

Seated at the Right Hand of the Throne

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[0 : 00] We're going to be in Hebrews chapter 8 tonight.

! First lesson in chapter 8. And we're studying, of course, the epistle to the Hebrews, the superiority of Christ in all things.

Since the inception of our study, of the book of Hebrews, and this is lesson 25, we have mentioned a number of times the New Covenant.

We're going to do so in the context of Hebrews chapter 8. That may be an omen. I don't know.

You may ask, why are we taking such a long time to go through this section? The answer is that it doesn't get any more important with this as to our redemption in Christ.

[1 : 07] And you may recall that last time, we studied in depth the superiority of Christ as the eternal high priest compared to the temporary and earthly service of the Arianic or Levitical priesthood.

Those two words, by the way, can be used interchangeably. The fact that we're spending such a great length of time on the priesthood of Christ is both God-honoring and vital to our spiritual growth.

If Christ is not at this moment at the right hand of the Father interceding for us, then we are miserably lost and destined for an eternity in hell.

But as we have seen, Christ, our high priest, is seated in the heavenly realm pleading our case before the Father and in response to any charges leveled against us by the deceiver, Satan himself. And that doesn't necessarily mean that Satan is lying when he levels those charges. He may be. But he may also be telling the truth. And that's when our advocate goes into action.

[2 : 37] That word advocate in the language of the New Testament is the same for defense attorney. So today we will begin an end-depth study of the New Covenant from the 8th chapter of Hebrews.

Interestingly, the Holy Spirit adds two more reasons. Christ was a superior priesthood and those two reasons are his seat is at the right hand of the Father and he dwells in the heavenly sanctuary. So the first thing we're going to look at is the seat of Christ. That may sound a little unimportant, but in reality it is vitally important.

Hebrews 8.1 Now the main point in what has been said is this, we have such a high priest who has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens.

Why did the Holy Spirit deem it important to speak of the seat of Christ in the heavenly places?

Well, I think the primary reason, the essential reason, and remember this is a Jewish congregation or a congregation of former Jews, he did so because the earthly tabernacle and later temple were devoid of seats.

[4 : 20] There wasn't any place to sit down. The Levitical priests never sat down when they were carrying on their priestly duties in the tabernacle and later the temple because their work of making sacrifice for the sins of the people was never finished.

There was always somebody waiting in the wings with another animal or a dove to sacrifice and since the sacrifices were not permanent, the work of the earthly priest was never permanently effective.

The sacrifices had to be repeated over and over again. For that reason, the earthly priests and even the earthly high priest never rested from their labors.

Since their work was never finished and there was always another sin to atone for, while they were on duty, seats were of no value. Now, eventually, they went off duty and were replaced by the next guy up to bat.

But God did not provide seating in his blueprint for the construction of the tabernacle and later temple. I love reading about the tabernacle.

[5 : 51] It was animal skins and talks about it in the book of Leviticus. Very particular how to pull this off. Now, we do hear of one seat in the earthly holy of holies.

It's called the mercy seat. But this was not a seat for men. The earthly high priest himself entered this area once a year on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, to offer sacrifices.

And it was an elaborate ceremony. It took 24 hours. And the mercy seat in the holy of holies on earth represented God's throne and God's very special presence.

For the earthly priest to sit on that would have been the height of blasphemy and probably would have resulted in instant death. Much like Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, when they offered strange fire.

They got intoxicated and offered strange fire to the fire of God. It says fire came out and consumed them. It also says and Aaron was silent.

[7 : 19] What do you say? There's my two boys. When Jesus offered His own body as the perfect sacrifice, He entered into the heavenly holy of holies and very poignantly, though passed over many times, the Scriptures say, and He sat down.

Now He did not do that because He was tired. He didn't do it because He desired rest.

He did so because He was qualified to do so and His atoning work was done. You may recall and we just celebrated Easter and the resurrection and the crucifixion and the resurrection and from the cross the Lord cried out, It is finished.

Tetelestai. And that was a cry of accomplishment. It actually was used in that world as a banking term and it meant the debt is paid in full.

There's no more debt. He had done what all of the accumulated efforts of the earthly priests had done under the old covenant for 1600 years and couldn't pull it off as hard as they tried.

[8 : 59] Jesus had accomplished the forgiveness of sins for His people for all time, down to our day and beyond.

We don't have much longer before the Lord returns. And the people of God were now reconciled to the Father. The Father's wrath toward them had been satisfied, quashed.

God was satisfied with the sacrifice that had been offered. What's the main proof that God the Father was satisfied with everything Jesus had done in Passion Week and the proof is He's alive.

He raised Him from the dead. And that was the Father's stamp of approval that this is acceptable to me. This is what I wanted.

And the Lord Jesus accomplished all of this with one sacrifice. it was the sacrifice of Himself and that means it is a sacrifice that is worthy for time and eternity.

[10 : 22] And when it comes to our salvation, the Lord Jesus has taken His seat. That is a beautiful way to graphically display it is done.

I'm going to sit down. It's done. He has accomplished everything that needs to be accomplished for the redemption of mankind.

