

- *Jesus is working for us in heaven*

- *We are to come for grace and mercy when in need*

### 1. Jesus' ministry does not have the weaknesses of the old system

- *Old Testament priests never sat down*

- *Constant repetition of attempts to find God are wrong and unnecessary*

### 2. One stage of Jesus' ministry is finished

- *Jesus is seated!*

- *From God's side everything has been done!*

- *Jesus is joint-King with His Father*

### 3. Jesus is now bringing his reign to final victory

Our writer is eager that we should know of the power of the priesthood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He is working for us in heaven, carrying forward a ministry far greater than anything that could ever have happened in the old tabernacle. The priests of the Mosaic law had a weak ministry, which could never give us peace of conscience, but Jesus exercises a priesthood which has finality and perfection. We are to know that we have the Son of God in the heavens as our high priest. We are to come to him to find grace and mercy when we are in need. He is our Melchizedek who sustains us when we are weary. He ministers a new covenant with new promises.

1. **Jesus' ministry does not have the weaknesses of the old system.** With regard to the Mosaic law it may be said: <sup>11</sup>*And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.* Every word here points to the weakness of the old system. The priests were generally always busy inside the tabernacle doing the same thing they had done hundreds of times before. They were always standing. Inside the tabernacle there was no chair. The priests could never sit down there. It was a sign that their work was never done. They were always repeating what they had done before. Day after day and year after year the same ceremonies continued. Yet they never changed the situation of the worshippers.

Are you a religious person always following the same religious routine but never feeling happy in your conscience that God accepts you? Then it means you have not yet come to see what it means that Jesus is the high priest of those who draw near to him. Constant repetition of attempts to find God is a bad sign. It is an indication that you are coming in the wrong way. We are meant to be able to come to God boldly and confidently with the feeling of acceptance and a cleansed conscience. Religious legislation can never do that for us. Even the law that God gave could not do it. No one else's religious law will be any more successful. It would be better to find the 'new and living way' – the way of coming to God through Jesus.

2. **One stage of Jesus' ministry is finished.** <sup>12</sup>*But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God...* The priests could never sit down, but Jesus has sat down! It means that the work of sin-bearing is finished, and has been done so perfectly it will never need to be done again. Jesus' death upon the cross was so perfect that nothing can ever be added to it. He died for every sin that was ever committed of every member of the human race from the first sin of the first man to the last sin of the last human being who will ever exist! It does not mean that everyone will be saved, but it means that everything has been done on God's side. It only now has to be received! It is as much that could ever be done on God's side in the 'outer courtyard' of this world. All we have to do now is believe! We trust in the power of the blood of Jesus in heaven.

Jesus sits at God's right hand. This is a piece of picture language. It means that Jesus is a joint-King with his Father. Sitting down is a sign that the main work has been done. It is also the position of a king sitting on a throne administering grace and mercy to his subjects who come to him.

3. **Jesus is now bringing his reign to final victory.** Now that the perfect offering for sin has been achieved, Jesus is at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup>*waiting eagerly, from that time onwards, until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.* Jesus is steadily administering God's kingdom. He knows that he is going to win.

(i) He will spread his kingdom

(ii) Sin will be defeated

• Total victory

• Jesus is going to conquer his enemies through his people

• Set apart as God's people – an accomplished position and status

• Churches may experience suffering and persecution but it will make no difference to the ultimate success of God's rule and reign

(i) He will spread his kingdom. All nations will be made disciples. The command of Matthew 28:19 will be completely fulfilled. (ii) Sin will be defeated. Satan will be defeated. Death and sin will be abolished. Weakness in the church will cease. He will bring the church to its full maturity.

Jesus' enemies will become a footstool for his feet. This way of talking is a piece of picture language speaking of total victory. In Joshua 10 we have a story of how five pagan kings rose up to attack the allies of Joshua. So Joshua marched all night and defeated the kings in a great victory at Gibeon. Israel pursued them as they fled along the roads. Then Joshua returned to the camp at Gilgal to deal with the five kings who had hidden in a cave. Joshua said to the people, 'Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings'<sup>1</sup>. It was a way of saying, 'All enemies will be defeated as these enemies have been defeated. You will tread them down and utterly conquer them'. Jesus will do the same thing! He will trample down everything that is against him and against those who are allied to him.

<sup>14</sup>For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. There is a connection between verse 13 and verse 14. Jesus is going to conquer his enemies, but he will do it through his people. He will rule **because** he has perfected for all time those who are for ever set apart as his people. Jesus' blood gives us liberty of conscience. We have the ability to come into the presence of God. The new covenant has been brought into operation.

It is a mistake to translate the word here as 'those who **are being** made holy' or '**are being** sanctified'. It is a single Greek word and verse 10 makes it clear that it refers to something positional and definitive. It means 'those who are set apart as God's people for ever'. By a single sacrifice Jesus' people have been given a status in God's presence that is 'perfect'. They approach him with a certainty of the full acceptance that has been gained through the death of Christ. By a single offering Jesus has perfected for all time those who are sanctified – those who are for ever set apart as God's people.

It is through these people that God's kingdom will triumph. Jesus extends God's kingdom through them and cannot fail as he does so. The Lord Jesus Christ goes out with his people to spread his gospel, conquering and planning further conquering. The churches may experience suffering and persecution but it will make no difference to the ultimate success of God's rule and reign. A mighty conflict is taking place between the dragon and the Christ-child, but through his people Jesus will rule until every knee bows to him and sin and Satan are totally abolished.

<sup>1</sup> Joshua 10:24



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