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Recommended Citation

Vaught, W. O., "Christ's Supreme Exaltation!" (1978). *Vaught Sermon Notes: Hebrews*. 49.
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CHRIST'S SUPREME EXALTATION!

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 56
HEBREWS 8:1-2

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I believe there is a turn-about in interest concerning Bible Doctrine in our time. People are no longer satisfied with phony softhearted superficial interpretation of the Word of God. We are going to see some amazing things about grace and about the superiority of Jesus Christ in this 8th chapter of Hebrews.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD OF JESUS CHRIST

1. THERE ARE THREE PRIESTHOODS IN SCRIPTURE.
 - a. The Age of the Gentiles--they had a family priesthood.
 - b. The Age of the Jews--they had the Levitical priesthood.
 - c. The Church Age--every believer in the Church Age is his own priest and Jesus Christ is the great high priest.
Every believer who is born again is a royal priest.
(1 Peter 2:5 and 1 Peter 2:9)
2. AS HIGH PRIEST JESUS CHRIST IS THE MINISTER OF SPIRITUAL THINGS.
(Hebrews 5:1) All spiritual things that are related to Jesus Christ are also related to us. He is our spiritual high priest.
3. JESUS CHRIST WAS APPOINTED HIGH PRIEST BY GOD THE FATHER.
(Psalm 110:4, Hebrews 5:4-10, Hebrews 6:20)
4. JESUS CHRIST OFFERED HIMSELF AS A SACRIFICE.
(Hebrews 9:26-27) Our High Priest is greater than all the priests who went before him for he offered himself as a sacrifice for us. He did two things. He solved the problem of the old sin nature and he paid for all of our sins. He disassociated himself from human good. (It is tragic to get so associated with human good that you ignore Bible Doctrine.) Jesus Christ despises human good. (Isaiah 64:6) Jesus Christ will burn all the human good of believers at his Judgment Seat. This is going to make heaven a wonderful place. No human good will be there. Jesus Christ also satisfied the righteousness and justice of God as he bore our sins. God can't sacrifice his character in order to do business with us.
5. JESUS CHRIST HAS AN ETERNAL AND AN UNTRANSMISSABLE PRIESTHOOD.
6. BECAUSE OF OUR UNION WITH CHRIST, ALL BELIEVERS OF THE CHURCH AGE ARE PRIESTS.
(1 Peter 2:5 and 9, Rev. 1:6 and 5:10 and 20:6)
7. CHRIST, AS OUR HIGH PRIEST, PERFORMS A MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION FOR ALL BELIEVERS OF THE CHURCH AGE. (Hebrews 7:25)
8. THE BELIEVER OF THE CHURCH AGE DOESN'T MAKE AN ANIMAL SACRIFICE ANYMORE. We have four basic sacrifices--
 - a. The sacrifice of the believer's body. (Romans 12:1)
(This is accomplished by rebound.)
 - b. Production and giving. (Hebrews 13:16)
 - c. Obedience to the teaching of the pastor-teacher. (Heb. 13:17)
 - d. A fourth one is the sacrifice of praise. (Heb. 13:15)

Three Basic Principles Found in Hebrews 8

This is the chapter of the superiority of Jesus Christ as the Great King-High Priest.

1. Jesus Christ is superior because he has an heavenly ministry. (Hebrews 8:1-5)
2. Jesus Christ is superior because he has a better ministry. (Hebrews 8:6)
3. Jesus Christ is superior because he has a new covenant ministry. (Hebrews 8:7-13)

Verse 1 talks of the glory of Christ and is a transitional verse.

HEBREWS 8:1 "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;" "Of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum" is not quite correct. The word "now" comes from the particle de showing we have a transition here. This is used with another word in the greek not translated here and the word is kephalaion and it means "the main point." Next we have epi plus the present, passive, participle of lego which means "on what has been said is this." So thus far in the sentence we have "Now the main point on what has been said is this."

