**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

**Sermon**

**Priesthood of the Believer**

*Pastor ~ Matthew Diehl*

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(Unless otherwise noted, NAS is quoted – New American Standard Bible)

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This sermon will show the transition from the High Priest in the Old Testament to prophetic Jesus, the Messiah/ Christ . . . God in the flesh, who was sacrificed for our sins and rose from the grave . . . demonstrating His defeat over physical death to ascend to heaven, and we await His prophetic return.

**Hebrews 3:1**

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling,

consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;

**What is a High Priest? [Function and Location]**

**1. Function**

Chapter 4 of Leviticus details the functions of the High Priest, which was to officiate over sin offerings and sacrifice animals for himself and the sins of the people. So, the High Priest was the one God positioned to perform these functions for himself and the people. The High Priest was the one that God placed in office to make the sacrifices for sin. Aaron and his sons were the first high priests established under the Law of Moses.

**Exodus. 40:12-15**

12 "Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. 13 "You shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest to Me. 14 "You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them; 15 and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations."

**Exodus 28:1** "Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me-- Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. 2 "You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.

We need to see that God intended for the Law’s sacrificial system the High Priest officiated was just a **tutor** that pointed to the Messiah (Galatians 3:24). These sacrifices and burnt offerings were never intended by God to remove the penalty for sin (Hebrew chapters 9-10). The Law pointed a person to God’s love, grace and faith. Thereby, encouraging a person to surrender their heart (Circumcised heart Deuteronomy 30:6) to God so He could indwell their heart and direct their lives.

**2. Location**

**Mount Moriah = Salem**

**Salem = Jerusalem**

**Zion = City of David = Threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite = Temple Site**

Before Aaron, there was Melchizedek, who was the king and priest at Salem where Abraham paid tithes to God (Genesis 14). Salem is the name of Jerusalem at that time.

**Genesis 14:18-19** And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. 19 He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;

Be it known that Salem is also known as Moriah, which is the place where God directed Abraham to take his son Isaac to be an offering. Two thousand years later, this location is the same site for the Cross of Jesus. . . the perfect sacrificial offering. God did not go through with the sacrifice of Isaac and has never directed a human sacrifice like the pagans commit. God used Abraham to demonstrate that his faith made him righteous (Genesis 15:6). In Genesis 22:14, Abraham labels the land of Moriah “in the mount”. So, the location of Salem is also known as Mount Moriah.

**Genesis 22:2** He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you."

This is the place of sacrifice for a sin offering to God. The sacrifice function of this location is unique in human history. From Abram, in about 2000 B.C. to Christ, to today (2021) . . . we have 4000 years that this earthly location has been the geographic point of two faiths and an additional fake claim . . . as the location where God’s relationship with humanity is uniquely focused.

For the Hebrew people, the significance of this tithing through Melchizedek to God is that Abraham was the father of the Hebrew people. Thus, Melchizedek was kind-of a go-between Abraham and God. . . a mediator. This is significant regarding Jesus Christ. In addition, Abram received a blessing through Melchizedek. Again, Jesus Christ was “THE Blessing” to all humanity. The book of Hebrews highlights this relationship. Remember, God established His covenant with Abraham (Genesis 3) and his descendants, and all the families of the earth (nations).

**Genesis 22:14-18**

14 Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the **mount** of the LORD it will be provided." 15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

**Salem = Jerusalem**

Furthermore, scholars identify Salem as Jerusalem. (Also see Josephus Antiquities of the Jews, I, x, 2; VII, iii, 2.) Josephus was a 1st century Jewish historian writing for the Romans, who identified Jerusalem to be Salem in the time of Abraham.

Salem (Jerusalem/Mount Moriah) is the place where the Temple was eventually built, housing the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was eventually housed. King David moved the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem . . . further recognizing the site where God chose to build His permanent Temple in replacement of the portable tabernacle the Hebrews used during the Exodus. The Jerusalem Temple was a place set aside by God to be the visible location where there was a focus upon Him and His covenant with not only His chosen people but all humanity.

Remember that God directed Abram to leave his homeland and go to a place that He will show Him (Genesis 12). Once there, God established His covenant of faith with Abraham and proclaimed the covenant to encompass all the nations (Genesis 12:3). God said that Abraham was made to be in right-standing with Him by Abraham’s faith (Romans 4:3, Genesis 15:6, Hebrews 11:8).

**Zion = Salem = Jerusalem**

In Psalm 76:2, Salem and Zion are linked. Zion is another name for Salem. . . thus, Jerusalem. “His tabernacle is in Salem; His dwelling place also is in Zion”. At first, Salem and Zion (fortress or city of David) were two distinct sites but very close together. As Jerusalem expanded, the city walls encompassed David’s fortress. Therefore, the two location’s names came to identify the same place. It was after David died that the Temple was built.

