

Hebrews

The Perfectly Qualified High Priest (Part 2)

Hebrews 5:1-9

INTRODUCTION:

Hebrews 5:1-9 (NASB95)

I. Basic Qualifications for an Old Covenant High Priest.

- A. Appointed by God from among Men.
- B. Sympathetic to Men.
- C. Make Sacrifices for Men.

Hebrews 5:1 (NASB95)

Hebrews 5:3 (NASB95)

Hebrews 9:7 (NASB95)

Hebrews 10:26 (NASB95)

Numbers 15:22-36 (NASB95)

II. The Perfectly Qualified High Priest.

- A. Appointed by God from among Men.

Hebrews 5:5 (NASB95)

Psalms 2:7 (NASB95)

John 8:54a (NASB95)

Philippians 2:6-8 (NASB95)

Philippians 2:9-11 (NASB95)

Psalms 110:1b (NASB95)

Hebrews 5:5b-6 (NASB95)

- B. Sympathetic with Men.

Hebrews 5:7 (NASB95)

Hebrews 5:8 (NASB95)

Hebrews 5:9a

- C. Make Sacrifices for Men.

Hebrews 5:9b

CONCLUSION:

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INTRODUCTION:

What have we learned so far? We have seen two of the three qualifications for an earthly high priest. He must be appointed by God from among men and he must be sympathetic toward men. This morning we will see how he must offer sacrifices for his people. Then the author will show how Jesus perfectly meets and exceeds every one of those qualifications. And this is a very important question for them to have answered because in their mind, Jesus would not fit any qualifications for a priest. He was a part of the wrong tribe. He was not born in the right family. He is not on this earth among us conducting sacrifices. There is no indication that He, in any way, fits what they thought were the qualifications for a high priest. So it is important that Jesus Christ be seen as the unrivaled person to be qualified to be our ultimate high priest.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Hebrews 5:1-9 (NASB95)

5 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; ² he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; ³ and because of it he is obligated to offer *sacrifices* for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. ⁴ And no one takes the honor to himself, but *receives it* when he is called by God, even as Aaron was.

⁵ So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him,

“You are My Son, Today I have begotten You”; ⁶ just as He says also in another *passage*, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

⁷ In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

⁸ Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. ⁹ And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

Prayer

- I. Basic Qualifications for an Old Covenant High Priest.
 - A. Appointed by God from among Men.
 - B. Sympathetic to Men.
 - C. Make Sacrifices for Men.

The third basic qualification for a high priest was that they were to make sacrifices for men. You first see it in the last half of verse 1.

Hebrews 5:1 (NASB95)

5 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men" (and here it is) "**in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;**

Verse 3 says essentially the same thing,

Hebrews 5:3 (NASB95)

³ and because of it he is obligated to offer *sacrifices* for sins, as for the people, so also for himself.

You will notice in verse 1 that the priest was "**appointed on behalf of men.**" He was to act on the behalf of men in the things that brought the sins of men before God. The way by which he would do that was by offering "**both gifts and sacrifices for sins**" on the behalf of men. This was his main work. His work was a work of gifts and sacrifices. So the function of a priest was broken down into at least **two parts**.

First of all, **gifts**. What are the gifts he is talking about? In the broadest sense, gifts included all the money, jewelry, or other such valuables people gave to the Lord through the priests. More specifically it probably referred to the grain, or meal, offering prescribed in the Old Testament. It was a thanksgiving and dedication offering.

The grain offering consisted of fine flour and oil, mixed with frankincense to give a pleasant aroma, and sometimes baked or fried into a cake. Part of the offering was burned on the altar, and the remainder belonged to the priest to eat. No lemon or honey could be used, because they would ferment. A small measure of salt was required to act as a preservative. The offering represented the dedication of a person and all his possessions to God in complete thanks for what God had done for him.

But not only was the priest to offer gifts, but he was to also **offer sacrifices for sins**.

These sacrifices had to be offered on a daily basis. They were repeated and repeated and repeated as often as they sinned. It was a daily process. Notice in verse 3 that the priest had to offer sacrifices both for him and the people. He was not a perfect priest. So what he had to do was go in there and go through the whole process for himself and then come back and do it for the people.

Hebrews 9:7 (NASB95)

⁷ but into the second, (that is the holy of holies) **only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.**

Sin separates men from God. The sacrifice is meant to restore that relationship. I want you to notice a very important point here. Sacrifices for sins could only atone for the sins of ignorance. Did you get that? There are two kinds of sin that the Old Testament talks about. **Willful sin and sins of ignorance**. There is no sacrifice for willful sin. That is the sin of defiantly breaking God's laws.

Hebrews 10:26 (NASB95)

²⁶ For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

So the sins of ignorance were the only ones really covered. Let me read you what God said when He first laid this out.

