

“We have a great high priest. ” Hebrews chapter 3 verse 1

What is a priest? A priest is someone who mediates between God and people, offering sacrifices and prayers on their behalf. The ancient Jewish religion had a whole class of priests whose job was to do this. They had many detailed and complex rituals to perform under the Jewish religious code.

One of them was the high priest. Each high priest served only for a year. He had the unenviable task of entering in to the inner sanctum of the temple, the most holy place, where the presence of God manifested above the mercy seat, the covenant box. There he would make atonement for the sins of the people, once a year.

In reinterpreting the Jewish scriptures in the light of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the writer of the Hebrews refers extensively to the laws and rituals set out in the Old Testament. He presents these things as mere shadows and copies, symbols and illustrations, of the reality that was to come in Jesus.

So as the high priest entered the most holy place again and again, year after year, Hebrews tells us something that is almost beyond our ability to comprehend. Jesus, it assures us, *“passed through the heavens,”* and entered the actual sanctuary of God's presence. He does not have to do it again and again, nor does he have to offer multiple sacrifices for sin. His own sacrifice of himself satisfied God's requirements once and for all time. The writer of Hebrews is clear about his main point *“We have this kind of high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that was set up by the Lord and not man.”*

Please take a moment for that to sink in. Right now, even as you read this, Jesus is in heaven speaking to his Father on your behalf, having paid the price for your sins once and for all on the cross. If we could only fully appreciate that, how great our confidence would be.

*“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

Prayer

*Father, it is my frail humanity that prevents me from fully understanding this incredible truth. Jesus is at this moment at your side in heaven speaking to you on my behalf, advocating for the salvation of those who are lost on the ground that he had paid the penalty due for sin, and making a case for me as a believer to be strengthened and blessed by your grace towards me. Please help me to live with confidence in this truth rather than in the doubt and uncertainty that assails me when I focus on my own human failings. In Jesus name, amen.*

*All these devotionals can be found on our website [inghamitechurch.org](http://inghamitechurch.org) on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.*