

Sermon #46 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title: **THE GREATNESS OF**
OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Text: Leviticus 21:10-24

Subject: *Christ our Great High Priest*

Date: Sunday Morning — April 28, 2019

Readings: *Hebrews 2:1-18*

Introduction:

The title of my message is **THE GREATNESS OF**
OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST. My text is Leviticus
21:10-24.

Proposition: The Lord Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest, the only mediator and priest by whom sinners can must come to God.

- Sinners can come to God by this Priest.
- We must come to God by this Priest.
- All who come to God by this Priest have eternal life by him, because this Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, has made reconciliation to God for sin by his own blood and has obtained eternal redemption for all who come to God by him!

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Divisions: Let me show you four things about the Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest in Leviticus 21:10-24.

1. His Consecration (vv. 10-12)
2. His Bride (vv. 13-14)
3. His Seed (v. 15)
4. His Perfection (vv. 16-24)

HIS CONSECRATION

1st — **We see something of the greatness of our Great High Priest in his consecration to God as our Priest** (vv. 10-12). As our Great High Priest, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus, the Christ, the God-man, our Mediator sanctified himself, consecrated himself entirely to the will and glory of God for the saving of our souls (John 17:17-19).

(John 17:17-19) “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. **(18)** As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into

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the world. (19) And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.”

We see this portrayed in Leviticus 21:10-12.

(Leviticus 21:10-12) “And *he that is* the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes; (11) Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother; (12) Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God *is upon him: I am the LORD.*”

The first time the words “high priest” are used in the Bible is right here in Leviticus 21:10. Actually, a better translation would be “great priest,” or “great high priest.” Our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus

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Christ, is the one of whom the passage speaks. In all things, he is our example. Even in the typology of this chapter, it is the High Priest, the Lord Jesus, who is the eminent example of devotion to God.

- The holy anointing oil is upon him!
- The words “*anointing oil*” might be translated, as some suggest, “*the crown of the anointing oil.*” — You see, **our Great High Priest is the King**, the King of Glory, a Priest upon his Throne. **He is called the Great High Priest because he is infinitely better than all others, because there was never a priest like him** (Exodus 28:36; 29:6; 39:30).

(Exodus 28:36) “And thou shalt make a plate *of* pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.”

(Exodus 29:6) “And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre.”

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(Exodus 39:30) “And they made the plate of the holy crown *of* pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, *like to* the engravings of a signet, **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**”

- Our all-glorious Christ was consecrated to put on the garments, the garments of salvation. — He made them. — He wore them. — He puts them on us!
- Our great Savior, Jehovah’s Righteous Servant, never rent his clothes or uncovered his head as one in mourning (Isaiah 42:1-4).

(Isaiah 42:1-4) “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. (2) He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. (3) A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he

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shall bring forth judgment unto truth. (4) He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

NEVER DEFILED HIMSELF

He never touched the dead, except to give life. Even when his mother was before him as a bereaved widow, as she beheld his anguish upon the cursed tree, he was her Great High Priest and Mediator, and showed tenderness, concern, and care, not for himself, but for her. In the midst of his woes as the smitten Shepherd, he took time to recommend her to John, and then, so to speak, resumed his work of suffering. And **what he did for her, he did for all his chosen family.**

(Psalms 69:4-9) “They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies

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wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away. (5) O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. (6) **Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.** (7) Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. (8) I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. (9) For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.”

NEVER WENT OUT

When he came here to redeem and save his people, our Savior said, “*Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!*” — And he never turned aside from his work. He never went back. Jehovah's Servant, our Savior, never went out free, but voluntarily stood to his

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pledge as Jehovah's voluntary bond-servant (Exodus 21:1-6).

And as our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus truly was the Priest who never went “out of the sanctuary” and who never “profaned it” by the introduction of personal concerns. He ever felt the streams of the anointing oil on his head. He came to save others. Himself he could not and did not save. He “*saved*” not, but “*hated and lost,*” his own life for us. He stood entirely as our Substitute and Surety. Oh, “*thanks be unto God*” for such a Great High Priest!

(Psalms 116:7) “Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.”

(Psalms 116:12-13) “What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me? (13) I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.”

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(Psalms 118:1-3) “O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: because his mercy *endureth* forever. (2) Let Israel now say, that his mercy *endureth* forever. (3) Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy *endureth* forever.”

HIS BRIDE

2nd — **I want you to see something of the greatness of our Great High Priest in the bride he chose** (vv. 13-14).

(Leviticus 21:13-14) “And he shall take a wife in her virginity. (14) A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, *or* an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.”

God’s elect, the church of Christ is espoused to him “*as a chaste virgin*” (2 Corinthians 11:2) and he calls

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her, “*my undefiled*” (Song of Solomon 6:9). When we stand with him before the throne of God, he declares that we are chaste, undefiled virgins!

