guilty of murder and should die. It's very clear, folks, murderers die. Is that what your Bible says or not? Okay.

So, number 3, judgment is dispensed from a judging body. Alright, we've talked about that. We don't need to beat that one over the head, no pun intended. Verse 25. Some of you didn't catch that. I should have said something else like, "I don't want to beat that dead horse," or something. Verse 25, "And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge." Please notice: if he's not guilty of murder, he doesn't go home. He goes to the city of refuge. Did you all get that? Okay, it's obvious that you didn't mean to murder Will so you can go home. No, that's not what happens. Remember, someone has to die. Someone has to die. This avenger, the avenger, Will's avenger, has to avenge. Now, you say, "I don't see that." Hang on. "Shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil." Did you get that? He stays in the city of refuge until someone dies. He goes to the city of refuge, if it was seen that it was involuntary manslaughter, if it was no fault of his own, if he didn't mean to take his life, if he wasn't careless like in the case with the ox and if he wasn't angry like ambushing someone to give them a good thumping, if he wasn't doing that, then okay, he's not guilty of murder, he doesn't have to die but he does have to go to the city of refuge until the high priest dies. So this high priest, we might remind ourselves is the one that is ministering in the tabernacle at this time but will be ministering in the temple. It's the place where you worship. It's a very holy place.

Look at verse 26, "But if the slayer," look at this now, if the slayer who is not a murderer, do you all get this? Is everyone with me? "If the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled; And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood." Do you all get that? The man who killed the man that didn't mean to do it, if he comes outside city limits, the avenger can still take his life. Yeah, he was safe and sort of free unless he came outside the city of refuge city limits. If the avenger, let's just say it once again, I'm out there and I accidentally took Will's life. Accidentally, don't plan on it so it would have to be an accident. Let's just say that Andy is Will's brother and Andy is going to avenge Will and it's found out that I didn't mean to but by the judges of the city of refuge to which I fled, it's found out that I didn't mean to kill you, who knows what it was, I backed over you with the car or whatever. Who

knows. Alright, stay away from the van. Let's just say that that's the way it was. It's found out, your brother finds out, okay, you didn't mean to kill him. I have to stay in the city of refuge. I have to stay here. If I go outside the city and he finds me, he has a lawful right according to Mosaic law to kill me. Why? To take the place of your life. Are you all with me?

So, one who leaves the city before the death of the high priest should expect death. What if I want to go out and see the family? Too bad. Too bad. How long do you think that took sometimes? Aaron lived to be a pretty old fellow. Can you imagine? You get up in the morning, your family is not living in the city of refuge, you are. It's an unfortunate situation. That's just all there is to it. You live in a world that is fallen with sin and it's an unfortunate situation. You have to live in a city of refuge. The good news is you are alive, the bad news is you can't wait for the high priest to die and you wait. And you wait. Day after day after day after day, you get along with a bunch of Levites and that's it. You are waiting to be able to be free to go back to the way you were living, earning a living, being a family man, seeing your kids grow up. But you can't until the high priest dies. You're not free to enjoy your life in the slightest. You don't get to enjoy the freedoms of salvaging until the high priest dies. There is no joy restored to your life. You feel like you're hanging on by a thread and nothing will ever be the way it was until the high priest dies. You wonder if God has forgotten you. There is no way to return to the way things were and to enjoy the blessings that God has given you because of unfortunate situations, things that you wish didn't happen and there is no hope restored until the high priest dies.

Now, if you wander outside the city gates, verse 27, the avenger will kill you. He's not guilty of your blood. Verse 28, why? "Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge." It doesn't matter if you agree with the law. It doesn't matter if you agree with the philosophy. It doesn't matter if you agree with the Jehovah who seems so mean and unreasonable. It doesn't matter. The rules are simple: stay in the city or you belong to the world of the dead. Why? It's easy, you didn't stay in the city until the death of the high priest. You don't get to enjoy any freedom until the high priest dies. And the revenger of blood shall find him, verse 27. Verse 28, until the death of the high priest, middle of the verse, "but after the death of the high priest the slayer," look here, look here. Look here, does everyone see it? "After the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession." Now, just think about that day. Total freedom. Why? The high priest died. You get to go back and enjoy the blessings of the Lord that were given to you. Why? Because of the death of the high priest. I hope that you are not new at this thing. I hope that you are seeing Jesus all over this.

Verse 29, "So these things shall be for a statute of judgment unto you throughout your generations in all your dwellings. Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die." One witness does not bring the death penalty. Verse 31, "Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death." If the judges, look here now, if the judges find him guilty, you don't get to redeem your friend. If I'm guilty, no one is going to save me from certain death from the avenger. Guilty deserves death. The destroyer, the avenger, has every

right to kill me if I don't stay in the city but before that, if I don't belong in the city. The destroyer is an expected reality in my life if I'm guilty.