Numbers 15:22-36 (NASB95)

²² ‘But when you unwittingly fail and do not observe all these commandments, which the Lord has spoken to Moses, ²³ *even* all that the Lord has commanded you through Moses, from the day when the Lord gave commandment and onward throughout your generations, ²⁴ then it shall be, if it is done unintentionally, without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one bull for a burnt offering, as a soothing aroma to the Lord, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and one male goat for a sin offering. ²⁵ Then the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and **they will be forgiven**; for it was an error, and they have brought their offering, an offering by fire to the Lord, and their sin offering before the Lord, for their error. ²⁶ So all the congregation of the sons of Israel **will be forgiven**, with the alien who sojourns among them, for *it happened* to all the people through error.

²⁷ ‘Also if one person sins unintentionally, then he shall offer a one year old female goat for a sin offering. ²⁸ The priest shall make atonement before the Lord for the person who goes astray when he sins unintentionally, making atonement for him **that he may be forgiven**. ²⁹ You shall have one law for him who does *anything* unintentionally, for him who is native among the sons of Israel and for the alien who sojourns among them. ³⁰ But the person who does *anything* defiantly, whether he is native or an alien, that one is blaspheming the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from among his people. ³¹ Because he has despised the word of the Lord and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt *will be* on him.”

God has never provided and does not provide forgiveness of sins yet today that are willfully in defiance of God without true repentance. Any sin could become a sin of ignorance if a man repented and turned his heart to God. There is forgiveness for anyone who comes to God and repents of his sin. But for that one who defiantly rebels against God, who by his own will disobeys and continues to disobey there is no more sacrifice for sins. The sacrifice cannot cover those sins.

So the basic qualifications for the high priest is by being selected by God, being sympathetic with men, and performing sacrifices for men. Now I want you to meet the perfectly qualified high priest and see how Jesus meets and exceeds each of those qualifications. Beginning in verse 5.

II. The Perfectly Qualified High Priest.

A. Appointed by God from among Men.

Hebrews 5:5 (NASB95)

⁵ So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You”;

We have all used and seen the word glorify, but what does it mean? To glorify is to praise or honor someone to an extreme degree. If you like someone, you might compliment or praise them, but glorifying takes that a step further.

So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a high priest." Did you hear that? Verse 5: "Christ did not glorify Himself". So who glorified Jesus? Look at how the verse ends... "but He who said to Him, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You".

Who chose Jesus to be a high priest? God did. And what is the first qualification for a legitimate high priest? He had to be chosen by God from among men. It is interesting too that He quotes **Psalm 2:7**.

Psalm 2:7 (NASB95)

⁷ "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, **'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.**

The Holy Spirit throughout the book of Hebrews continues to repeat quotes from the Old Testament because He is writing to Jews and He wants to use scripture that they are familiar with and trust to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. And so Jesus fits the chief requirement. He has been called and appointed by God.

There is a wonderful statement by Jesus in John 8:54.

John 8:54a (NASB95)

⁵⁴ Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me,...

Jesus is saying I have not sought my own glory. Paul describes Jesus in the same way.

Philippians 2:6-8 (NASB95)

⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus did not seek His own glory and because of that God glorified His Son.

Philippians 2:9-11 (NASB95)

⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

God awarded Jesus with the authority and honor of high priest and sat Him at His right hand. So Jesus Christ fits the first requirement of a high priest. He is appointed by God. Notice at the end of verse 5, let me read it and into verse 6, so you get the flow.

Hebrews 5:5b-6 (NASB95)

...*"You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"*; ⁶ just as He says also in another *passage*, **"You are a priest** forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

We will get to Melchizedek in a minute. But notice this...the same God that said *"You are my Son,"* is the same God that said *"You are a"* (what?) *"priest."*

This is heavy stuff for the Jew, because the Jew knows Psalm 2:7 which is quoted in verse 5 and he also knows Psalm 110:4 which is quoted in verse 6. He knows that those passages are referring to the Messiah who is going to be a great king priest. He is not going to be a priest after Aaron's order, but a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

I am only going to give a brief look at Melchizedek because we will cover him a lot more when we get to Chapter 7. Melchizedek is spoken of in Psalm 110 where the Psalmist is prophesying the coming of the Messiah. He uses Melchizedek as a type of Jesus because Melchizedek was more than the average run of the mill priest. In the first place, Melchizedek had a higher priesthood order than Aaron because he was a "king and priest".

Now let me ask you this, was Aaron ever a king? No. Was he a priest? Yes. But if Jesus is both a king and a priest, then He is not after the order of Aaron is He? But He is after the order of Melchizedek because He is a king priest.

"You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

Was Aaron a priest forever? No, but there is no record of Melchizedek's birth or of the time of his death. There is no indication of who his parents are. The Jews knew that this must be some wonderful individual, because Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. And Abraham was no small time guy in the mind of the Jews. So the Holy Spirit says this priest, Jesus Christ, is not after the order of Aaron. He is typified by Melchizedek, who was a picture of a king priest forever.