Please bear this thought, okay? Nothing need be added to Christ's sacrifice and nothing can be added to Christ's sacrifice.

stands alone. Now, what may go down as a monstrous absurdity of all time, people continually try to add things to the sacrifice of Christ.

They teach that it is Christ plus good works or Christ and a membership in the right church or Christ, but you have to make sure you're giving the correct amount of money and so on.

[11 : 37] Some churches in denomination have whole lists of things. And when we try to add something to the sacrifice of Christ that is called sin, nothing can or need be added because his sacrifice in and of itself is perfect in all respects.

Absolute perfection. Now, this fact should have been joyous news to the Hebrew congregation receiving this message.

As Jews, they had labored for millennia under the sacrificial system. And it was an assembly line.

I don't know if you've ever seen it, but the hill outside the temple, the blood flowed down that hill. It was red. At the base of that hill was the kidron, the stream.

It flowed red. There was a passage when Jesus was going toward Calvary and he said he stepped over the kidron and he looked down and he saw that red flow, I'm convinced, and he knew that wouldn't be necessary much longer.

[13:04] But these guys had been under this system for millennia, 1600 years. Day after day, the earthly priests had entered the temple and offered the blood of bulls and goats rams and rams and other things to make atonement for the sins of the people.

They even bought their animals in the temple from the high priest. It was a moneymaker. Imagine the thrill of these Jews to hear now in this congregation confession that by one sacrifice, a final sacrifice, the work of redemption was finished, forgiveness had been accomplished, and it need not nor can it be repeated.

Can't be repeated. the high priest could only sit down and did so at the right hand of God the Father.

Now the Bible mentions frequently the right hand of the throne, and that's important. The right hand of the monarch represented a place of extreme honor.

It was a place of exaltation, a place of power. One derived honor from being allowed to stand at the right hand of the king.

[14:52] But to sit at the right hand of the king was an unbelievably supreme honor. And Christ of course sat down at the right hand of the most honored and holy throne in the universe.

And as amazing as that sounds, and it is amazing, listen to John in the book of Revelation as he quotes the Lord Jesus in Revelation 3.21, he who overcomes, and overcomers are true believers, he who overcomes, I will grant him to sit down with me, that's Jesus talking, on my throne as I have also overcome and sat down with my father on his throne.

The saved of eternity are going to be allowed to sit with Jesus on his throne to the right hand of the father.

That's got to be a big throne. all the saved of eternity are going to be sitting on that thing. Now, not being Jewish believers, we cannot appreciate the great comfort these words had to the saved in this Hebrew congregation.

When a Jew was saved and joined a local Christian church, church, he was through with the Jews in his area.

[16:35] And they were through with him. Even if he was not yet saved, but merely was visiting and attending a local church, if the Jews found out, they would excommunicate him immediately from all Jewish society.

Everything. This meant no temple worship, no visiting the local synagogue, loss of social standing, loss of job, loss of family.

Often, when a Jew became a follower of Christ, the family actually held a funeral. They'd have a casket. It would be lowered into the ground.

It would be buried. By this act, the family was declaring this former member of our family who's abandoned the true faith, which to them was Judaism, embraced this false faith, which is not false, it's Christianity.

this member is now dead to us. We've buried him, even though the coffin was empty. I'm told that in a lot of places, Orthodox Jews do this to this day.

[18:05] They'll have a funeral. So the writer of Hebrews is reminding the congregation that though they may have been deprived of earthly temple services in Jerusalem, they have not been deprived of the heavenly services going on in the temple where God reigns.

And that's much greater, much more important. They had the true, perfect, eternal priest in the real, heavenly, holy of holies, of which the earthly one was only a poor and soon to pass away type.

And it would pass away in 70 AD when the general Titus Vaspasian, later emperor, destroyed the temple, totally obliterated it.

One of the most beautiful, though humanly tragic, pictures of being at God's right hand occurred when Stephen was being martyred.

In Acts 7.55, inspired Scripture tells us, Stephen gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God.

[19:36] And then he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Stephen sees all this and he makes a comment about it to the guys that are killing him.

Why was Jesus not seated at the Father's right hand? Being seated is the expression of our finished redemption.

But when a child of God falls into trouble, I'm sure it only applies to me in here, none of you guys, but when we fall into trouble, and Stephen was in a lot of trouble, he'd been stoned to death, Jesus

stands up.

Why? That is the position of action and advocacy. Immediately his power and energy are brought to bear on behalf of his beloved that is in trouble down here on earth.

He is seated as our redeemer, but stands as our helper and advocate. And Stephen looks up and he's being martyred for his faith and Jesus is standing, ready to receive him.

[20 : 52] How interesting when Jesus stood before the high priest and the high priest said, are you the Messiah, the Christ of God? And he said, I am. He used the most sacred name in Scripture, Yahweh.

He said, I am. And hence forth you will see me seated at the right hand of the power, meaning the Father. And then you'll see me coming back on the clouds of heaven to take that high priest to judgment.

