

Christ the High Priest

Part 1

Speaker	Arend Remmers
Place	Plumstead Conference
Duration	01:04:32
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/ar052/christ-the-high-priest

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[00:00:00] It is on my heart tonight to meditate a little on the subject of the High Priest, Christ, the High Priest. It is one of the major subjects of this epistle to the Hebrews, and it is, I think, a subject not easily to be understood, and not often, perhaps, well understood.

Before I enter into this subject, I would answer or find an answer to the question, who is a priest and what is a priest, in general, before we can understand what the High Priest is.

[00:01:03] And in order to that, I would read two verses from the Old Testament, from the book of Exodus.

And in Exodus 19, we find two verses, first in verse 6, which treat the subject of the priesthood in general.

In verse, Exodus 19, verse 6, verse 7, verse 5 already, And ye shall be mine own position out of all the peoples, for all the earth is mine, [00:02:01] and ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

These are the words which thou shalt speak to the children of Israel. And then in the same chapter, verse 22, And the priests also who come near to Jehovah shall hallow themselves, lest Jehovah break forth on them.

We see here, for the first time in scripture, that God intended to make a whole nation priests.

A strange thought, we say, but it is not strange at all, because we find the realization in ourselves, All who are believers in the Lord Jesus, in this day, today, in our era, have been made priests.

[00:03:05] How often have we sung on the continent, I don't know whether it's in the British, in the English hymn book, to him who loves us and gave himself for us, Revelation 1, verse 5 and 6.

We sing it, who made us priests and kings.

And every believer is such a priest and king, even now, not in future, but we are even now priests and kings. And this was the intention of God with the people of Israel. He said, ye shall be a kingdom of priests. It's practically the same expression which we find in 1 Peter 2, where he says, we are a

priesthood and kings. And also in Revelation 1, verse 5, etc.

But when God uttered these words by Moses, it was only a couple of, we don't know exactly how long, how much time elapsed, [00:04:10] but it was only a short time when they fell into idolatry, turned away from the God who had delivered them from Egypt, who had made them his own people and wanted to exalt himself in this people by making them a people of kings and priests. But the flesh and Satan prevailed.

They drew the people away from God. And so, this wonderful idea of God to make priests of a whole company, of a whole people, fell to the ground.

And what happened? He chose one family, the Levites. And not even all the Levites. He chose one tribe, which was the tribe of Levi, who were the servants of the sanctuary. [00:05:08] The greater majority were simple servants, the Levites. And one family only, the family of Aaron, became priests. The eldest, always the high priest, and the rest of this one single family in the whole people of Israel, were the priests who were privileged to do what we read in verse 22.

The priests also who come near to Jehovah shall hallow themselves, lest Jehovah break forth on them. We see here the first Old Testament answer to the question, who is a priest and what is a priest? Who is a priest? They were the Levites, the family of Aaron. [00:06:01] And what is a priest?

It's a very important question even for us today. It is one who draws near to God.

A man in this world can't draw near to God. He's his enemy.

He's far away from God.

But the moment you come to the Lord Jesus and believe in him and in his precious work, the value of this work is counted to you and you are a priest. You are made a priest. You can't become a priest by your own efforts. You are made, we are all made priests. The character of this priesthood is in the first place the liberty and the ability to draw near to God.

That's priesthood.

We don't realize that all the time. [00:07:02] But it is a very dignified position.

And I think during, in the course of the ages, this fact that the position of a Christian is a dignified position in the real sense of the word. Not what man makes of it. They dignify themselves. But it is the highest dignity of a human creature to be a priest who is enabled and has also the liberty. It's two things.

To have the ability and to have the liberty to draw near to God and to be in his immediate proximity.

What a place.

That is what priesthood means. And in the New Testament, as I said, this has quite a place. It's not very often mentioned, but our worship, for example, draw near to God. [00:08:03] We always have the possibility and the occasion to draw near to God, even when we are alone. But the most dignified

occasion is really when we come together as priests.

And not only the brothers, the sisters as well. These differences in the Old Testament don't exist anymore. And we are priests who draw near to God to worship him by his son.

That is real priesthood. But it is, as we see here, connected with not only with his love, which made us priests. Him who loved us and made and gave himself for us and made us priests to God his father. But it is also the holiness of God. The consciousness that we, when we draw near, we draw near to the, if I may say so, the holiest being existing.

