

20-0112p Transcript

20-0112p - *Jesus as High Priest, Steve Cain*

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Jesus, High Priest and the New Covenant

Transcript (0:00 - 38:41)

Transcript

Preacher: Steve Cain

(0:00) I have been in Hebrews and Hebrews talks about the, our High Priest, and we know (0:12) who our High Priest is. Our High Priest is Jesus, and we know where he is. He's in (0:18) heaven interceding for us, and he is in the Holy of Holies, in the presence of (0:23) God.

And there he is being the ambassador for us, so to speak. The scriptures point (0:36) out that Jesus is an ambassador and a High Priest. And when we look at the (0:41) concept of what an ambassador is, we know that an ambassador is one who is sent.

(0:46) When we have ambassadors going out from the United States, we know that they have (0:52) a purpose. They have a power to present the things, but they cannot go beyond, (1:01) like an agency. If you know anything about agencies, a person who has been (1:08) assigned as a salesman or something, he has an agency, he can only go so far.

He (1:14) only has so much power to bind the company and to make promises and what (1:21) have you for the company. And Jesus is our agent, sent by God to us. We know that (1:31) Jesus was incarnated into this world and became and took on the form of a man and (1:38) human being.

He's one of us, and we know about that situation because we see his (1:45) birth recorded for us in Matthew and also in Luke. And we know the events that (1:51) took place during that period of time and how Mary was approached by God and (1:55) told her that, or the angel told her that she was the most high exalted among God (2:00) at this time, and that she would be the mother of God's Son. And we know that (2:06) Jesus is the fulfillment of a promise, a promise that was made to Abram.

And he is (2:14) the fulfillment of that promise, and we have the records to reflect the fact (2:20) that Jesus is the product and of his promise or God's promise to Abraham. And (2:28) if you reflect the promise of Abraham, when God came to Abraham, Abraham was in (2:36) Ur of Chaldea. He was just an individual, just like you and I. He was an individual (2:42) that perhaps, as I likened it the other day, suppose God came to Cleveland and (2:49) we're all part of this Cleveland area, and

out of all the people in Cleveland, (2:54) he singles out one person and says, I'm going to make you a great nation.

I'm (3:02) going to make out of you a huge nation, and through your seed, I'm going to bless (3:10) the world. And so the only thing Abraham had to do was to take God up on it, and to (3:21) believe him, and to believe that it was going to come to pass. Well, we don't have (3:26) time to rehearse all the history of Abraham and all the events that took (3:30) place in Abraham, and we know that God worked wonders in, wonderfully, in (3:36) Abraham's life, and brought him to the point where he had great faith in God.

(3:43) Where before he just, in passing, saying, I'll take you on. And I think that's (3:48) exactly what Abraham basically did. That's my concept, that when God came to (3:57) Abraham and said, I'll make of you a great nation, and I'll make of you a great (4:02) your seed will be numberless, and I will bless the world through you.

And Abraham (4:07) perhaps went to Sarah, his wife, and said, I just had this proposition given to me. I (4:13) think I'm going to take him on, adventurous soul. And he didn't have (4:18) anything other to go by.

He had no excuse, because he wasn't worshipping God at that (4:23) time. He was worshipping whatever that goddess was, that the idol. At that time, (4:32) he was a part of that community.

And if you weren't worshipping that idol, you (4:37) weren't a part of that community. So God brought him out, made him a believer in (4:42) him, and we know this story about Isaac, and how that he was told to offer Isaac (4:49) on an altar. And the scriptures point out to us that Abraham believed that God (4:56) was going to keep his promise through his seed, and Isaac was his (5:01) only child at that point, besides Ishmael.

And we know that Ishmael was off (5:07) somewhere else, in another part of the world, doing his thing. And so we know (5:14) that Abraham had great faith. And it is the faith that we must have, in order to (5:22) be able to come before God.