**God Directs David to Build an Altar**

**on “The Threshing floor of Ornan” (also known as Mount Moriah)**

**But. . . God Directed David Not to Build the Jerusalem Temple**

**1Chronicles 21:18** Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up and build an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

**1Chronicles 21:22** Then David said to Ornan, "Give me the site of this threshing floor, that I may build on it an altar to the LORD; for the full price you shall give it to me, that the plague may be restrained from the people."

**1Chronicles 21:28** At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he offered sacrifice there.

**1 Chronicles 28:2-3** Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Listen to me, my brethren and my people; I had intended to build a permanent home for the ark of the covenant of the LORD and for the footstool of our God. So, I had made preparations to build it. 3 "But God said to me,

[Read 1 Chronicles 17 that David references.]

[Also recorded in 2 Samuel 7]

'You shall not build a house for My name because you are a man of war and have shed blood.' . . . 1 Chronicles 28:6 "He said to me, Your son Solomon is the one who shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him to be a son to Me, and I will be a father to him.

**So . . . Salem, Mount Moriah, City of David, Zion, Ornan’s Threshing Floor and Jerusalem are all the same place.**

**Solomon Builds the Temple (about 957 B.C.)**

**2 Chronicles 3:1** Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (2 Chr. 3:1 NAU)

In 1 Kings 5, we receive the beginning account of King Solomon building the House of God, (Temple) in Jerusalem.

**All In One . . . Temple High Priest in The Life of Jesus and Sacrifice on The Cross**

**In Jesus’ lifetime,** the high priest was the presiding officer of the Sanhedrin. We read the names of Annas and Caiaphas. Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas and High Priest before his term (John 18:13, from AD 6 to 15). Jesus is brought before Annas first after his arrest.

When we read the book of Hebrews, we see that Jesus Christ is the High Priest that takes the place of the existing High Priest serving in the Temple. Jesus also replaces the entire Temple System. God’s Holy Spirit indwells every Believer. Forgiveness of sin takes place in the Believer’s heart.

The Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant that was housed in the Holy of Holies in the Temple is where the High Priest dropped the blood of sacrifice animals for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus, the superior High Priest, made a one-time offering with His blood spilt on the Cross replacing the entire Temple-High-Priest system. This is the main message of the book of Hebrews.

**Hebrews 3:1** Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;

4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**5:5** So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"; 6 just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

**5:9** And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, 10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

**6:19** This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

**7:1** For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. 3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually.

**7:15** And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, 16 who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is attested of Him, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

**7:26** For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.

**9:11** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; 12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Key passages in the book of Hebrews identifies Jesus Christ as the superior High Priest that only needed to make one perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people. Obviously, the Cross was that sacrifice.

Therefore, there is not any need for anyone to go through a priestly system to perform works in order for the penalty of sin to be removed. It is by the Believer’s individual faith they are saved (Ephesians 2:8). Scripture tells us that there is one mediator between God and people - Jesus Christ/Messiah (1 Timothy 2:5).

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises (Hebrews 8:6). (See also Hebrews 9:15, 12:24)

**Therefore, every person who surrenders to Christ is a priest for themselves (1 Peter 2:4-10; Hebrews 10:8-17).**

**1 Peter 2:4-10**

4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

6 For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,"

8 and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

**Hebrews 10:8-17**

8 After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them" (which are offered according to the Law),

9 then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second.

10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

13 waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying,

16 "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND ON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM," He then says,

17 "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

We know throughout history many organizations and governments have claimed to be the mediator between God and humanity. They do this by mediating and directing religious works and membership qualifications to their group. . . at the same time claiming to be the only ones God has authorized to officiate His plan of salvation and maintaining salvation. Obviously, water-baptism and the Lord’s Supper are two practices faith groups will claim they have exclusive governance.

It is so obvious to see these fraudulent claims once Scripture is read. Example, the reading of Ephesian 2:8-9. . .*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.* Then, there is Jesus telling Nicodemus he has to be reborn of Spirit. Spiritual-baptism is a God-act. It is hard to show and officiate over spirit-baptism as compared to water-baptism. Even with this challenge, I have seen charlatan TV preachers attempt to claim power of salvation and spirit-baptism.

Without going into detail of the most egregious ones, it is sufficient to say. . . that if anyone makes this claim, they are in contradiction of Scripture, God’s Word and salvation plan for His creation. These false claims always take Scripture ‘out of context’ to support their claim. Repeat, there is **not** anyreligious group, person, institution, or charismatic movement through which God mediates His salvation-grace, other than His own incarnation as Jesus Christ. Did Jesus say from the Cross: “Look at me . . . my sacrifice is insufficient. . . you have to add to my work to be saved”? Jesus said from the Cross, “It is finished!” (John 19:30).

**AMEN**



