

Hebrews 8:1-5

“The intrusion of eternity”

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I. Introduction

The author of Hebrews simply cannot take his eyes off Christ. In 7:26 he said: “It was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens.” Jesus was just what his readers needed! And because this book is in the Bible and according to 2 Timothy 3:16 “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God,..*”; then Jesus is just exactly what we need in our lives as well! In Chapter 8 we have another major division in the letter. You will recall that our focus was on Jesus as High Priest, how what some of the Hebrews viewed as a liability in his genealogy because He was not from the tribe of Levi was in reality an essential asset. The main focus in chapters 8-10 moves from the Person of the High priest which we saw in verse 26 to the work of the High Priest and His sacrifice. Through church history and its influence in society there has been a never ending attempt to “sanitize” Christ and Christianity from any connection with His cross. But the truth remains “*You will never understand Jesus apart from the cross.*” They are indivisibly united! They are best explained in the phrase of verse 27 where we read that, “*This He did ONCE FOR ALL when He OFFERED UP HIMSELF*”. There had never been a Levitical priest who ever OFFERED UP HIMSELF upon the alter of sacrifice. But not only did Jesus do so but verse 28 tells us that “*the Son who has been perfected forever*”. The job of the High Priest

was to find a sacrifice that had the right qualifications that would be acceptable; it had to be without spot or blemish and as such we are being told that Jesus Christ could find no sacrifice that was without spot or blemish except himself, so he offered himself. There was no Priest found worthy to sacrifice and no innocent victim worthy of offering, so Jesus as High Priest was worthy and became the sacrifice offering Himself once and for all, as both Priest and Victim. Further more, the cross of Christ is a “timeless” event! When you combine the two key thoughts of verses 27 and 28 together you get that picture: *This He did **ONCE FOR ALL....** the Son who has been **perfected forever***”. The Cross of Jesus is NOT merely an event we look back into time to understand it is rather an event that was in its very nature an ***intrusion of eternity into time!*** The Cross of Christ burst into time for the world to see but the fact is it had been going on since before time began and it continues on throughout time into eternity. Two scriptures prove this point:

- A. First in Revelation 13:8 we are told that James is “*the Lamb slain **from the foundation of the world.***”
- B. Then in Revelation 5:6 as the apostle John looked all around **heaven** searching for one worthy to take the title deed to the earth and remove the curse of the fall saw, “; ***in the midst of the throne, ...stood a Lamb as though it had been slain...***”

This is why all of humanity prior to the Cross and the historic presentation of Christ could be saved, just as we are saved today, because the cross reached backward into time as well as forward into time. From God’s perspective the cross of Jesus Christ, is the central act of history, everything flows from that.

II. Vs. 1 Position

Vs. 1 First the writer wants to remind his readers that, the point of emphasis is in Jesus as High Priest is not about **duration** but **location!** **The central question is: *Where can a***

person find this kind of ministry of Jesus Christ? The writer answer is twofold and is yet another superiority of Jesus priesthood when compared to that of the Levities, His

“**POSITION**” and His “**PREPARATION**”.

1. **POSITION**: First in verse one he writes that that it comes from the risen Lord, Jesus Christ who is “**SEATED at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.**” Thus the emphasis is upon Jesus “**POSITION**”. I find two things about Jesus “**POSITION**” fascinating, His **posture** and its **location**!
 - A. **Posture** “**Seated at the right hand of the throne**”: The writer starts off by way of a point of comparison saying that; Jesus as our High Priest was “**Seated**”. Every Hebrew reader of this letter would have stopped the writer right then and there and said, “*Excuse me, did you say the Priest was seated?*” Go back Exodus chapters 25-30 as God gave Moses the pattern of the tabernacle with all its furniture and you will notice that there is one piece of furniture missing in the earthly pattern that is very present in the Heavenly Tabernacle, a chair or a throne! In the earthly tabernacle there was no pattern given for a chair because the Levitical priest never sat down! They stood all day long from morning to evening as they were constantly offering sacrifices as Hebrews 10:11 goes on to explain because, “**Every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.**” The Levitical priest’s job was never done, because what he had to offer was never permanently effective. There was no need for a chair, a bench or a Barcalounger in the earthly tabernacle yet we read that in the heavenly tabernacle Jesus was “SEATED”. The only piece of furniture that had any resemblance of a seat in the earthly tabernacle was in the holy of holies behind the veil atop of the arc of the covenant in the mercy SEAT. But it was not designed to be a place for a priest to sit and would have blasphemous for him to do so. Yet we are told after Jesus as our High Priest offered Himself, He sat down because His work was done, as His last words on the cross were, “*It is finished!*” Jesus in one sacrifice accomplished what 10’s of thousands of priests and untold millions of sacrifices never did, forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. Saint’s *as far as our salvation is concerned, Jesus has taken His seat! Ah but as true as this is with regards to being seated as our redeemer, He is nonetheless STANDING, as our helper.* Remember Stephen’s witness before the Sanhedrin where in his time of need he declared that He saw Jesus STANDING at the right hand of God! He has accomplished all that needs to be done and there is nothing more He has to do! The work of Christ needs nothing added to it because it is perfect. Further more we are told that the taking His seat involved it being on the “*right hand of the throne*”! The significance of being on the “**right hand**” is two fold:
 1. The right hand was the **place of honor and exaltation** of a monarch. To sit there was the highest honor a king could bestow. In the ruling council of the Sanhedrin it was **the place of final authority and power**.
 2. The right hand was also significant as it related to trials in Judaism as **the seat on left side was responsible for writing the condemnations for the accused**

