

# 16

## JESUS OUR SUPERIOR HIGH PRIEST

*Hebrews 7:11-28*

### Introduction: How Does a Person Get Close to God?

#### I. Jesus' Priesthood is Kingly: He is Both Priest and King (v.11-14)

- A. All OT Priests had to be descended from the tribe of Levi
  - o Thus, there were no OT priests who were also kings
  - o When Saul tried to act like a priest he was condemned (1 Sam 13:13)
- B. But Jesus was descended from Judah, the tribe of kings
  - o This fulfilled messianic prediction: "And there shall be a priest on his throne...and the crown shall be in the Temple of the Lord" (Zech 6:13-14).
  - o Why would it matter if we have a priest who is also a King?

#### II. Jesus' Priesthood is Eternal: He Lives Forever to Intercede (v.15-19, 23-25)

- A. All OT priests eventually died and could not intercede forever
  - o "Former priests...were prevented by death from continuing in office" (v.23)
  - o Thus, no one could be fully assured of access to God
- B. But, Jesus lives forever as our high priest
  - o Psalm 110:4 predicted we would need a new priesthood that would last forever: "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (v.17)
  - o Jesus' priesthood is not about "bodily descent" like the Levitical priesthood, but about "the power of an indestructible life" (v.16)
  - o Thus, "He is able to save to the uttermost...since he always lives to make intercession for them" (v.25)
  - o Jesus can do this because he is both fully human and fully God!

#### III. Jesus' Priesthood is Certain: God Established it with an Oath (v. 20-22)

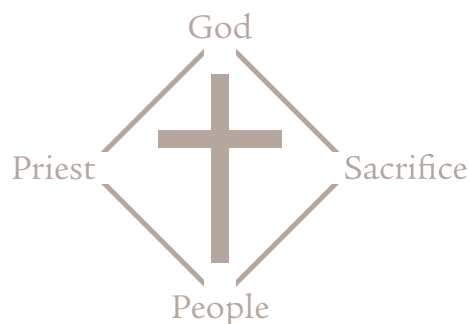
- A. OT priests held the office with no assurances it would remain valid in the future



- o There were many OT institutions that were temporary and would later be replaced or taken away
- B. But Jesus' priestly office is guaranteed with an oath that it will always be valid
  - o We are told about this oath in Psalm 110:4: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever'" (v.21).
  - o As we saw earlier (Heb 6:123-17), oaths are an act of God's grace to reassure us that he will keep his promises. Christ's priesthood will never be rescinded or changed!)

#### IV. Jesus' Priesthood is Perfect: His Sinless Nature Allows Him to Die for Us (v.26-28)

- A. OT priests could not really take away sin
  - o We will learn later that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (10:4).
  - o And an OT priest could not offer himself because he's a sinner and thus must "offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people" (v.27)
  - o This is why another priesthood had to arise (v.11)
- B. But Jesus is sinless and therefore can offer himself
  - o Jesus is described with OT sacrifice language: "holy, innocent, unstained" (v.26),
    - What are some of Jesus' great acts of obedience?
    - Realize it is not just his death that saves us, but also his life!
  - o Thus, Jesus is able to do what no OT priest could ever do: "he offered up himself" (v.27)
    - Jesus is the perfect sinless sacrifice we need to take the punishment for our sins
    - You cannot understand the cross unless you understand OT sacrificial system!
  - o The four parties involved in OT sacrifices are united in the person of Jesus



## Discussion Groups

1. Do you ever struggle with doubts about whether the work of Jesus is really able to save you? How does this passage provide reassurance?

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2. How does this passage show that we have to understand the OT in order to understand the NT? How does it help you understand the relationship between the OT and the NT?

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3. How does this passage help you rejoice not only in the death of Christ but also in the perfect, obedient life of Christ? How do both his death and life work together to save us?

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