[00:09:07] The seraphim in the Old Testament cried continuously, holy, holy, holy, Lord God. The four living creatures in Revelation 4 do the same thing. Continuously they cry, holy, holy, holy. That is our God.

The same God who loved us and gave his son for us. In order that everybody who believes in him shall not perish but shall have eternal life. But it is the God of love and the God of light. The God of grace and the God of holiness. This is very closely connected with the fact that we are priests. We don't have to be ashamed. We don't have to say, or we don't have to say, I'm not worthy to approach God.

But very soon in Christianity, or rather Christendom, this thought did prevail.

[00:10:08] And it did not take long before the first priests in the New Testament were installed, not in the New Testament, in the time after the New Testament was accomplished. And to distinguish them from the whole company of believers or unbelievers who were only confessors. But there was again a priest who was now distinguished from other Christians, took a special position, and was, as it were, the new mediator between God and men.

Many in the same way which God introduced in the Old Testament. There, there were several priests, few priests, and one high priest. But the whole company of the people who could not draw near to God, only the priest could. So we see how these precious thoughts of God revealed in the New Testament deteriorated [00:11:07] very soon.

That priesthood, a special caste, as it were, of people, whether believers or not.

And the main thing it was that they answered to the demands of those who installed them.

And the whole thought of the priesthood was lost.

In the great churches, big churches, there's no understanding of what priesthood really means. Even in the Reformed churches where they spoke in the beginning of the general priesthood of all believers, they don't think of what just in a few words I said in the introduction. They think that everybody can have his say. That's the general priesthood. But it's not the idea at all of priesthood, that everyone has his say.

[00:12:04] But that we are privileged to draw near into the presence of God.

That is what priesthood means. It is not a special caste of people, of believers. But it is a name, a

very dignified name for every true believer who has no shame and no inhibition to draw near to the holy and only God, the highest, with freedom, with liberty of heart, because he or she, we have been made priests by Christ.

These thoughts I put before I get to the idea of the high priest. Because in the Old Testament, we know that the high priest had a very, not a fundamental, [00:13:02] but a rather strongly different position from the other priests.

The other priests were so limited in this service which was confided to them, that they were not even able to draw near into the real presence of God.

So by the way, as a footnote, we can say that the priesthood in the Old Testament is in a way a type of our priesthood today.

The high priest in Israel is in a way a type of the high priest, the Lord Jesus. But in another way, there are more contrasts between the priesthood in the Old Testament and the priesthood in the New Testament than there are similarities. It is an image, it is a type, there is no doubt about it. [00:14:01] And we shall see perhaps some of these differences. But the high priest was the only one who only once a year was permitted to enter into the holy presence of God. And for that, this is the necessity for the real understanding of the epistle to the Hebrews. We have to know the Old Testament, and especially the second, third, and fourth book of Moses. If we don't know these books in detail, we will have great difficulty in understanding this epistle to the Hebrews, which was addressed to Hebrews, that means Hebrew-speaking Jews from the country of Palestine or Israel, as it now exists, has been existing for several decades.

They knew this all by heart.

For them, there was nothing new in all the descriptions of the tabernacle, and the temple service, and the priesthood, [00:15:03] and the sacrifices, the offering, for them that was, as it were, their daily bread. For us, on the contrary, it is not, I hope at least, that this is not a general, I hope this is not a statement of general application.

For us, it is rather not so well-known and not so normal to know the Old Testament.

Therefore, forgive me if I say tonight here in the beginning of our conference, read your Bibles.

Read your Bibles, especially the young ones.

When we were young, there were no technical devices to draw us away from books.

[00:16:01] They didn't exist.