We must believe that he is, and that he's a (5:26) rewarder of those who diligently seek him. And not only that, but we must (5:31) believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of living God, and that he is the (5:34) fulfillment of that promise to Abraham. We've got to come to the place in our (5:39) lives where we believe in God.

And we've got to believe that he is the creator of (5:45) all the world. And as we listen to a poem in Athens, which I love that (5:56) particular part of it, Acts the 17th chapter, where he talks about he's (6:00) standing there before the individuals there, and telling them about God, and (6:05) who he is, and that he is the one who determines where we live, what we do, and (6:13) various other things that he talks about. So we've got to come to the point where (6:17) we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that he is the (6:21) promise.

And so as we reflect upon these things, we now are going to accept the (6:28) idea that Jesus is our high priest. And we have a lot to go into when we deal (6:38) with all the things. But Paul, the writer of Hebrews, points out to us that we have (6:46) the same amount of things to go by with Jesus.

And how that as he was walking (6:52) here on the face of the earth, that God proved that Jesus was the Christ, the Son (6:58) of the living God, through the signs, wonders, and miracles that Jesus

(7:03) performed, and that God performed through Jesus, the Holy Spirit performed through (7:07) Jesus. We know that Peter on the day of Pentecost stands up and talks to the (7:13) crowd there on the day of Pentecost, and he's telling them that they crucified (7:18) the Christ. And Peter says for the same thing, that by signs, wonders, and miracles (7:25) God proved that he was the Christ, and that he is the Messiah, and that you (7:31) crucified him.

And of course they're pricked to the heart, and they want to (7:36) believe, and they want to escape the wrath of God at this point. And so they (7:42) say, what must we do in order to be saved? Well, what must they do in order to be (7:47) saved? They have to believe that Jesus is the Christ. They have to believe that God (7:52) has ordained him to be the High Priest.

They have to believe that Jesus has the (7:56) power to forgive their sins, and that Jesus can present them before God (8:02) without sin, without blemish. We have to believe that. And so it is with that in (8:13) mind that we must look at the fact that Jesus is the High Priest.

Now I really (8:24) would like to deal with many, many things, but the thing that I want to just boil (8:31) down to is the Melchizedek concept. Who is Melchizedek, and why does God make a (8:43) high priest after the order of Melchizedek? Let's take a look at chapter (8:51) five of Hebrews and see what it is all about. Now we know that God had high (8:58) priests throughout the years, throughout the ages, and throughout the history of (9:03) the Israelites.

And we know that Melchizedek is introduced to us during (9:11) Abraham's lifetime. And we know that Abraham's nephew has been carried away (9:17) in that by marauders, and he's captive now. And then Abraham goes after his (9:28) nephew and tries to redeem him or to recapture him and bring him back home.

And (9:35) he's successful in doing so. We see the account being given in Genesis. And so (9:42) as we see the the account come out, Abraham now has not only rescued his (9:48) nephew, but he's also got some plunder.

He's got loot. He took their riches that (9:56) they were getting, and he took it away from them and made it his. And so he's (10:00) coming back, and as he's coming back home, an individual by the name of (10:05) Melchizedek comes out and greets him.

And Melchizedek then is presented to us as a (10:15) priest, a high priest. And we're looking at that and we're trying to determine. We (10:25) don't know anything about Melchizedek.

Did Abraham know something about (10:29) Melchizedek? I don't know if Abraham knew anything about Melchizedek except for (10:34) the fact that he was from Salem. And so as we reflect about that, and of course (10:42) that's what Jerusalem becomes. Salem becomes Jerusalem.

But he is coming out to (10:49) Abraham, and we see that Abraham is blessed by Melchizedek. And we know that (10:58) the Scriptures point out to us that the greater blesses the (11:02) lesser. And so we're pointed out that Melchizedek is greater in stature and (11:10) greater in God's eyes spiritually than Abraham.

