

# ***We See Jesus – Lent 2015***

## ***"We See Jesus Acting as Our Go-Between"***

Text: Exodus 28 (Selected Verses)

As we walk in humble repentance during this Season of Lent, may God grant that each of us would be moved to recognize and acknowledge our sin, and then to thrill to the sin payment made by our Savior Jesus. Amen.

Dear Fellow Christians, during our series of mid-week Lenten services this year, we are focusing our meditations around the theme: *We See Jesus*. Like Christians of each generation, we too see Jesus in the Old Testament, these "types" or "shadows" confirmed also by inspired New Testament writers. So far this Lenten season we have found Jesus in connection with the tabernacle erected by Moses in the wilderness. (There we saw Jesus *bringing us into God's presence* – the torn temple curtain proving that Jesus did indeed give us access to our Heavenly Father.) Next we saw Jesus in connection with the Old Testament sacrifices, where, unlike the fellowship sacrifices of old, by his sacrificial death he has provided us a permanent, loving fellowship with God. Tonight we will find shadows of our Savior in the priesthood of Aaron, the first High Priest, and in the holy vestments or garments God prescribed for the high priests to wear. This evening *We See Jesus – Acting as Our Go-Between*. Our text is found recorded by God the Holy Spirit in the 28<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Book of Exodus, several selected verses:

***ESV Exodus 28:1,2,15-17a,21,29-31,33,35-38 "Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests--Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. <sup>2</sup> And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. <sup>15</sup> ¶ "You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, in skilled work. In the style of the ephod you shall make it--of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen shall you make it. <sup>16</sup> It shall be square and doubled, a span its length and a span its breadth. <sup>17</sup> You shall set in it four rows of stones. <sup>21</sup> There shall be twelve stones with their names according to the names of the sons of Israel. They shall be like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. <sup>29</sup> So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment on his heart, when he goes into the Holy Place, to bring them to regular remembrance before the LORD. <sup>30</sup> And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart, when he goes in before the LORD. Thus Aaron***

***shall bear the judgment of the people of Israel on his heart before the LORD regularly. <sup>31</sup> ¶ "You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. <sup>33</sup> On its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, around its hem, with bells of gold between them, <sup>35</sup> And it shall be on Aaron when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the Holy Place before the LORD, and when he comes out, so that he does not die. <sup>36</sup> ¶ "You shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the LORD.' <sup>37</sup> And you shall fasten it on the turban by a cord of blue. It shall be on the front of the turban. <sup>38</sup> It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall bear any guilt from the holy things that the people of Israel consecrate as their holy gifts. It shall regularly be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.***

So far the inspired words of our Holy God. Trusting God's promise that he would meet with us and bless us through the study of his holy words, so we pray, ***"Sanctify us by Your truth, O Lord. Your Word is truth!"*** Amen.

Sometimes a wise old saying turns out to be just old, not so wise. I remember hearing as a boy, for example, that *"a job done well need never be done again."* I thought about how dumb that was every time I mowed the lawn, washed the dishes, took out the trash, and got a haircut. One can imagine, of course, what the original author probably had in mind, but it sure seemed silly to a twelve year old boy mowing the same lawn for the tenth time that summer. Another expression that doesn't seem to hold water is *"They just don't make them like they used to."* The interesting part of this old saying is that it is true, but not according to the original intent. The original implication was that they made things better years ago, and that what they make today is junk in comparison. The truth of the matter, in the vast majority of cases, is that they really *don't* make things like they used to, *they make them immeasurably better.* Case in point: I once owned a '52 Chevy Pickup – a clunky, unwieldy, uncomfortable deathtrap on wheels. Those old beasts had rides that could shake the fillings out of your teeth (old fillings, not new ones) and one of the more common accidents was when the driver got impaled on the steering wheel shaft. Thank goodness they don't make them like they used to.

We find the same sort of thing repeated everywhere we turn today. Remember the old tube type televisions and radios? Thank goodness they don't make those like they used to. Seems like our boxy old black and white was always in need of repair. How often do modern televisions break? From microwaves to computers, and from furnaces

to bicycles, what we can buy today is almost always a dramatic improvement over that with which our forefathers struggled.

We have found much the same thing holding true as we have compared different elements of the true faith before and after Christ. Prior to Jesus' life and death, the Jews saw their God so close at hand, and yet as so inaccessible. They saw symbols of his presence in their midst, but they had no real fellowship with him. Any such fellowship came only accompanied by blood, death, sacrifice, and fear. So too this evening we see that what the Jews had to do in connection with their religious observances has been completed for us – and dramatically improved – by our Lord through his innocent death. When it comes to the exercise of our religion, thank God we don't have to do it like they used to.