But today, it is a great danger to think I have it all in my little screen. But you don't have it all there. You can't have it all there. If you want to read the Bible, you have to have time and leisure in a positive sense. You have to go in your room and lock the door so that nothing, even not the ringing or the sound, whatever it may be of the telephone, can disturb you. And then you can read and study the Bible with prayer that the Lord may be growing greater and greater as we have sung in our hymn, the last hymn. This is a very serious thought because I hear recently, and this has caused much

concern in my heart, is a concern which has led me to much prayer that I heard that young people say, we don't read the Bible anymore. [00:17:03] We have other things which are much more interesting, which may be Christian. But if you don't know the Bible, you will be in the next difficulty which will come up in your life. You will be like in a swirl, like in a maelstrom. You will be torn down because you have no fundament for your life. It is very serious, so I turn back now. For the Jews, it was daily bread to know and speak about the priest and the high priest. They knew everything. For us, that's why I try to give a little introduction, not to forestall anything of the conference, but to give a little impression of what this idea of the high priest, which is introduced in the second chapter of the Hebrews for the first time, what it means. The high priest in the Old Testament was the only one of the whole people. Even the priests were not really privileged and had liberty to enter into the holiest place. [00:18:09] The tabernacle and later the temple consisted actually of three parts, the tabernacle and the temple actually of two parts, but the court of the tabernacle and the temple was the first place.

There was the first holy thing, the altar.

The brazen altar, the altar where the burnt offering and all the other offerings were offered to God, and then came the basin for the washing of their feet and hands, and then the second point was the holiest. The holiest, that was the first part of the tabernacle and the temple, which was not yet the dwelling place of God, the throne of God. [00:19:04] It was, as it were, the entrance. And there you had the golden altar for the incense. There you had the golden lampstand with the seven lamps, the only light in the sanctuary. It's also a very important thing. The only light in divine things can be given by the Lord Jesus and his Holy Spirit. That is the golden lampstand. Gold, the Lord Jesus, as the Son of God, and the oil in the lamps is the image of the Holy Spirit. There were no windows in the temple and in the tabernacle. There was no natural light, and this is, I hope, understandable. No natural light could enlighten the tabernacle. The inside of that place where God dwelt and where the priests were still able to enter. [00:20:03] And then the third thing was the table with the twelve showbreads, the representation of the entire people of God.

There was no image, no type of the unity of the assembly in the Old Testament. Many types of the assembly, but none of the unity. So the people of Israel were represented by twelve loaves, twelve tribes. But they were represented in their entirety, in their completion, but not in their oneness. There was not one bread. Even on the day of Pentecost, there were two loaves, Jews and the Gentiles, but no type of the oneness, although this is really a type of the assembly. And I have no doubt that in a way, these twelve loaves also speak of the complete number of all the children of God this day. [00:21:05] And when the priest entered into the holiest thing, he saw all these wonderful things. And he saw them only in the light of the golden lampstand, these seven lamps. If his light had been dimmed or extinguished, he had seen nothing.

And so it is today.

If we are not enlightened by the Holy Spirit and the love to the Lord Jesus, who is the only light in our life of believers, as believers, we will see nothing. We will only see ruins, separations, splittings, divisions, but not God's view.

He always saw what I just described, wonderful thing. But then came the veil, the curtain, between the holy place and the holiest of holies. [00:22:06] And that was where only the Ark of the Covenant, the Ark, a kind of coffin, it's true the expression, made of wood, covered with gold. And on it, the

propitiatory made of pure gold, with the mercy seat, thank you, the mercy seat with the golden cherubim on top.

And they looked downwards and saw that once a year the high priest put some of the blood of the sin offering on top of this mercy seat. That's why it is called mercy. And God said, when I see the blood, I will pass by you. This is the teaching of the tabernacle. And in this holy place, between the cherubim on the mercy seat, on the Ark of the Covenant, [00:23:04] was the throne of God in this world, which was shown by the cloud of glory, which dwelt always, one must conclude that, always above the temple as long as God dwelt there. It was a visible sign of the presence of God. And in this second part of the temple and the tabernacle, first there was the tabernacle and then they came into the country, the land of Canaan. It was only after 500 years after their entry that Solomon built the temple on the place which David was shown by God. Very instructive is this all. But in this holiest of holies, nobody was able to enter, only the high priest once a year. And each year, hundreds of times, the high priest was ever anew, because they were by death were hindered to continue. Hebrew speaks about that. [00:24:01] But then the contrast.

When the Lord Jesus came, he went, he was on the cross, he was sacrificed on that altar, this altar of burnt offering and sin offering, which was the cross. In the tabernacle it was all in glory, but in reality it was the place of shame. Where man placed the Lord Jesus on the hill of Calvary, on the place Calvary, this place of the scouts where the culprits were executed.