(Revelation 14:1-5) “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. (2) And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: (3) And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. (4) These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. (5) And

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in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest. —

He is our Melchizedek, our ever-living High Priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, “*who also maketh intercession for us*” and is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him.

The priest was typical of our Lord Jesus Christ in his person, in his family, and in all his public acts. He points us to our Great High Priest. — **Even in his choice of a bride, the Lord God took care that the priest set forth another Priest.**

Our Savior’s bride is “*without spot or wrinkle,*” “*undefiled,*” “*the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her and blessed her*” (Song of Solomon 6:9). Obviously, there is no greatness in a man choosing to marry a virgin. Every man wants to do that.

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Here is the greatness of our great Christ. — He loved a harlot. He married “*an imperious whorish woman*” (Ezekiel 16:30) with “*a whorish heart*” (Ezekiel 6:9) and made her a chaste virgin! By nature we are all, like Hosea’s wife Gomer, people of ill repute, both profane and whores (Hosea 1-3). But the Lord Jesus has made all his holy bride chaste virgins (Revelation 14:4).

Because God “*hateth putting away*” (Malachi 2:16), the priest must not marry a divorced woman. Our blessed Savior is God who “*hateth putting away.*” He chose us for eternity. — There must be nothing even to hint to his bride that she may again be separated from him.

Illustration: *Hosea and Gomer*

(Song of Songs 2:4-6) “He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love. (5) Stay me with flagons, comfort me with

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apples: for I *am* sick of love. ⁽⁶⁾ His left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.”

The Son of God calls us his undefiled, because he has made us undefiled, chaste virgins. We look upon the Son of God and say, Thou art “*my first husband*” (Hosea 2:7). These things are not so by nature, but (Blessed be God!) they are so!

(Hosea 2:19-20) “I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. ⁽²⁰⁾ I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.”

Christ is married to his church in perfect holiness.

— “*She cometh to the king in robes of needle-work*” all glorious. She was not thus fair when he found her; but she is “*all fair,*” “*undefiled,*” “*the choice one,*”

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when he marries her. The marriage of the Lamb is on the day of his coming out of the Holy Place to bless his redeemed. We are his holy people in whom he rejoices, over whom he rejoices with singing! No spot or wrinkle, no blemish, or any such thing, appears on his redeemed when he is their Bridegroom (Ephesians 5:27).

The blood of our all-glorious Christ, our Great High Priest's sacrifice, and his righteousness demand and absolutely secure our everlasting glory and perfection as his chosen bride!

“HIS SEED”

3rd — It is written of God's Great High Priest, — *“Neither shall he profane his seed among the people”* (v. 15). **Aaron was not to mix his seed with the wicked. Neither shall Christ!** He shall never profane one of his own, by charging them with sin as he shall the damned forever!

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(Romans 4:8) “Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

(Romans 8:33-34) “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth. (34) Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

HIS PERFECTION

4th — We know that all the work of our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, shall effectually secure this blessed end because our Priest is exactly the Priest God required. **Look at the perfection of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, as it is set before us in verses 16-24.**

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(Leviticus 21:16) “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying...”

Don't miss this. — **Here the Lord God speaks not to Aaron personally, but to Moses, the lawgiver, telling him the kind of man the high priest must be.**

(Leviticus 21:17-21) “Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever *he be* of thy seed in their generations that hath *any* blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God. (18) For whatsoever man *he be* that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or anything superfluous, (19) Or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded, (20) Or crookbacked, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken; (21) No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD

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made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.”

The man God requires, the man we need, the man God accepts as our Great High Priest is the God-man, Christ Jesus. He is exactly the priest we need — perfect! He is the perfect man, the perfect God, the God-man, our Savior. None other could save us (Hebrews 7:25-28).

(Hebrews 7:25-28) “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. (26) For **such an high priest became us**, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; (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**. (28) For the law maketh men high

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priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.”

THE BREAD OF GOD

Who can read the words “the bread of God” in this chapter (vv. 6, 8, 17, 21, 22) **and not think of our Lord Jesus Christ?** Those specific words are used only seven times in Holy Scripture (Leviticus 21:6, 8, 17, 21, 22; 22:25, John 6:33). It seems obvious to me that our Lord Jesus referred to this 21st chapter of Leviticus when he said, “*The bread which I give is my flesh, which I give for the life of the world.*” (John 6:51). — “*The Bread of God is he that cometh down from heaven*” (John 6:33).

The showbread the priests offered continually upon the Table of Showbread pointed to him, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is “The Bread of God.”

- He is the Bread that satisfies God.

