

Lecture 8 – Hebrews 7-10: The Priesthood of Christ

Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever. Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people--that is, their brothers--even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. Hebrews 7:3-7

Key Terms

External problem, internal problem, guilt & the remedy for guilt, Melchizedek, tabernacle, sacrifice & obedience, atonement

Lecture Objectives

- Outline in review the historical context of the first hearers
- Identify the problem of guilt: the biblical perspective and our culture’s perspective
- Describe the relationship between guilt and the OT tabernacle and sacrificial system
- Explore implications of the extensive teaching on the tabernacle and the sacrificial system for today’s Christian life and ministry

Preliminary Questions

- Many people today struggle under the weight of guilt. How might you help these people develop a biblical perspective on guilt and release from guilt?
- Many people today have totally discounted guilt as a legitimate feeling and so have no struggle with guilt. How might you help these people develop a biblical perspective on guilt and release from guilt?

Hebrews 7-10: The Priesthood of Christ

I. Backgrounds and Review

A. Church situation then

1. External problems

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Internal problems

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. The problem of guilt; longing for Judaism’s appealing cure? (9:9, 14)

4. The sensory appeal of Old Testament ritual

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

5. The mental appeal of the annual rhythm (confession and repentance)

- a. _____
- b. _____

6. Reply: No need of ritual or annual atonement

B. Hearing the message today

C. The disappearance of guilt

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

D. Illustration: The case of Katherine Powers

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

E. Result: Pastors provide a remedy few think they need

F. Jesus: A priest superior to Melchizedek

G. The flow of thought in Hebrews

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

H. Review of Melchizedek: history, name, timelessness.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

I. Jesus is like Melchizedek (7:3-7)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

J. Melchizedek and Jesus superior to Aaronic priesthood

1. Old order could not attain its goal
2. Problem: Its connection with law
3. Jesus' priesthood predicted, guaranteed by God's oath
4. Jesus the guarantor of better covenant (7:21)

K. Jesus is superior to Aaronic priesthood in several ontological and economic areas (7:24-28)

1. One priest
2. Never dies
3. Saves completely
4. Intercedes
5. A pure sacrifice
6. Once for all
7. Offered himself
8. Consecrated forever

Question/Answer

- Could you explain the sacrificial system? Are you saying that the Jews would wait around until they could sacrifice once a year?
- If the law is perfect, how did it need to be improved upon (see Psalm 119)
- Did they really put a rope around a priest's ankle in case they died while making sacrifice?

II. Jesus' Superior Ministry in Tabernacle (8 - 9)

A. He serves in true tabernacle (8:1-6)

1. _____
2. _____

B. He enacts a superior covenant (8:7-13)

1. _____
2. _____

C. Inadequacy of tabernacle worship (9:1-10)

1. Atonement
2. Access
3. Clear conscience

D. Jesus provides what a priest should (9:11-14)

E. Optional aside: Jesus' death to seal the covenant (9:16-22)

F. Jesus, the final, complete sacrifice (9:23-28)

1. Locus:
2. Number:
3. Efficacy:
4. Other comparisons to Aaron:
5. Therefore: we must rest in the completed work of Jesus Christ!

G. Application and illustration: tent or Super Bowl

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Question/Answer

- How do the Catholics interpret the once for all sacrifice in light of the mass?
- In light of the finished work of Christ, how do we understand our role as a royal priesthood?
- In what sense do we "imitate Christ"?
- What does it mean to have "the law written on our hearts"? How does it come to us?
- In what sense is this a struggle or "our effort"?
- Paul admonishes us not to take our freedom as license under the new system. Is it not the same as the OT?
- How does Hebrews get these insights? Should we all be doing this sort of thing?

III. Sacrifice and Obedience (10:1-18)

A. Recapitulation (10:1-4)

B. Christ came to obey. (5-10)

1. Jesus a model of obedience:
2. Implied critique of abuse of sacrificial system. It failed to atone and failed to reform. (see 1 Sam 15, Is. 1:10-17, Jer. 7:21-23, Ps. 51:16-17.)
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

C. Comparison of Jesus and priests: "Sitting"

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

D. Sin covered completely and removed progressively, 10:14

E. Multiple benefits for the believer