That's the place where the Holy One of God, our Lord, was placed, was sent to by man, showing only the absolute corruptness, corruption of the human nature, that they sent the only Holy One and Good One who had never committed any sin to that place of the culprits. [00:25:04] But then when they had accomplished all their evil thoughts and deeds, then God said, he let down, as it were, the curtain, so that no man could look into that place where the Lord was placed on the altar now. It was the same place, the cross. He didn't change his place. But the aspect is changed.

In these three hours of darkness, which no human eye could pierce, there the Lord Jesus was on the altar placed by God and offered himself as the sacrifice, the only sacrifice which could suffice to fulfill all God's desires as to sin, to our sin.

And the Lord Jesus was not only the sacrifice.

He was also the high priest who offered this sacrifice.

[00:26:05] What the high priest in the Old Testament had to repeat year by year, he did it, as we see in the Hebrews, once and for all times. By one offering he perfected all those who are being sanctified.

So the Lord Jesus as the high priest can only be understood in light of what we find about the high priest and the priest and the offerings in the Old Testament. For the Jews, again I repeat that, this was their daily bread. And for them really a curtain, the veil was torn aside that they said, well that is the fulfillment of what we have in our Bible, the Old Testament. And they believed in him and they followed him. But now in Hebrews we see that some wanted to turn back to the old things, which we have already mentioned that and it is good to ever keep that in mind, [00:27:04] that the Jews were the only people and in that time the only time in this world that men could say we had a relationship to God before the Lord Jesus came.

There was no other people. No other people in this world who could say we have a relationship as a people with God. There was none.

God says several times in the Old Testament, you alone has God chosen to make them his people and to give them his laws. And these laws they had, we have spoken of one aspect of these laws. And now the Lord Jesus came and he says, I am the end of the law. It is all over.

A new time starts.

And many Jews believed in him because they saw this is the fulfillment of all the predictions. [00:28:02] We have not spoken of the prophecies, but they were also there. The king of the Jews born in Bethlehem, Micah 5, etc.

The lamb slaughtered is Isaiah 53.

And now they believed in the Lord Jesus and many thousands. We read that in the New Testament in Acts 2, 3,000. Acts 5, there were 5,000.

Huge masses of Jews were converted and I think we can say many came along with them, who were impressed.

Chapter 6 says that. Hebrews 6 says that. They had tasted the good things, but they had not eaten.

They had seen the things.

They had experienced conversions, but they had not been converted themselves. And they and also others were now in the difficulties, the persecutions which came up, [00:29:02] in a danger to turn back to a thing of which only they could say, but that was also from God. And that was better. They wanted to turn from the truth of the Gospel, where God had revealed him completely in grace and love and holiness in Christ, and to turn back to the old things.

The old wine of which the Lord already spoke.

But that was the danger of many of the Hebrews. And then the writer of the Hebrews says, but if you really look at the Lord Jesus, you will see that he is the better high priest. Because the high priest whom you look for has to get into the holiest of holies every year.

[00:30:01] And you have only, in a way, peace for one year.

And even that, if you didn't believe, you had no peace. It was an outward thing. But Christ alone can give you peace for all eternity. That was the thing.

And that is why the Lord Jesus is presented as the true high priest. Now the Jews, the Jews had two priests whom they knew.

If I may dare to say so, to bring it to a little point.

The Jews knew one priest by experience. That's the one of whom we have been, the priesthood of

which we have been spoken, have been speaking. The high priest, with all the priests from the tribe of Levi. But every Jew also knew another priest.

[00:31:01] That was not a priest from the Hebrew people. The Hebrew people, when he was presented to us in Genesis 14, did not even exist.

But they all knew him. I'll show you why.

It is the priest Melchizedek, of whom we read in Genesis 14.

The only time in the historical books of the Old Testament where we read of this mysterious person, I dare say. It's a mysterious person. And I think intentionally.

The Holy Spirit shows us this person, Melchizedek, really in a mysterious way.

There are things which one would like to know about him. Who was his father?

Hebrews 6, 7 says, without father. [00:32:01] Who was his mother?