And Melchizedek (11:18) blesses him. And not only that, that Abraham pays tithes to him. And so the (11:27) point that is being made here in the Hebrew letter is, who is Melchizedek? We (11:35) don't know.

By what order did he become a high priest? We don't know. What happened (11:44) to him? We don't know. Continues to live though, according to this, doesn't he? (11:51) But I've never met him, never seen him, don't have any record of him.

So he must (11:55) have died somewhere along the way. But we know that Melchizedek was a high (12:02) priest. And so as we reflect upon these things, let's take a look at chapter 5 (12:11) and as he tries to point out to us what Melchizedek is about.

And then he's also (12:17) going to compare Jesus's priesthood after the order of the Aaronic priesthood, the (12:24) Levitical priesthood out of the Mosaic law. And we know that God has ordained (12:30) and authorized the Levites to be the tribe from which the priesthood is going (12:37) to come from. And we know that at the very outset of the establishment of the (12:42) Mosaic law, that God ordains Aaron, Moses's brother, to be a high priest.

And (12:49) that all future high priests would come from Aaron's lineage particularly, as (12:56) opposed to Levi. Levi is the general family of Aaron. Aaron is a (13:04) descendant of the child Levi of Abraham or Jacob's sons.

Jacob had 12 sons and (13:14) they comprised the 12 tribes of Israel. And Levi was one of the 12 tribes. And (13:20) God selected Levi to be the tribe from which the priesthood would come from.

And (13:27) so at this time they had to start keeping track of the lineages of Aaron and the (13:33) descendants of Aaron so that they would know who would, out of all of the (13:37) Levitical tribe, would be authorized to be the high priest. And so as we reflect (13:43) upon that, why is Jesus greater and why does God select Jesus to be a high (13:51) priest over Aaron after the order of Melchizedek? I've said all that and I (14:02) haven't given you the bail yet. So let's take a look at chapter 5. (14:08) Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them (14:15) in matters related to God, to offer gifts, sacrifices for sins.

He is able to deal (14:23) gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray since he himself is (14:28) subject to weakness. This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins as (14:35) well as for the sins of the people. In other words, the priest is a human being (14:43) and the priest is subject to sinning just as those of his religious affiliation.

So (14:52) they're all subject to sinning and so he has to offer sacrifices not only for (14:57) those of his tribe but also for himself. And this is why he has to offer (15:03) sacrifices for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people. Verse 4. Notice (15:08) now, and this is one of the points that must be taken, and don't forget this (15:15) point, verse 4. If you've got a colored pen or whatever and you want to (15:19) mark your Bible, mark this.

No one, no one takes this honor upon himself. What honor? (15:28) The honor of being a high priest. No one takes it upon themselves.

So when God (15:39) comes to Jesus and on an oath says you're going to be a high priest after (15:44) the order of Melchizedek forever, it was God who ordained Jesus. Jesus didn't take (15:53) it upon himself. Aaron didn't take it upon himself, even though the Levitical (15:59) tribe and the various others wondered why Aaron was going to be the high (16:06) priest.

They accused him of favoritism and that's the reason why we had the rod (16:12) that budded. They took all the twelve tribes and put the rods in a room and the (16:19) rods that were in the room,

they came back the next day and there was one that (16:23) had budded and all the rest of them were still the way they were. Whose rod was (16:28) budded? It was Aaron's and this was God's way of showing that God chose him, not (16:35) Moses.

There was no family ties here involved. So Aaron is the one. God ordained (16:46) him.

So no one takes this honor upon himself. He must be called by God just as (16:54) Aaron was. So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a (17:01) high priest.

But God did say to him, you are my son. Today I have become your (17:08) father. And he says in another place, you are a priest forever in the order of (17:17) Melchizedek.

Notice the words in the phrase, in the order of Melchizedek. So (17:26) what do we know about Melchizedek? We're about to learn a little bit about (17:30) Melchizedek. During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and (17:37) petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death.

