

The Epistle to the Hebrews

Lesson # 13 August 20, 2017 Jesus Christ, Our High Priest Hebrews 5:1-10

Introduction to the return of our studies in Hebrews

As we re-embark on our study of Hebrews, I realise that this time is going to fly by and it will be 2018 before we know it. The way things look right now, we will not be switching back to Philippians in February, but we will continue to have two different adult classes running at the same time. As I reflected on this incredible book of Hebrews and the shortness of our time together studying it thus far, I came across a quote that, while not in particular about Hebrews, reminded me of something I wished there was more of in our classes, both mine and Kenny's – meaningful discussion and questions. I know I teach in lecture style, and there are only occasional questions and good discussions. However, in light of Proverbs 27:17 – *“Iron sharpens iron and one man sharpens another.”* – we can all learn more if we engage in discussions even when there is friendly disagreement. Here is where the quote I found comes in, it is by Al Mohler, written in the context of T4G;

“We have to risk disagreement. Disagreement is not the worst thing. Disagreement is the price you pay to make sure you actually know what you are talking about and clarify what you are saying. And you can be in relationships where you love each other all the more for it. I have Christian brothers who will challenge me and whom I challenge, and at the end of it, we worship God more faithfully together because of this.

Also, disagreement gives us the chance to think out loud. One of the gifts we need to give each other is to expose our thinking to each other. We tend in our intellectual narcissism...to want to show up with a finished product. “Here’s my position. I have arrived here.” But we need to be vulnerable, because we will be far more faithful if we will line out our thinking so that we can watch each other think, hear each other think, and say, “if that’s not tightened back here, you’re going to end up over here,” or “I don’t think you heard what you said when you were there.”

We need to have the maturity and the discernment to say there are some things we are united on or we cannot recognize each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Someone asked me a question one time: “What do you say to someone,” a believer, I was told, “who doesn’t believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ?” Here’s what you are: not a believer. We have a category problem there. **There are certain things that have to be believed.** And this is a NT issue – the apostles had to say here is what the gospel is. You have to know this much. Romans 10, for example. They have a very clear example. If you’re not there, you’re not a believer. You’re not a Christian. You’re still outside...

There is a second level, I suggest, in which we have some serious disagreements. And it’s not because we don’t love the Lord and we don’t love the Bible and we don’t serve Jesus. But there are issues that divide us denominationally that aren’t accidents. They go back to serious disagreements about things that matter, and we love the Lord and we love the

truth enough to know they really matter. We might both be wrong, but we can't both be right. But we do recognize each other as sincere believers in Christ, and we can witness together. Whitfield and Wesley could share the gospel together and preach together and be in ministry together. We can be in this room together. We can exult in Christ together. And we know that the commonalities that bring us here are why we're here, but we're still who we are... We are who we are, and until Jesus comes back, we will have to work with some things. And in humility there are going to be some things we disagree about until our Lord Teacher corrects His church and purifies and sanctifies his church in common."ⁱ

While we are getting started, I wanted to comment on one more thing; there may be a question as to why I place so many quotes or citations from books in my lessons. The truth is twofold. (1) Sometimes, an author says something so well that I cannot improve on it, and to simply try to reword it does not seem as helpful to me; (2) Many of the books I read, I am aware that very few other people will ever read them. So, if I can get someone enthused about an author by reading what they write like, it will be more helpful for you.

The Old Testament High Priest

vv. 1-4

The role of the High Priest was a dominant one in the OT & in the Gospels, and it was instituted by God in Exodus 28-29, where we find descriptions of instructions for Aaron and his 4 sons. Aaron was to serve as Israel's first High Priest. In Exod. 28:1 – 29:46, it is obvious that God chose (or appointed) the man (& his sons) whom He wanted to act as the High Priest – as the go-between for God & His people – who would set the tone for the position, and in whose family the priesthood would reside – cf. Exod. 28:43; 29: 9,20. It was to be a position where the son would succeed his father, whose term of office ended at his death.