Hebrews 7 says, without mother. There are only three passages in the whole of Scripture where Melchizedek is mentioned. Here in Genesis 14.

And then in Psalm 110.

And then in the Hebrews chapter 5 to 7, several times. And the most detailed explanation of him is in chapter 7.

Who was his father? Nobody knows. Who was his mother? Nobody knows. When did he die? Nobody knows. When was he born? Nobody knows. So, he is intentionally described to us as a person which we cannot fully know.

And which person is there in this world who says of himself, nobody knows the son except the father.

[00:33:01] Melchizedek is also a type of the Lord Jesus.

But here, I would say, it is not as in the case of Aaron that there were more contrasts than resemblances. Here it is expressly said in the Old Testament, in Hebrews 7, compared to the Son of God.

I don't know how it says in English, but in German it says compared to the Son of God. So here, the resemblance between Melchizedek, the priest in the Old Testament, and the Lord Jesus, the high priest, assimilated to the Son of God. And Mr. Darby gives quite a note for this word, assimilated.

Melchizedek was in his characteristics assimilated to the Son of God.

[00:34:07] Abides is in direct connection with this Melchizedek. So he is assimilated, that means he is made similar to the Lord Jesus. Aaron was more in contrast, and Melchizedek is made similar. And some of these similarities we have already seen. The Son of God has no beginning of life. He has no

end of life. He is the eternal Son of the Father, in the bosom of the Father. He has no father in this sense who generated him. He has no mother at all who brought him forth. The Hebrews does not speak about the birth of the man Christ Jesus in Bethlehem. He speaks of the eternal person of the eternal Son. And of that, Melchizedek is the type.

[00:35:03] There couldn't be a higher type than a type of the eternal Son of God. Could there? No, I don't think so.

So Melchizedek is presented to us in a way, which shows already in the first time where he is described, what position he took.

When he is described in Genesis 14, it is after Abram returned from the battle of the five kings.

It says in Genesis 14, verse 17, And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after he had returned from smiting Kedor, Leoma, and all the kings that were with him into the valley of Shavi, which is the king's valley. And Melchizedek, which means king of righteousness. [00:36:03] King of Salem, which means, Salem means peace. King of righteousness, king of peace. Those are the titles the Lord Jesus will take, when he takes his kingship in the millennium before us, in front of us. And then he is characterized by the fact, the first thing is he brought out bread and wine.

Now those were, these things, these two things were at that time, normal food and drink. But we cannot but think of the fact that for us, bread and wine have taken quite a special and wonderful, marvelous connotation. The remembrance of the dead, death of our savior, bread and wine.

God gives us a type of that, that the Lord Jesus, [00:37:03] in his character as the eternal son of God, wants ever to remind us, as long as his own are in this world, that he is the one who gives bread, the true bread, and he is the one who gives the true wine to remind us of his death for sinners. But not here a sacrifice as Aaron brought it.

It is also a mysterious mention here that he only shows the things.

He does not say for what purpose. He does not say for what cause. He just shows them.

And I cannot but think that here the remembrance of our beloved Lord, the son of God who loved us and gave himself for us, is presented to us. The second thing is that in verse 19 it is said, And he blessed him, and he blessed Aaron, [00:38:02] and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heavens and earth. I cannot go into all these details. The title, The Most High God, confirms the title and the name of Melchizedek, because The Most High is one of the titles God himself will take, especially in the millennium. We see that in the Psalms, in the last books of the Psalms, especially the third, where the return of Israel to the land of promise is presented. The Most High speaks of God in one aspect of his relation with this world in the millennium.

And this Melchizedek blesses Abram.

Now in Hebrews 7, we will not come to that chapter this year, I suppose, it is said that Abram was the forefather, Isaac, Jacob, Levi, and then Aaron.

[00:39:08] So Abram, who was blessed by Melchizedek, the first priest in the Bible, was the forefather,

the forebearer, as it were, of Levi, of whom Aaron sprung. And Hebrews says, so Aaron must be, Aaron, the high priest, must be lower than Melchizedek, because it says, without contradiction, the lower is blessed by the better. And that is what we find in Hebrews. The Lord Jesus, as fulfiller of the type of Melchizedek, is better than the type of, than the person of Aaron, who in a sense was blessed via Abram by Melchizedek.

