

The Greater Priest

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[0 : 0 0] Take your Bibles and turn to the New Testament book of Hebrews. Hebrews chapter 4. And again, it is our privilege to have Pastor Paul Martin from Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto, Canada.

! He's not new to almost everyone here, but he is new to a few of you. He's a dear brother. We love him. We're always happy when he comes and preaches for us.

Hebrews chapter 4, verse 14. And then we're going to read through chapter 5 and to verse 10. Hebrews 4, verse 14.

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin.

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.

[1 : 2 3] He's able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray since he himself is subject to weakness. This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as the sins for the people or of the people.

No one takes this honor upon himself. He must be called by God, just as Aaron was. So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest.

But God said to him, You are my son. Today I become your father. And he says in another place, You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death.

And he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered. And once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be a high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

[2 : 3 8] Well, brother, come and preach for us. Brothers and sisters, it is a great delight to be back with you again. And I bring you greetings from Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto, which, as I was sitting there this morning, was thinking we will be 20 years old in April.

And some of you were here when Grace Fellowship Church of Toronto was just a thought and a prayer. And so I want to give glory to God for all that he's done. And thank you for your prayers on our behalf.

The Lord has been kind to the church. We've been able to start other churches and help some other churches in our community. And I see all of this as God's grace and God's answers to prayer.

And praise be to God who has seen fit to cause the gospel to go forward in my city, the city of Toronto, which is bursting at the seams, is now over half the people who live in, what's our population now?

It's like 6 million people or something in the Toronto area. And about 52% were born outside of Canada. So the world is in the city of Toronto.

[3 : 42] In our own church, we have some 30 or 40 different nations represented. It's just a delight to be there and a delight to see the gospel moving forward. So thank you for your prayers. Please keep them coming.

We give praise to God for all that he does. And, of course, it is in Canada, which I am sure all of you would love to become Canadians. In fact, just a show of hand, all of you who are not American.

Thanks, Ollie. No, kids, you're both, so you don't put your hands up for this one. There's like two of you. So, children, I just think you should know now that one of your great objectives in life ought to be to become Canadian.

And there are many, many reasons for this. I will only go into one right now, which is we've got a much more interesting form of government. And you're probably hearing all kinds of things about your government.

We have a much more ancient form of government, a parliamentary system. And one of the good things about having an old way of doing things is that you have people dressing up in funny little costumes.

[4 : 45] And one of those people is a gentleman who is referred to as the sergeant at arms. He wears a smock kind of thing and a very strange hat.

And he carries in his arm a golden scepter that he holds over his shoulder. And he marches in kind of strangely at the beginning of every morning session of parliament.

I mean, it's just interesting there. Like, you don't have to go any further. Who cares what they talk about? You get to watch a guy with a scepter. Now, back in 2014, a very unfortunate thing happened when a gunman entered our parliament buildings, got through security, and then was eventually removed by none other than the sergeant at arms.

And this was a great shock to people like me because I thought he was just an old guy playing dress-up, but he actually carried a weapon, and he actually neutralized the threat, and he was hailed as a great hero.

Little did we know that our sergeant at arms was in charge of all security on Parliament Hill. I didn't know that, and I'm a Canadian. This is just one of the many interesting things you can learn about Canada.

[5 : 54] But there are many places in life where an individual wears certain things, carries certain things, speaks in a certain way that is meant to represent a greater reality.

And the sergeant at arms, by his dress, is representing the authority and the protection of those elected representatives. His uniform, his scepter, his role, what he wears, how he carries himself, all of these things are intended to point to something greater, his authority.

Police officers wear uniforms. Clubs have ceremonies. Governments use symbolic things. And this idea of something representing something else happens all the time in life, and it happens all the time in our Bibles.

Something comes first that is intended to explain something that's going to come later. An event. A kind of dress.

A role. It's meant to prefigure something. Something greater. Something yet to come. And in the Old Testament, there are three big offices or roles that are all intended to point forward to someone yet to come.