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- He is the Bread God gives by which our souls are satisfied.
- He is the Bread God's servants constantly spread on the table in his house.
- Christ is our daily Bread, the Bread we must have, the Bread we must eat, the Bread we want!

THE PERFECT PRIEST

All of these precepts concerning the men who might be allowed to serve as God's High Priest were necessary because the high priest in Israel was a type of Christ throughout the Old Testament. As such, he must always appear as one who was altogether without blemish or fault.

The Song of Solomon gives us some light on this passage. In setting forth Christ's purity, beauty, and perfection in figurative terms, it uses almost all the references to the body that are found here in Leviticus

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21. Here the defects are spoken of, there the excellences.

- If the priest had been “*blind*,” the people would be led to misapprehend the type. He could not represent him whose “*eyes are as a flame of fire*.”
- If the priest had been “*lame*,” he could not represent him whose “*legs are as pillars of marble*.”
- If the priest had been “*flat nosed*,” he could not be the type of him whose bride has this said of her, “*Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon*.”
- If the priest had been “*superfluous in any limb*,” if one limb had been longer than the other, he could not be a type of him who “*cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills*.”
- If the priest had been “*broken-footed*,” he could not have typified him whose feet are “*sockets of fine gold*.”

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- If the priest had been “*broken-handed,*” he could not have typified our Lord Jesus, whose hands we are told are “*as gold rings, set with beryl.*”

Our Redeemer, our Great High Priest, was to stretch out his whole body on the cross. The nails were to pierce his hands and feet. Yet, not a bone of his body would be broken.

- If the priest had been “*crook-backed,*” he would have represented the High Priest of the church as inferior to the church herself, “*whose stature is like the palm-tree.*”
- If the priest had been “*a dwarf,*” he could not have reached up to the altar’s height. He could not have been a type of him whose “*countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.*”
- If the priest had had “*a blemish in his eye,*” he could never have typified our Lord whose “*eyes are as doves by rivers of waters, washed in milk, and fitly set.*”

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- If the priest had been diseased, having the “*scurvy*” or “*scabbed*,” he could not have typified him “*who is all fair*,” who has “*no spot or wrinkle*.”
- If in the most secret, hidden spot of his frame, the priest had had the slightest blemish or defect, if one of his “*stones*” were broken (bruised, swollen, or missing), he could not have been a type of our great Savior who is “*all glorious within*.”

Our Great High Priest is just such a High Priest as we need! — Altogether perfect! — Altogether lovely! — Exactly the Priest God’s Law Required! Virtue flows out of him when he is but touched by a sinner’s a hand! **And this all-glorious Christ was the Sacrifice as well as the Priest required by the holy Lord God and his holy, unbending law.** — “*He offered up himself*” (Hebrews 7:21).

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(Leviticus 21:22-23) “He shall eat the bread of his God, *both* of the most holy, and of the holy. (23) Only he shall not go in unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I the LORD do sanctify them.”

The common, deformed, defiled men among Aaron’s sons, were provided for. They were allowed to feed upon the holy things. But only the unblemished, faultless man could go into the holy place, only God’s appointed High Priest could go into the holy of holies and make atonement for the people.

The high priest had to be a man who had no fault or blemish, because he typified that Man who is our Great High Priest of infinite worth, beauty, and glory, the God-man, who gives all his beauty to us, and yet retains it all in himself! Oh, how fair he is! — “*Thou art all fair, my Beloved. Thou art all fair!*”

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- He who offered the Bread of perfect righteousness in the holy place (the outer sanctuary) must be himself perfect.
- And he who offered the blood of complete satisfaction in the most holy place, behind the veil, must himself be perfect.

(Leviticus 21:24) “And Moses told *it* unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.”

By these things all Israel knew what sort of priest to expect. Their eyes were fixed on One who was to be “altogether lovely,” by whose merit, virtue, and sacrifice God would accept his people, by whose merit, virtue, and sacrifice God could not but accept and bless his people.

(2 Corinthians 5:17-21) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

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(18) And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Now, turn to Numbers 6. Let me show you how God gives his blessings to us by our Aaron, our all-glorious Christ, our Great High Priest.

(Numbers 6:22-26) “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, (23) Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, (24) The

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LORD bless thee, and keep thee: (25) The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: (26) The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

Now, hear what God says about his Son’s work.

(Numbers 6:27) “And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.”

APPLICATION

Oh, how can I persuade you to trust this great Priest! Spirit of God, come, come and make him known in the hearts of needy sinners, for the glory of God.

(Hebrews 10:9-14) “Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the

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body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.”

Come now to God by Christ, our Great High Priest, and you will obtain mercy and grace from God by him.

(Isaiah 25:9) “And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this *is* our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Amen!