



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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November 30, 2011
Midweek Advent Worship
Pastor Randy Ott

First Lesson: [Exodus 30:22-33](#)
Sermon Text: [Hebrews 7:23-28](#)

Who is The Coming Messiah? He is Our Priest

At this time of the year, we end of making a lot of lists, don't we? Or you get handed a lot of lists, right? Do you kids here make any lists and hand them to your parents and say, "Here is everything I want. Don't miss anything." Or do you just circle pictures in the catalogues that come?

God made his list to get us ready for this time of the year too. It's throughout the Old Testament. It's his list that describes for us what the coming Christ would be like. He used things that the people would have seen regularly. In many cases, almost every day, to say what the work of his Anointed One would be. One of the first things on the list that we are going to look at is that the Anointed One who was coming was going to be a priest like no other priest.

Christ is a Greek word that means *Anointed One*. It means the same exact thing as Messiah, which was a Hebrew word that means *Anointed One*. Anointing isn't something we are used to. We don't do a lot of anointing with oil like I just read to you about the priests in the Old Testament, but that's something the people would have been used to. People were anointed into different offices. They were consecrated as it said, or set apart for service to God. In fact, God had them anoint a lot of inanimate objects, right? That whole list was given. There were a whole bunch of inanimate objects that would have been used in the Tabernacle. "Anoint them or set them apart for my sacred use." So when he promised that he was going to send the Anointed One, the Messiah, or the Christ, the people would start thinking about some of the things they had seen anointed. One of them would be priests. The coming Messiah, the coming Christ would be anointed into his office as the great High Priest.

What did the priests in the Old Testament do? The priest in the Old Testament was a go between. He interceded on behalf of the people, right? God had this whole elaborate system of sacrifices. You need this fellowship offering, this thank offering, this drink offering, this whole burnt offering, this sin offering. You read through some of that in the Old Testament in Exodus and then later in Leviticus or in Deuteronomy, you probably don't read it real closely because it just goes over your head. But it was a very, very detailed system of what the people were supposed to bring as a sacrifice, and when. God said, "You need to do this, but you can't do this. You can't bring it to me directly because I am a Holy God, and you can't approach me directly. You can only approach me through the work of the priest." The priest would be set apart, considered holy before God, and would serve the Lord. He would represent the Lord to

the people, and he would represent the people to the Lord. He was the go between. He would intercede on their behalf.

The work of the priest wasn't to pass notes back and forth between the people and God, like you might do in school as a go between for two people. He got his hands dirty. The priest would offer those sacrifices. The work of the priest often involved slaughtering the animals, gutting the animals, taking the offal or the parts they didn't burn outside of the camp, draining all the blood, sprinkling blood at times during the year on the people and on the altar and on the various things. It would involve all kinds of things that had to be done that showed the people that blood had to be shed so that there could be peace between God and man. The priest did it day after day after day.

All the priests were set up in their different ranks and they would take turns doing all these different things, but day after day after day the people were confronted with the reality of their sin. They heard the cries of the animals as they were slaughtered. They smelled what their sins were with all that bloodshed and then all those things being burned. They were reminded day after day of what it took to pay for sin. The priest of course had to offer it first of all for his own sin and then for the sins of the people.

The great High Priest would do the same exact thing but differently. Our great High Priest offered himself once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God. As it says, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. Think about that concept for a minute. Our great High Priest is not only the priest who gives the sacrifice, he IS the sacrifice.

We are going to sing a hymn a little bit later, *You Lord Are Both Lamb and Shepherd*, the paradoxes of Jesus. Jesus is both priest and the sacrifice the priest offers. Who would have ever come up with a plan for salvation like that? But our God did. Our God came up with a plan that perfectly pays for all sins of all time. Jesus, who lives forever, has a permanent priesthood. His sacrifice paid for all sins of all times. That's why the Lord again and again pointed them ahead to the Anointed One who would come and take away the sins of the world. Our righteousness from God that would appear, as he talked about in Jeremiah, would be the Lord our righteousness. He would do all these things as the Anointed One.

So when God got his people ready for the Messiah to come, he reminded them they were sinners. He reminded them that blood had to be shed, and he did it every day of their lives. Then he showed them how Jesus gave his blood so that all sins of all time would be paid for. When he was here on earth, he served as our High Priest by offering himself. He continues to serve as our High Priest today because he continues to serve as our go between. He is able to save completely those who come to God through him because he always lives to intercede for them as it says in Hebrews 7.

That means he is still interceding for us today. When Satan accuses us of our sin, when our guilt comes and attacks us, when we struggle with that guilt because we know

we have failed our God and Satan comes and whispers in our ear that “God can’t love you because you’ve done this. You don’t deserve to be forgiven. You can’t be forgiven.” That’s when our Savior intercedes for us. He says “My blood covers you. Your sin has been washed away through my perfect sacrifice.” He pleads our case. He is our defense attorney and he is also our judge. He is the one who says “Go in peace. Your sins are forgiven.”

We can get distracted from that central truth to what we want to celebrate at this time of the year. We can get distracted by all of our rushing and all of our chasing our tails and everything else under the sun, but the greatest gift that can be received is probably not on any of our lists. The greatest gift that ever can be received has already been received. It’s Christ’s life and death in our place. It’s what gives meaning to any gift we exchange as just a small insignificant reminder of how God has given us the greatest gift. He has given us our Anointed Priest who took away our sins and who continues to intercede for us each and every day of our lives. As we sinners continue to sin, he continues to plead, and that one sacrifice takes away all of our sins. That’s what the coming Christ would do, that’s what he did do, and that’s what he continues to do.