[7 : 18] You have the office or the role of a prophet. Someone who would speak on behalf of God and always be calling for ethical change. Change how you're living because this is what is true about God.

And then you have the role of a king. One who would protect and rule over all of God's people for their good and their prosperity. And you also have the role of a priest. One who intercedes for God's people and blesses God's people.

And these Old Testament roles, these Old Testament offices of prophet, priest, and king, are all pointing forward and ultimately fulfilled in, well, a man who would be born as a baby and laid in a feeding trough, our Lord Jesus.

And today, I want to ponder with you the greater priest. And we'll do that by looking at two kinds of priests who came before him.

One, the singular guy, a guy we'll look at in a second. Secondly, another guy and all his descendants. And we'll see how they were all pointing forward to the greater priest.

[8 : 26] What is a priest? Well, a priest is someone who interacts with God on behalf of other people. And the word priest doesn't even occur in your Bible until you reach Genesis 14.

You can turn there if you like right now. We'll get there in a second. You've got to go 14 chapters into your Bible before this very religious word priest appears. And it appears very suddenly.

There's no buildup. There's no building expectation. There's no explanation. He just appears and disappears. And the context here in Genesis 14 has to do with Abram.

So Abram has been given a promise by God that all of his descendants will make a great nation. A people of God. He doesn't even have a son yet. But he's wandering through the land that will eventually be his.

And as he is there, his nephew Lot, who's living in the city of Sodom, is captured by some raiding kings. And those raiding kings capture the city, all the people in the city, including Lot, Abraham's nephew, and they haul him away.

[9 : 31] Abram says, well, that's my nephew. I've got to do something. So he gathers his men and he chases after those marauding bands of kings. And he rescues the people of Sodom, including his nephew Lot.

And as he is bringing them back, he is met by two kings. One of these kings is the king of Sodom. Now, a lot of interesting things happen here in Genesis 14 with the king of Sodom.

We don't have time to look at them now. But I'll just point out that the text makes it clear that the king of Sodom was very ungrateful, very ungodly, and very selfish.

How different he is from the second king who appears in the story, this king who was also a priest, a priest of God, the king who gave and the king who blessed.

And I think that contrast between the king of Sodom and the king of Salem is very important to see. And it's teaching us something. So let's look, first of all, at what I will call, this is number one, the priest, singular, of blessing.

[10 : 34] The priest of blessing. So we're at Genesis 14, verse 18. I was thinking of my father-in-law, Bob Heaney, this morning, because I once tried to convince him to change Bible versions, and he said to me, I've had to memorize in two versions already.

I'm not changing again. I'm too old. And I thought to myself, I'm preaching from my ESV. I know you like the NIV here, but I've preached through two versions. I'm too old to change. I'm invoking the Bob Heaney rule.

So pardon me as I read from the English Standard Version, which will be very much like your new international version. Genesis 14, 18. And Melchizedek, king of Salem, not Sodom, Salem, brought out bread and wine.

Interesting. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed him, blessed Abram, and said, Blessed be, Abram, by God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth. God is the possessor, or maybe creator.

The word could be sort of used both ways there. Of heaven and earth. And blessed be, God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And Abram gave him, this Melchizedek, a tenth of everything.

[11 : 42] So the second king to come out and meet Abram on his return is Melchizedek. His city-state of Salem, which would probably later become Jerusalem, the city of peace, it seems it was not attacked by the bad kings, so his stuff was not being rescued by Abram, and yet he goes out, just like the king of Sodom went out, who's getting all his stuff back.

And this king, Melchizedek, marches out in front of the pagan kings and the pagan nations, all the people of Sodom, Gomorrah, all the other nations, and his first action is to give to Abram, Abram now, and to bless Abram.

He physically blesses, he gives Abram bread and wine, and then as priest of God Most High, he verbally blesses, he gives Abram a benediction there in verses 19 and 20.

And this priest, you will see, is described here as priest of God Most High, El Elyon, the real God. And so he identifies the God that he serves.

I serve the God who is, the God Most High, who is possessor or maker of everything, and he notes, Melchizedek notes, that this God is sovereign over all things.

