

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

A GLORIOUS SUM

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.

Hebrews 8:1

Every school age child is aware of what a sum is. When doing math problems the sum is the number that is arrived at when adding a group of numbers together. It does not matter if there are two numbers or twenty. It does not matter if they are two digit numbers or ten digit numbers, when they are added together there can be but one sum. That correct sum cannot be arbitrary, either, but will always be the same regardless of who might perform the math. Nothing is left to interpretation or opinion. There is only one correct answer.

The writer of Hebrews speaks of a sum which is arrived at by adding up all of the things which he has said. This sum is no less than the very summary of the gospel itself. "We have such a HIGH PRIEST." What a glorious thought. It is upon this "sum" that all of the hope of the people of GOD squarely rests.

Those who were made priests according to the Mosaic law; of necessity had to be physically descended from the tribe of Levi. Throughout the scriptures there are examples of men who were not Levites who took upon themselves to perform priestly duties and were put to death as a result. Whether it was Dathan and Abiram with their censers (see Num.16) or Uzzah reaching forth to touch the Ark of the Covenant, in order to steady it, (see II Sam.6) their destruction was swift and sure. Even those who were Levites who acted not according to the command of the LORD met the same fate, as we see in the case of Nadab and Abihu who offered strange fire before the LORD. (see Lev.10:1,2)

Yet we read nothing of CHRIST being descended from the tribe of Levi. Rather, HE is the LION of the tribe of Judah, of which nothing is spoken of concerning the priesthood. How then did HE come as a priest? HE came not in the order which was subject to the Mosaic law but rather was of the order of Melchizedek which had neither beginning of days nor ending of life. Therefore HE is a PRIEST forever, seeing HE ever liveth to make intercession for them that come unto HIM (see Heb.7:25)

In fact we read in this same book of Hebrews that HE could not make any offering or sacrifice according to the law since HE was not from Levi's loins. "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law." (Heb 8:4) HE came not to perpetuate the law of Moses (which is earthly and temporary) but rather to fulfill it and put it out of the way because that law (and its offerings and sacrifices) was merely a shadow and type of HIS one true offering for sin. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." (Heb 7:19)

So while CHRIST was indeed made an offering for sin in order to fulfill the law of Moses, HIS priesthood is of a higher and more perfect order than that of which Moses was only a type. In order to fulfill the righteousness of that earthly law, the high priest, Caiaphas by name, did indeed rend his own garments and offered up the LORD JESUS CHRIST unto death as a sin offering, (even prophesying it, see John 11:50-53) even though he had no true

understanding of what he was doing and was a mere condemned pawn in carrying out the sentence of death upon the ONE true sin offering.

Yet our great HIGH PRIEST did offer up HIMSELF in that true tabernacle which the LORD pitched and not man, and entered into that holy place which no son of Levi could ever discover let alone enter. That Holy Place which is in the very presence of the Immortal GOD to which no man could possibly approach. *"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."* (Heb 7:24) HE has prevailed, led captivity captive and given gifts to men because HE was ordained unto this very work, and has obtained eternal redemption for every one of those given to HIM and for whom HE stood as a SUBSTITUTE, imputing HIS righteousness and standing to them, as heirs of HIS everlasting Kingdom.

A mere satisfaction of the law of Moses could only benefit those upon whom that law was laid. When the high priests which sprang from the loins of Levi entered into the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle or Temple, they did so with none but the names of the twelve tribes of Israel graven upon their breastplate and nothing but the blood of bulls and goats which could never take away sin.

Oh, but this HIGH PRIEST of whom we now speak, has entered in once into the True HOLY OF HOLIES with HIS own blood, making men of every tribe, kindred, and tongue upon the face of the earth, to be forever justified and sanctified in the presence of their FATHER. For when HE offered up HIMSELF as the LAMB of GOD, without spot, HE did so for every one whose names were written in the LAMB's book of life, graven upon HIS heart, and loved with an everlasting love, united to HIMSELF in an indissoluble union from before the foundation of the world.

HE is a merciful and faithful HIGH PRIEST. *"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."* (Heb 2:17) *"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house."* (Heb 3:1-2)

HE is a great HIGH PRIEST. *"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession."* (Heb 4:14)

HE is an experienced and sinless HIGH PRIEST. *"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* (Heb 4:15)

HE is a Heavenly appointed (not made by the law) HIGH PRIEST. *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek."* (Heb 5:8-10)

HE is a HIGH PRIEST exactly suited to the needs of HIS people. *"For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated forevermore."* (Heb 7:26-28)

HE is a HIGH PRIEST whose ministry is established upon a better covenant than that of Moses. *"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."* (Heb 8:6)

HE is a HIGH PRIEST of good things to come. *"But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.."* (Heb 9:11) *"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."* (Heb 9:28)