

Speaking to the soul



Obedience

Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became

the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him. Hebrews 5:8-9

The high priest was the most important person in the Jewish faith. He traced his family line back to Aaron, the brother of Moses, and his life and ministry are described in huge detail in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible). When he went into the temple he had to wear specific clothing. In common with all priests, he had to wear priestly undergarments, tunic, sash and turban but in addition he wore a sleeveless blue robe, a richly embroidered apron, a breastplate with twelve gems representing the tribes and on his turban there was a golden plate inscribed with the words "Holiness unto Yahweh". He would have nothing on his feet but had to have a ceremonial bath before going into the temple. Just once a year, on the Day of Atonement, he was permitted to go into the holiest part of the temple, the Holy of Holies.

The writer to the Hebrews knew that his readers would have known all about high priests and of their huge importance in Jewish life and history. But here he declares that God had sent someone who outshone them all. However good high priests were, they were not perfect. However, Jesus had no sin so was able to do what the high priests could never do; open the door of eternal salvation through taking the sins of the world upon himself.

The language of high priesthood belongs to a world very different from our own. But the message is still absolutely relevant to us today. We need someone to open the door into the holy presence of God, and it is Jesus who has done precisely that. And just as Jesus obeyed his Father's will, so too we are called to live in obedience to God. Unlike Jesus,

we will not achieve perfect obedience in this life, but as we seek to align our thoughts and actions with God's will day by day, we learn more of what it is to be truly alive.

QUESTION

What is God teaching you about obedience at the moment?

PRAYER

Loving God, I thank you that in Jesus I have a perfect high priest who can continually lead me into your holy presence.
Amen

Photograph - Snow drops at Mount Stewart, National Trust

