

Hebrews 5.1-4

The Man In-Between

I. The Mediating Priest –

In a similar manner to which the sacrifice stood in the place of the people, so too did the priest.

a. The need for a mediator

- i. there is a need for someone to stand in between the people and God
- ii. He commands them to come forward - no excuses
- iii. They must but they cannot
- iv. God established the priesthood to act as mediator and go-between

1. Taken from among men
2. Appointed for men
3. Offer gifts and sacrifices
4. No man takes this honor
5. Called by God ...

- b. The people desperately needed someone to stand between them and the God of Heaven who they had so offended.
- c. The priesthood stood as those who plead the cause of the people.
- d. He stood between the people and the anger of God; between the justice of God and the blood of peace. If substitution is the backbone of the system; This work of covenantal grace is its beating heart. The priest literally stood between God's wrath and the people

II. The Impossible Priest

- a. Offers sacrifices for the people.
- b. The people could not approach God on their own
 - i. Every sin that they committed added to their guilt and the burden of their debt –

Ezra 9.6-7

ii. Every action they did was sin –

Proverbs 21.4

iii. Even the offering of sacrifices was sinful because of the condition of the heart...

Isaiah 1.12-15

c. The entire structure of the OT law of worship was designed to teach this one lesson. "You are not worthy to approach your God. You are sinful, He is holy, you dare not come near."

i. Stay away from the mountain of God –

Exodus 19.10-13

ii. The priests camped between the people and the tabernacle

Numbers 1.52-53

iii. No one enters without blood -

iv. The holy of holies and the veil of separation.

d. But the priest was, himself, in the same condition... so the priesthood of the Old Testament was itself flawed.

III. The Endangered Priest

It was a dangerous work

a. Examples

i. Aaron's sons –

Leviticus 10.1-3

ii. Eli and his sons –

1Samuel 2.12-17; 3.12-13; 4.10-11

iii. Ezekiel and the charge against the priests –

Ezekiel 34.1-10

iv. Jesus' conflict with the religious rulers –

Luke 19.45-20.8

b. Reason

- i. Irreverence for the God that they served
- ii. Disdain for the people they represented
 - 1. Abuses
 - 2. Extortions
 - 3. Violations
 - 4. Self-promotion
- iii. Carelessness about the tasks to which they were appointed
- iv. Arrogance and the belief that they were in fact worthy

IV. The Foreshadowing Priest

The System was not ultimately for them. It was never supposed to be the end solution.

a. Designed to show the ruin of man even more fully - when your mediator cannot come close enough to offer the sacrifice without incurring wrath, you have a real problem.

b. Designed to finally allow the debt to be removed when it was fulfilled.

c. created for the coming of Christ –

Ezekiel 34.23-34

d. Prepared to allow a real payment to be made-

Hebrews 8.1-6

V. The Superseded Priest

Hebrews 8.7-13

a. There is no longer any need for a separate priesthood

b. Christ has fulfilled the need with His blood

- i. He was sinless
- ii. He was God made flesh
- iii. He was also fully man
- iv. He freely offered His blood and death in our place
- v. God has accepted this sacrifice and proves the fact to us by raising Christ from the dead.
- vi. God counts the death of Christ to fully to our account that we have also all become partakers of His priesthood –

c. We have become priests to our God –

1Peter 2.4-10

- d. we have a living intercessor who gives to us the right to enter into the presence of God –

Hebrews 7.24-25

- i. Do not ever allow any man to tell you that you need him to go to God on your behalf

- ii. Do not ever think that God will not keep His word and accept the sacrifice of Jesus, the perfect Lamb that God Himself provided!
- iii. DO NOT EVER seek to replace the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ with some made up ritual that supposedly offers a new sacrifice to cover sin and bring peace
- iv. Do not ever believe that the Old Testament system will be reinstated with any effect. There is no return to the law
 - 1. for anyone.
 - 2. Ever.
 - 3. Period.
 - 4. End of Discussion
- v. But with the finality of that replacement, and the impossibility of its ever being re-instated, is the steadfast assurance and confidence that all who run to Christ will, in fact, find forgiveness.

John 6.35-40

