

# The Greater High Priest – Psalm 110

*The Strong Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ - #3*

**Introduction** – Last time we considered the gospel of King Jesus as interpreted throughout the New Testament’s application of Psalm 110. His reign was foreshadowed by Melchizedek who was “*king of righteousness*” and “*king of peace*” (Heb 7:1-2). But Melchizedek was more than a king. He was priest of the Most High God as well. And Psalm 110 is also interpreted throughout the New Testament to reveal that Jesus was “*a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.*” This greater High Priest is our Priest and He is able to save to the uttermost. And that means He is able to save *you* to the uttermost.

**Entering Into This High Priesthood** (Heb 5:1-10) – Priests are “*appointed for men in things pertaining to God*” (v1). That is, a priest is a mediator between God and man as well as between man and God. Verses 1-4 show that the Levitical priesthood was a compassionate priesthood, serving those who “*are ignorant and going astray*” in their sins. Ignorance occurs for want of diligent attendance to what God requires, and those who wander astray are those seduced and turned from the straight paths of holy obedience (John Owen). These priests did not assign their position to themselves. They were called and appointed by God (v4).

**The Greater High Priesthood** – Christ was also appointed by God, but not according to the Levitical line (that was fading away). In Psalm 2 (quoted in v5), God’s statement that He had begotten Christ is assigned to the priestly work of Christ. He is begotten from the dead (His resurrection, see Acts 13:33), ascended into heaven and become our High Priest. In Psalm 110 (quoted in v6), God ordains Christ to that priesthood of another order.

**The Way for Christ** – Christ did not have to offer up sacrifices for Himself, but He did offer up prayers “*with vehement cries and tears...*” (v7). In the Garden of Gethsemane, He sweat blood and cried tears and asked if there was any way for this cup to pass from Him. While He was about to experience a horrible death, as He suffered on the cross, His greatest cry was, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” The eternal fellowship of the Father with the Son was cut off because of our sin which He bore for us. Christ experienced a divine desertion, something no one would ever face. He was without sin, but He became sinful, full of sin, our sin, and bore the just wrath of God for it (2 Cor 5:21). His righteousness would not be imputed to us until our sin was imputed to Him. God took Jesus through death by the resurrection but did not avoid His death in the process. And this proves that there is no other way by which a man can be saved (Acts 4:12).

**Your Will Be Done** – When Jesus said these words and followed through, He “*learned obedience*” and was “*perfected*” (vv8-9). He learned obedience, not from a previous condition of disobedience, but from an untested obedience; He was perfected not from a previous condition of imperfection, but from an untested perfection. And all of this was the greatest act of love in the history of the human race. We learn what love is here. Emotionally, Christ did not want to obey, but that did not make His obedience or His love less sincere; it was the most sincere act of love imaginable. And having been perfected, He became the author of our eternal salvation (9). If you have obeyed Him (in faith, closing with Christ), then that salvation cannot be undone by anything you can or will do.

**The Greatness of the New High Priest** (Heb 7:25-28) – Chapter 7 discusses this Melchizedek-priesthood in more detail. Verses 11-19 notes the inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood and in vv 20-24 contrasts that priesthood with Christ’s, showing His to be immeasurably superior. Concluding, the writer says, “*Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them*” (v25). The word “uttermost” in Greek means “utterly, completely, perfectly.” When Christ saves, there is nothing left to be done except the application of what He has done by the Holy Spirit. His priesthood never changes because He never dies or retires from office. And He never ceases praying for you at the right hand of God.

**A Fitting High Priest** – He is separate from sinners and higher than the heavens (v26) which is exactly what we need. His sacrifice is once for all and never needs to be repeated because His sacrifice was no shadow of things to come. His was the real deal.

**He Has Perfected Forever Those Who are Being Sanctified** (Heb 10:11-14) – Alluding again to Psalm 110, our justification and ongoing sanctification are declared, promised, and sealed. Christ has perfected forever those who are imperfect. Your justification is done and your sanctification rests on that. Every honest Christian knows they fall short all the time. But your sanctification is not resting on you; it rests on the Perfected One. That is why our sanctification must be based on gratitude and thanksgiving and not on guilt or merit – as though your sanctification was at all connected to your standing before God. Our sanctification often feels like an impossible, hard work. But listen to Psalm 110, “*He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head*” (v7). Jesus did not declare on the cross, “*It is begun...*” He cried out, “*It is FINISHED!*” and everything else is just cleaning up the mess. People who have been justified do not go back and make their home in the mess. The “religious man” worries that given such freedom, he would go sin up a storm. But true Christians who know their salvation is disconnected from their performance are Christians who learn to gratefully and joyfully perform – and no one else learns this.