

Concordia Journal

Volume 41 | Number 1

Article 13

2015

Lent 5 • Hebrews 5:1–10 • March 22, 2015 Sermon Notes

Andrew Bartelt

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, bartelta@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholar.csl.edu/cj>

 Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Bartelt, Andrew (2015) "Lent 5 • Hebrews 5:1–10 • March 22, 2015 Sermon Notes," *Concordia Journal*: Vol. 41: No. 1, Article 13.
Available at: <http://scholar.csl.edu/cj/vol41/iss1/13>

This Homiletical Help is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Journal by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Lent 5 • Hebrews 5:1–10 • March 22, 2015

Bartelt: Lent 5 • Hebrews 5:1–10

Sermon Notes

1. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews continues his discussion of the “high priesthood” of Christ (and his commentary on Psalm 110) in 4:14. The importance of the office of high priest was obvious to a Jewish audience (even if the office had been corrupted by contemporary human machinations), and the assertion that the role of high priest had reached its completion in Christ was no doubt striking. In the Old Testament, the high priest wore the names of the twelve tribes on his breastplate as representative of the people as a whole (Ex 28:29), and on the Day of Atonement only he

entered the Holy of Holies (the one time a year *anyone* was allowed to enter) to sprinkle blood on the “mercy seat” or propitiatory (the lid of the Ark of the Covenant), both for the sins of the priests (especially his own) and for the sins of the people (see Lv 16). The Letter to the Hebrews (already in 2:17) shows Jesus as the fulfillment of this priestly office, and, as is often the case, the fulfillment (or antitype) is far greater than the prophecy (or type) itself. Not only does Jesus offer the ultimate (“once for all”) sacrifice, but he also *is* the sacrifice (7:27). Furthermore, he does not need to sacrifice for his own sins (as the human high priest did in 5:3) since he is sinless (7:26).

2. This pericope (5:1–10) is a nicely rounded section, beginning and ending (in Hebrew *inclusio* style) with a reference to the “high priest.” Two qualifications of a high priest are noted in verses 1–4; they are discussed in reverse order in verses 5–6 and 7–8, with the saving result noted in the final verses.

3. The first quality required of a high priest was that he must be able to sympathize with those whom he represented (vv. 1–2, also 4:15). For a “sinful” high priest this included offering sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people (v. 3). The sinless Jesus, of course, did not have to do this, but he is no less a high priest. He, too, can “deal gently” with the “ignorant and wayward” (the sins here are those of ignorance and inadvertence), not condemning their sins but atoning for them. The real humanity of Jesus is taken up in verse 7 and following (“in the days of his flesh”), and it is clear that our Lord can certainly sympathize with those whom he represents as high priest and mediator. Indeed, he has suffered more than any other, offering prayers and supplications of agony (cf. Ps 116). He, too, “learned obedience” as he prayed three times in Gethsemane, giving himself up to the will of God, and he was heard “as a result of his godly fear” (not “because of”), which may well mean true fear and trembling more than simple piety. Thus, Jesus’s identity with all humanity focuses upon his humiliation and suffering (see Phil 2:6–8).

4. The other qualification required of a true high priest was his divine appointment—not “taking the honor upon himself,” but “being called by God, as Aaron was” (v. 4). The high priesthood of Jesus is even greater than that of Aaron, as the writer shows by combining quotes from Psalm 2:7 (v. 5) and Psalm 110:4 (v. 6) to document the divine appointment of Christ, who is both Messianic king (Ps 2) and priest (Ps 110) as well as truly “Son of God.” (Note the contrast between Christ’s divinity and humanity: a Son, yet he suffered—v. 8.) The enigmatic Melchizedek stands out as the one Old Testament figure who was both priest and king (recognized by no less than Abraham in Genesis 14) and is therefore a type of the kingly priesthood (or priestly kingdom) of the Messiah.

5. The end result (*telos*) of Christ’s high priestly work, which was “made perfect” or complete when he himself cried, “It is finished,” is the “eternal salvation of all who obey him” (v. 9). The present participle indicates constant obedience (“continue to obey him”), which is not obedience as to the law (which only reflects the sins for which this great high priest has offered atonement) but the obedience to the faith (cf. Acts 6:7). With Christ the whole Old Testament system of sacrifice and priesthood is fulfilled: the ultimate sacrifice is made. The “priesthood of all believers” is fulfilled (Ex

19:6, 1 Pt 2:9); the priestly role of the pastor is to forgive sins by pointing to the sacrifice already made by Christ.

Suggested Outline

Jesus Has “Been There and Back”

Introduction: Real sympathy often comes from those who have experienced the same situations. As our great high priest, Christ suffered more than we could ever bear.

- I. The role of the high priest in the Old Testament was representative of the people.
 - A. He had to be “one of them.”
 - B. He was to be their mediator before God.
- II. Christ is an even greater high priest.
 - A. He is truly “one of us.”
 1. He was human, tempted.
 2. He learned obedience to the will of God.
 3. He suffered.
 - B. He is greater than we are.
 1. He is the Son of God.
 2. Though tempted, he never sinned.
 3. What he suffered was far worse than our suffering: as both priest and victim, he suffered the wrath of God on sin for all men.
- III. As our representative, Christ brings us into “identity” with him.
 - A. Primary is identity with his death—for us. His obedience earned our salvation.
 - B. Jesus also knows our temptations and sufferings.
 1. There is nothing we can ever face that Jesus has not already experienced.
 2. There is nothing we can ever suffer that Jesus has not suffered more severely.
 - C. As priest and king, Jesus brings us into the “obedience of faith” by which we live in his kingdom.