

July 11, 2021



The Uniqueness of Jesus Hebrews 4

After speaking of the true rest which remains for God's people (a rest into which neither Moses nor Joshua led the people — Hebrews 3.19-4.9), the writer of Hebrews arrives at a point which is central to his book — Jesus is the high priest through whom God's people enter into the rest He has provided.

The work of Jesus as our high priest needs to be understood through the work of the earthly high priests serving under the Law of Moses. The men who served as earthly high priests operated between man and God, offering gifts and sacrifices so that man's sin could be forgiven (5.1). These high priests were taken from among the people — they were well acquainted with the people they served and for whom they made intercession before God. However, these high priests had something in common — they had to offer sacrifices first for themselves, as they had fallen prey to sin, also (Hebrews 5.3).

In His efforts to demonstrate the superiority and uniqueness of Jesus,

the Holy Spirit, through the writer of Hebrews, announces Jesus as the "great high priest" (4.14). He is the great high priest because He has "passed through the heavens" in His work as high priest. While earthly high priests ministered in the tabernacle or temple, Jesus' high priestly work was accomplished in the "greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands... into the presence of God for us" (9.11,24). Jesus' work as high priest is the reality to which the work of the earthly high priests pointed.

Additionally, Jesus is the great high priest because He is the Son of God (4.14). Later, the Holy Spirit will reveal that Jesus' priesthood is different than, and superior to, the priesthood of the Old Testament. None of the Old Testament priests could claim to be God's Son — only Jesus, appointed priest by God (5.5).

Finally, Jesus is the great high priest because of His sinlessness (4.15). Though He was tempted, Jesus never sinned, uniquely qualifying Him to be our mediator before God. As we find ourselves seeking God's pardon, let us take comfort in the work of our Great High Priest, Jesus! -TS

Please feel free to contact us — we'd love to hear from you!
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