

# **A SON, A SACRIFICE, A SAVIOR**

## **Heb 5:5-9**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In New York's Hayden Planetarium a special Christmas holiday show was enhanced by an added feature. A giant lollipop tree was projected onto the planetarium dome, surrounded by a horizon filled with brilliantly colored toys which came to life and danced to the tune of "Jingle Bells." At the climax a huge figure of Santa Claus faded out in a snow storm, and the star of Bethlehem broke through into a sky that produced exactly the sky of the Promised Land on the night of the nativity. The designer of this show may not realize that he dramatically staged the supreme Christmas message our world needs to understand: The recovery of the meaning of Christmas. It is a tragic loss to substitute "Jingle Bells" for "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and a lollipop tree for the manger of Bethlehem.

### **READ Hebrews 5:5-9**

The book of Hebrews presents the superiority of Christ. Hebrews was written to a group of Jewish believers outside the area of Jerusalem (similar to James). Jesus Christ is greater than all of the Old Testament figures.

**Proposition: 3 Gifts** that God has given to His children

1. **A Son**
2. **A Sacrifice**
3. **A Savior**

**So That:** This Christmas we understand the gift of Christmas

**1<sup>st</sup> Gift ...**

**I. A Son**

**5:5**

Point – What wondrous love is this? That a Father would give his

only begotten son? I can't think of a more precious gift ...

**Proof – Heb 5:5 – “So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, ‘YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU’;”**

In this verse you see:

### **A. Humility Personified**

**“So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest,”**

**John 8:54a – “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me.”**

- all the fullness of Godhead dwells in Him
- yet he emptied Himself in the incarnation
- see His humility – divine, spotless, sinless humility

### **B. Eternity Pierced**

**“but He who said to Him, ‘YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU’;”**

- this is a quote from Psalm 2
- great incarnation verse
- Christ is eternal – He has always existed
- no “today” in eternity => point where eternity is pierced is the day of His birth
- God, the eternal being, coming to earth as a baby

This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament:

1. **Acts 13** – Paul’s sermon at Pisidian in Antioch – Jesus as Savior
2. **Heb 1** – God – King – Jesus is far superior to angels
3. **Heb 5** – Priest

The book of Hebrews begins:

**Heb 1:1-2 – “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup>in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.”**

This is the unique Sonship of Jesus Christ. He has always been the son, and at the same time, there was a special day when He became a human son of Mary and of God the Father. This is part of Jesus’ ministry to us. All the way back in the Garden of Eden we understand that sin carries the consequences of the punishment of God. God provides a way of escape. That is the Christmas message. That is the gospel. There is forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. There is hope in the midst of tragedy, there is hope in the midst of disappointment, and there is hope in the midst of discouragement because of the message of Jesus Christ. There is hope because of the message that the punishment we deserve can be dealt with by a man – Jesus Christ. In God’s perfect wisdom and in His unfolding plan of redemption, He decreed that He would come to earth as a man, live as a man and die as a man to pay the price for our sin.

**Illustration:** In Manila, there is a massive garbage dump for the entire city. Tens of thousands of people make their homes on that dump site. They’ve constructed shacks out of the things other people have thrown away. And they send their children out early every morning to scavenge for food out of other people’s garbage, so they can have family meals. People have been born and grown up there on the garbage dump. They have had their families, their children, their shacks, their garbage to eat, finished out their lives, and died there without ever going anywhere else, even in the city of Manila.

Missionaries also live on the garbage dump. They are, Christians who have chosen to leave their own country and communicate the love of Jesus Christ to people who otherwise would never hear it. They have chosen to live in the same shacks and have the same lifestyle – to be on the same level as these people.

This is amazing, but even more staggering is the journey Jesus made from heaven to earth. He came as a son. That is God's gift to humanity.

This **Son** is not just any son. He is a **Priest**.

We have a problem. God is holy and we are not. We face death, separation from God. How can we stand in the presence of a holy God?

We are sinful. We are born in rebellion to God. He has made it clear that the standard to enter into heaven is absolute perfection. God has said that just one sin, one nanosecond of not loving the Lord your God with all of your heart, mind, soul and spirit has condemned you to hell forever because He is holy. And that is God's just judgment. How can we stand before a holy God like that?

We can't.

We need someone to stand between our holy God and ourselves. We know from that Old Testament that we need a priest. The solution God gives is a priest.

