

# KEY EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

## HIS OFFICES

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- Traditionally, the work and ministry of Christ has been summarized in the 3-fold office that Christ held: Prophet, Priest, and King
- This is known as the *munus triplex* – the 3-fold office of Christ
- It was John Calvin who brought this 3-fold office of Christ into prominence
- These 3 offices of Christ – prophet, priest, and king – represent the 3 offices of ancient Israel to which men were appointed as servants of God
- Men in the OT who were appointed to ministering on God’s behalf were appointed to 1 of those 3 offices
- And in the OT these offices were held by separate individuals – either he was a prophet, a priest, or a king – but no single individual in the OT held all 3 offices at once
- But all 3 offices are held supremely in the one person of Christ...Christ is all 3...He is prophet, He is priest, and He is king

### Prophet

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- A prophet is someone who represents God to man...The office of prophet was established in Deuteronomy

**Deuteronomy 18:15-18** ~ *The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.’ The LORD said to me, ‘They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.*

- God spoke through the OT prophets to mankind (people like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel)
- Christ, though, was the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promise to give a prophet in Deuteronomy 18
- He is the Word of God, the logos....He came to speak the things of the Father....He completely revealed the Father to the people...He explained the Father to them

**John 1:18** ~ *No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.*

**Acts 3:22-23** ~ *Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you. And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’*

- Jesus frequently referred to himself as a prophet

**Matthew 13:57** ~ *And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.”*

**Luke 13:33** ~ *Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem.*

- Jesus was both the object and subject of prophecy...He declared the Word of God, but He also is the Word of God
- Thus, as Messiah, he was the focus of OT prophecy, but He Himself was also a prophet

Question: Are there still prophets, prophecy today?

## Priest

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- A priest is someone who represents man to God...A priest is a man appointed to act for others in things pertaining to God.....a mediator
- We need someone to mediate between us and God!
- Throughout the book of Hebrews the high priesthood of Jesus Christ is exalted

**Hebrews 2:17** ~ *that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God*

**Hebrews 4:15** ~ *we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.*

- In a way no other NT writer does, the writer of Hebrews introduces us to the priesthood of Jesus Christ
- He draws on many allusions and practices from the OT to demonstrate that Christ is our great high priest
- We know what Israel's OT priests did...they were representatives in matters related to God.....like the offering of gifts and sacrifices for sins
- Only the high priest could offer the highest sacrifice on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) – once per year in the holy of holies
- All the sins of the people were brought symbolically to the Holy of Holies, where blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat as a sacrifice to atone for them
- So solemn was this ceremony that tradition says that the high priest would enter the holy of holies in the tabernacle or temple with a rope tied around his ankle with bells around his waist
- The bells jingling would be a sign that the priest had fallen to the ground dead
- So this is what happened year after year after year
- He would go into the holy of holies and sprinkle blood onto the mercy seat on top of the ark of the covenant
- He did not spend a lot of time in there....just enough time to make the sacrifice in the presence of the glory of God...He did not sit down or delay....As soon as the sacrifice was made, he left and did not return for another year.....This was necessary every year
- And between those yearly sacrifices, every day, day after day, thousands of other sacrifices were made
- In Jerusalem for example, the fire on the great altar of sacrifice never went out; and on a great Sabbath such as Passover, literally hundreds of thousands of lambs would be offered
- The process was never ended, never completed, because the priesthood was not perfect and the sacrifices were not perfect
- In fact, all priests and all sacrifices in the OT were representations of the one True Priest who would come and offer Himself as a sacrifice which would ultimately cleanse us of our sin
- And that's what makes Christ's priesthood different and superior to the OT priests and their sacrifices
- He was both the offering and the offerer...he was both priest and sacrifice
- He fulfilled the priestly/mediatorial function in that He offered himself up as a sacrifice for sin....something the OT priest could not do
- So in every way Christ is the greater priest with a greater ministry than any of the priests in the OT

**Hebrews 9:11-15** ~ *But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from*

*dead works to serve the living God? For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance*

- Notice these 7 qualities about Christ's priesthood:

### **#1 He is a Supernatural Priest – vs. 11**

- He entered through the “greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands”
- The writer of Hebrews is talking here about heaven itself...the presence of God
- God's dwelling in heaven is uncreated...it does not belong to the created realm
- And it is this tabernacle that Jesus entered into through His priesthood
- Heb 9:24 ~ For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, **but into heaven itself**, now to appear in the presence of God for us;
- Heb 8:1-2 ~ Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, **who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle**, which the Lord pitched, not man.
- Only the high priest could enter into the holy of holies once a year with a blood sacrifice
- And that's true also for the true tabernacle...heaven...only the True Great High Priest can enter into heaven, God's dwelling
- Only Christ has access into the tabernacle not made with hands
- Only Christ can enter into the greater and more perfect tabernacle
- Only Christ can enter into the tabernacle not of this creation

### **#2 He is a Suffering Priest – vs. 12**

- When he suffered and died on the cross, in a sense he entered the Most Holy Place of the temple
- It was through His suffering that he accomplished this and opened up the holy place for us
- He suffered physically and as the sin-bearer (See Isaiah 53)

### **#3 He is a Sacrificial Priest – vs. 12**

- Both the OT sacrifices and Christ's sacrifice involved death
- The writer of Hebrews is drawing our attention back to the OT sacrificial system and reminding us how bloody and messy it was
- And the great amount of blood was a continual reminder of the penalty of sin...sin results in death
- Blood is a symbol of death...and in the OT the death of the animals was a sacrifice for sin
- This tells us something very important...forgiveness demands blood!