B. Sympathetic with Men.

Then we come to the second basic qualification of a high priest. He had to be sympathetic with men. Now this takes us a step past omniscience. Omniscience **knows** everything, sympathy **feels** everything, right? Christ, as God, did not need more knowledge, but as we will see in verse 8, He needed to experience what it felt like to be human. His incarnation caused Him to be sympathetic beyond being all-knowing.

Hebrews 5:7(NASB95)

⁷In the days of His flesh,...Let's stop there.

This is pointing to the time He was on earth. Christ existed before He came to this earth and He still exists today.

...He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

Do you remember the Garden of Gethsemane, the night before He went to the cross? He went into the Garden to pray and He agonized there and He sweat as it were great drops of blood and He cried to the Father. And His heart was grieving and broken at the prospect and the pain of bearing sin. He felt temptation and He felt the power of sin. He felt everything Satan could throw at Him, and He got it all especially on the cross. He felt everything you will ever feel and more. He felt the temptation you will never feel because He had to be so in tune with sin that He would **never** succumb to it.

And then it says He prayed. He prayed unto Him that was able to save Him from death. Who is that? God. But I want you to catch that thought here. It is very powerful. In the English Bible it says "**save Him from death.**" He was not saying "God do not let me die". That is why he said "**for this hour came I into the world.**" He was not praying that God

would spare Him from having to go to the cross. He was turning Himself over to God and praying to be saved from the power of death. **He was praying for the resurrection!**

And notice it says, " **and He was heard because of His piety** " Piety means that He recognized God as sovereign and committed Himself completely to God. So the point then that Spirit makes is that Jesus is qualified to be a sympathetic high priest by His agony, by His tears, His prayers, and His suffering. Whatever anguish you go through Jesus is able to sympathize with you.

Hebrews 5:8 (NASB95)

⁸ Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

I don't think any of us teach our children to be obedient by making them suffer. Do we? We tell our children "Do not touch the fire or you will be burnt! Do not touch the fire or you will be burnt! Do not touch the fire or you will be burnt!" And what do they do? They touch the fire and they get burnt. It is then, by their own experience, that they really understand the sensation of being burnt. You learn when you suffer. It was God's will that Jesus would be a suffering servant. Look what it says, "**though he were a,**" what, "**a Son.**" Even though He was God's Son, He had to learn by suffering. That is the only way you learn. Even though He was the Son of God, He was given no exemption from suffering.

Sympathy comes from experience and Jesus learned obedience through His incarnation by suffering. That is the kind of high priest I want. I do not want a God who is way out beyond our universe sitting on a little ivory tower and ruling the universe in a detached manner, do you? I want a God who feels like I feel and knows what I am going through.

Isn't wonderful to be able to fall on your knees before the Lord in prayer and feel His arms around you and sensing Him saying "I know, I know".

Hebrews 5:9a

⁹ And having been made "what" perfect,

The word perfect means complete. Jesus went through everything He had to go through so He could be complete. The complete, perfect high priest.

Perfect does not mean His nature changed or His character changed. It just means that He is now completely qualified to be the perfect high priest. Now there is only one other qualification. Besides being chosen by God and being set apart in the sense of sympathetic and understanding, **the third thing was He had to make sacrifice for sins.**

C. Make Sacrifices for Men.

Christ far exceeded this sacrificial qualification. He died on the cross as a perfect sacrifice for us. His sacrifice offered permanent forgiveness of sin. He did not enter into the earthly holy of holies, but rather, passed through the heavens and entered into the true holy of holies in heaven where God dwells and left the way wide open for us. And not only does He enter in for us, but we can enter in on the basis of His merits, and that is a first.

When Jesus went in, He went in without sin. He never had to offer a sacrifice for Himself. That in itself makes Him a greater high priest than any high priests from the old covenant. By His death He opened the way of **eternal** salvation. All the priests of all time could not

provide eternal salvation. They could only provide temporary forgiveness. They had to offer sacrifices day after day after day. But Jesus was able to offer forgiveness by just one act on the cross. He perfected forever those who are His.

Hebrews 5:9b

...He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

Jesus became the source of our eternal salvation. Now that is a great high priest! It says at the end of verse 9, "to all those who" (what?) "who obey Him" Does that mean in order to experience salvation you must follow a lot of rules? No, we are to have an obedient faith. God wants you to obey Him by believing in Christ. God does not expect anybody to be redeemed by running around and keeping rules.

CONCLUSION:

When you have a true faith it will be active. We do not just keep a lot of rules, we actually seek and do God's will in our lives in gratefulness of all He has done for us. It is not for our glory, but for His. When you truly believe that you need no other high priest you will have an obedient faith. Oh what a perfectly qualified high priest we have!

What A Day That Will Be.