

Hebrews 8:1

A Pause to Consider...

The writer urges us to take a deep breath and consider a summary of the whole argument. It is a nod to the fact that his long-winded argument just might have addled our brains, wearied our intellects and exhausted our understanding... more than that, it reminds us that what he is about to restate is the true meat of the whole argument. We are standing at the cusp of the argument in relation to the superiority of the gospel over the law. If we miss this point, we miss the whole thing and maybe even the gospel itself. It is that important! So, altogether, let's pause and consider before rushing into the rest of the matter.

I. SUMMARY AND WIND-UP

A. The Greek word here is <Κεφάλαιον> It is the head of the issue or matter, the summary, the chief, the point of it all... this word is a shout to us - pay attention! Heads up, this is REALLY important. In other words, he is saying that he cannot overstate the importance of this

declaration. If you miss this, you have missed it all.

1. Interestingly. The word can be "summary" an encapsulation and restatement of the preceding... even while it denotes the thing upon which the whole depends. The thing without which the whole structure falls to ruin. In this case, it is used in both senses.

B. The author is doing 2 distinct things in these first few verses

1. giving us a general sense of just what God has done in giving us this priest.

2. Extolling Him for the greatness of His person and work.

C. In the first verse alone, the issue laid out is:

1. Our relationship to the high priest

"We have such a high priest"

2. The completion of His sacrificial work.

"Seated..."

3. The incredible glory OF this High Priest
(Which we will look at next week)

*"At the right hand of the throne of the
majesty in the heavens".*

D. There is more laid out in the whole summary statement, but this is a good place to begin.

II. JESUS, THE PRIEST

A. He is such a high priest as we need in every way.

B. He is the only one, we have such a priest; not another, not one of, but such a one...

1. He has absolute dignity and excellence of person
2. He has complete exaltation and glory
3. He is set upon the throne at the right hand of the majesty on high.

C. We must remember that although He was nothing in the eyes of man while on the earth, He was possessed of this eternal glory and honor. He condescended to be esteemed as nothing, it was not the truth of who He is.

1. That outward diminishment was needful for the sacrifice and work He came to do,
2. But He remained always possessed of who and what He truly was.

3. As soon as the work was accomplished, He was exalted once more to the place from whence He came.

D. He entered into the holy place

1. With the blood of the sacrifice

2. Into the presence of God

3. Sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice upon the mercy seat

4. And unlike every other priest before, who only offered at the shadow of the real, and then had to withdraw lest they sin and be destroyed... He offered, at the real, and then took His place. Ascending to the very throne of God, and there took His rightful place... not for a season, but for all eternity, never to be replaced nor removed.

III. OUR HIGH PRIEST.

A. There is no other

“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,” (1 Timothy 2:5, NKJV)

*“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”
(John 14:6, NKJV)*

B. He is ours, and we have been given a personal relationship to Him. He is ours in the same way that a family can say of one of its members, he is mine.

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,” (Hebrews 3:1, NKJV)

*“For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;”
(Hebrews 7:26, NKJV)*

C. We must have Him, or we cannot get to God by any means.

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15)

“We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.” (Hebrews 13:10)

IV. THE PRIEST SUPREME

A. If we do not have a relationship to this high priest, then we have no part in what He offers. Period.

1. There is no substitute, and thus there is NO approach to God
 2. there is no confidence, no boldness, no peace
 3. there is no removal of the barrier of sin
 4. there is no life...
 5. there is no hope
- B. The office of High Priest is for the church and those who belong to her ALONE. Christ is redeeming His bride. You cannot have Christ and hate the bride, you cannot have Christ and hate His body, you cannot have Christ and hate what and who He loves.
1. not a denomination
 2. not a particular location
 3. not a pastor nor a teacher,
 4. but the bride of Christ, the fellowship of the believers, the brotherhood of saints, the communion of the redeemed...
 5. While there may be a season when you walk in disharmony, or have a lack of this fellowship, there will also be a hunger toward that fellowship that requires us to be restored to the body.

C. This implies and confirms the glory and special place of the church over all else.

1. Not as if the institution of the church saves us, as is taught by Rome; but to say that the Christian church is one place that teaches the truth of God's manner of salvation. No other faith or belief is ratified by the Spirit of God. All other faiths, all other religions are the invention of man as a means to answer the deep and abiding need of our souls. Created to worship, we ache for God...

D. In comparison to Judaism, the church has a dignity not found in Levi. Although Levi had its own sense of this dignity, it was only outward.

1. They had the priest anointed with the oil.
2. He had the garments made for beauty and for glory.

“And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.” (Exodus 28:2, NKJV)

3. He wore the headpiece which was inscribed "holiness unto YHWH"

““You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet:

HOLINESS TO THE LORD

And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. So it shall be on Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.” (Exodus 28:36–38, NKJV)

4. He alone entered the holy of holies, he alone could bring the people into the presence of God...

E. The dignity of the church can be hard to understand and appreciate, for it is not an outward glory, nor is it supposed to be.

1. As a result of this hidden dignity, the Jews despised the church.
2. The pagans too despised them, for they did not have the great golden altars, cast images and ceremony

F. This truth is important, for if we cannot see the hidden glory in true worship; if we are blind to true glory and feel the need for false external glory, it shows us that our hearts are not seeing God, but rather just our false ideas. We do great wrong when we remove one set of falsehoods

only to then erect other falsehoods. If we misunderstand the work of the priest, what has been accomplished and what is being done still then we will have it all wrong. The sacrifice has been completed; it will never need to be repeated in ANY fashion.

V. THE PRIEST AT REST

A. Seated at the right hand...

1. This is the place and declaration of the fact that the sacrifice has been offered, **one time** and has been accepted for **all time**.

“And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”

(Hebrews 10:11–14, NKJV)

B. There is no longer any need of a continuing or repeated sacrifice

“For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven

itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.” (Hebrews 9:24–28, NKJV)

C. God fulfilled and accomplished His eternal purpose in Christ leaving NOTHING remaining to be done.

“To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our

Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.” (Ephesians 3:8–12)

D. So not only do we have the evidence of scripture but the manifest purpose of God to fulfill His will in the death of Jesus. Take note, our salvation is the will of the Father. No one coerced or pressured Him; no one forced Him; no one had to convince Him, plead with Him or manipulate Him to do this. God purposed to save a people, chosen in love and displayed in eternal glory and praise for the Son who accomplished it through His suffering and death in our place. His is the glory and His is the honor. May He eternally receive the full and glorious reward of His travail and obedience.