Are you guilty? Were you ever guilty? Have you ever seen yourself as deserving of the avenger? Has there ever been a time in your life when you didn't think highly of yourself? Has there ever been a time when you weren't the best thing walking around? Has there ever been the time when you didn't think you were the one getting picked on? The one unjustly being ridiculed? Have you ever deserved the avenger? Because until you realize that you deserve the avenger, you'll never appreciate the city of refuge. "I didn't mean to do it!" You still deserve the avenger and if you come out of that city of refuge, you deserve the avenger. The problem is we have a small, very, very, very small Savior and the reason we have a very small Savior in our eyes is because we really aren't that bad.

"Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer." Verse 32, "And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest." There is no redemption outside of the death of the priest, the high priest. You don't get redeemed until the high priest dies. There is no other way. I talked to a missionary today. A missionary that wants to be a missionary supported by this church and I said, "Dear Brother, tell me what you think about the Sinner's Prayer." He said, "Well, I believe that a person can be misled to believe that it saves you and still get saved." I said, "So, let me get this straight: you believe that you can put your faith in something besides what Jesus did for you on the cross and still go to heaven?" That's it, isn't it? We just want a God that will allow people into heaven who don't put their faith just in the death of the high priest. Is anyone in here tonight? We want to believe that mamaw and papaw and everyone else is going to heaven because they do pray and they do go to church and they do all these neat things but the death of the high priest is not what they are trusting to free them from the avenger. So there is no redemption option. If you deserve to die, you can't be redeemed. You have to die. If you have to be in the city of refuge, there is no redeeming you from the avenger. You have to stay in the city of refuge until the high priest dies. That's just the way it is.

Look at verse 33, "So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." Look here, there is no way around it: when you shed innocent blood, guilty or not, somebody has to die. Now, where does that put America? How does God see America tonight when we have killed 50 million first-generation children and, in effect, all the second and third generations beyond them? In China they have either sterilized or aborted over half a billion in 40 years and we wonder why the judgment of God. Where is this God of love? I'll tell you, look at a sin cursed world. Look at every sinner in the sin cursed world and help them understand that God requires bloodshed for that bloodshed. It hasn't changed. Somebody has to die when there is bloodshed. You say, "I don't understand that the economy." It doesn't mean that it doesn't exist. Jump off a building and say you don't believe in gravity and you will experience sudden deceleration trauma. You don't have to call it gravity. Call it what you want.

Verse 34, "Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel." So for the few that are still listening, I want you to understand a few things. First of all, we need to understand that a fear of fatal recompense for a lack of self-control or premeditated crime still works. Let me say it again: a fear of fatal recompense for lack of self-control and/or premeditated crime still works. So, here's what our prayer should be. It's Wednesday night, we're going to pray here in a few minutes and here is what we should be saying, "Master, you are the God of order and you have set up particulars steps or procedures that are far more important in my understanding of them. May I continue to act the part of the servant and I will trust you to act the part of the Master." That should be our prayer because this is not just one of those laws that we never...friends, every day in our lives we see things in Scripture and the Holy Spirit leads us to do things and we're not comfortable with them but we don't have to be. We are the servant, he is the Master. So we ought to come away with a few things. 1. God is incredibly protective of life and and, 2. He is very patient. Please notice, please notice even for the person who is in the city of refuge, someone has to die for Will. Do you see that? So who is it? It's either the man who leaves the city of refuge and is avenged or its who? The high priest. Someone has to die.

So tonight if you are unwilling to trust the death of the high priest, you can die for your own sin. Are you all with me? Die for your own sin if you want to. The difference between the person who goes to heaven and the person who goes to hell is one word: faith. Christ died for sins and for the sins of all sinners. He tasted death for every man, Hebrews 2:9. He's the propitiation for our sins, not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world, 1 John 2:2. 2 Peter 2:1 says that those who go to hell go to hell scorning the Christ who bought them. It says in Hebrews 10:30 that a person who tramples underfoot the Son of God and counts the blood wherein he was sanctified an unholy thing, goes to hell but he goes to hell tripping over the death of Jesus Christ on his behalf. So the high priest dies or you can die for yourself. Just leave the city of refuge. Just leave the place of safety that God has set up for you.

Now, so we ought to be thinking, "God, help me to remember that you have both just demands and compassions when considering judgment and that I am commanded to be like you. I am commanded to be like you." So we have seen Jesus in every way and look how we have seen him in Exodus: the bush before Moses, the smitten rock, quenching thirst, the rod held high against the Amalekites, Moses bringing them out, Moses himself being a picture of Christ, the willing servant but also he is a picture of the high priest.