So he says, there is a high, even if you go, wish to go back to the Jewish high priest, [00:40:08] you go back to the wrong person, because there is a higher high priest, and that is the Lord Jesus. And you will relinquish the true priest, Melchizedek, for the much lower high priest, Aaron. Would that be right? No, it would not be right, because the Lord is the fulfillment not only of Aaron, but there it is more, and I repeat it, in contrast, what Aaron did was all imperfectly done, but what Melchizedek did was a perfect preview of what we find in the person of our Lord Jesus, the Son of God, the true Melchizedek.

And this is explained, if you read Hebrews 7, you will find that many, many things are in parallel to be found in Melchizedek and the Lord Jesus. [00:41:11] And these things are used to show that the Lord Jesus is more than Aaron, but he is on the same level as it were assimilated, Melchizedek is assimilated to the Lord Jesus. So the character, the order of Melchizedek is the order of the high priesthood of God, and that is what we find in Psalm 110, which shows us another mystery of this person.

Psalm 110, a psalm of David, one of the 75, David wrote half of the psalms exactly, and in this Psalm 110, [00:42:01] it is said in the first verse, Jehovah said unto my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put thine enemies as footstool of thy feet.

And then in verse 4, Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, thou art priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

And that in my eyes is the next mystery. If you realize that Abraham lived about 2000 BC, and that David lived about 1000 BC, there was a lapse of time of 1000 years between those two persons, Abraham, the forebear of the people of Israel, and David. And David uses, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, the name of Melchizedek in a way that you think everybody knew him, [00:43:08] because otherwise it would make no sense to mention a person who nobody knows would make no sense. And that is the next mystery. How come that through 1000 years from Abraham was the only person who ever saw Melchizedek? He died, naturally, he died, but he is described as a person who comes out of eternity, blesses Abraham, and goes back to eternity, and is never mentioned again, only here in Psalm 110, 1000 years later, approximately, than Abraham saw him. And that is the next mystery. And David mentions the name with so much self-understanding that you think everybody should have known him.

[00:44:02] And I am convinced that they all knew him. That the story, the history of Abraham after the battle of the kings, when he met Melchizedek and was blessed by him, was handed forth from generation to generation, from Abraham to Isaac, from Isaac to Jacob, from Jacob to his 12 sons, and there in the tribes. So all the people of Israel remembered that their father, forebear Abraham, had once had a wonderful experience to meet this king and priest who blessed him in the name of the Most High. Then David says, of the Lord Jesus, prophetically, this is a purely prophetic psalm, the Lord said to my Lord, the Lord Jesus puts this question to the Pharisees, how is it possible that David, who is the father of Messiah, [00:45:04] which they all agreed upon, can also say he is my Lord?

Because he was Messiah, son of David, and son of God at the same time. And they had no answer. And they didn't dare to ask him any more questions. But here it is said that God said to his son, to the Lord of David, who prophetically confessed him as his Lord, although he knew that he would be his own son also. The Lord Jesus is both, son of David, son of God. And then in the fourth verse, the same person is addressed, not only to sit at his right hand, also a verse which is mentioned very often in Hebrews, more than any other epistle of the New Testament, then he says, thou art priest, according to the order, after the order of Melchizedek. So we see that the Lord Jesus already in the Old Testament is identified, as it were, with this Melchizedek, [00:46:10] when he is installed as priest after the order of Melchizedek.

So every Jew who knew the Old Testament should know there is a higher priest than Aaron. And that is Melchizedek, that is Messiah. But they did not accept him. And those of the Jews who accepted the Lord Jesus as the true Melchizedek were now reminded, if you go back to Judaism, you lose the true Melchizedek, the true and eternal high priest, the perfect, the most perfect type of the Lord Jesus we find in the Old Testament in a person. Melchizedek, only mentioned this one time. So these were only a few thoughts about priesthood and especially the priesthood of Christ in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. [00:47:09] In order that we might have an enhanced understanding of what priesthood means. The Lord Jesus, when he was priest and is priest, he did two things.

What is the time? When do we have to? Nine o'clock? Simon? Nine o'clock. Thank you.