[13 : 02] He says, by the way, Abram, you and I both know that it was God who brought about this military victory. It wasn't you and your army. He's the one who's delivered your enemies into your hand.

And Abram agrees with Melchizedek. When Abram is talking with the king of Sodom, he says to the king of Sodom, back in verse 22, or over in verse 22, I've lifted my hand to Yahweh, God Most High, Lord God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth.

He uses the same phrases that Melchizedek used, but he attaches Yahweh there. He says, you know, Mel and I know what we're talking about, but Mr. Sodom King, let me just tell you, it's not Baal or anybody else.

It's Yahweh who is the creator of heaven and earth. Yahweh is our great deliverer. Yahweh is God Most High. Not only that, Abram goes so far as to endorse the priesthood of Melchizedek when he gives him 10% of the victor's spoils.

So here's Abram worshiping God by giving God through God's priest, King Melchizedek, 10% of everything he just got in his victory.

[14 : 10] That's quite an interesting story. And then it stops as quickly as it started. Thankfully, our New Testament book of Hebrews tells us a little bit there.

If you want to flip ahead and if you don't mind flipping, just flip around with me or if you just want to listen, that's fine. Hebrews chapter 7, verse 1. Because in the New Testament book of Hebrews, the author here explains a little bit more about Melchizedek, some things we might have missed in our reading of the text in Genesis.

He says, Hebrews 7, 1, For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, oh yeah, saw that, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, and to Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything.

He is first, by translation of his name, this is what his name means, king of righteousness. And then he is also, by position, king of Salem, that is, king of peace.

He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he continues, a priest forever.

[15 : 27] So, the author tells us three important things. Number one is name, king of righteousness. If you just take the Hebrew of his name, that's what you get. Righteousness and king.

Those two words combined together, he's king of righteousness. His name is telling us that he was a follower of God. And then his title, king of Salem. Salem, we would, you might know the word shalom, the word for peace or wholeness.

He is the king of peace. So, his title tells us who he represents. He represents those who are at peace with God.

And then this very odd thing about his lineage. He's given no genealogy in the book of genealogies. The book of Genesis is all about who's your daddy.

And it's separated all through the book in this way. And so in a book of genealogies, it's very strange to have someone as important as a priest have no mention made of his father, of his mother, or when he died.

[16 : 33] In fact, the author of the Hebrews says he continues a priest forever. And we think what he means there is forever in the sense that just as we never read of his birth, neither do we read of his death.

And so as far as the duration of his story in the Bible, he's the continual priest of El Elyon, the continual priest of God Most High.

So here's the very first priest in the Bible, Melchizedek. He is a priest who blesses. He is a righteous king who dwells in the city of peace.

and in a book full of genealogies, he doesn't have one. He appears, then he disappears from the storyline, but he's not forgotten.

Now, just keep all this in your mind because now we're going to sort of chronologically move along. Abram dies, his descendants end up enslaved in Egypt. God rescues them using his servant Moses.

[17 : 34] They come through the Red Sea. Where's the first place they've got to stop when they come out the other side, but Mount Sinai. And who's going to speak to them from the mountain but God himself.

They're going to hear the voice of God and God is going to speak to them the ten words, the ten commandments. Now, when these commandments come, after the people say, hey, we can't take it anymore, Moses, you go up on the mountain and get the rest of it, and Moses comes down with the law, that law is full of instructions about another priesthood, a priesthood that's different than the Melchizedekian.

If you want to say that at home and impress your friends, go ahead. And the Melchizedekian priesthood is there, but now we're talking about Aaron's priesthood. So we had the priest who blesses.

Secondly, let's think about the priests, plural, of intercession, the ones who intercede. Who were they? Well, unlike Melchizedek, these priests have a very specific lineage.

They are selected by God. You've got to be one of the sons of Aaron. So there were the twelve tribes of Israel. One of the tribes is Levi. Levi had a descendant named Aaron, and Aaron and all his sons are the ones who are going to be priests.