The high priest is a picture of Christ and so let me just show you one more thing. Please turn to Hebrews 1. I wanted to show you, look, I wanted to show you Numbers 15. I wanted to show you Deuteronomy 4, Deuteronomy 19, Joshua 20. They all talk about the city of refuge and the avenger. All of them. There is additional light to be had there. Hebrews 1. All through the book of Hebrews, we see this amazing thing that the Old Testament was really testifying of the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ. Folks, listen, there is no way to be righteous other than Christ. Other than faith in Christ, there is no way to be righteous. Now, here's the thing: many of you today, many of you, praise God for so many of you here to study the word of God and to worship in

song and worship in prayer but here's what Paul said in Galatians 3:1, "You trusted Christ to save you from your sin but now you expect to be sanctified because of your own rugged individualism. You expect to quit this and start this without ever trusting the Christ who saved you." Hello? We trust him to save us from the penalty of sin but every day we are trying to save ourselves from the power of sin. It's a wrong idea.

So, let's talk about this high priest in Hebrews 1. Well, let's just go to Hebrews 5. Can I show you Hebrews 5? Look at Hebrews 5. I want to show you that Christ is better. Why is Christ better? He's better because he died not just for those who didn't mean to do it, he died for those who did mean to do it. Are you listening to me? I tried all week to find the high priest as the perfect picture of Jesus but the problem is, he is not a perfect picture of Jesus. The death of the high priest was only possible for the one who did something and didn't mean to do it. Are you with me? But the Bible says in Romans 5:7, "For when we were yet without grace, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Christ died for the ungodly, not for the person that didn't mean to do it, for the person who hated God. For the person who did mean to do it. He died for them too. That's why Jesus is the perfect picture of the high priest.

Look at chapter 5 of Hebrews and look at verse 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: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." He's not saying he only has compassion on those who didn't mean to do it, he has compassion on those who have gone astray. Do you see that in verse 2? "On the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way." Those who wander off. Those who are ignorant, yes. Yes, he ministers for them. But for those who wander off too. Yes, the high priest in the Old Testament, he did, but in the picture of the city of refuge, he wasn't there to die for the one who did mean to do it but Christ, look at verse 5, "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Look here, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." This is an issue not of, "Did you mean to do it or didn't you mean to do it?" We're very clear that Christ dies for rebels. Rebels. For those who did mean to do it. When they flee to the city of refuge and rely on the death of the high priest, Jesus Christ, they find deliverance from their offense.

Hebrews 9, look at verse 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. 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: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself." Did you see that? Offered himself. The number 1 reason why Christ is better than Aaron? Christ is better than the high priest because he dies for the rebels too. Number 2, because he offered himself. You had to wait

until the high priest died in the Old Testament. He might live to be 117 years old with 3 sets of hearing aids. You're out of luck. But when Christ said in John 10:17, "I am the Good Shepherd. I give my life for the sheep. You cannot take my life from me. I lay it down so that I can take it up again." That means that Christ is better than the high priest pictured in the Old Testament. Why? Because he offered himself.

Number 3, I took you too far, look at chapter 7. Look at verse 23, "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man," but this man, Christ, this man, "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Why? Why? Why is he able to save those who come to God by him? Because "he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Alright, look at this, "For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; 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." Listen, the third reason why Christ is better than the high priest in the Old Testament is because he establishes the eternity of the free. That's such a big word. Why use that big word? No one uses those words. Why is he better? Because he lives today. Yes, his death freed me. His death freed me from fear of the avenger. His death freed me from eternal fear of death and hell.

Yes, he freed me from being in bondage to my sin but when he got up again, when he got up again, he kept me free. No one will ever come back and say, "You know, I believe that guy still deserves to die." No. No. No. The high priest, it says 4 times in the book of Hebrews, 4 times, Hebrews 1, Hebrews 8, Hebrews 10, Hebrews 12, he has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Why is that significant? Because in that tabernacle I showed you a picture of, there were no seats. The priests stood daily offering sacrifices. There was no seat. He was always standing. Standing daily but this man, when he offered himself, he sat down on the right hand of God. The work was done. He died. He died and that was it. Once for all. He died to be free from the fear of the avenger and it says in Hebrews 2, he took on flesh and blood that he might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Do you fear death? You don't need to fear death tonight. Why? The high priest died for you and rose again. He died to free you and rose again to keep you free. You don't need to fear death anymore as long as you trust in the death of the high priest. But you have every reason in the world to fear death, hell and destruction if your faith is not in the death and the resurrection of the high priest. So, Lord, help us to remember everything that we are in Christ.