

**A Year with Jesus**  
**Week 4: High Priest**

Scripture: Hebrews 4:14 - 5:10; Hebrews 9:1-28; Hebrews 7:23-28.

The most important responsibility of the high priest was to conduct the service on the DAY OF ATONEMENT, the tenth day of the seventh month each year. On this day he alone entered the Holy Place behind the veil before God. Having made sacrifice for himself and for the people, he brought the blood into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it on the mercy seat, God's "throne." This he did to make atonement for himself and the people for all their sins committed during the year just ended (Ex. 30:10; Leviticus 16). It is with this particular service that the ministry of Jesus as high priest is compared (Heb. 9:1–28).<sup>1</sup>

**Jesus as High Priest.** The New Testament's most important references to the high priest are found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, referring to Jesus. Qualifying Himself to be a merciful and faithful high priest by becoming a man of the seed of Abraham (Heb. 2:11–18), He is sympathetic with our weaknesses (Heb. 4:15). He did not assume the office of high priest for glory (Heb. 5:5), but was called by God to the office, and not of the order of Aaron, but of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:10). He had no need, as the sons of Aaron, to offer sacrifices for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for He had no sin (Heb. 7:27–28). They offered animal blood that could never take sin away (Heb. 10:1–4). But he offered His own blood (Heb. 9:12) once for all (Heb. 9:26; 10:10, 12). They were many priests, because they died (Heb. 7:23); His is an eternal priesthood because He lives forever (Heb. 7:25). Their priesthood was performed in an earthly model of the real sanctuary (Heb. 8:5); He performs His ministry in heaven itself (Heb. 4:14; 9:11), seated at the right hand of God (Heb. 10:12). By His one offering He has achieved His goal—the sanctification of His people. We may therefore come directly into the presence of God through the "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).<sup>2</sup>

1. Read Hebrews 4:14 - 5:10. What does verse 14 say about Jesus as our High Priest? How should that impact our lives? Why?
  
2. Instead of being a distant deity and aloof savior, how does verse 15 describe Jesus? How does that description of Jesus as our High Priest encourage you?

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<sup>1</sup> Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., & Harrison, R. K., Thomas Nelson Publishers (Eds.). (1995). In *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., & Harrison, R. K., Thomas Nelson Publishers (Eds.). (1995). In *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

3. According to verse 16, what are we now able to do that we were unable to do before? What emotions do you experience as you contemplate the great blessings we find in this verse?
  
4. Read Hebrews 5:1-6. How is Jesus similar to and different from other High Priests?
  
5. Read Hebrews 9:1-5. Describe what these verses say about the Holy Place.
  
6. According to Hebrews 9:6-10, how effective was the ministry of the High Priest under the old covenant? What was the Holy Spirit teaching us through this?
  
7. What does Hebrews 9:11-28 say about the work of Jesus? How does this work differ from the work of High Priest in the Old Testament?
  
8. Based on 9:11-28, write down all the benefits you receive from this work of Jesus.
  
9. Read Hebrews 7:23-24. How is Jesus different from the High Priests of the old covenant?
  
10. What does verse 25 say is the result of that difference?
  
11. What do verses 26-28 say about the High Priest, and Jesus in particular?
  
12. Write a prayer of thanksgiving for what you learned about Jesus in these verses. Ask God to help you live in light of the wonderful news that Jesus, as our Great High Priest, offers to all who trust in him.