In our text, God establishes the family of Aaron and his male descendants as his priests. This was intended to be a permanent appointment, at least until the arrival of the Messiah. Down through the ages only a direct descendant of Aaron could serve as a priest in God's temple and still enjoy God's blessing. This line was disrupted for a time when in 175 BC Antiochus Epiphanes sold the office of the high priest in Jerusalem to raise some needed capital. The abominations of that particular time (following the division of Alexander the Great's empire to his four generals) was prophesied in the Old Testament as **"the abomination that brings desolation."**

Appointed to serve as God's priest, Aaron was thus a shadow or type of Christ for several reasons. He was commanded, for example, to wear a breastplate upon which were mounted twelve precious gems – one for each of the tribes of Israel. In this way Aaron carried the people with him, near to his heart, as he served before God as High Priest. Jesus, our perfect High Priest, also carried the people near to his heart – shouldering the sum total of all of our sins and carrying them to the cross. There were other elements that demonstrated that Aaron was a picture of the Savior that was to come, not the least of which was the fact that Aaron served as the go-between or mediator between God and man. Jesus, of course, assumed that role when he came to earth, and still serves in that capacity in heaven.

Aaron thus served as a mediator, but the shadow is but a dim representation of Jesus. Look at our text and note well some of the other elements of the high priest's uniform and their implications. Golden bells were sewn into the high priest's robe, in the words of our text: **"its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy place before the LORD and when he comes out, that he may not die."** Jesus served as our Mediator, but he needed no bells. He came and went from the presence of

his Father without fear, without the need to announce his coming, without bells. Aaron also had to wear *a plate of gold, engraved with the words: HOLY TO THE LORD*. This plate was to be hung by a blue cord on the front of the turban on Aaron's head, again, as our text put it: **"It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall bear any guilt from the holy things that the people of Israel consecrate as their holy gifts. It shall regularly be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD."** Jesus, our great High Priest, needed no sign, no engraved plate of gold. His "plate" was his own perfect conduct; his flawless obedience represented his "HOLY TO THE LORD." He thus **"bore our iniquity,"** and removed it from us forever – once, for all.

We are right then to see in Aaron a type or picture of Jesus. This connection, again, is verified in the New Testament in the Book of Hebrews. Those same sections in Hebrews clear up another problem that we have in using Aaron as a shadow of the Savior. That "problem" is that Jesus was not of the line of Aaron. Jesus, as you know, was from a different tribe altogether. You remember those Christmas Words from the Gospel of Luke: **"...because he was of the house and lineage of David..."** David was of the Tribe of Judah. Again the familiar Christmas prophecy from Micah 5:2: **"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting."** Both Joseph and Mary were from the tribe of Judah, not the tribe of Levi (let alone the family of Aaron). How then could Jesus be our High Priest?

The Book of Hebrews clears this up. It was God himself who established the priesthood of Aaron's family. He not only *could* establish another such priest or line of priests, he *had already* established another priesthood, one that preceded Aaron by over 500 years. Do you remember when Abraham was returning after rescuing Lot and his family from the Elamites and their allies? At that time he met a man named Melchizedek, who remains something of a mysterious figure to us today. Genesis 14:18 tells us that Melchizedek was both **"king of Salem"** and **"priest of God Most High."** Melchizedek was therefore a priest established by God himself over 500 years before Aaron was born. Hebrews 7:3 deepens the mystery surrounding him by describing him as one who **"is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever."** What does this have to do with Jesus? Hebrews 6:20, **"Jesus (has) become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."** Again we get further explanation from the Book of Hebrews as to why Jesus was of the line

of Melchizedek rather than the line of Aaron: **"For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests."** <sup>15</sup> ¶ **This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek,** <sup>16</sup> **who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life.** <sup>17</sup> **For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."** <sup>18</sup> **For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness** <sup>19</sup> **(for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God."** (Hebrews 7:14-19)  
We therefore see Jesus in Aaron, but we see him even more clearly in Melchizedek.

All of this is very interesting, but Scripture was not written for our entertainment; it was written for our instruction, correction, and growth. What exactly does this then have to do with us today? What is its practical value or application to our everyday lives? Think of it in these terms. Suppose you had a spouse or a very close friend that you betrayed shamelessly. The offense was so bad that he or she refuses even to speak to you – won't even listen to your voice. What do you do? Your best hope is to find a mediator, a go-between, someone who cares for both of you and will go to the offended person and speak on your behalf – hopefully bringing about a reconciliation. Recognize this evening that that is the kind of situation that existed between us and our God because of our sin. Yet when you see Jesus walking that tortured path to the cross, recognize that he is going there to speak to the Father on our behalf. He went there as our Go-Between, our Advocate, and there he won our reconciliation by taking the Father's holy wrath upon himself. No longer have we offended our God, Jesus has. The righteous fury for every sin ever committed was mercilessly visited upon Jesus. The result is now a restoration of perfect harmony between God and his children. Our Mediator was gloriously successful. The very One who was punished for our sins, now speaks in our defense.