Next are the words "we have" and this is a present, active, indicative of echo and it means we have and we will possess this forever. (The biggest problem in Christianity is that we want to help God. "Remember, you can't get out and help push the jet.") This is eternal security. We have this and we hold it forever. Many people want to reduce Christianity to what they do. We have Christ the moment we believe and will always have him. Nothing can ever happen to change this and if you don't understand this, you will be miserable the rest of your life. The thing we have is "such an high priest" and it really means such a unique category of high priest. The word is archiereus and there is only one like him. Next we have the relative pronoun hos translated "who." He is the one who is seated at the right hand side of God in the heavens.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE PRIESTHOOD1. DEFINITION.

A priest is a member of the human race who represents the human race to God. He is man's representative before God. He is the go-between. The Levitical priest was always taken from the male population of the Tribe of Levi, never from angels or from women. The exception to this is The Church Age where every single believer, male or female, represents himself to God. Every believer of the Church Age is his own priest. We call this "The priesthood of every believer." The priest must partake of the nature of the people for whom he acts. He must be a member of the human race. (Heb. 5:1, 7:4-5, 7:14 and 28) This is the reason why Jesus had to become a human. As God he couldn't be a priest. (Heb. 10:5, 10:10-14)

2. THE SPHERE OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

The priest must function in the sphere of spiritual phenomena. He is appointed for man's benefit in spiritual things. This means that the royal priesthood of the Church Age is related to Bible Doctrine. If we are to have spiritual benefits in the

Church Age, then we must live on Bible Doctrine. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The only food for priests is doctrine. But so many times we are running around doing something, when we ought to be learning doctrine. Being "in the program" may be the greatest pitfall of most Southern Baptists. All spiritual growth is related to Bible Doctrine. Every believer priest is related to Christ through full-time Christian service. You a member are just as much of a priest as I am, though I am the pastor-teacher. You stand alone before God. God wants to pour, but God has to have a cup into which he can pour.

3. THE THREE CATEGORIES OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

- a. The royal priesthood. Melchisedec is in this battalion. He was a king-priest. He became a priest by divine appointment, and a king by conquest. The Lord Jesus Christ is in this battalion. Christ was born a king and was appointed a priest in eternity past by God the Father. We, as believers in the Church Age, are in this battalion today.
- b. The Levitical priesthood. These were authorized by the Mosaic Law. This was the family of Aaron, the tribe of Levi. They were commissioned in spiritual things. (Numbers 16:5) This priesthood was perpetuated through physical birth. Aaron had four sons. Nadab and Abihu were eliminated because of rebellion and disobedience. The line was carried on by Eleazar and Ithamar. They dealt in shadows pointing to reality. The Tabernacle was filled with shadows that pointed to reality. The shewbread pointed to the reality, Christ the bread of life. The seven golden candlesticks, pointing to Christ, the Light of the World. The Holy of Holies had in it things that spoke of Christ as the propitiation for our sins. The Passover was a shadow, pointing to the cross. The feast of unleavened bread was a shadow, pointing to fellowship. The feast of firstfruits was a shadow, pointing to the Resurrection. The Day of Pentecost was a shadow, pointing to the interruption of the Jewish Age and the beginning of the Church Age. The trumpets tell of the future gathering of Israel. The Tabernacle is the shadow of the Millennium, the reality.
- c. The family priesthood. This was in the age of the Gentiles when the head of the family was the priest. Both section two and three of the categories of priests are now defunct.

4. WE HAVE A ROYAL HIGH PRIEST IN THE CHURCH AGE.

His name is Jesus Christ. He was appointed forever by the divine decrees. Psalm 110:4 and Heb. 5:6 and 5:10 assigned him to the Melchisedec battalion. Also Heb. 6:20. His appointment was accompanied by a divine oath.

5. THE ROYAL PRIEST OF THE CHURCH AGE.

All believers are appointed to this priesthood.

