

Sunday September 17th sermon: "Our High Priest Sat Down! -- The God of All Comforts (Pt 33)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,
by John Pittman Hey

Hebrews 10:11-13; Psalm 110:1

God comforts us by the oath He made to Christ, appointing Him our high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

God actually saves us, by our high priest Christ taking away the animal sacrifices, that God does not delight in, and establishing the will of God, which Christ delights in. It is in Christ's very body, acting as our high priest forever, that this crucial work was accomplished on the cross.

Hebrews adds this conclusion: "by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all!"

Hebrews next provides another contrast between the priesthoods of Aaron and Christ: Aaron's sacrificial work never ceased, because the same old animal sacrifices could never take away our sin.

Aaron's work was never finished, never completed, and he never rested from it.

In all the detailed depictions of tabernacle and temple furnishings, there weren't any chairs at all!

But there is a chair in glory, a throne in fact, where our Lord Jesus has sat down!

Christ sat down at the right hand of God, after He had offered Himself as the one-time and sole sacrifice for our sins.

Christ's high priestly offering is finished forever!

Aaron's sacrifices went on forever, but could never take away sin.

Christ's sacrifice was once for all for our sin, and it took them all away.

And therefore, Christ sat down.

And because Christ rests from His sacrificial work for us, we rest in Christ's perfection of our redemption and justification!

All the former works we labored to do to reconcile ourselves to a holy God, Christ finished for us at Calvary. Now He rests from that work, and that's why He can say, that we should come to Him, we who labor and are heavy laden in our sin, and He will give us rest!

Sadly, the lost who seek their own justification and self-righteousness, have substituted themselves in Christ's stead as their own so-called priests.

Like Aaron, they can never rest from the futility of their own pitiful offerings to God.

Our justification is accomplished, and our crimes are discharged, by the blood of Jesus, and so He sat down, and all who trust in Him, now are commanded to rest in Him.

But note well the exalted place Christ sits – our great Man of Calvary, the Lord Jesus, is enthroned at the right hand of power and glory now!

This resting place of exaltation for Christ comes as no surprise. After all, Jesus promised it would be so, at His trial before the Jewish leaders.

There, Jesus declared Himself to be Messiah, God manifest in the flesh, and that someday, His haters and murderers would see Him in the glory, seated with power.

In rage, they killed the Lord of Glory, and so our Lamb was slain for us then.

But previously in Hebrews, reference to the glory of Christ's situation has been described repeatedly. In the third verse, after He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of God.

Referring to Christ, the writer of Hebrews next quotes from the Old Testament, where God provided testimony of Messiah's deity, and declared His throne to be forever and ever!

Next, Hebrews quotes from Psalm 110, where God commanded Christ to sit at His right hand, until He makes Christ's enemies His footstool!

By doing so, Hebrews establishes the link between God's solemn oath to Christ regarding His high priesthood after the order of Melchizedek -- also found in Psalm 110 -- and Christ's exaltation as God and man in glory forever.

That's because Melchizedek was not only a priest of the most high God, but he was also the king of peace, and his name means "king of righteousness."

Thus we discover that the solemn oath of God to Christ, includes Christ's exaltation as our King of Peace and Righteousness as well!

All of which proves for the Jewish believers reading Hebrews, the identity and work of Jesus Christ, as the priest that saves us from sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and as our great King also, Who is our Righteousness, as Jeremiah foretold He would be!

The very One Who takes away our sin before God, is the very same One Who lays His perfect obedience and righteousness upon us, as our King, as our Ruler!

The comfort that God gives to us by His oath to Christ, to be our priest forever, is now seen to be far greater, and more wonderful, than we first believed!

We love to sing these words by Horatius Bonar:

Done is the work that saves!
Once and for ever done!
Finished the righteousness
That clothes th'unrighteous one!
The love that blesses us below
Is flowing freely to us now.

The sacrifice is o'er,
The veil is rent in twain,
The mercy-seat is red
With blood of victim slain;
Why stand we then without, in fear?
The blood of Christ invites us near!

The gate is open wide,
The new and living way
Is clear and free and bright,
With love and peace and day;
Into the holiest now we come,
Our present and our endless home.

Upon the mercy-seat
The High Priest sits within;
The blood is in His hand
Which makes and keeps us clean.
With boldness let us now draw near,
That blood has banished every fear.

Then to the Lamb once slain
Be glory, praise, and power,
Who died and lives again,
Who liveth evermore;
Who loved and washed us in His blood,
Who made us kings and priests to God!