**Proof – Heb 5:6 – “just as He says also in another passage, “YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.”**

**“Melchizedek” – Gen 14:18-20**

Melchizedek is mentioned ten times in the Bible:

- twice in the OT – **Genesis 14, Psalm 110**
- eight times in the NT in 3 chapters of **Hebrews (5, 6, 7)**

Abraham mentioned 230 times

Moses mentioned 833 times

David is mentioned 1080 times

In some very special ways, Melchizedek is more important than

these men.

**Priest** (1<sup>st</sup> mention) – represented the people before God

- God's man on earth

“forever” –

**Heb 7:1-3** → a priesthood with no beginning and no ending.

This **Son** who is a **Priest** is not just any Priest

- He is also a **King**
- He is the Sovereign

\* King of Righteousness (*melek + tsedek*)

- This is what his name means

\* King of Salem (King of Peace)

**v. 3** – the literal man Melchizedek did have an earthly mother and father

- In Genesis, a book of genealogies, there is no record of his mother or father
- This is because he is a type of future coming, perfect High priest... Jesus Christ

**7:23** – There were many priests because they died

**7:25** – But His is an eternal priesthood because He lives forever

**7:27-28** – He has no need, as sons of Aaron, to offer sacrifices for His own sins first – **Heb 4:15**

**Illustration:** In April 19, 1742, David Brainerd, missionary to American Indians, wrote in his diary: *“I set apart this day for fasting and prayer to prepare me for the ministry. In the forenoon, I felt a power of intercession for immortal souls. In the afternoon, God enabled me so to agonize in prayer that I was quite wet with sweat, though in the shade and the cool wind. My soul was drawn out very much for the world: I gasped for multitudes of souls. I think I had more enlargement for sinners than for the children of God, though I felt as if I could spend my life in cries for both.”*

**Application:** This Son, this Priest, this King intercedes for us.  
That is a magnificent gift!

The Gift of a **Son** ...

**2<sup>nd</sup> Gift** ...

**II. A Sacrifice**

**5:7-8**

Point – This Son (King Priest) was sent to be a Sacrifice

Proof – **Heb 5:7-8** – “**In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. <sup>8</sup> Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.**”

We see: Persevering Agony, Persevering Purity, Persevering Fidelity

A. Persevering **Agony**

**5:7a** – “**In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death,**”

- Gethsemane sums up best, but not restricted to just Gethsemane

Notice the word “**days**” – Not just a night or a day, but during all the “**days of His flesh**” he was wrestling and praying and begging and crying out and weeping.

- it was a lifetime of warfare against sin

“**save Him from death**” – *ek* – Lit. out of

- Jesus was praying to the One able to save him from death
- His main prayers were in the power of resurrection

➔ Confidence in the Resurrection

- Abraham was like Jesus!

- **Genesis 22** – Abraham was a man of faith
- **Hebrews 11:19**
- Abraham was following the footsteps of His master - Jesus

## B. Persevering **Purity**

**5:7b** – “and He was heard because of His piety.”

- Jesus hit the market perfectly – the standard God set
- spotless Lamb of God
- **Ephesians 5:27** – “no spot or wrinkle”

## C. Persevering **Fidelity (Obedience)**

**5:8** – “<sup>8</sup>Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.”

Recommend: Isaiah passage on Suffering Servant

- **Isaiah 50** – verse 4 and onward
- **Isaiah 53**

What does it mean that He “**learned obedience**”?

*“This does not mean he moved from being disobedient to being obedient. It means he moved from being untested to being tested and proven ... It means that the gold of his natural purity was put in the crucible and melted down with white-hot pain, so that he could learn from experience what suffering is and prove that his purity would persevere” – Piper*

There’s a side to the Christmas story that isn’t often told: those soft little hands, fashioned by the Holy Spirit in Mary’s womb, were made so that nails would be driven through them. Those baby feet, pink and unable to walk, would one day walk up a dusty hill to be nailed to a cross. That sweet infant’s head with sparkling eyes and eager mouth was formed so that someday men would force a crown of thorns into it. That tender body, warm and soft, wrapped in swaddling clothes, would one day be ripped open by a spear.

Back would be shredded by the whips ...

**Application:** Jesus was born to die.

- Jesus' death, though devised and carried out by evil men with evil intentions, is in no sense a tragedy.
- In fact, it represents the greatest victory over evil anyone has ever accomplished.

The Gift of a **Son**, the Gift of a **Sacrifice** ...

**3<sup>rd</sup> Gift** ...

**III. A Savior**

**5:9**

Point – We need a Savior. We need salvation.