(17:43) And he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he (17:49) learned obedience from what he suffered and once made perfect. He became the (17:56) source of eternal salvation for all who obeyed him and was designated, designated (18:04) by whom? He was designated by God to be a high priest in the order of (18:11) Melchizedek.

Then he goes on, he says, we have much to say about this, but it is (18:19) hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you (18:25) ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's (18:30) Word all over again. You need milk and solid food.

Anyone who lives on milk, being (18:38) still an infant, is not acquainted with the teachings about righteousness, but (18:44) should, but solid food is for the mature who by constant use have trained (18:51) themselves to distinguish good from evil. Now notice there, that's the phrase that (18:57) I picked up on when I was studying this. Does someone just automatically know how (19:05) to distinguish good from evil? No, you just don't automatically know how to do (19:14) that.

You have to be trained, you have to be taught. Your parents should be (19:19) teaching you on how to distinguish good from evil, but the scriptures point these (19:24) out to us too, don't they? And that was the purpose of the Law of Moses. The Law of (19:30) Moses was designed to try to help them distinguish good from evil, but the (19:37) majority of the people did not use the Law of Moses that way.

And that was one of (19:42) the reasons why the sacrifices were offered, is because people would sin and (19:51) the way that they get back into good graces of God was to go and offer this (19:55) sacrifice that was designated for that particular sin. But God says, I do not (20:02) desire, I do not desire sacrifices and offerings. Why? Because he hopes that you (20:12) won't use them.

He's hoping you won't need them. He's hoping that you will learn how (20:18) to distinguish good from evil. And that's what he wants.

And that's what he (20:25) wants from us. He wants us to learn how to distinguish good from evil. But in (20:30) the meantime, he's setting up a new system under which you and I are going to (20:36) live.

A commandment, a new commandment, which is introduced to us in chapter 8 (20:42) and reiterated in chapter 10. But we're not looking at that particular promise at (20:48) this point. We want to just basically see how Jesus was established to be our High (20:56) Priest and how he's accomplishing it.

And that he is our High Priest and he is (21:00) interceding for us and he is working on our sins and he's helping us and he's (21:05) able to present us before God without spot, without blemish. How does God or (21:11) Jesus do this? It's under the new commandment that he is operating. He is (21:17) able to present us before God without spot and without blemish.

And it's by the (21:23) fact that we become his disciples. It's by the fact that he allowed himself to be (21:30) crucified and to come under the clutches of Satan and death. It is because he is (21:37) able, and I'm just giving you a thumbnail sketch about how Jesus (21:41) accomplishes this.

And so as he is in hell, he's under the clutches of Satan, (21:48) but Satan cannot hold him. He can hold you and me because we have sinned, but he (21:55) cannot hold Jesus because Jesus has not sinned. So then by the power of God, God (22:03) brings him forth from the dead and therefore he is no longer under the (22:10) powers of the law.

He's no longer under the condemning powers of the law and (22:16) therefore the law cannot condemn him anymore and or even try to condemn him. (22:21) So he's giving you and me the opportunity to be in him and to be free (22:26) from that condemnation ourselves. But we have to become a disciple of Jesus.

And so (22:32) Jesus is now in heaven and he's interceding for us. How did he become the (22:37) high priest? And those are the things that we're looking at and want to (22:43) develop a little bit further. Let's go over now to chapter 7. Let's pick up in (23:00) chapter 6 in verse 13.

When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no (23:07) one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself saying, I will surely (23:13) bless you and give you many descendants. And so after waiting patiently, Abraham (23:18) received what was promised. Men swear by someone greater than themselves and the (23:25) oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all arguments.

So he's talking (23:30) about you and me. When we make a deal, whenever we come together and strike (23:35) hands to agree about something, sometimes we'll say on my mother's Bible or on my (23:41) mother's grave or whatever we're saying that we seal that oath with something (23:46) that is greater than us, on the board's table, whatever. We're using something (23:52) else.

