

**Thought for Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021**  
**Pastor Gordon Hamilton**

**Please have a drink and a piece of bread or similar ready as we will be sharing in the Lord's supper a bit later.**

**Hebrews 5:1-10**

Two weeks ago our reading ended with the fact that Jesus was the great high priest, and I am sure that none of us would argue with that fact. The chapter begins by stating; *'Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them.'* That is why we can have confidence in the final sacrifice that Christ paid for us, because although 100% divine, Jesus was 100% human and therefore qualified to take our sins, which he did at Calvary. Jesus is also; *'able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness.'* Although Jesus was subject to weakness, we have to be aware that he never succumbed to that weakness. The truth in verse 4; *'no one takes this honour on himself, but he receives it when called by God,'* is confirmed in Jesus' case in John 3:16; *'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.'* But not just for a short time as verse 6 says, quoting Psalm 110:4; *'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'* It is a strange quotation to use. Melchizedek, as you may remember when we looked at the story of Abraham at the end of January, came out to meet Abraham. We only get a fleeting glimpse of Melchizedek; Genesis 14:18-20; *'Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram, saying, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.' Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.'* So apart from these three verses and what we read in Psalm 110:4, what the writer to the Hebrews states here, could appear a bit strange; *'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'* The only link I can see is that Melchizedek brought out bread and wine, and of course Jesus left his disciples, and that includes us, the Last Supper, which was and is bread and wine. Whereas Melchizedek is never seen again and the only references are those I have referred to, Jesus is with us, always. Hebrews chapter 7 gives us the only other link when it says; *'the name Melchizedek means 'king of righteousness'; then also, 'king of Salem' means 'king of peace.' Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.'* So as Abraham recognised something special in Melchizedek, we are called to recognise something special in Jesus. Abraham gave Melchizedek 10% of what he had, and that has become the tithe that is talked about in the church, not a legalistic figure but not a bad starting figure, and we know how Abraham was blessed by doing what he believed was the right thing to do. Verse 7 returns to look at Jesus' life on earth as a human being. We know there are many references to Jesus praying, although the vast majority are of times, we are just told that Jesus went off by himself to pray to his father. We do know that the night before he died, Jesus went with his disciples into the Garden of Gethsemane and there he prayed, as Luke 22:44 tells us; *'more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.'* Maybe that is what our writer is referring to, or maybe when Jesus was on the cross, understanding that prayer is talking to God the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we saw Jesus cry out; *'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? Which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'* and verse 8 tells us; *'Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered.'* It can be very difficult for some people who believe that when you become a Christian, you will know no more difficulties. Jesus suffered and died, at just 33 years of age, that we may know His peace. That doesn't mean a stress free life but it does mean a life that knows the peace that passes all understanding. What did we say about Jesus? He was *'in the order of Melchizedek.'*

King of Peace. That is what Jesus has to offer. Jesus had to learn, even right at the end of his life, to pray, *'Not my will but yours be done.'* He learned obedience from what he suffered. The writer says we should know and understand this, it should be part of our belief, part of our faith, but too often we struggle receiving the peace that passes all understanding, and it is because of that, verse 12 says; *'by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again, you need milk, not solid food.'* I pray that is not aimed at any of us, but I am sure we all have wobbles at time. Take John the Baptist for instance. He spent time in the desert, **read Matthew 3:1-12...** I am sure he would have been told by his parents what the angel had told Zechariah, his father in Luke 1:13-17, having spent all that time doing the Lord's work, in Matthew 11:3 we see John asking the question of Jesus; *'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'* As we look at some of the disciples we see that they also had wobbles in their beliefs, even Peter, at the hands of a young servant girl, Peter denied that he was a follower of Jesus, the one who not long before had confessed he was the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God. I am sure the writer to the Hebrews wasn't having a dig at any of the eleven disciples, they had met with the Lord Jesus after his resurrection. As for Peter he had been forgiven, personally. For Thomas, he had confessed, and was the first to confess after his resurrection that Jesus was; *'my Lord and my God.'* As for Paul, he had been challenged on the road to Damascus, and everyone knows what a Damascus Road experience is, whether they have had one or not. I pray Jesus is our Lord and Saviour, no question. Amen.

**Read Matthew 26:26** and eat your piece of bread, then read verses 27-28 and drink your drink, as we share together in the Lord's supper, giving thanks for Christ's obedience

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name,  
I've been born again in Jesus' name;  
And in Jesus' name I come to you  
To share His love as He told me to.

*He said: 'Freely, freely, you have received,  
Freely, freely give;  
Go in My name, and because you believe  
Others will know that I live.'*

All power is given in Jesus' name,  
In earth and heaven in Jesus' name;  
And in Jesus' name I come to you  
To share His power as He told me to.

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