So the author of Hebrews picks up on the first fact, that “*every High Priest is chosen from among men.*” No one could decide, who was not a descendent of Aaron, that they wanted to be a High Priest when they grew up. It was to be a position open only to Aaron and his descendants. (Ultimately they were descendants of Levi – cf. I Chronicles 23:24-32). In fact, upon the return from exile to Jerusalem, as recorded in Ezra 2:62, very significantly, those who returned to positions of priest, but could not produce papers to show their lineage (as Levites) were excluded from the priesthood as defiled! (see also Nehemiah 7:64, which makes the same point)

It was a role that could also only be filled by a human male; no women, no angel could be a priest or High Priest, because a mediator had to be a man, ministering in sacrifices, offerings of all sorts (thanks, fellowship, restitution, atonement, and so on) for all sorts of occasions &/or transgressions (cf. Leviticus). The High Priest was man's representative before God; taking the opposite role of the prophet, who became God's representative before men. Since the role of High Priest is appointed by God, it is to be a role of humility and service to God's people (Shepherds – cf. Ezekiel 34 & John 10), not a source of boasting, pride and ambition – which, of course it had

become by the time of the Gospels. A similar sentiment goes along with our salvation, since we are chosen by God – cf. Acts 13:48; Rom. 3:27-4:3.

At the end of v. 1 is a phrase that would be easy to overlook, “*for sins*”. The purpose of the High Priest’s acting on man’s behalf before God, and in doing so, to offer gifts and blood sacrifices is “for sin”. The reason that God established the office was that the priest was to be concerned (every day – it was his job) – with the immense problem of human sinfulness and the need for the people to be reconciled to God (ultimately, per Gal. 3:19-24, the point of the entire sacrificial system of the OT was to lead people to Christ. Later, as we examine Heb. 7-10, we’ll see how the author unravels this for us to show us how Jesus Christ fulfills this office perfectly, although not as an OT Levitical / Aaronic priest.

All of the actions of the High Priest were to be directed to that end – of reconciling God’s people to God, and this reached a climax each year on the Day of Atonement – Yom Kippur – cf. Lev. 16:15-16.

Arising out of this first qualification for the High Priest is the fact that his humanity and human nature are not of a higher natural order from those he serves (contrast Jesus’ view of the Pharisees and priests in Matt. 23:1-36)! Because he too is beset by weakness, and understands (or should) that he is dealing with people who need his help and not only his sympathy (Heb. 4:15), but his understanding. “Deal gently” here is not synonymous with Heb. 4:15, but really means “avoiding anger”, i.e., being patient.

Notice whom He is to deal gently with, “*the ignorant and the wayward*”. IOW, those who have sinned ignorantly, not realising it, and those who are wandering apart from a passionate following after God. The author does not list the sins of defiance here - or sins that are committed intentionally. See Num. 15:30-31; Deut. 17:12-13. This is tantamount to what the author of Hebrews continually warns against: rejection of the only obvious source of salvation – Jesus Christ – cf. Heb. 10:26-31.

Since the human High Priest is beset with the same weakness as his people, he has the ability to deal gently and with both compassion and empathy toward sinners since he shares the same condition of being human as they are, and should recognise that.

In verse 3; “*Because of this*”, he must (“is obligated to”) offer sacrifices for his own sins as well. This is not in any part the weakness that Jesus has as our High Priest, because as Heb. 4:15 says, He “*was without sin*”, so He was under no obligation whatsoever to offer any sacrifice on His own behalf. All He suffered, He suffered on our behalf and as part of the propitiation of God’s wrath – cf. Heb. 7:23-28!

Philip Hughes makes these comments,

re: Heb. 5:2-3; “That Christ did not share in our sinfulness does not in any degree invalidate this fellow feeling for us and with us in our weakness. The common ground with

us was that of his fellow humanity which was subject to temptation or testing. The difference between him and us is that he unfailingly overcame temptation, whereas we have been overcome by our temptation. For him to have been our fellow in defeat would have been of no worth to us.”ⁱⁱ

And; “the perversity of the human heart is such that even if it should be possible for a person to be free from sins of waywardness, yet no man can claim to be free of sins of ignorance or inadvertency (see Lev. 4). Atonement is necessary for sins that are both known and unknown, if man is to be fully delivered from the power of evil. It was, then, for the ignorant as well as the wayward that the offerings and sacrifices of the OT were instituted. Belonging to a category quite distinct from them were those persons who sinned presumptuously or “with a high hand” and who, because they thereby willfully excluded themselves from the grace and blessing of God, were ordered to be cut off from among his people (Num. 15:27ff; cf. Ps. 19:13). For such, there is no offering prescribed, or prescribable; they were beyond recall. The high priest’s atoning sacrifice was offered, accordingly, for all the sins of the people except for the sin of rebellion or apostasy, which was a defiant renunciation of the divinely given covenant. And this was the irremediable sin which those to whom this epistle is addressed were in danger of committing; hence they are warned that to return to unbelief is to fall away from the living God, that there is no possibility of restoration for those who have committed apostasy, and that there remains no sacrifice for sins if they sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth (3:12; 6:4-6; 10:26).”ⁱⁱⁱ