As I was preparing this portion of the study, I was struck by the thought, how many times have my sinful actions caused the master to rise from his throne to intercede with the Father on my behalf. An even more staggering thought for all of us is that Jesus is not through with us. Aren't you glad? Here we have the glorified Son of God, God Most High, still preoccupied with ministering to and for his children.

And I'll remind you that even in the crucifixion scene, it appears that at least two of those Roman soldiers were saved in the midst of that.

[22 : 21] One being the centurion. Surely this was the Son of God. Jesus was still ministering. The thief was saved. Still ministering. Some in the church believe our sins will ultimately cause Jesus to cast us back into a state of lost us.

Nothing could be further from the truth. He ever lives to make intercession for us. He is always serving His bride here on earth as she even now is being ready to be with her husband and king. So Jesus is a better high priest than His earthly counterpart because He is seated at the right hand of God the Father.

He is also superior because the sanctuary where He dwells is superior to the earthly counterpart. A minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, not man, for every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices so it is necessary that this high priest, that's Jesus, also have something to offer.

You ever think in terms of Jesus offering something to the Father? Now if He were on earth He would not be a priest at all since there are those who offer the gifts according to the law.

[23 : 58] Jesus wasn't a Levite. He only came from Judah. But now He serves and even Moses was warned by God when He was about to wreck the tabernacle.

He was the sanctuary in which Jesus is presently a minister is infinitely superior to the one which the Levitical priest ministered at.

Infinitely. The tabernacle was made of animal skins. The temple of gold and cedar had white marble floors. The heavenly temple is infinitely more beautiful than these earthly counterparts.

We can't even imagine. Paul said, I've been there, I can't describe it. It's not permitted for me to talk about it. That's what he said. It is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, not man.

Unlike the earthly temple, the heavenly can never be destroyed, it will never crumble, it will never deteriorate. The true temple is the one that is permanently fixed in heaven.

[25 : 17] This is also true of our world compared to the heavenly realm. Our world is passing away. We see more and more evidence of that daily as our world groans for the return of the creator God who made it.

Things on this earth pass away. The old covenant passed away when the new covenant came. the sacrifices passed away when the perfect sacrifice was offered.

Our earthly worship is a mere shadow of what our heavenly worship will consist of. One of the reasons I love to read the prayers being offered by the saints in heaven in the book of Revelation, they're just the most beautiful prayers.

And there we will experience true worship. And then Hebrews 8 3 says this, For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices so it's necessary that this high priest also have something to offer.

When Jesus was on the cross, He cried out, It is finished. But was it? In the sense of redemption accomplished, the work was finished.

[26 : 35] Christ, but we know Jesus is not now floating on a cloud, strumming a harp, and neither will we one day. That's good news. He's quite busy carrying on His priestly!

ministry. He still is presenting gifts to the Father. So what gifts can Jesus possibly present to the Heavenly Father?

He presents to Him the gifts of praise and worship and thanksgiving of the people of God redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Our praises. Are you a praising, worshiping, thankful member of the body of Christ? If you are, these are the gifts Jesus is presenting to the Father.

If you're not engaged in that in a serious way, then Jesus has nothing to present to the Father on your behalf. Now, please mark this thought down.

[27 : 40] None of us can praise God or thank Him or commit or dedicate ourselves in worship, obedience, and service to Him apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Under the old covenant, no Hebrew could offer a gift of sacrifice to God except through a priest. Under the new covenant, no Christian can offer a gift of praise or worship to the Father except through our high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot come to God apart from Christ. We cannot confess sin apart from Christ. We cannot seek forgiveness apart from Christ. We cannot worship and serve God, the Father apart from Christ.

We can do nothing apart from Christ. I mean, just how important is He? I've had guys tell me, I believe in God, I just don't believe in Jesus. You're in serious trouble.

[28 : 43] Deep trouble. Colossians 3.17, whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

And then Ephesians 5.20, always give thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. So Jesus, we see Him here, He continues to minister on our behalf because He continually brings our gifts of worship, praise, repentance, dedication, and thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father.

and I hope that will serve to motivate us to even greater deeds of worship and praise and good works. As we now know, these are presented to the Father as gifts from our High Priest.

He's the one who died in our place so that we might live in and through Him. Now, I'm going to do something a bit different tonight. I'm going to stop at this point, though I have a few more comments.

verses. We'll get to those next time in Hebrews 8, 4, and 5. But these verses are directly connected to the rest of our study of the New Covenant, so we're going to save them for next time.

[30 : 05] But I close with the words of A.W. Tozer, great man of God, with the Lord, who said, it is impossible to be too thankful to God.

That sounds like Tozer doesn't stand. It's impossible to be too thankful. You can't offer too much thanks for what the Lord is accomplishing in your life.

So, give Jesus a gift of praise this week, and be assured He will present that to the Father. Be assured of that. Let's close with prayer.

Thank You, Lord, for Your grace, Your mercy. Thank You, Lord, for the great hope we have centered on the Lord Jesus Christ, a soon-returning King, a warrior, a defense attorney, an intercessor.

So many thanks. Lord, we live in a darkening world, but Jesus is light, and the light is coming.

[31 : 08] We know this, and we thank You for that assurance. In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you.