But since God has no other person greater than him, because God wanted to (24:01) make the unchangeable nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what (24:06) was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. In verse 18 now, God did this so (24:12) that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who (24:18) have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. (24:25) We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

It enters the (24:33) inner sanctuary behind the curtain where Jesus who went before us has entered on (24:40) our behalf. He has become a high priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. (24:47) Before we go any further than this, I find this very interesting.

The writer (24:52) of Hebrew letter is saying and including himself, we, and I'm looking at (24:59) verse 18 again, God did this so that by two unchangeable things in which it is (25:06) impossible for God to lie, we, and he's including himself, who have fled to take (25:13) hold of the hope. What has he fled from? He's fleeing from the law of Moses. He's (25:21) fleeing from the condemnation that the law has over him to take hold of a hope.

(25:30) And what is the hope? The hope is eternal salvation with God to be able to (25:37) anticipate being with God eternally in heaven when we die or at the judgment day (25:44) at the end of the world. We have fled to take hold of this hope that is offered (25:52) to us and may be greatly encouraged. In other words, this is something that they (25:58) are really hanging their hat on.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm (26:06) and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain where Jesus who went (26:12) before us has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever in the (26:20) order of Melchizedek.

So let's continue on and I'm giving you the whole bail I (26:30) guess. This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God, most high. He met (26:41) Abram returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him and Abram gave him (26:46) a tenth of everything.

First his name means king of righteousness, that's (26:52) Melchizedek. Then also king of Salem means king of peace. Without father or (26:59) mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like (27:04) the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

Now don't take that completely (27:12) literally. All he's telling us is that unlike the Levitical priesthood, he (27:18) didn't get his priesthood by virtue of birth line. He did not get his priesthood (27:25) by virtue of just assuming it.

He got his priesthood because God authorized (27:34) him to be priest. He is a priest and no one's going to take it away from him. So (27:45) he looks and he says, just think how great Melchizedek was.

Even the patriarch (27:52) Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder. Now the law requires the descendants of (27:57) Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people, that is their (28:03) brothers. Even though their brothers are descended from Abraham, this man however (28:09) did not trace his descendant from Levi.

In other words, he didn't have birth (28:15) right. He got it because God ordained him and God wanted him to be a priest. And (28:22) yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.

(28:27) And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. In other words (28:33) Melchizedek is far greater than Abraham. In the one case the tenth is (28:38) collected by men who die, but in the other case by him who is declared to be (28:43) living.

One might even say that Levi who collects the tenth paid the tenth (28:48) through Abraham because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body (28:54) of his ancestor. If perfection, and here we go, if perfection could have been (29:02) attained through the Levitical priesthood, for on the basis of the law (29:07) was given to the people, why was there still need for another priest to come? (29:15) One in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron. For when there is a (29:24) change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law.

There's a (29:29) principle. Underline that principle. If you're going to change your high priest (29:36) and the way in which he's selected, you've got to have a reason. And he does (29:44) have a reason. And he's going to tell us what that reason is. He of whom these (29:51) things were said belonged to a different tribe.

He's talking about Jesus. Jesus was (29:56) not of the tribe of Levi. He was from the tribe of Benjamin, the descendant of (30:02) David.

And he'll point that out for us. He was from a different tribe and no one (30:08) from that tribe has ever served at the altar. For it is clear that our Lord (30:13) descended from Judah.

And in regards to that tribe, Moses said nothing about (30:19) priests. And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like (30:25) Melchizedek appears, one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation (30:32) as to his ancestry, but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. For (30:41) it is declared you are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.

And so we (30:48) want to reflect on the fact that Jesus died. He was resurrected. And he is (30:55) ascended into heaven.

And what is the case of his lifespan? He's not going to die (31:04) again. He's going to live forever. And if he's going to live forever, he's going to (31:13) be our high priest for all the time that he's alive.

And God's not going to change (31:18) that. He is a priest forever. Just think about how great he was.