**Illustration:** Newtown Massacre this past Friday

- Endless discussion on what would cause this man to do such a revolting crime?
- Not about a mental illness, not about a chemical imbalance, certainly not about autism
- God gives us the answer in **Jeremiah 17:9**

**“The heart is more deceitful than all else, And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?”**

- It is sin – it is grotesque, horrific sin.
- As revolting as this massacre is, we are in a sense, no better than this criminal before God
- We fall as infinitely short of God's standard as that psychopathic killer
- We need forgiveness. We need a Savior. We need salvation.

Proof – **Heb 5:9** – **“And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,”**

**“perfect”** – complete → perfectly qualified

Gabriel gave Joseph the meaning of Jesus' name: **“She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21).**

- *Jesus* comes from the Hebrew *Joshua*, or *Jehoshua*, means “YHWH will save.”

“**eternal salvation**” - what was it that gave Him the right to be that author?

- His own death.
- by His death He opened the way of salvation, eternal salvation.

“**all those who obey Him**”

**Illustration: Bar Mitzvah** – literally translates to “son of the commandment” one who is subject to the law. According to Jewish law, when Jewish boys become 13, they become accountable for their actions and become a Bar Mitzvah. A Bat Mitzvah occurs when Jewish girls become 12, and it means the same as it does for boys.

At the end of the ceremony, the Bar Mitzvah, the son of the commandment says “*I will hear and I will do.*” This is basically same statement that the nation of Israel gave to God in **Exod 24:7**: “**Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!”**”

This was the Mosaic Covenant but there was a problem:

- they can’t do it
- we can’t do it – no one can do it
- we can’t obey the law because God commands that we obey it perfectly
- We are helpless, hopeless and lost
- That is where the obedience of Jesus comes into play

**J. Gresham Machen** – Professor of New Testament at Princeton Seminary between 1906 and 1929, and led a conservative revolt against modernist theology at Princeton and formed Westminster Theological Seminary as a more orthodox alternative. As the Northern Presbyterian Church continued to reject conservative

attempts to enforce faithfulness to the Westminster Confession, Machen led a small group of conservatives out of the church to form the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. When the northern Presbyterian church (PCUSA) rejected his arguments during the mid-1920s and decided to reorganize Princeton Seminary to create a moderate school, Machen took the lead in founding Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia (1929) where he taught New Testament until his death.

Machen is considered to be the last of the great Princeton theologians who had, since the formation of the college in the early 19th century, developed Princeton theology: a conservative and Calvinist form of Evangelical Christianity.

Machen's influence can still be felt today through the existence of both institutions that he founded—Westminster Theological Seminary and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In addition, his textbook on basic New Testament Greek is still used today in many seminaries, including The Master's Seminary (it was the textbook for my first Greek class).

Machen had decided to honor some speaking engagements he had in North Dakota in December, 1936, but developed a lung infection in the cold weather there. After Christmas, he was hospitalized for pneumonia and died on January 1, 1937.

Just before his death, he dictated a telegram to long-time friend and colleague John Murray -- *"I'm so thankful for active obedience of Christ. No hope without it."*

Jesus' "**obedience**" (v.8) makes it possible for us to "**obey**" (v.9) Him.

- We can hear as new creatures in Christ
- We can do as new creatures in Christ
- Because of the Son, the Sacrifice, the Savior

**Illustration:** We had a wonderful time singing at Emeritus Nursing Home with high school students on Wednesday.

Afterwards, we spent time talking and sharing the gospel with the residents. What struck me is how close they are to eternity

*“All hell will rage at you one day with this one message— especially when you are nearing death: your salvation is not sufficient; your guilt remains; condemnation hangs over your head; and the wrath of God is not removed. At that moment you will need truth about the foundation of your eternal salvation. And one truth that will strengthen your confidence in that hour is the truth that you have no ordinary High Priest, but one who has the infinite dignity of the Son of God, and he has therefore become the source of eternal salvation”*

**Illustration:** 9 days from now, we will all be receiving gifts.

- How much are you going to pay for the gift you receive?
- Did you do something to earn the gift?
- Did you work for the gift?

No. It wouldn't be a gift then would it?

**“God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.” (1 John 5:11–12)**

**Application:** In the same way ...God's gift of salvation...

- You don't have it.
- You can't earn it.
- You can't buy it.

It is a free offer to any man, woman and child. Please consider your status under the Lord. Turn from your sin and plead with Jesus Christ to forgive you. Receive Him as your Savior.

**CONCLUSION**