One last thing. Before you take something like this for granted, imagine having to face Judgment Day without the reconciliation won by our Lord. Again, it is shallow and superficial to walk through Lent trying to conjure up a feeling of sorrow over the physical pain Jesus endured in his passion. Our goal during these meditations is to see with ever greater understanding all of the many things that Jesus not only suffered, but all that he accomplished on Calvary – not just for others, but for me personally. To this end we pray: *We thank and praise you this evening, Dear Savior, for acting as our Go-Between, and for the amazing reconciliation you won for us on the cross. Continue to intercede for us, so*

*that we might each look forward without fear to your Second Coming, and to serving you here in time, and shouting your praise for all eternity. Amen.*

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## Mid-Week Lenten Services - 2015

**The Opening Hymn** *(As noted on the back page and on the Hymn Board)*

### Invocation

**Pastor:** *In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**Congregation:** *(Spoken) Amen.*

### Confession and Absolution *(TLH 318)*

**P:** *Acknowledging that we stand in the presence of our Holy God we humble ourselves, and in true repentance we confess our sins:*

**All:** *Before Thee, God, who knowest all, with grief and shame I prostrate fall.  
I see my sins against Thee, Lord, the sins of thought, of deed, and word.  
They press me sore; I cry to Thee: O God, be merciful to me!*

*O Lord, my God, to Thee I pray; oh, cast me not in wrath away!  
Let Thy good Spirit ne'er depart, but let Him draw to Thee my heart  
That truly penitent I be: O God, be merciful to me!*

**P:** *Jesus Christ himself has been punished for your sins. God the Father has placed upon Jesus the iniquity of us all. According to His authority, and by His command, I announce to you the divine decree of our God that all of your sins are forgiven, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**All:**

O Jesus, let Thy precious blood be to my soul a cleansing flood.  
Turn not, O Lord, Thy guest away, but grant that justified I may  
Go to my house at peace with Thee: O God, be merciful to me!

### The Reading of the Passion History

### The Apostolic Creed

I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**The Pre Sermon Hymn** *(As noted on the back page and on the Hymn Board)*

**The Sermon** – *The theme for our devotions this Lenten Season is*

**"We See Jesus"**

*(Please turn to the back page for this evening's service details)*

**The Response** – *(TLH Hymn 138 v5)*

**My Savior, I behold Thee with faith's enlightened eye;  
Of Thee no foe can rob me, his threats I can defy.  
Within my heart abiding, as Thou, O Lord, in me,  
Death can no longer frighten nor part my soul from Thee.  
Amen.**

**The Offering**

**The Prayer of the Day**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**The Benediction**

**P:** *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
And the love of God the Father,  
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

**C:** **Amen, Amen, Amen.** *(Sung by all)*

**The Closing Hymn** *(As noted on the back page and on the Hymn Board)*

**Silent Prayer**

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**Announcements** *[All are invited to remain for fellowship and light refreshments.]*

# Weekly Hymn and Meditation Schedule

**February 18**

**Hymns: 140, 157,  
149**

**Lenten Theme:  
" We See Jesus "**

*"...Making Us  
Clean"*

**Text: Numbers 19:2-  
6, 9-12, 20**

Pastor Naumann

**February 25**

**Hymns: 158, 32,  
154**

**Lenten Theme:  
" We See Jesus "**

*"...Bringing Us  
Into God's  
Presence"*

**Text: Exodus 40:17,  
20-30, 33-35**

Pastor Roehl

**March 4**

**Hymns: 141,  
142(1-4), 156**

**Lenten Theme:  
" We See Jesus "**

*"...Paying for Our  
Sins"*

**Text: Leviticus 4:1-3,  
22, 27-31; 6:1-7**

Pastor Naumann

**March 11**

**Hymns: 155,  
150(1-4), 150(5)**

**Lenten Theme:  
" We See Jesus "**

*"...Giving Us  
Fellowship with  
God"*

**Text: Leviticus 1:1-9,  
3:6-11**

Pastor Roehl

**March 18**

**Hymns: 18,  
151(1-4), 145**

**Lenten Theme:  
" We See Jesus "**

*"...Giving Us  
Eternal Life"*

**Text: Leviticus  
23:33-36, 39-42**

Pastor Naumann

**March 25**

**Hymns: 166,  
171(1,3-5), 558**

**Lenten Theme:  
" We See Jesus "**

*"...Acting as Our  
Go-Between"*

**Text: Exodus 28:1-2,  
15-17a, 21,29-31, 33,  
35-38**

Pastor Roehl

**-Please return this bulletin to the Entry Table for use next week-**