[18 : 52] You might have been born into the tribe of Benjamin and had very godly desires and say, Daddy, I want to be a priest. And Daddy would have to say to you, it doesn't matter, son. You can never be a priest because the only ones who can be priests are the sons of Aaron.

And what did these priests do? Essentially, what the priests did was make sacrifices, animal sacrifices, killing an animal in the place of a person, making sacrifices all day long.

It was a bloody work. Thousands upon thousands of animals getting sacrificed every year, a daily reminder that even though God had rescued them and He had brought them out of slavery and they were His people, they continued to sin and they had to make atonement for their sin.

They had to make things right between them and God, even though they were God's people. And these priests were interceding. That was their job. That's all they were to do was to be interceding on behalf of God's people.

And out of all of those priests, there would be one high priest. And this high priest, on top of all that regular duties given to all the priests, had one particular job on one particular day.

[20 : 10] If you live in Toronto, the local Jewish synagogue advertises on our news station, I always know when it's Yom Kippur, because they got ads running. It's Yom Kippur. Day of Atonement. And when Yom Kippur would come, when the Day of Atonement would come, that high priest was given opportunity to walk into the most holy place.

So, in the days of Moses, that would be in the tabernacle after Solomon in the temple. And so you would enter the temple courts and then there was the holy place and then there was the most holy place.

And that most holy place could only be entered one time a year on the Day of Atonement. And before he went marching in there, he had to sacrifice a bull and he had to sacrifice a ram for him and all the other priests.

And then he would get another goat or get a goat and another ram and he'd sacrifice them for all the people. And then he'd burn the incense and fill the room just with a cloud of sweet smelling incense.

And then he'd take the blood from those sacrifices and he'd start throwing the blood on everything, on the altar and on the candles and on the Ark of the Covenant itself just splattering blood, splattering blood, splattering blood.

[21 : 20] And then he'd come out from there and there would be one goat remaining. We get our phrase scapegoat. And he'd take that goat and he'd put his hands on the goat as a symbolic transfer of all of our sins.

My sins and all my other priests and all the people of Israel were putting all our sins on this goat and some guy would lead that goat out and release him into the wilderness. It was a picture that God had taken all their sins away.

Leviticus 16, Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it. Listen, the iniquities of the people of Israel, all their transgressions, all their sins and he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness.

The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area and he shall let the goat free in the wilderness. And there shall be a statute forever for you that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of all their sins.

And Aaron did as the Lord commanded Moses. Now as you're turning to Exodus chapter 28, if you want to be a page turner with me to Exodus 28, just think about this, that this would happen once a year but it would happen every year, every year, after year, after year, Yom Kippur, after Yom Kippur, high priest going in, making intercession, making intercession, we've got more sins, it's been another year, Lord, we've got more sins.

[22 : 57] And when he would go in there, he had to dress in a particular way. There are three things, we could look at lots of things that he had to wear, but there are three things that specifically say when he wears this, he's bearing that.

it is symbolic. When he wears this, he's bearing this real thing. The first of those three things was the smock or the ephod.

Think Walmart worker, smock, and that's kind of what it was. The high priest would wear over top of other clothing. And that smock had on its shoulder pieces one stone on the right, one stone on the left, and engraved on one stone were the names of six tribes and engraved on the other were the names of the other six tribes.

He also wore what was called the breast piece of judgment, something like a nine-inch square chest purse that would hang from the shoulder pieces over his chest.

And on the front of it were twelve stones, each stone with one of the names of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. it was a purse because it had a couple of things inside of it.

[24 : 14] He also wore a golden headplate. So he had a turban on and fastened to the turban was, I don't know, kids, do you have a little license plate on the back of your bike?

It's probably about that size. It's kind of, he had a little license plate on his forehead, a golden license plate that said, holy to the Lord, holy to Yahweh.

glory. And when the high priest on that day of atonement would walk into the Holy of Holies, he was wearing these things to remind him. He was bearing the people on his shoulders, he was bearing the people on his heart as he entered before God.

