

2. Christ, Our High Priest

Jesus—the King of kings—is to reign forever. 2 Samuel 7:13 teaches: “ 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” In Zechariah 6:12-13, we learn that the Branch would build the temple of Jehovah and would sit and rule upon his throne. Peace would be between the king and priest, for both priest and king would be one, the branch, sitting upon one throne:

12 Tell him this is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the Lord. 13 It is he who will build the temple of the Lord, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.'

Jeremiah 23:5-6 teaches that the Branch is “A King who will reign wisely:”

5 "The days are coming," declares the Lord,
"when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch,
a King who will reign wisely
and do what is just and right in the land.

The passage continues:

This is the name by which he will be called:
The Lord Our Righteousness.

Jesus became both King and Priest on his throne in the temple of Jehovah. Heb 4:14 teaches clearly that Jesus is High Priest: “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.”

Christ, a Better High Priest

Christ is a better high priest than any other is, because he sits eternally at the right hand of God and serves in the true sanctuary. Heb 8:1-2 teaches:

8 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

Christ is a better high priest because he is able to sympathize with our weaknesses according to Hebrews 4:15-16:

15 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. 16 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.

Christ is a better high priest because God, his father, appointed him. Hebrews 5:5-6 teaches:

5 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 have become your Father."

6 And he says in another place,
"You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek." .

As a better high priest, Jesus is an anchor for our souls. Hebrews 6:19 teaches: "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain. Verse 20 concludes: "Where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:28 teaches that Christ is a perfect high priest forever: "28 For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever."

Christ, At Once the High Priest and Sacrifice

Jesus shed his own blood as the sacrifice for our sins. In this way, he was at once high priest and sacrifice. Heb. 9:12-14 reads:

12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. 14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Jesus died for once, offering the sacrifice for all. Hebrews 9:25-26a teaches:

Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. 26 Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world.

He offered this sacrifice of his blood once for all according to Hebrews 9:26b-28:

But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

The sacrifice that was once for all came "at the end of the ages" which is past tense. "He will appear a second time . . . to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him," is future tense.

Conclusion

That Christ is high priest forever parallels the fact that Christ is King forever. The dilemma of all millennialists (pre-, post-, trans-) is that in their doctrine Christ cannot be high priest eternally and not be on his eternal throne. The two—King and priest—abide now and forever in the temple of Jehovah. In the first lesson, the King was to build the house of God and establish a kingdom that

would remain forever (2 Samuel 7:11-14). In this current lesson, the root of David was to build a temple of Jehovah from where he would sit on his throne and be a priest forever. Christ said in Revelation 3: 12: "12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God." Revelation 7:15 describes our relationship in the temple:

And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore,

"they are before the throne of God

and serve him day and night in his temple ;

and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.

In Revelation 21:22, we find that the temple is really the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb: "22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple."

Christians are both part of the temple of God and priests in service in that temple. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:4-5, "4 As you come to him, the living Stone – rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him – 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a **spiritual house** to be a **holy priesthood**, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. [Emphasis added.]

Study Questions from the Scriptures

1. 2 Samuel 7:13: How long will the throne of his kingdom last?
2. Zech 6:12-13: Who will build the temple of the Lord? Where will they sit?
3. Jeremiah 23:5-6: What is the name of the Branch?
4. Heb 4:14: Who is the great high priest?
5. Heb 8:1-2: Where is Jesus the high priest now sitting?
6. Hebrews 4:15-16: Who is able to sympathize with us? What do we approach? What do we find there?
7. Hebrews 5:5-6: After what order is Christ priest? How long will he be priest?
8. Hebrews 6:19-20: Who enters the inner sanctuary?
9. Hebrews 7:28: For how long has Christ been made perfect?
10. Heb. 9:12-14: What does the blood of Christ cleanse? Whom do we serve?
11. Hebrews 9:25-26a: How many times did Christ enter heaven to offer himself for our sins?
12. Hebrews 9:26b-28: When did he offer himself? What does man face after he dies? When will Christ bring salvation?
13. Revelation 3: Who will be a pillar in the temple of God?
14. Revelation 7:15: Who will be before the throne of God?
15. Revelation 21:22-23: Who are the temple in the heavenly city?
16. 1 Peter 2:4-5: Who are living stones? Into what are they built? What will they be? What kind of sacrifices do they offer?