Becoming a priest (especially a High Priest) was not a job one chose. God chose those who would take this office, just as He had chosen Aaron (Ex. 28:1; I Chron. 23:13; Ps. 105:26); and one was not democratically elected by the people to be their priest. It was a position of honour and power – abused by the priests at the time of Christ, who were then selected (at least the High Priest was) by Rome through political appointment – but it was not Aaron’s idea to be the High Priest. In Numbers 16:1-35, the rebellion of Korah is described. He was a descendent of Levi, who rose up against Moses’ and Aaron’s leadership along with 250 other leaders (probably over the execution of a man who had broken the Sabbath in Num. 15:32-36). Notice Num. 16:1-49. In Numbers 17, God provides them with a sign – and Aaron’s rod, was set among 11 others, and almonds sprang forth from it (17:1-12). This validated that Aaron had been chosen by God as High Priest and no usurpers would be tolerated! God, in His sovereignty, chose who would minister to Him and His people as High Priest – cf. Heb. 9:4.

The Appeal to the OT

vv. 5-6

Just as Aaron did not appoint himself as High Priest, nor did Jesus. As God’s Son, He was appointed to that office, as the quote of Psalm 2:7 here attests, along with the citation in v. 6 from Ps. 110:4.

His death on our behalf was certainly the work of our Great High Priest, but Hebrews never says when He became the High Priest, except that it was after He had been perfected (Heb. 2:10). His functioning as our High Priest is certainly evident just prior to Gethsemane and the Cross in John 17, His High Priestly prayer, and there is more than a hint of His intercession in Luke 23:31-32. However, compare Heb. 7:25; 8:1; 10:11-12 and Heb. 1:3 – which talk about His taking up of that role, of exercising it fully and for eternity once He had died, was resurrected and ascended to take His rightful seat at God’s right hand, and while there, to intercede on behalf of His own people – of that there is no doubt.

The author’s appeal to Ps. 2:7 (Heb. 1:5) is a seemingly odd choice of proof text here. We looked at Heb. 1:5 and its use of that same OT passage in lesson 3 (cf, Lesson 3; Hebrews 1:5-14; Oct. 15-25/15, pp. 1-3.). There we saw Ps. 2:7 used to support Jesus’ superiority over angels and saw that “Today” was the time of His exaltation, return to heaven and taking the royal throne as king over all. Perhaps this verse makes more sense when connected to v. 6 here; the citation of Ps. 110:4, which helps connect us with the fact that Jesus was not just a High Priest in the order of Aaron / Levi; but he was also a king, just as we will see that Melchizedek was.

With the Aaronic priesthood, a tight separation between priest and king was prescribed. Note in I Samuel 13:8-14, where Saul the King, impatient because of Samuel’s delay, takes on himself the role of priest. The result for Saul is found in vv. 13-14. God does not take the roles He assigns to people lightly. This usurping of priestly power was the beginning of the end for Saul as King of Israel.

In this passage in Hebrews 5, we have just a glimpse of Jesus’ connection to Melchizedek, an OT mystery figure who combined the roles of priest and king, which is very likely the key to why Jesus’ priesthood is ‘after the order of Melchizedek’.

We first meet Melchizedek in Genesis 14:17-24. Abram has just defeated the coalition of kings (of cities) who had overthrown Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 12) and kidnapped Lot, Abram’s nephew. Melchizedek – “King of Salem (priest of God most High)” blessed Abram, serving him bread and wine, and Abram (v. 20) gave Melchizedek 10% of everything. This is a puzzling account, and the only other OT reference to Melchizedek is found in Ps. 110:4, which the author quotes here in Hebrews 5:6. The context of Psalm 110 (as we briefly examined re: Heb. 2:8 – lesson 6; pp. 2-3) is of the Davidic King ruling over the Millennial Kingdom, sitting at God’s right hand, ruling and reigning, crushing and destroying His enemies – a true sovereign – yet v. 4 interpolates here that this king is also a priest, but not in descendency from Aaron. He arises from a different order, that of this Melchizedek. Schreiner cautions here: “The word ‘order’ doesn’t signify a line of succession as if there were many Melchizedekian priests; it refers to the nature of Jesus’ priesthood.”^{iv} So, in Melchizedek, there is a union of the 2 functions – king and priest, and again Schreiner comments’

