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1. Christ's Priestly Ministry (Heb. 2:5-18)

Christ is our priest, our leader on the way to salvation. His assuming a suffering human nature assured the efficacy and perfection of his ministry. Christ's Passion was not a defeat but a victory, according to God's saving plan. The sufferings of Jesus were neither arbitrary nor degrading, in view of what he was to God and men alike.

— page 13

2. Christ's Priesthood and Ours (Heb. 4:14-5:10)

Among the biblical terms for priest (e.g., Levite, elder), mediator is perhaps the one which best denotes the nature of Christ's priesthood and ours. The conditions required by the priesthood are realized fully and eminently in Christ. Every priest is ordained to offer sacrifice to God as man's representative. He must be characterized by compassionate zeal and must be called by God. Christ is unlike other priests in that he shared the human condition in every way except that he had no sin. He became a perfect priest by learning to obey through suffering. His incarnation was his ordination; his life, culminating in his death and resurrection, is the exercise of his priesthood.

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3. Christ's Priesthood According to the Order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-10)

Melchizedek's priesthood, a royal priesthood, was superior to that of Aaron, yet it was only a figure of Christ's. Melchizedek blessed Abraham and accepted a tenth part of his booty. By name he was "king of justice"; as king of Salem, he was "king of peace." The absence of all records of his birth and death shows him as holding his priesthood by himself alone. More than Melchizedek, Christ is king of justice and peace; his priestly dignity is unique, his priesthood is eternal. Melchizedek was also superior to Abraham and Levi, and his priesthood was independent and universal and somehow eternal. All this is absolutely true of Christ alone. — page 28

4. Christ's Eternal Priesthood (Heb. 7:11-28)

Christ's priesthood is heavenly in character, divine and everlasting in nature. It finds its exercise in his perpetual intercession on our behalf. The provisional character of the levitical priesthood gives way before the perpetuity of Christ's priesthood, a priesthood based on his own imperishable life, a power inherent in his nature and person as God's Son. Jesus is the only priest, and a priest forever. His perpetual intercession on our behalf is his supreme priestly function. Jesus is the ideal high priest, perfect in every respect in that office. — page 35

5. Christ Our Mediator (Heb. 8:1-13)

The essential act of Christ's mediation is his worship of God, which is summarized and per-

petuated by his eternal priestly prayer and which infinitely surpasses the ancient Mosaic sacrifices. This is clear from the superiority of the sanctuary in which Christ offers his sacrifice and from the excellence of the new covenant which he established. Christ ministers in the heavenly sanctuary, of which the earthly one was a mere shadow. Christ is the only possible mediator between God and man, and his new covenant is based on promises better than those of the old covenant, inasmuch as it promises the writing of an inward law upon man's heart, full and universal knowledge of God, and complete forgiveness of sin. — page 44

6. The Excellence of Christ's Sacrifice (Heb. 9:1-12)

Christ's sacrifice is clearly superior to the priestly service of the levitical ceremonial system, which was highlighted by the rite of atonement (Yom Kippur). The old sanctuary and the rites of expiation were figurative in character. Access to God is the final end and object of the priesthood, and this is fully realized in Christ alone. The scene, the offering, and the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice show forth its superior excellence. Heaven is the temple which Jesus enters by his glorious resurrection, and the blood of his sacrifice is his own, which he offered once and for all, winning for us an eternal redemption. — page 52

7. The Blood of Christ — A Perfect Sacrifice (Heb. 9:13-28)

With the Old Testament rites of expiation always in mind, the value and efficacy of Christ's

sacrifice is more clearly seen from the exceptional, purifying power of his Blood, through his eternal Spirit, his divine nature. Christ's expiation also inaugurates the new covenant. Finally, the blood of Christ is the perfect sacrifice which opens the perfect sanctuary of heaven and needs no repetition because of its absolute perfection. Christ's priestly intercession in the heavenly sanctuary, the supreme and essential exercise of his priestly ministry, is a description in ritual, liturgical language of his enthronement at the right hand of the Father. — page 59

8. The Perfect Efficacy of Christ's Sacrifice (Heb. 10:1-18)

Christ's sacrifice is superior not only to the general representative sacrifice of the Day of Atonement but to all the levitical sacrifices generally. It effects a perfect cure and needs no repetition; it also establishes a real community between the offerer and the victim and God himself, effected by perfect obedience to God's will. The efficacy of Christ's priestly work lies in the fact that his sacrifice is not only pleasing to God but has an absolute power, issuing from Christ's perfect sovereignty, the eternal perfection he has achieved in his glorification and enthronement at God's right hand. This is how he is able to sanctify us and make us, like him, perfect adorers of God. — page 65