A couple of minutes. The Lord did two things. He made, as a high priest, as in the Old Testament, he made propitiation, reconciliation, atonement, which is often suppressed a little bit. But there are three passages in Hebrews and nowhere else where it is clearly said that the Lord Jesus, as high priest, made atonement. [00:48:04] The first is in Hebrews 2, the very chapter we are occupied with.

Hebrews 2. In the end of the chapter, the writer arrives at the point where he says that the Lord Jesus is the high priest, our high priest. And he says in verse 17, Hebrews 2 verse 17, The brethren are the future believers, the Jews in the first place and then ourselves.

He was made like to his brethren, those who would become his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things relating to God. And then it is said to make propitiation for the sins of the people. [00:49:07] There it is clearly said that the Lord, in his work on the cross of Calvary, acted as the high priest once a year when he went into the holiest of holies. He made propitiation. It is the act of atonement in the cross in the three hours of Calvary. We have a second passage and here in this first passage it is the fundamental statement.

In chapter 7 verse 26 it is said, For such a high priest became us, holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and become higher than the heavens.

Who has not day by day need as the high priest, first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins, then for those of the people. [00:50:07] For this he did once for all, having offered up himself. Second place, where he says that this sacrifice which the high priest in Israel had to repeat year after year, the Lord Jesus accomplished once and for all. But he did it clearly on the cross. This is the uniqueness and we see here again what I mentioned during my words that there is a contrast between the Old Testament high priest and the Lord Jesus.

And the third passage is in Hebrews 9. In Hebrews 9 verse 11 it is also said by way of contrast, but in

contrast to the Old Testament things.

[00:51:07] Christ being come as high priest of the good things to come, the future blessings. And in relation by the better and more perfect tabernacle, in contrast to the old tabernacle, not made with hand, that is not of this creation.

Nor by blood of goats and calves, all contrasts, contrast after contrast, but by his own blood. Now we turn back to verse 11, but Christ being come as high priest of the good things to come, has entered in once for all into the holy of holies, having found an eternal redemption. That was clearly on the cross and it was once and for all. But then you might say, and that is often the thought, but the Lord Jesus could not be high priest in this world. [00:52:07] It is even said in Hebrews that the Lord came from Judah of which tribe nothing is said about priesthood.

It is true. On earth Hebrews said he could not be a high priest. How can we reconcile these expressions in the same epistle? Quite simple.

We have seen that the tabernacle and the temple consisted of three different parts. The court, where the altar was, where the cross was, the holy place and the holiest of holies.

And the Lord was not crucified in the camp of Israel. He was crucified as it were on the altar in the court. [00:53:01] And the court did not belong to the camp of the people. It was already a separated place. It was, as the Lord Jesus says in John 12, when ye shall have lifted up the Son of Man from this earth. Why was that?

When was that?

When ye shall have lifted up the Son of Man from this earth. There are several passages which are understood but wrongly in John. That being lifted up means that the Lord went up into heaven after having done his work. It is wrong. In other passages it is not quite so clear. But in the first instance in chapter 3, John 3, it is very clear. Just like Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up on the cross naturally. It is not said. But in John 12, I think it is verse 32 or 33, that is the clue, the key for this understanding here.

[00:54:11] And I did not find it myself. I have got it from Mr. Darby. In John 12, it is in 32.

No. When ye shall have lifted up the Son of Man from this earth. That is in chapter 13.

Who finds it?

Is it age?

[00:55:02] You can look.

No. That is a point to look for.

There is somewhere in John the saying, when you shall have lifted up the Son of Man from this earth. Okay. That is the explanation. The Lord Jesus was high priest in this world in an exceptional position. Only in propitiation on the cross. It was an exceptional position. He was not anymore really in this

world, lifted up from this world. They did not want him, but God said, I want you. And the second, this the Lord Jesus did once and for all.

Only once was he crucified. And this work was so complete and so perfect that it did never have to be repeated and will never have to be repeated again. [00:56:03] Whereas the atoning work of the high priest in the Old Testament had to be repeated time and again. The second thing is that the Lord, as we have seen in chapter 2, which I mention only this verse again, that he was in verse 17, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things relating to God. To make propitiation, we have seen that. For in that himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to help those that are being tempted. The Lord Jesus as high priest is now active in a totally different way. We see that in the Old Testament in the high priest Aaron, when he went into the holy place, he had his clothing, his clothing for glory and for honor.