“The citation of Psalm 110:4 indicates that he is more than a king. He is a king-priest. Jesus is a Melchizedekian priest. Indeed, there is also an indication here of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, for he serves as a priest “forever”. In any case the main point of the verse is

that God appointed him as a Melchizedekian priest, Jesus did not take that honor upon himself.”^v

Our Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus

vv. 7-9a

“Throughout the whole of his life – not just from Jordan to Golgotha, but from Bethlehem to Golgotha – Christ reoriented our humanity, justifying and sanctifying our condemned and corrupted existence within his own righteous and holy life. To confess that the life of our Lord was a vicarious life is to say much more than that his life was merely exemplary, even if it was most certainly that. It is to say that his life – the faithful, obedient, holy life he lived before God the Father – was a life he lived in our place and on our behalf. So, in union with Christ, we come to share, to participate, in the life he lived for us and our salvation. Jesus is the second and last Adam, the One who has made our humanity his own to remake us in God’s image, given that he is the full and exact image of God as man (Col. 1:15, 19; Heb. :3). To that end, he had to undo all the ruin and wreckage, all the perversion and distortion, that resulted from the first Adam’s fall into sin. Our Lord needed to be faithful where we are not; he needed to obey His Father where we do not; he needed to pray when we will not; he needed to be holy where we are not; he needed to worship where we will not; he needed to fully love and trust where we cannot. He needed, in other words; to save us from us in and as one of us, bending us back to God after we had become bent in upon ourselves in self-righteousness, self-lordship, and self-worship.

Viewed from this perspective, the life of our incarnate Savior, lived in full trust and obedience before God his Father, is supremely good news for sinners, for he accomplished for humanity, within our humanity, what we would not and could not. The redemption and restoration of our fallen selves cost Christ much, ensuring that his life was characterized by enormous inner and outer pain and suffering – loss, grief, rejection, contempt, betrayal, temptation, loneliness, shame – as he endured our brokenness with unfathomable love. That is to say, Christ resolved to bear the full force and weight of our distorted condition to consecrate us to the Father in his own self-consecration. From manger to cross, in anguish and heartbreak, with obedience and endurance, our incarnate Savior undertook our human condition...so as to perfect it before God. He and only he could and did set our humanity to rights from every way it had gone horribly wrong, thereby becoming the source and ground, the substance and sum, of the salvation that is his alone to share. The epistle to the Hebrews reads thus, “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him. (5:7-9)”^{vi}

Clarke & Johnson

Jesus, who was without any doubt, God in the flesh, was also fully human. “*In the days of His flesh...*”, denotes the time of His humiliation as He condescended to take on a human body (Heb. 10:5), and “*emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant*” (Phil. 2:7); “*born in the likeness of men*”(Phil. 2:7); “*humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*”(Phil. 2:8). He was “*born of a woman*”(Gal. 4:4), although He always existed (Micah 5:2).

Yet, here in our text, we are given a glimpse into the life He lived – many theologians believe that v. 7 is a reference to just Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-45 & pars), and certainly, that must be included as the subject here, but to confine it to only Gethsemane is far too limited in scope and seems to indicate that Gethsemane was His only time of suffering. Tom Schreiner, citing Gareth Cockerill, makes this point; “It is better to see this entire verse as a depiction of the utter dependence on God that characterized the Son’s earthly life and came to its climax in Gethsemane and on the cross.”^{vii}

Just to consider one other moment (of many) in Christ’s life that would have cause heartbreak, and thus illicit prayers and supplications – see John 6:66-71. He spent numerous nights (sometimes all night long) in prayer, off by Himself, often on a hill or a mountain (cf. JN 6:15; MT 14:23; LK 6:12; 9:18, 28, etc.). Isaiah 53:3 tells us that the Messiah would be “*a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief*”, as a result of the fact that “*He was despised and rejected by men...*”, so despite His joy that Heb. 12:1-2 tells us fueled Him to press on, Heb. 5:7 continues on, saying that these prayers, supplications, loud cries and tears were directed to “*Him who was able to save Him from death.*”

