

We hear the first declaration of the new order of Priesthood replacing that based upon Aaron. After the order of Melchisedec. Melchisedec? Who is he? Read about him in Genesis 14:18 It is a new priesthood, but like the order of Melchisedec's priesthood. But before the author tells us more he immediately takes us onto holy ground. First the Priest Himself is presented, but not as we might expect. We see, not a striking man clothed in magnificent garments befitting His majesty, but a lowly suffering One. Here we are drawn into the Holy Place and see the suffering obedient One. One who is Son! Son learning obedience? No. Humanly speaking scripture depicts a "son" as a child who has matured and "graduated" from learning obedience. The adoption is awarded upon completing a loving, rigorous, disciplined upbringing and tutoring at the hands of the "schoolmaster" appointed by the father. See Galatians 4. Yet the Son of God is eternal having no beginning as a divine Being nor beginning as Son, much less upbringing to Son-ship. Thou art my Son, Psalm 110.

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God.*

14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Yet He is not described here in the pomp and glorious robes due Him as Great High Priest but as a lowly suffering Man crying out to His God for deliverance from His enemies and death. Death? God was certainly able to save Him from dying, not to mention from His enemies. And He was heard by God. He was heard by God because He, as a humble lowly Man, feared God. For though God didn't prevent His death, He did something more striking. When God heard the cries of His Son, rather than intervening to prevent the crucifixion, He raised Him from the dead after His death and entombment. Though God was clearly able to prevent the death of His beloved Son He had something else in mind. A sacrifice to atone for our sins. The Lord, as a man, knew His destiny, quietly accepted and embraced it, carrying it out. But it was no trivial thing. He did not stoically accept His "fate" and go forward with it without emotion. The cross was always before Him. But with mounting human apprehension as the hour approached.

There were reminders:

John 12:3 *Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.*

John 12:27 *Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. 28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

Later in the privacy of the garden with His disciples, in agony He expressed His feelings to the Father with strong crying and tears, Luke 22:39-46. His dying would not be a

trivial thing, even though He knew the outcome would be for us a marvelous salvation from sins, deliverance from the power of sin and resurrection — victory over the tomb. Then upon the cross He cried out again "My God, My God why hast thou forsaken Me?" A true Man, in total physical, emotional and spiritual agony bearing our sins. But what is this "learning obedience?" Did He need to be taught to obey God the Father? Not in the sense of raising a child in submission in discipline under parental authority. In His youth, as a child and teen, He dutifully subjected Himself to his parents, Luke 2:40-52. This was consistent with His perfect humanity and a child's due respect for parents. We parents have the privilege and duty to teach our children to obey us, else how would they ever be ready to obey God when grown? He learned obedience as a disciple learns obedience. But the obedience He learned was far beyond mere human duty. His "learning," was in the sense of undertaking a life (and death) of obedience, as Man. A new experience for Him.

Luke 22:42 *"Nevertheless not my will but thine"*

Philippians 2:8 *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

While it was "learned" this obedience was voluntary. But then He bore the ultimate in discipline due every human being for our sins. When it was finished, our sins all paid for, He delivered up His spirit to the Father and died. He was not saved from dying but He was saved "out from" death to become now the author or initiator of salvation to all who will obey Him. Obey Him, called of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedec. The epistle fills out this wonderful story as we go along, revealing further this Great High Priest who also was Himself the sacrifice.

But first another urgent reminder is inserted here lest the reader casually overlook his own lack of obedience to the Son — his own lack of salvation. The Jewish readers had all of the Old Testament scriptures at their disposal. And some apparently felt having, learning and reciting them somehow made them acceptable to God. Paul countered this attitude in Romans 2:11-24. How many "Christians" rest their eternal destiny upon their attending church, learning the catechism, keeping the ordinances and participating in the rituals, without personal faith upon the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ for sins? Reading the scriptures doesn't save. Faith does. There were those among them that had remained in the old Jewish traditions. They didn't seem to "get it." They remained babes spiritually using milk, not growing strong and maturing. Certainly we are to desire the word as new babies and to grow so we become able to eat real food, 1Peter 2:2. Growing in the word and applying it we learn through practice and experience. We increase our perceptiveness and ability to discern and judge between both good and evil in our daily walk. We receive Christ and grow into mature Christians. Carry on.

By Ron Canner, January 21, 2009