

## Responding to Our Great High Priest

Text: Hebrews 4:14-16

Date: 5-5-24

The author concludes that Jesus Christ as Mediator of the new covenant is superior to Moses the mediator of the old covenant for Jesus is a Son and Lord over His entire house whereas Moses was a faithful servant in that house.

### I. The believer's guarantee of a High Priest (Heb. 4:14a)

What is a priest? God made a way for the people to have access to Him through the appointment of this mediating priesthood. The high priest interceded on behalf of the people by offering gifts like incense and sacrifices for his own sins and those of the people (Heb. 5:1, 3). Only those who had been divinely chosen by God from the tribe of Levi could serve as priests.

The High Priest was the priest above all the other priests and his greatest task was what he did on the Day of Atonement. In a specific and elaborate exercise the high priest would symbolically bring the sins of the people to the Holy of Holies and sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat to make an atonement for the sins of the people (Lev. 16:8-16).

The believers in the first century, hearing that Jesus Christ is superior to Moses, may have thought that there was no longer a High Priest. But, the Hebrew's author now declares: You have a High Priest. But this new High Priest isn't of the line of Aaron anymore. Rather, it is Jesus Christ Himself, the One who is superior in all things and ways. And He is infinitely better than any high priest in the Aaronic line.

### II. The work of our High Priest (Heb. 4:14b; 15-16)

#### A. Christ's work on earth is finished.

#### B. Christ's work is now heavenly (Heb. 4:14b)

So Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the great High Priest for those Jews struggling with the change in the covenants. He is great because His work is great and God has accepted all of His sacrifice forever. No longer are the earthly sacrifices needed for Jesus Christ has finished the job forever and has gone to the heavens because He is the true High Priest.

#### C. Christ's work was perfect in all things (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus was divine but in no way did that hinder Him from being the great High Priest. His humanity allowed Him to go through every single thing that his fellow mankind has gone through.

Unlike the earthly OT high priest, Jesus Christ met every challenge and temptation with victory. He proved it by rising from the dead and defeating death.

Whether it is a physical weakness from frailty or a weakness from sinfulness, Christ successfully defeated them all because in every experience He never succumbed one time to that weakness in exhibiting frailty or sin.

Jesus went all the way in facing every single weakness. Jesus Christ incarnated went through the full extent of weakness, never sinning; therefore, He can perfectly and fully sympathize with mankind and be our great High Priest.

#### D. Christ is working on our behalf today (Heb. 4:16).

### **III. The response to our High Priest (Heb. 4:14c; 16).**

#### **A. Hold fast to our confession (Heb. 4:14c)**

The implication was for the Jews who might desire to go back to the old covenant to remain firmly committed to their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We also can be firmly committed to Jesus Christ on account of the work that He has done. The priesthood of Jesus Christ includes all the resources that we need to live in this world. Every action that Jesus Christ manifested has made it abundantly clear that in Christ we have everything that we need.

#### **B. Come boldly to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16)**

Because Jesus is a High Priest who has made a way for his children to enter into His presence, God's throne is a throne of grace, not judgment to those who believe.

Let us use what has been offered to us. We have everything that we need on account of God's goodness. When weakness overwhelms us, we can go to the One who has experienced weakness on our behalf. His presence in Heaven allows Him to dispense grace now to us in our deepest hurts and trials. In fact He loves to do it.

#### **Conclusion**

- We have a Person in Jesus Christ who has the character, qualifications, and actions to be our Great High Priest!
- Based on the point above, who else would you want to go to when in time of need?
- What is stopping you from accessing your great High Priest?