

## **Hebrews 5:5-10<sup>v</sup>**

Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek." In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

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## **<sup>v</sup> About the Second Reading: Hebrews 5:5-10**

The epistle to the Hebrews is a tightly-woven theological essay that stresses that Christianity has fulfilled the promises of Judaism. The author's purpose is to show the superiority of: Jesus to the prophets, the angels and Moses (1:3–4:13), Jesus' priesthood to the Levitical priesthood (4:14–7:28) and Jesus' sacrifice to Levitical sacrifices (8:1–10:18).

According to Jewish tradition, Jesus could not be a priest because he was from the tribe of Judah not Levi. But the author of Hebrews argues that in fact Jesus is the real High Priest because he, like Aaron and Melchizedek, was chosen by God for his priestly ministry on our behalf.

The quotation from Psalm 2:7 (v. 5) affirms that Jesus was chosen by God, not self-appointed. His unique priesthood is modeled upon that of Melchizedek, whom the author later claims to be superior to Abraham and thus to Abraham's descendant Levi and the Levitical priests.

For his lifelong submission to God, Jesus was saved not from death but through death. Whereas human beings learn to be obedient because they suffer for disobedience, Jesus, through his suffering, learned that obedience itself exacts a price in human life. Through his obedient suffering, Jesus is "made perfect" (v. 9) and becomes our source of salvation.