- a. It was a priesthood that was originally meant for Israel, but they lost it because of the Golden Calf incident. (Ex. 19:6)
- b. Many scriptures tell us that Church Age believers are appointed to this royal priesthood. (1 Peter 2:5 and 9, Rev. 1:6, 5, 10 and 26)

6. THE PURPOSE OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD IN THE CHURCH AGE.
This is to reach super grace. This brings maximum divine blessings. This is the objective, everything else is incidental. (Hebrews 6:17-20, Ephesians 3:17-21, 4:11-16)
7. THE TRUE FUNCTION OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD.
This will be spelled out in Hebrews 13 so we will not anticipate it.

The next words in this verse are "Who has sat down" and this is an aorist, active, indicative of kathizo and should be translated "and has sat down." This is a culminative aorist and it views the action of the verb in its entirety. It shows the result of resurrection, ascension and session. It has been accomplished and will last forever. He, himself, sat down in contrast to the Levitical priests who stood up to do this work. The Levitical priests always stood when they did their sacrificial work in the Tabernacle or Temple. The only place to sit down was the Mercy Seat and no one dared ever sit there, which pointed to the time when Christ would sit down at the Father's right hand.

THE DOCTRINE OF ASCENSION

This Scripture says, "He sat down on the right hand side of God in the majesties in the heavens."

1. THE RESURRECTION BODY OF JESUS CHRIST WAS CAPABLE OF SPACE TRAVEL.
Just like our resurrection bodies will also be capable of space travel: His resurrection body traveled through all three heavens. (John 20:17) We will all make this trip at exactly the right moment.
2. JESUS CHRIST WAS SEATED AT THE REQUEST OF GOD THE FATHER AND IS THE SUBJECT OF MANY SCRIPTURES. (Psalm 110:1, Romans 8:34, Ephesians 1:20, Col. 3:1, Hebrews 1:3, 13 and 8:1, 10:12, 12:2, 1 Peter 3:22) This prophecy is more often quoted in Hebrews than in any other book. This lets us know that the humanity of Christ is in heaven where one day our humanity will be. (Ephesians 1:6)
3. THE ASCENSION AND SESSION IN HEAVEN FORMS THE BASIS FOR THE VICTORY IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT. (Hebrews 1:3-13)
4. THE ASCENSION AND SESSION OF CHRIST BEGINS A NEW SPHERE OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT.
This is why the Age of Israel was never completed, but interrupted. It will be completed in the future, but it is now an interrupted age. The Church Age will be completed without interruption. You are royalty so act like it. The Millennium is the time when the royal family will rule and reign with Jesus Christ. Regardless of race or education or economic condition, if you are a believer, you will reign with him forever. Once the ascension occurred, ten days later he pulled the switch on Israel and their age was interrupted and the Church Age began.

Christ will never be alone after the Rapture of the Church. The ascension means victory and it means we are royalty. Everything is new in this dispensation. Christ's ascension is the basis of our royalty. He is a victor and we will be victors. Jesus Christ is the high priest forever, and we will be royal priests forever. He made us royalty with responsibility. There never was a female priest in Israel, but in the Church Age every believer is a priest, both male and female. (Ephesians 1:20-22, 4:7-10) We are now living in the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict. We are Satan's main target.

5. THE ASCENSION AND SESSION INTRODUCED A NEW CHAPTER IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY. We call it operation footstool. (Psalm 110:1) Quoted in Luke 20:42-43, Acts 2:33-34, Hebrews 1:13. This means that all the enemies of our Lord will be annihilated at the Second Advent of Christ.
6. THE SECOND ADVENT WILL CONCLUDE OPERATION FOOTSTOOL. (Daniel 7:13-14, Zechariah 13:2, Col. 2:15, Rev. 20:1-3)
7. THE ASCENSION AND SESSION OF CHRIST COMPLETED HIS GLORIFICATION IN HYPOSTATIC UNION. He is in his permanent state as the God-man. (Acts 2:33, 5:31, 1 Peter 3:22, Phil. 2:9)
8. THE ASCENSION AND SESSION EXPLAIN THE UNIQUENESS OF THE CHURCH AGE. (John 7:37-39)
9. THE ASCENSION AND SESSION IS THE KEY TO THE VICTORY IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT. (Hebrews 1:4)
10. THE ASCENSION AND SESSION OPENS A NEW DOOR FOR CHRIST'S SERVICE--NAMELY INTERCESSION. Jesus Christ prays every day for every believer. (Hebrews 7:25)

The word for majesty is megalosune and this refers to his total glorification. There had never been any other High Priest in resurrection body. Thus far Jesus Christ is the only one to have a resurrection body. Megalosune magnifies this idea. Resurrection made it possible for Christ to continue his high priestly ministry.

