Present High Priestly Ministry of Jesus

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PRESENT HIGH PRIESTLY MINISTRY OF JESUS

• THE OUTLINE

Jesus’s current activities would include:

A. Functioning as our forerunner (unbreakable spiritual lifeline or anchor) (Heb. 6:19, 20)
B. Preparing a city for us (Jn. 14:2; Rev. 21:2, 10 11, 23)
C. Distributing spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:7, 8, 11-13)
D. Offering encouragement to all believers (Heb. 4:14-16; 12:1-3)
E. Making high priestly prayers for us (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:25)
F. Sending the promise of the Father (the Holy Spirit) to indwell all the saved (Act. 1:4)
G. Caring for, exhorting, encouraging, and, if necessary, reprimanding His Church (Rev. 1:10-20; 2:1-3:11)
H. Working through His people (Jn. 14:12)
I. Waiting until the Father sends Him to defeat His enemies (Psa. 2:8, 9; 110:1; 2 Thess. 2:7-10; Rev. 6:14-17; 19:11-16)

• THE ANALYSIS

A. The place involved:

The right hand of God – The place here is in reality a position of highest honor. In essence, the Lord Jesus Christ now occupies the most prominent, privileged, and powerful position in all the universe.

1. This place is verified by many New Testament authors:

   “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God” (Mark 16:19). “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” (Heb. 8:1). “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. 10:12). “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” (1 Pet. 3:22).

   (See also: Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13.)

2. This place is viewed by one New Testament martyr:

   “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God” (Acts 7:55-56).
B. The performance involved:

Just what kind of ministry does our Lord perform for us at the Father’s right hand? In essence, He is there:

1. To be our forerunner

   “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 6:19-20).

2. To prepare a place for us

   “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2).

3. To give spiritual gifts to His followers

   “He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:10-14).

4. To offer encouragement to His followers

   “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. For we have not an 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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:14-16).

   “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds” (Heb. 12:1-3).

5. To make high priestly prayers for us

   “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. 8:34).

   “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. 9:24).

Here He functions in a twofold manner:
a. Acting as our intercessor (due to the weakness and frailties of the believer)—While on earth, our Lord once told Peter:

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:31-32).

According to many New Testament passages, the Savior continues to perform this blessed ministry for His people from heaven:

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).

b. Acting as our advocate (due to the sins of the believer)

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night” (Rev. 12:10).

6. To send the promise of the Father (John 16; Acts 1:4; 2:33)

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me” (Acts 1:4).

Much ink has been used attempting to explain the five words “the promise of the Father.” Various passages of Scripture make it dear that the promise of the Father (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16) and also the promise of the Son (John 14:16-26; 15:26; 16:7) were references to the arrival of the Holy Spirit of God.

“Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:33).

The exaltation of Christ allows Him to sit at the right hand of the Father and thus send the Holy Spirit of God on His believers.

7. To care for His churches (Rev. 1:10-3:22)

In this amazing passage the Apostle John, on the Isle of Patmos, sees the resurrected and glorified Christ standing among seven golden lampstands, dressed in the garb of a high priest. He is told that the lampstands symbolize local churches on earth.

8. To work through His people

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father” (John 14:12).

9. To wait until His enemies become His footstool
“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool” (Heb. 10:12-13).

It is my (HLW) opinion that one of the greatest hymns ever composed is Charles Wesley’s theological masterpiece entitled, “Arise, My Soul, Arise” which beautifully summarizes in musical fashion the present ministry of Jesus in glory!

Arise, my soul, arise; shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding sacrifice in my behalf appears:
Before the throne my surety stands,
Before the throne my surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.

He ever lives above, for me to intercede;
His all redeeming love, His precious blood, to plead:
His blood atoned for all our race,
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds He bears; received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers; they strongly plead for me:
“Forgive him, O forgive,” they cry,
“Forgive him, O forgive,” they cry,
“Nor let that ransomed sinner die!”

The Father hears Him pray, His dear anointed One;
He cannot turn away, the presence of His Son;
His Spirit answers to the blood,
His Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I am born of God.

My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for His child; I can no longer fear:
With confidence I now draw nigh,
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And “Father, Abba, Father,” cry.