That ephod, that smock with the shoulder stones was to remind him that he bore all of God's people to the Lord. So Exodus 28, verse 12, you shall set the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod as stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel.

And Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord on his two shoulders for remembrance. So when that high priest would walk into the holy presence of Yahweh, he carried all of Israel on his shoulders, each soul, and all their sins.

[25 : 31] He stood there in their place. He bore them and he bore their sins on his shoulders. He was their loving representative before the holy God.

He never entered that holy of holy places alone. He always entered with Israel in his peripheral vision on his shoulders. He was representing all of those souls.

All of their greatest need is resting on his shoulders. He's got to do something about it. He also wore that breastpiece of judgment with the twelve stones across the front and those decision stones, the Urim and Thummim on the inside in the pocket of that chest purse.

It was to remind him that he carried all the cares and concerns of the people to the Lord. Exodus 28 verse 30 And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and Thummim and they shall be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before the Lord.

Thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the people of Israel on his heart before the Lord regularly. I don't think he means judgment here in the sense of condemnation but rather in the sense of determination.

[26 : 44] The Urim and the Thummim were used and thank God he didn't include how they were used because you know we'd all be trying to make these at home, right? So we don't know how they were used but they were two stones that were used for decision making in matters of national crisis.

A king could consult the Urim and Thummim to Lord shall we go to the right or to the left will you be with us in this battle or not? And so in this sense when the high priest bears the Urim and Thummim on his heart he's bearing the greatest concerns of God's people before the Lord.

What mattered most to God's people their high priest bears closest to his heart and as he approaches God on the day of atonement he comes not just with the people and their sins on his shoulders but he comes with their concerns on his heart.

And then he wears that golden headplate with the dedication message on it reminding him that he bore the responsibility of making Israel right with their God.

He is the one who's been declared holy to bring the blood of the sacrifice before God. So verse 36 in Exodus 28 you shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it like the engraving of a signet holy to the Lord and you shall fasten it on the turban by a cord of blue and it shall be on the front of the turban it shall be on Aaron's forehead and Aaron shall bear what?

[28 : 12] Any guilt from the holy things that the people of Israel consecrate as their holy gifts it shall regularly be on his forehead that they may be accepted before the Lord that they the people may be accepted before the Lord Aaron and all of his descendant high priests did not come before God in their own righteousness but in the righteousness that they have been clothed with by God himself it is because he's been set apart as high priest that he is holy to the Lord and so it is he and only he that is allowed to come on Yom Kippur day of atonement and in these clothes in this outfit he is acceptable to God therefore what he offers on behalf of God's people is acceptable to God if the gifts are offered by him the gifts are accepted he could deal with the guilt of their sins because he is holy to the Lord that is what he bore and it was a mighty load but Aaron's priesthood and Melchizedek's priesthood were both incomplete in and of themselves they lacked the ability to take care of sins once and for all he bore their names he bore their cares he bore their guilt but he had to do it again and again and again for our names to be born before God for our cares to be met by God for our guilt to be finally and fully done with by God we needed another priest a greater priest to come and that's number three

Jesus Christ the greater priest the Bible is very clear that the priesthoods of Melchizedek and Aaron have come to an end and that's all because they were always only pointing forward to our greater priest the Lord Jesus Jesus Christ is first of all the greater Melchizedek he's the greater Melchizedek as Hebrews 7 said Jesus or rather yeah Jesus was the yet unborn prototype for Melchizedek that's what the writer of the Hebrews meant when he said that Melchizedek is resembling the son of God he continues a priest forever Melchizedek is patterned after Jesus who hasn't been born yet he's pointing forward and he was given to us to be a picture of ways in which Jesus would serve as our greater high priest so what did we learn about Melchizedek king of righteousness king of peace right oh beloved think of Jesus the true king of righteousness who is righteous by his own life think of Jesus the king of peace who brings final and full shalom wholeness completeness and peace between God and man think of the lineage of our savior born of the virgin appointed by God not by genetics