Summary

1. Being at the right hand of the throne in the heavens, places the Lord Jesus Christ in a totally superior place for the function of his priesthood.
2. In the Levitical priesthood the high priest died and thereby ceased to function as a high priest. Christ, our high priest, died on the cross but arose and went right on in his high priestly ministry. The Levitical priesthood was composed of sinful men who had to offer sacrifices for their own sins. Our great high priest had no sins for which to offer any sacrifice.
3. The Levitical priest operated on the earth, while our great High Priest operates in heaven. He operates in a resurrection body.
4. The Levitical priest operated under an inferior authorization, the Mosaic Law, a covenant which had been nullified by a change of dispensation.
5. The Levitical high priest was neither a mediator nor a saviour. Jesus Christ is both.

6. Furthermore, the Levitical priest was cut off forever when he died. But our great high priest took death and used it as a stepping stone to his great eternal high priestly ministry forever.

HEBREWS 8:2 "A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." This is a beautiful picture of the superiority of our great High Priest. Our Saviour High Priest has a superior sanctuary. The closest thing we have to a sanctuary is our human body and in 1 Cor. 6:19-20 the body is called the temple of the Holy Spirit. There is no such thing as a sanctuary here on this earth. This is a technical name and is reserved for the great heavenly sanctuary he is preparing for us. They had a Tabernacle and a Temple where God dwelt among them. Now he indwells every believer. This verse forces us to be technical about the meaning of this word. The word used here for "minister" is not the usual word diakonos. This means to wait on tables, and I do this for you every Sunday morning and evening and every Wednesday night. But here the word for minister is leitourgos. In ancient greek this word was used for a political servant. When the Old Testament was translated into greek, we called it LXX MSS (Which simply means 70 men translated the manuscripts.) It is called the Septuagint. Leitourgos was used in the sense of a high priest ruling the nation. It is used here of our great high priest Jesus Christ ruling his spiritual kingdom. Hagios is a descriptive genitive. This was the part of the Tabernacle covered with a tent. It was the holy place and the Holy of Holies. So it means "A minister of the holy places." Next we have "even the true tabernacle." This is the real tabernacle. The word is alethinous skene and means the real and true tabernacle.

Next we have the accusative singular of hos translated "which." Next is Ho Kurios meaning the Lord Jesus Christ, the creator of the heavens. The word translated "pitched" is the aorist, active, indicative of pegnumi. When they translated the Hebrew of Isaiah 42:5 into the greek, they used this word pegnumi for the creative work of Jesus Christ. It means to fix, to put together, to build. It is a constan-
 tive aorist and means to pull together all the creative work of Jesus Christ into one unit. The creation of the heavens is gathered together in one moment. This is in John 1:3 and Hebrews 1:10 and Col. 1:16. Jesus Christ is the builder of the True Tabernacle. Moses was the actual contractor of the earthly tabernacle, and built it according to specifications. But the Lord Jesus Christ is building the heavens. Notice it says "and not man." The words are ouk anthropos. Man has had nothing to do with the building of heaven. So where is all that material you are sending up from which your house is to be erected? There is no such thing. Listen to this--you never will have anything to do with building heaven. The people who go to heaven will live in a heaven Christ built. Does that tell you something? The whole concept of grace is in view. We will be there not to live in the house we have built, but in the house he has built for us. Pegnumi is strictly the work of Christ. That's grace. Believing in Christ gets us there. No human hands have ever touched that eternal home, thank God for that. Jesus built it and it will be perfect forever. The superiority of Jesus Christ is absolutely final and complete. He ministers in a superior sanctuary.