Even the (31:27) patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder. Now the law requires the (31:31) descendants of Levi who became become priests to collect a tenth from people, (31:37) that is their brothers. Even though their brothers are descended from Abraham, this (31:43) man however did not trace his descendant from Levi.

Yet he collected a tenth from (31:48) Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. And without doubt the lesser (31:52) person is blessed by the greater. In the one case the tenth collected by men who (31:57) die, put in the other case by him who is declared to be living.

One might even say (32:04) that Levi who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham because when (32:11) Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor. Notice now (32:17) he's going to make some other announcements and we don't have the time (32:21) to really delve into this. But I want you to stop and think about the (32:31) idea of the fact that Jesus is in heaven interceding for us.

I don't have the (32:39) scripture right here in front of me right now, but the scriptures point out (32:47) that Jesus is our high priest as long as he's in heaven interceding for us. The (32:56) scriptures point out that should Jesus step foot back on this earth, he ceases (33:03) to be the high priest. And that's a very very important application.

And so (33:12) individuals who think that Jerusalem has to be restored so that when Jesus comes (33:17) back he's going to reign in Jerusalem for a thousand years. He can't. Why? (33:31) Because the Melchizedek priesthood continues to reign and the Levitical (33:38) priesthood continues to reign.

He's not authorized to be a high priest here on (33:47) this earth. He's only authorized to be a high priest for us in heaven forever. (33:54) And because of this he has to have a new covenant.

A new covenant. And that (34:05) covenant is only good as long as Jesus is in heaven interceding for us. You've got to (34:17) come back and study that with me.

Okay. So the scriptures point out here in Hebrew (34:28) letter if you would continue to read on you will see the statement that he (34:32) cannot be a high priest here on earth. He cannot step foot on this earth again (34:42) and continue to be a high priest for us.

Why? Because there are high priests (34:49) already in place for different systems. He is in the heaven interceding for us. (35:03) He's providing us with the opportunity to have the forgiveness of our sins and (35:09) that's the reason why it points out in Romans there is now therefore no (35:15) condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus because we have died to sin.

We (35:21) have died to law. In Romans the sixth chapter it points out to us that when we (35:28) were baptized into Christ we put him on. We died with him in that baptism to rise (35:34) to walk in a newness of life.

We have chosen to accept the new order that God (35:44) wants us to have by becoming Christians and it is through Christ that we have (35:52) the hope of eternal life with God and that we will be with God eternally in (35:58) heaven. There's no other way. No other way.

And that's why Paul says or Peter (36:07) says in Romans we're in Acts the fourth chapter there is no other name under (36:11) heaven whereby man may be saved. It is important for us to recognize that Jesus (36:20) is our high priest. He is the ambassador of God.

He is God's ambassador to us and (36:31) we are to grasp that and how on what basis are we going to grasp that? Faith. (36:45) We have to have faith that God is saving us through Jesus and that we have a hope (36:54) of eternal life with him forever and ever. We have to have faith in that.

Faith (37:06) is the very most important part for us. The Hebrew letter talks about faith (37:14) probably even greater than Romans does. The Hebrew letter even gives us examples (37:23) of individuals throughout history.

Chapter 11 gives us that. A whole myriad (37:33) of individuals who were saved by faith who were looking for a city of course (37:38) square and they knew they had not received it here on this earth but they (37:45) are going to get it in heaven wherever Jesus is. That's what we have to accept.

(37:53) If there's anyone here this evening that needs to grab a hold of that which God (38:02) is offering us through Jesus and you want to do it tonight. We have everything (38:08) ready for you. The water, the garments and we would be more than happy to help you (38:14) become a child of God and a brother or sister to Jesus.

And Jesus in the Hebrew (38:24) letter there says he's going to be proud to be your brother. If you need to respond (38:31) to that, if you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, if you (38:35) believe that God has worked out our salvation this way, won't you come? (38:41) Well together we stand and sing the song of the cross.