It would seem that this part of the verse probably does refer to Gethsemane, yet, Schreiner comments that there His prayer for rescue was not heard, since He did die.^{viii} Yet, many times He predicted His impending death in the gospels^{ix} so it would make sense that His prayers for deliverance were not reserved for Gethsemane alone. He knew what was coming before He got to that garden. The second part of v. 7 says, “*He was heard because of His reverence.*”

His agony in praying to avoid His death was not fully related to physical death. The cross was the fulfillment of the very reason he had come, the very goal of His reason to come to earth, and he moved toward it with “inflexible determination” (Hughes, p. 183). “The dread with which he approached the cross is explained, as Calvin says, by the fact that in the death that awaited him “he saw the curse of God and the necessity to wrestle with the total sum of human guilt and with the very powers of darkness themselves.” The “loud cries and tears” which accompanied Christ’s supplication are to be understood, then, in relation to the indescribable darkness of the horror that he, our High Priest, was to pass through as, on the cross, he bore not only the defilement and guilt of the world’s sin but also its judgment. At Gethsemane and Calvary we see him enduring hell so that we might be set free to enter into his heaven.”^x

Mark Jones wonderfully comments,

“His obedience led Him to a place called Gethsemane, and He said, “Here I am”. I agree with Hugh Martin, from his wonderful book – *The Shadow of Calvary* – that if He had not made those petitions, we might rightly call into question His sinlessness. If He had not begged the Father 3 times, “Remove this cup. Remove this cup. Remove this cup.” If he had not done that, we might question whether He had any sensibilities as a human being of the holiness of God. No one understood God’s holiness like the Son of God, and He

knows He is going to go into the fury of God's holiness. And if He did not shrink back from that, we might question whether this man is an insane fool or even worse, sadistic.

The only appropriate thing for Him to do in the garden was to say "Remove this cup." He had only ever known the smiles and love of His Father. From all eternity until the time that He was born at His mother's breast, He had only ever known the love and communion between Him and His Father, but the prospect of His Father turning His face away from Him, the prospect of the plagues of Egypt darkness covers over the land and the death of the first-born, how could He not ask, "Remove this cup from me"? Hugh Martin says, "To have such impressive views as Jesus now had of His Father's wrath, and not be filled with an earnest longing to escape from it, would have argued that He did not possess a true human nature, with all the sinless sensibilities which are the essence of humanity.

But all of those requests were wrapped in the words, "Your will be done". Cf. Isa. 50:5 – "*I have not been rebellious, I turned not backward.*"^{xi}

It was at Calvary, following Gethsemane, that verses like II Cor. 5:21 are seen to come to fruition. Apart from that ultimate sacrifice and the subsequent resurrection to validate its efficacy, we could never be saved (cf. I Cor. 15:12-22).

When v. 7c says, "*He was heard because of His reverence*", the word translated "*reverence*" is found only in Hebrews in the NT (cf. Heb. 12:28); & is found only twice in the OT (Joshua 22:24; Prov. 28:14). The use of the word in Heb. 12:28 suggests that the word means "reverence or awe, not as some postulate, "anxiety". The word is translated in the NET as "devotion"; in the NIV & NRSV as "reverent submission". God answered Jesus' prayer because of His fear of God, because He had given His life completely into God's hands – cf. LK 23:46; JN 5:19,30.

Schreiner, whom I quoted earlier on the last page, clarifies his position helpfully here:

"But how did God answer his prayer to be delivered from death? Certainly not by sparing him from death [cf. Rom. 8:32], for he endured the cruelty of death by crucifixion. His prayer was answered at the resurrection by deliverance from the realm of the dead, for when God raised him from the dead, he was rescued from death once for all (cf. 2:6). The reference to the resurrection fits well with 5:5-6, which alludes to Jesus' resurrection and ascension. The resurrection shows that Jesus is a priest "forever," and at the resurrection, he was begotten by God, i.e., he was appointed to rule at God's right hand."^{xii}

Philip Hughes adds;

"He was, however, "saved from death" inasmuch as on the third day he rose triumphantly from the grave; and it is in this sense that "he was heard." Thus, Herveus comments, "He was heard" because in the resurrection he received what he sought."^{xiii}

Verse 8, "*although he was a Son*". IOW – the Son of God, and as such, was under no implicit necessity to learn obedience, or to learn anything really; but because He came as fully man, He did learn obedience through what He suffered. Yet, unlike us, He learned perfectly, and where we seem to always fall, He never did. It was essential and critical that He maintained perfection and thus was sinless, so He could offer Himself as a sacrifice for those who were "like Him" yet fully disobedient and sinful. His obedience was thus essential to offset our disobedience (cf. I Pet. 3:18,22).