**Leviticus 17:11** ~ *For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.*

**Hebrews 9:22** ~ *without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness*

- Forgiveness doesn't happen without the shedding of blood
- But all those OT sacrifices were never able to cleanse from sin, but only to symbolize such cleansing
- That's what makes Christ a greater high priest...He is a sacrificial priest...through his own blood

#### #4 *He is a Sufficient Priest* – vs. 12

- Notice that phrase “once for all”
- The OT priests never completed their task of offering sacrifices...it was an endless, tedious job

**Hebrews 10:11** ~ *Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins*

- But Christ’s sacrifice was once for all!

**Hebrews 10:12-14** ~ *but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.*

- The sacrifice of Christ was complete and eternal!
- Christ’s death marked the end of the Jewish priesthood and sacrifices
- That’s why there should be no priests today or altars in the church

#### #5 *He is a Saving Priest* – vs. 12

- He has “obtained eternal redemption”
- No OT priest could do that....but Christ did....on the strength of his own sacrificial blood shed on the cross, He procured redemption for His people

#### #6 *He is a Sanctifying Priest* – vs. 13-14

- The writer of Hebrews here makes clear that the blood of goats and bulls could only cleanse sinners externally....they could only cleanse the flesh
- But the purpose of Christ’s sacrifice was to cleanse actually, internally....to cleanse the conscience

#### #7 *He is a Superior Priest* – vs. 15

- He is the mediator of a new and better covenant

### **King**

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- A king is someone who has authority to rule and reign over a group of people
- There were kings in the OT (Saul, David, Solomon, then a divided kingdom with many kings)
- But Christ is the one true king of Israel prophesied in the OT:

**Genesis 49:10** ~ *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.*

**2 Samuel 7:16** ~ *Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”*

**Psalms 2:6** ~ *But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.”*

**Isaiah 9:6-7** ~ *For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of*

*His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.*

**Micah 5:2** ~ *But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."*

**Zechariah 9:9** ~ *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

- The rejection of Christ as king by Israel resulted in the postponement of the millennial kingdom but it did not alter the certainty of complete fulfillment of His work as king nor the fact that He indeed is the king of Israel
- Jesus is King in that he rules and judges and one day he will return to take His throne

**Revelation 19:11** ~ *And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.*

- All of God's purposes for these 3 offices was perfectly culminated in the Lord Jesus Christ

## HIS BAPTISM

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**Matthew 3:13-17** ~ *Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him. After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."*

- This is the event that launched Jesus' public ministry
- John's baptism was a baptism of repentance
- Baptism was not a new practice in Judaism...it was the regular rite in the admissions of converts from other religions
- When such a conversion took place, the males of the family were circumcised and all of both sexes were baptized
- This was seen as the ceremonial removal of all the pollutions contracted in the Gentile world
- The novelty in John's case and the sting in his practice was that he applied to Jews the ceremony that was held to be appropriate in the case of Gentile coming newly into the faith
- All Jews were prepared to accept the view that Gentiles were defiled and needed cleansing, but to put Jews in the same class was horrifying....The Jews were God's people already
- But they had to acknowledge that they were no better than a Gentile...the people were under sin and they needed forgiveness
- By accepting baptism at John's hands those who were baptized were expressing their repentance and their desire for forgiveness
- They indicated their need for spiritual cleansing and renewal
- Those who received John's baptism were those who were aware of their sinful condition and need for forgiveness
- (Believer's baptism is different...it symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection)
- This is why John tried to prevent Jesus being baptized by him...since his baptism symbolized forgiveness, John thought this inappropriate for the spotless lamb of God

- Yet, Christ insisted that John baptize Him in order to “fulfill all righteousness”
- Question: What does this mean?
- Christ identified Himself with sinners in this act of baptism; Not that he was repenting of his own sins, but rather that He would ultimately bear their sins and impute his righteousness to them (2 Cor 5:21)
- Thus, in order for him to properly secure righteousness for sinners, this act of baptism was necessary
- It prefigured his death and resurrection
- Notice the approval of heaven in this act: vs. 16-17
- This was an affirmation of Christ’s public ministry and Messiahship directly from heaven
- Notice the Trinity in these verses as well (vs. 16-17)
- Question: What implications does this have for believer’s baptism?

## HIS TEMPTATION

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**Matthew 4:1-11** ~ *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’ ” Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU’; and ‘ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’ ” Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’ ” Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’ ” Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.*

- 1<sup>st</sup> temptation (the personal temptation) – Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread rather than trusting God’s provision
  - Jesus’ response: Matt 4:4 ~ It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’ (quote from Deut 8:3)
  - It was as though Jesus was saying “Satan, it does not really matter much whether I have physical bread to eat. God will preserve my life. What really matters is whether I believe God or not. If I doubt his Word, all is lost”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> temptation (the national temptation) – Satan tempted Jesus to receive worship Satan’s way rather than God’s way (jump off the top of the temple...God will send his angels to save you...and people will follow you immediately)
  - Jesus’ response: Matt 4:7 ~ it is written, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’ (quote from Deut 6:16)
  - It was as though Jesus was saying, “Satan you want me to put God to the test...but my responsibility is not to test Him but to trust Him)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> temptation (the universal temptation) - Satan tempted Jesus to inherit kingdoms of the world his way rather than God’s
  - Jesus’ response: Matt 4:10 ~ it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’ (quote from Deut 6:13)
- Question: What does this teach us about how to gain victory over temptation?