Jesus is the greater Melchizedek who blesses his people he blesses his people by sacrificing his own flesh and blood and then giving us bread and wine as we meet together with him so that we would never forget the sacrifice he's the greater Melchizedek but he is secondly the greater Aaron the greater high priest who intercedes for his people both at his death and at his resurrection but even right now before our heavenly father so look now to Hebrews chapter 5 let me show you three things that were true about the priests of Aaron that are also true about Jesus three S's solidarity sympathy and selection Hebrews chapter 5 and verse 1 the author of the Hebrews he's making clear if you think I'm making this connection up between Jesus and the priests well he just read Hebrews he did all the hard work I'm just telling you what he said he says the earthly priests were marked by this first of all earthly priests like Aaron and his sons were marked by solidarity with God's people they're one with God's people

Hebrews chapter 5 verse 1 for every high priest chosen from among men he's a man like us is appointed to act on behalf of men like us in relation to God not like us to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins we needed a man the second word sympathy these earthly priests were marked by sympathy for God's people verse 2 he can deal gently with the ignorant and the wayward since he himself is beset with weakness he's just a man because of this he's obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people he's not superhuman he's a man like us he's set apart to that office but he can have sympathy with us because he's like us we needed not just a man but we needed an understanding man thirdly earthly priests were selected by God for his people verse 4 says no one takes this honor for himself but only when called by God just as Aaron was we needed a qualified man and what was true of these earthly priests is so greatly true of our heavenly priest our Lord Jesus he goes in reverse order he says first of all the greater priest was selected by God for God's people verse 5 so also Christ so also right this is true about the earthly priest well let me tell you about Jesus so also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest but was appointed by him who said from Psalm 2 you're my son today I've begotten you verse 6 as he says also in another place

Psalm 110 you are a priest forever after the order of who Melchizedek he's getting back in the picture so the greater priest was selected by God for God's people he's ultimately qualified to be our great high priest the greater priest priest has sympathy for God's people verse 7 in the days of his flesh Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to him who was able to save him from death and he was heard because of his reverence oh we have a high priest who ultimately understands what it is to be human for he himself is human he knows what it is to live on this earth and the greater priest stands in solidarity with God's people verse 8 although he was a son he learned obedience it doesn't mean that he disobeyed and had to obey it means he remember how Adam was put into the garden and had to learn obedience and he chose disobedience well the second Adam Jesus had to come and learn obedience he was given laws to obey and unlike the first Adam he obeyed them all he learned obedience in this sense through what he suffered and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek there he is again so we have an ultimately qualified ultimately understanding true and perfect man to represent us one with us because he's in his human nature like us so this Jesus did all that God required of mankind and in taking on human flesh stands in absolute solidarity with us and when Christ came when Jesus came and took up his ministry he didn't need to be dressed up in fancy smocks and turbans and head plates because as Hebrews says in verse 26 of chapter 7 he is a high priest holy innocent unstained separated from sinners for in and of himself he is exalted above the heavens he was in himself what all the smocks and head plates and chest purses were pointing at

[36 : 27] Jesus fulfilled all of these things therefore he was able to do the true bearing work of the high priest clothed in his own perfect righteousness and not just in some outfit Christ our greater priest bore our sins he was ultimately holy to the Lord did he bear your sins?

can you say like Peter said he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree this is a personal statement can you make that statement?

I'm not asking if you believe it's true or false I'm saying can you say of yourself he bore my sins he's my representative before God Christ our greater high priest bears our concerns he carries them on his heart you can only say this if you're in Christ Peter would go on and write humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he might exalt you casting all your what?

all your cares all your anxieties on him because he cares for you it matters to him if you belong to this high priest then you know that he bears all of your concerns on his heart before the Father Christ our greater priest bears our names before God the Father he bears them on his shoulders just as the high priest bore the names of Israel on his heart and on his shoulders so Jesus bore our names on his heart and his shoulders as he hung on that wooden cross does he bear your name?

does Jesus himself bear your name on his heart and on his shoulders? sometimes we sing before the throne of God above I have a strong and perfect plea a great high priest whose name is love who ever lives and pleads for me my name is graven on his hands my name is written on his heart I know that while in heaven he stands no tongue can bid me thence depart why?