Hughes explains this in an excellent way;

“It is in reference to this suffering that Jesus was ‘made perfect’; indeed, what is said here is a reaffirmation of the teaching already given in 2:10 that Christ was ‘made perfect through suffering’, This perfection was progressively achieved as he moved on toward the cross which marked the consummation of his suffering and obedience. His perfection consisted in the retention of his integrity, in the face of every kind of assault on his integrity, and thereby the establishment of his integrity. Had he failed at any point, his integrity would have been impaired and his perfection lost, with the consequence that he would have been disqualified to act as mediator and redeemer. What was essential was that, starting, like Adam, with a pure human nature, he should succeed where Adam had failed. His sufferings both tested, and victoriously endured, attested his perfection, free from failure and defeat. This he himself dramatically declared by his triumphant utterance from the cross; “It is finished!” (JN 19:30), which in the light of what is said here in Hebrews may be understood as signifying, “I have retained my integrity to perfection”, as well as, “My work of redemption is perfectly accomplished.”^{xiv}

Schreiner concurs;

“The word “learned” suggests a process. There is no suggestion that Jesus ever disobeyed (4:15; 7:26), as if he had to learn to obey because he disobeyed previously. As Koester says, “To say that Jesus ‘learned obedience’ does not mean that he was formerly disobedient any more than saying that ‘he became a merciful and faithful high priest’ means that he was formerly callous or faithless. This verse, however, emphasizes Jesus’ humanity (see 2:2). He learned how to obey in the anvil of human experience, as he experienced life day by day. In particular, he learned obedience in his sufferings. When suffering strikes, human beings are inclined to do whatever it takes to avoid it, to find another path where there is joy and refreshment. Jesus, however, learned how to trust God and do his will in the midst of his suffering. His first aim was not his own pleasure but the will of God.”^{xv}

Bruce Ware adds;

“Another possible explanation of what Hebrews means when it says, “he learned obedience through what he suffered” can be eliminated summarily. Some might think that Jesus finally learned to obey the Father, having disobeyed him many time previously. In other words, the point is that Jesus “finally got it”. He finally learned that he needed to obey rather than disobey. While this may be our experience...it simply cannot be what this text means. Just a few verses earlier in Hebrews declares of Jesus that he was tempted in every respect as we are, “yet without sin” (4:15). Obviously it follows that since Jesus never sinned, that simply cannot be the case that Hebrews means here that a previously disobedient Jesus finally learned to obey.”^{xvi}

And Ware, again,

“Consider a couple of indicators that seem to warrant this reading of Heb. 5:8. First, look at what Hebrews had just told us in v. 7. We read there not only that Jesus offered up prayers and supplications to the Father throughout his life (“in the days of his flesh”) but that he did so “with loud cries and tears”. Unless we trivialize what this is declaring, would we not have to conclude that the situations this verse points to are ones in which Jesus

experienced agonizing hardship and difficulty in his endeavor to obey the Father? Does this not indicate that Jesus' trust in the Father and his dependence on what the Father alone would provide him was hard fought and won? Throughout his life he fought to believe and fought to obey and fought in prayer as he hoped in what the Father would provide. To put this point differently, Jesus' faith and obedience during these times of testing, in which he offered supplications with loud cries and tears, were not experience of an easy walk of faith or effortless acts of obedience. Jesus' obedience was not automatic, as though his divine nature simply eliminated any real struggle to believe or effort to obey. No, in his human nature, Jesus fought for faith and struggled to obey; otherwise the reality that Heb. 5:7 describes is turned into theatrics and rendered disingenuous. The inclusion of "with loud cries and tears" tells us, then, of the reality of the struggle Jesus endured as he trusted and obeyed his Father, praying earnestly for what he needed to fulfill the Father's will."^{xvii}

At the risk of too many citations (it may be too late now), let me add the voice of Peter Lewis to the comments on this passage:

"Jesus is not simply a Son because of His earthly obedience unto death; His death had its value because he was, in His own being, the Son of God "who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