and the right seat was responsible for writing the acquittals. In John 3:17 Jesus himself said that He came into the world not to “**condemn**” the world but that the world through Him might be saved or “**acquitted**”! **Jesus now sits on the right hand of the throne a place of honor, power and mercy** and it is on this seat that we have read that “*he always lives to make intercession for us.*”

- B. **Location** “**Of the Majesty in the heavens**”: I think that the readers would have found tremendous comfort in reading this as they were in Rome deprived of the temple services in Jerusalem but they need not be concerned as Jesus the great High priest was “**Seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.**” A far better location than Jerusalem to obtain mercy! Jesus is not somewhere out in outer space called heaven! Yes, Jesus is in heaven, but heaven is not “**out there**” in some unspecified distant location in a “*galaxy far far away*” He is not like we are looking all over the heavens for Luke Skywalker. No, according to Jesus in Luke 17:21 “*The kingdom of God is within you.*” **Heaven is within!** In Exodus 25:9 God told Moses, “*According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*”

III. Vs. 2-5 Preparation

Vs. 2-5 The sanctuary in which Jesus is a High Priest is infinitely superior than the one in which the Levites served in. When this book was written, the wilderness tabernacle hadn’t been used for a 1000 years, and the Herodian temple in Jerusalem would only be standing for another 5 years. Ah, but the true sanctuary in which Jesus serves can never crumble or be destroyed. The use of the word “true” in the Greek doesn’t mean that the other tabernacles were “false” but rather between eternal and temporary!

2. Second the author writes that Jesus is “*a minister of the **true sanctuary** which God made and not man.*” Here the emphasis is upon Jesus’ “**PREPARATION**”. Verse 3 is in response to a hypothetical question the writer anticipates the readers would ask: If Jesus has finished His work and is seated in heaven, what’s He doing now? The answer is that His sacrifice and atoning work is finished but priestly ministry is not finished as we saw in 6:25. The tabernacle took form and shape under the direction of Moses as a copy of something else that Moses had been shown in heaven and was built in three parts:
 - a. The outer court which the people could come.
 - b. The inner structure in the center of this court divided into two sections. One part called the Holy Place where only the priests and the Levites could enter.
 - c. The third part of the tabernacle was the rear section of this structure, called the Holy of Holies, containing in it nothing but the Ark of the Covenant of God, where Shekinah glory of God, indicated the presence of God. Into that Holy of Holies,

hidden behind the veil, entrance was prohibited to all upon pain of death, with the exception of the high priest who could enter once a year and then only under the most rigid requirements involving the shedding of a sacrifice and the bearing in of a basin of blood.

All this was but a pattern or a copy of the true tabernacle. The interesting thing is that this is the same threefold structure of the universe:

- a. The world of matter, the world of things, material or physical structure that we can touch, sense, see, taste, and smell. There is a great and varied area for discovery and exploration in this world. This where science works.
- b. The world of mind, the world of ideas, of emotions, the arts, knowledge, and the interchange of human ideas. This too, is a world, rich in voyages of discovery.
- c. Then there is the world of the spirit, a world that is a great mystery to us. It is a world in which are hidden the secrets of life. The keys to living are all in the world of the spirit. But into this world we cannot enter, we have no way of access in ourselves. Now Moses was shown all this. He saw the invisible realities of the nature of God,

the structure of the universe, and the need for man too have a Mediator, who would provide a way of access into this world where all the secrets of life are hidden. It was God's intention that man should have access into the inner world. We have no difficulty now with the worlds of mind and matter. We can explore it, we can weigh ideas, we can analyze them, we can entertain the various thoughts of men and we find wonderful delight in doing this. But into the world of spirit we cannot enter. There is only One who can enter that realm -- the Holy of Holies -- the High Priest!

By means of the cross, Jesus our High Priest, entered into the Holy of Holies. The cross is made for the whole man; it can be understood on three levels of life:

- a. There is the understanding of the cross on the physical level, its pain, its anguish, the awful thirst of it.
- b. There is an understanding of the cross on the emotional level. It is a moving experience to contemplate what occurs in the minds and hearts of those connected with the cross, and especially in the Savior's mind.
- c. But the real meaning of the cross never comes to us except as we move into the realm of the spirit, where we are entirely shut up to revelation. Our minds or emotions are incapable of explaining it on this level, we are shut up to what God says it means. But, on that level, we discover there is marvelous meaning and insight on life granted to us in the cross, and in the next section the writer begins to unfold to us the results of this sacrifice. The first part reveals the provision, in the cross, of a new arrangement for living.