

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fifth Sunday in Lent — March 17, 2024

*“So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest,
but was appointed by him 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, after the order of Melchizedek.’”*

– Hebrews 5:5-6 –

Queen Victoria of England was only nineteen years old when she was crowned; until that day she was always under supervision. Her ascension to the throne was the first time she was free. She rebelled at first, partying late into the night. In retrospect, she considered that time “the least satisfactory time in her whole life.” She eventually learned what it meant to be a good leader, surrounding herself with strong advisors and helpers, including her husband Albert. Together they made the nation strong; they prospered in economics, industry, science, culture, and the military. All the while she managed to keep a loving home, actively involved with her nine children.

What made Victoria a successful leader? How was she able to prosper a nation while maintaining a loving home? At all times she sought the best for her country and people. She did not seek power, but rather humbled herself, serving her nation for sixty-four years in humility. She consulted her advisors who helped her make the right decisions. Her success was an achievement of character; her reign was one of honesty and simplicity. Her humility did not make her weak; she was a strong leader who ruled in the best interest of her people.

It is so easy to fall into the trap of power. Many kings and queens, presidents and prime ministers, bishops and pastors, CEOs and governors think that their position gives them the authority to control the lives of those over whom they rule instead of remembering that they have been called to serve. We don’t even have to be in a position of leadership to fall into the temptation of controlling those around us. We think we know it all, and that eventually leads us to become self-appointed rulers.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that Jesus also knew himself to be a servant. He was identified as the Son of God with God’s own voice. He was obedient to the One who sent Him, sharing the same will as he continues to reign as eternal Priest and King. He did not choose these roles; He is the eternal fulfillment of all God’s promises.

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