

# IN THE DAYS of HIS FLESH

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Jesus is identified as a “priest forever after the order of Melchisedec” in Hebrews 5:6. Here are the verses that follow: *“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him”* (5:7-9).

There are some things in this familiar passage that make Christians stand in awe of the glory and the compassion of God. Notice that it says “in the days of his flesh.” Jesus did not begin to exist when He came to this earth. He was and is a person of the Godhead. Acts 17 shows that the expression “Godhead” is used when considering together the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Just as the Father and the Spirit have always existed, so also Jesus has always existed. But when he came here to give Himself for our sins, he began an existence in the flesh.

John refers to the continually existing Jesus before He became flesh as the “Word.” In John 1:14 the text says “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us....” This was the entrance of the Word of God into the “days of his flesh.” He is no longer in those days. He arose and is on the right hand of the Father.

In the days of His flesh He prayed. The words used here refer to strong and heart breaking prayers. Jesus was called on to suffer mightily for us. Throughout that suffering He prayed to his Father, the only possible source for help. And the Father heard Him.

We would expect any good father to hear his son. That’s what fathers do. Most fathers would love to be able to remove all difficulty from their children’s lives. Most of the time the best we can do is make things a little better. Sometimes we can’t even do that. Then there are situations where we know that we could remove a problem from a child’s life, but we know we shouldn’t. We know this because sometimes our children need to learn from the difficulties life throws their way. And so we let them suffer.

Now the situation between the Father and Jesus is not exactly parallel to ours. The knowledge possessed by the Son of God was infinite with regard to the purpose of being here in the flesh to save mankind. But there was a lesson even for the Word of God incarnate, a lesson learned through His suffering. It was the lesson of obedience.

God does not have to obey anyone. Before Jesus came here, he did not have to obey anyone. The Holy Spirit is God. He does not have to obey anyone. But then Jesus came here. He came here and “was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). When He came here He experienced all the things that we experience. One of these things is to obey. His suffering taught Him obedience. We must never forget that God in Christ did that to Himself for our salvation. It perfected or completed Him. It completed the plan that God had from the beginning of our sin to save us from our sin.

Now, with that in mind, remember that the text says that He is the “author of eternal salvation unto all that obey Him.” Much of organized Christianity today downplays obedience. It is all grace, they say. Well, it is all founded upon grace, but this text says as plainly as anything can be said that Jesus saves those that obey Him. There is no way around it; neither should any man seek to find a way to avoid obeying God.

Yet men and women, even good and religious men and women refuse to accept the idea that obeying the Lord God is a prerequisite to salvation. But it is. Oh, we know that our obedience will be at times imperfect in action, but it must never be imperfect in desire. After all, Jesus went to great lengths to come here in the flesh to save us. The least we can do is to endeavor with all of our being to obey Him.