

Lesson Forty-Eight

THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF CHRIST

Scripture Reading: Heb. 7:20-28, 9:23-28.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17). "For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26). "Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

123. Q. In what Old Testament scripture is the priestly office and work of Christ foretold?

A. It is foretold in Psalm 110:4.

Psa. 110:4—"Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." Cf. Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 5:6, 5:10, 6:20, 7:1-3, etc.

124. Q. What book of the New Testament treats especially of the Priesthood of Christ?

A. The Epistle to the Hebrews.

125. Q. What was one reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

A. It was that He might, in His capacity of Prophet, reveal God to mankind.

John 1:18 8:26, 14:9, 17:8; Heb. 1:1-2.

126. Q. What was a second reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

A. It was that He might, in His capacity of King, destroy the works of the devil, deliver His peo-

ple from the bondage of sin and death, and bring many sons unto glory.

1 John 3:8—"To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Heb. 2:9, 10—"But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." 1 Cor. 15:25, 26—"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."

127. Q. What was a third reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?

A. It was that He might acquaint Himself with our frailties, and thus qualify Himself to act as our merciful and faithful High Priest.

Heb. 2:14-18, "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage . . . Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

128. Q. What is a priest, in the scriptural sense of the term?

A. A priest, according to scripture, is a person divinely appointed to transact with God on behalf of man.

129. Q. What are the three essential qualities which a priest must possess?

A. They are: power or authority, purity, and sympathy.

130. Q. To what extent do these qualities inhere in Christ?

A. They inhere in Christ pre-eminently and perfectly.

(1) His power or authority. Matt. 9:6—"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins," etc. Matt. 28:18—"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Heb. 7:24—"he, because he abideth for ever, hath his priesthood unchangeable." His authority is "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7:16); that is, it is inherent in His Divine nature as the eternal Word, the only begotten Son of God, etc. Cf. John 8:58, 1:1-3; Rev. 1:17-18. (2) His purity. Heb. 7:26—"For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Heb. 7:28—"For the law appointeth men high priests, having infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was after the law, appointeth a Son, perfected for evermore." (3) His sympathy. Heb. 4:15—"For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 2:17, 18—"Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

131. Q. What are the two essential functions of a priest, according to the Scriptures?

A. They are (1) to offer sacrifice, and (2) to make intercession.

132. Q. What sacrifice for sin did Christ offer up, acting in His capacity of High Priest?

A. He offered up Himself as the Supreme Sacrifice and as the Perfect Atonement for the sins of the world.

(1) Heb. 7:27—"who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this he did once for all, when he offered up himself." Heb. 9:24-26, "For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own; else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 10:12—"but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (2) While this Supreme Sin-offering was made for all mankind, its benefits and blessings are only for those who accept Him as their Savior and obey his commands. (Point out, in this connection, that any sort of a gift must be accepted before it can be enjoyed). Heb. 5:9—"having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."

133. Q. Why was His Sacrifice a Perfect Sin-offering?

A. It was a Perfect Sin-offering, because He Himself, the Lamb of God, was "holy, guileless and undefiled" (Heb. 7:26).

Heb. 9:14—"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself up without

blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

134. Q. What other work does Christ do for His people, in His capacity as their High Priest?

A. He makes intercession for them at the right hand of God.

"The Priesthood of Christ does not cease with His work of atonement, but continues forever. In the presence of God He fulfils the second office of the priest, namely that of intercession" (Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 773). Heb. 7:23-25, "And they indeed have been made priests many in number, because that by death they are hindered from continuing: but he, because he abideth for ever, hath his priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." 1 John 2:1—"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Rom. 8:34—"It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." In view of this continuous intercession of our unchangeable High Priest, we should, as Christians, "have boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:19-22).

135. Q. Since Christ exercises the function of High Priest, who, then, are His subordinate priests under the New Covenant?

A. The Scriptures teach that all Christians are priests.

(1) 1 Pet. 2:5—"ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 2:9—"ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood." Rev. 1:5, 6—"unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father." (2) There is neither command nor precedent for a special order of priests under the Covenant of Grace. Matt. 23:9—"Call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven."

136. Q. What is our privilege as priests unto God?

A. It is our privilege and joy to offer up to God our spiritual sacrifices of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, devotion, and service.

1 Pet. 2:5—"to offer up spiritual sacrifices." Rom. 12:1—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." Heb. 13:15—"through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON FORTY-EIGHT

123. Q. In what Old Testament scripture is the priestly office and work of Christ foretold?
124. Q. What book of the New Testament treats especially of the Priesthood of Christ?
125. Q. What was one reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?
126. Q. What was a second reason why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us?
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128. Q. What is a priest, in the scriptural sense of the term?

129. Q. What are the three essential qualities which a priest must possess?
130. Q. To what extent do these qualities inhere in Christ?
131. Q. What are the two essential functions of a priest, according to the Scriptures?
132. Q. What sacrifice for sin did Christ offer up, acting in His capacity of High Priest?
133. Q. Why was His Sacrifice a Perfect Sin-offering?
134. Q. What other work does Christ do for His people, in His capacity as their High Priest?
135. Q. Since Christ exercises the function of High Priest, who, then, are His subordinate priests under the New Covenant?
136. Q. What is our privilege as priests unto God?

Lesson Forty-Nine

THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST

Scripture Reading: Isa. 9:6-7; Eph. 2:15-23; 1 Cor. 15:20-28.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). "Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:14-15). "For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death" (1 Cor. 15:25-26).

137. Q. What, according to scripture, is the order of Christ's priesthood?