[38 : 40] because Christ our great high priest has made atonement on that greater day of atonement that greater Yom Kippur that last Passover that first Easter our true high priest who was the ultimate sacrifice for sins as he hung upon that cross the greater priest came to fulfill what Aaron's priesthood could only point to what Melchizedek's priesthood could only point to Hebrews chapter 7 verse 23 the former priests all those other priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office they died but he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever consequently as a result of this he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them there's a two and there's a four you've got to go to God through Christ for intercession to be made this is the only way to get there his priestly intercession and his blessing were not just a one time thing they go on forever

Jesus lives forever consequently he's able to save to the uttermost he doesn't save part way and expect you to do the rest he doesn't save today but maybe not tomorrow he saves to the uttermost when God saves he saves and so both the sons of Aaron and Melchizedek are serving here to point forward to the ultimate greater priest who is Jesus himself the one who was born in the Bethlehem and laid in the manger yes but who then lived this perfect life and whose priestly work did not end with his death nor his resurrection that carries on now our high priest in heaven forever interceding and blessing interceding and blessing and all of us need him there I don't care who you are if you're here today you need him there and I'll tell you why because we all have the same two problems guilt and weakness it doesn't matter who you are you've got a problem with guilt and you've got a problem with weakness you are guilty before God and you're too weak to do anything about it we sin therefore we are legally guilty before God we need someone to intercede for us we fail we cannot live perfect lives that we need to live in order to be pleasing to God therefore we need blessing guilt and weakness are two biggest problems but this is why

Jesus came the greater priest solves the two big problems you have first of all let me talk about guilt I'll talk about guilt for you if you're not a Christian yet and then I'll talk about guilt for you if you are a Christian first if you're not a Christian you know for sure you're not a Christian or you're not sure you're in or out with the Lord I'm speaking to you if you're not a Christian Christ's presence as priest before God is the only way to take care of your guilt ultimately Hebrews 7.25 again this is the only way to deal with your guilt before God consequently he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them the inescapable reality is that the only way to be right with God forever is to draw near to God through his priest

Jesus that is why Jesus said I am the way he did not say I am a way I am the way the truth the life no one comes to the Father but through me just as only the high priest could enter into the holy of holies on earth only the greater priest can enter the holy of holies in heaven and here's the thing he's there and he invites you to join him to be seated with him on his priestly throne but you simply must deal with your guilt I'm not speaking here about your guilty feelings and whether you feel guilty or not I'm just saying if you drive down the road speeding you're breaking the law whether a policeman catches you or not whether you feel bad or good about it doesn't matter you're guilty and whatever your sins are they make you in a standing of guilt before God I'm talking here about your legal guilt your forensic guilt and you need to be pronounced clean you need to have your guilt taken away you need the guilt of your sins carried off into the wilderness you have to have all of your sins atoned for by ultimate sacrifice you need a sacrifice to be made that will last forever have you drawn near to God through his priest Jesus there are no other there are no other options the only way to be right with God is through his son you cannot try harder to be right with God the only way to deal with guilt is to give the guilt to Christ let the one who is holy to the Lord make the sacrifice on your behalf and make you right with God does he bear your name on his heart now if you are a Christian that doesn't mean you don't feel guilty if you're already a Christian

Christ's presence before God as greater priest takes care of your guilt currently if somebody comes along and tells you Christians don't sin they either don't know Christians or they're a liar or they're both because those of us who are Christians know we still sin oh we hate our sins we despise them sometimes we can't believe we're still sinning the way that we are sinning we want to be done with sin forever but we're frail and we're guilty before God we need a high priest before God just as much today as the hour in which we were saved 1 John chapter 2 if anyone does sin we have what an advocate with the Father we've got one standing on our behalf we've got one like a good defense lawyer who's not going to say oh he did this he tried really hard here he's just going to point to his own wounds and say I suffered the penalty has been paid that's been taken care of Christian when you sin every time even if you've been sinning for decades even if you've been falling into that same sin if you keep going back to Christ you will find there a sympathetic high priest our greater priest points to his cross wounds looks you in the eye and he says Christian