At the Resurrection and Ascension He became the Son in a new way – the Son in His glorified humanity – but He had been no less the Son, the same Son, in His humiliation and earthly life: "Although he was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered, and once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9). These words obviously do not refer simply to some kind of moral improvement from moral imperfection to moral soundness, since had Christ been a sinner He could never have been a savior; a sacrifice for the sins of the world had to be unblemished (I Peter 1:18-20). Christ's suffering was not necessary for His correction but for His qualification (Hebrews 2:10). By it He was perfected as sacrifice, having perfectly resisted all temptation (Hebrew 4:15); perfected as liberator, having annulled Satan's power (Hebrews 4:14); and perfected as a sympathizing and interceding high priest, the mediator between man and God (Heb. 2:17)."^{xviii}

The Source of Eternal Salvation

vv. 9b-10

"And being made perfect" (v. 9a) – This perfection then, of Christ's unstained and unblemished humanity, gave Him the capacity to endure the ultimate display of God's holiness and wrath on our behalf at Calvary.

"Jesus was perfected in his experience by learning obedience in his sufferings. His perfection was an abstraction until he obeyed God in the concrete realities and travails of everyday human experience. His sufferings and death equipped and qualified him to serve as a priest. He learned what it was to please God as a child, teenager and adult...Jesus' perfecting and obedience had to be worked out in everyday life and at every stage of his life. He wasn't qualified to serve as a priest as a young boy or teenager. It is certainly fitting to see an eschatological dimension to Jesus' perfection as well. He fulfilled what God

intended for human beings in his suffering and is now crowned as God's king-priest. In his testing and obedience, Jesus exemplified what God intended when he created human beings. Jesus' suffering was not merely moral. It is also vocational, fitting him for his role as high priest."^{xix} (Schreiner)

Verse 9a is a virtual parallel to Heb. 2:10 – *“For it was fitting that he, for whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.”* In this verse, He is the founder (or better, “the pioneer”) of their (*the many sons*) salvation, *“because he was made perfect through suffering.”*; and here in v. 9a, the difference is found in the word ‘source’ rather than ‘pioneer’ or ‘founder’.

He alone is the One who purchased the redemption of all who had or who will ever believe (and obey). Our salvation flows from Him to us as His elect. He did all that was necessary for us to be imputed with His righteousness and for our sins to be borne by Him to Calvary where God's wrath, poured out on Him in our place, so that the sins of all who had or would ever believe were put away as far as the east is from the west, and our text adds, that the benefit which arises from His redemption is *“to all who obey Him.”*

In v. 10, again, for the second time in 5 verses, the author ties Jesus to the king / priesthood of Melchizedek. He will explain in detail how this particular priesthood accomplishes salvation for everyone He saves in Hebrews 7:1-10:18 – the very heart of the book of Hebrews, but this detail is put off as from Heb. 5:11-6:12, our 3rd, and most controversial warning passage is inserted into the text. In this warning passage, which we will examine next, the author warns the readers to examine their spiritual state, because Jesus, even as such a High Priest is not an effective Redeemer for those who reject Him and refuse to trust Him.

ⁱ Albert Mohler, cited in *“Thinking. Loving. Doing.”* John Piper & David Mathis (eds) Crossway, 2011; pp. 151-152

ⁱⁱ Hughes, *Hebrews*, p. 177

ⁱⁱⁱ IBID, p. 178

^{iv} Schreiner, *Hebrews*, P. 162

^v IBID, p. 162

^{vi} John C. Clarke & Marcus Peter Johnson, *The Incarnation of God*, Crossway, 2015, pp. 138-139

^{vii} IBID, p. 163

^{viii} IBID, p. 163

^{ix} Matt. 16:21f; 17:22f; 20:17f; LK 9:22; JN 10:11, 17f; 16:32, etc.

^x Hughes, p. 183

^{xi} Mark Jones, excerpt from his 2017 sermon; *Isaiah 50:4-8 -The Relationship Between the Father & the Son*; at about the 22:47 mark in the sermon – Shepherd's Conference 2017 – General Session 5

^{xii} Schreiner, p. 164

^{xiii} Hughes, p. 184

^{xiv} IBID, p. 184

^{xv} Schreiner, p. 164-165

^{xvi} Bruce Ware, *The Man Christ Jesus*, Crossway, 2013, p. 63

^{xvii} IBID, p. 65

^{xviii} Peter Lewis, *The Glory of Christ*, Moody, 1997, p. 209-210

^{xix} Schreiner, p. 165