[00:57:04] And in his clothing there were two things which are especially precious for us. In Exodus chapter 28 it is said that the Israelites had to make two stones, two gems to place them on his shoulders, on Aaron's shoulders. And on these two gems there were six names of the tribes on the one stone and six names of the other tribes on the other shoulder. And then not enough, a second thing was that he had a breastplate which was beset with twelve stones. And there were four rows of three stones, twelve tribes, and there was a name of every tribe on every one of these gems. And it is said he shall bear them on his breast, on his heart. The shoulders speak of force and power, strength. And the heart, the breast speaks of his feelings, his compassion. [00:58:05] That is how the Lord Jesus in type and in image presents us before God as a high priest.

And this is a continual thing. It is very precious how many children of God have doubts because of their weakness of their faith, the weakness of their faith. They think, am I really saved? Think of this. You have believed in the Lord Jesus and he has written your name in one of these gems.

They are representative of the believers today. You think that he will ever, when he presents them to God, say, oh God says, there is one name missing. You had him, forgive me that speech. That God shall say to him, there is one name missing which was there yesterday. And that the Lord says I had to scrape it out, to wipe it out. [00:59:04] Can you imagine that? It is impossible.

So this service as a high priest of our Lord Jesus is so precious that he represents us in the eyes of God continuously.

There is no interruption and there is no change. Once your name is on his breast and on his shoulders, he will represent you and he will carry you through. On his breast by his strength and on his shoulders by his strength and on his breast, on his heart by his love. But then also he turns back or turns around to us and he says, you know, all your temptations, you go through.

I have seen also.

Have you ever thought of that? The Lord says, you say, well you are God. [01:00:02] No, he says, I am man. I was man in this world.

A boy, a baby, a boy, a young man, a full grown man. And in the midst of my days God took me away. But that sufficed.

And there is not one temptation from the outside which I have not seen. He was tempted but he never submitted.

He always obeyed his God.

And when he was tempted, and I say from the outside, he had no temptations from the inside because he had no flesh. But as man, as man, he was in the same circumstances as we are today.

Nobody will ever be able to say, Lord, you do not know what I have gone through. Nobody, no Christian will be able to say that. The Lord says, do you know what I have gone through in the desert?

[01:01:07] Temptations where all the glories of the world were placed before me and I said, I would rather obey. And that was suffering. He suffered, he learned his obedience by suffering.

Chapter 5. I have gone through that all but I have never succumbed. I have never given in. And therefore I can support you. I can give you support and strength. And what have I gone through in Gethsemane?

Nobody has gone through things like that where Satan approached him for the second time. He only left him for a short time and then he came back to show him all the cruelty and all the terrible things of the cross for Jesus as man. And that was a spiritual fight of which we read. [01:02:04] And still he was obedient. And that's the strength, the encouragement of the Lord Jesus to tell us, be rather obedient and suffer than give in to the temptation and not suffer.

He who gives in to temptation doesn't suffer in the moment. The flesh doesn't suffer, the flesh desires that. But the Lord says, I have not given in and have suffered. And that is what is said here. Also in 1 Peter 3, he who has death to sin does not suffer anymore.

Because if we do give in, give in to sin, we don't suffer. But if we say no to sin, we suffer. Our flesh suffers. But then we are free from the sin. In that point of view, under that point of view. [01:03:04] So the Lord Jesus as the great high priest is our helper to keep us from falling away, from going astray from the path of faith. And I don't know how you, when you look back in your lives, whether you have had situations where you had almost gone astray. Who has kept you? Your own wisdom? Your own intelligence? The grace of God.

The grace of the Lord Jesus. And then where who could say, I have never fallen, I have never stumbled. Who brought you back?

Was the Lord Jesus.

In that case, it was not. But we cannot separate that. His activity as the high priest, but as the advocate with the Father. You don't come back by yourself. [01:04:02] You don't have the strength to do so. But the Lord is drawing you with cords of love to bring you back to the path when you have gone astray, when I have gone astray. And to keep you on the path as the one and only high priest. What a savior, what a priest, what a person is the Lord Jesus, the Son of God. May he be before us in this conference. To his glory and honor and our own blessing.