[45 : 35] Christian I died for that sin too holy to the Lord is written all over Jesus and so we confess our sins as Christians daily we come to God and we're believing that what Christ did was enough for all of our sin all of our guilt no matter how long we live you know as we get older some of us start to realize this is really just an opportunity to sin more come Lord Jesus but we've got 1 John 1 9 if we confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness it's because I've got a high priest in heaven it's because he's there on my behalf God is just he's not going to punish sins twice and God is faithful he's going to hear the prayers of his people and he's going to continue to forgive and forgive and forgive all of you you must go to the greater high priest that's the only way you'll deal with your guilt it's the only way you will deal with your guilt as a Christian it's the only way you'll deal with your guilt for the first time as someone coming to God through Christ you must go to the high priest and deal with your guilt that's our guilt what about our weakness if you're not a Christian

Christ's presence before God is the greater priest it takes care of your weakness to come to him did you know you were too weak to get to God did you know you don't have enough in you when you feel too weak to come to God remember Hebrews 9 24 for Christ has entered not into holy places made with hands not into some physical temple in Jerusalem but Christ has entered not into holy places made with hands which are copies of the true things but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf there's his mission I stand unashamed in the presence of God forever on your behalf he has gone my unbelieving friend he's gone where you are too weak to go and he's gone there on your behalf he has done everything that needs to be done for you to be saved nothing remains except for you to believe that and to act on that he is there he is accepted before God he is there on your behalf if you will believe on him if you will trust on him the greater priest has taken care of everything why would you not flee to him

I can't think of a single good reason what do you think the world is going to give you that Christ will not give you what do you think what riches are tempting you to stay away from God when God himself is the author of all that is good all that is lovely all that is wonderful when God promises life and the world promise life only one can deliver and God is the one who delivers he delivers eternally but it must be by faith in Jesus you must believe you must come to him in your weakness you must believe that he has taken care of all of your sin all of your guilt you cannot be too weak to come to God you can only be too strong to come to God you've got to admit that weakness stop trying and start trusting and you know this is true for Christians too his presence before God for the Christian Christ's presence before God as greater priest takes care of our weakness to stay with God when you feel too weak to stay the course remember

Romans 8 34 who is to condemn Christ Jesus is the one who died more than that who was raised who is at the right hand of God who indeed is interceding for us that's priestly language Satan accused Job of following God for the money Satan accused Joshua the priest of being too spiritually dirty to serve God Satan is going to accuse you of all the similar kinds of things but the living Jesus is interceding for you before God right now who on earth or off earth for that matter can condemn you when Satan tempts me to despair and tells me of the guilt within upward I look and see him there who made an end of soul is counted free for God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me look on him pardon me

I get the pardon as he looks on the high priest the greater priest has done it he's made a way for the spiritually weak to get to glory we praise God that Jesus is not just some mere man who dressed up in funny clothes and carried the symbolic golden scepter but rather he's the real thing the real thing the greater priest the greatest priest the true priest the one that all the other priests were pointing to all those other priests were hinting at all the all the pomp and dress and circumstance of Melchizedek and Aaron and his sons that was all pointing forward to him that baby laid in the manger who would become the greater priest our salvation no wonder the angel would tell the shepherds for unto you is born this day in the city of

[51 : 35] David a savior who is Christ the Lord our great high priest Jesus the savior of the world oh friends turn to him and live let's pray together and so we thank you our Lord for all that you have done for us we feel like we know so little of your greatness but we praise you and thank you for being our interceder the one who makes intercession for us for being the one who blesses we pray that every soul here would know what it is to love God through Christ make it so by the power of your spirit and your great great grace you're the God who answers prayer so we entrust this prayer to you with full confidence in Jesus name amen