

Jesus-Your High Priest in Heaven

Exodus 28

Pastor Guy Gray

In Exodus, God gave His people more than just a place where they could meet with Him. He also gave them a person who would be their representative before God. The High Priest was to be the mediator between a perfect, Holy God and imperfect people. Just as the tabernacle itself was an elaborate physical illustration of an invisible spiritual reality, the ministry of the High Priest was also a symbolic illustration of what it takes and what it means to have a true relationship with God. The New Testament teaches that this all points to Jesus who is the ultimate fulfillment of the role of the High Priest in the Old Testament. Knowing Jesus as your Heavenly High Priest will transform your relationship with God—it will bring you joy and confidence and a desire to draw ever closer to God in fellowship and prayer.

He knows your name

In Exodus, the garments that the High Priest was to wear are described in great detail. But one of the most wonderful aspects of the garments was the wearing of the special jewel stones which had the names of the tribes of Israel inscribed on them. These were to be worn on the shoulders and over the heart. These stones were to be worn as stones of “*remembrance*” before the Lord—what a fantastic picture of the role of the High Priest! The message is clear: God knows/remembers His people by name. The role of the High Priest was to keep bringing these names before the Lord God. And this is the role of Jesus your Heavenly High Priest. He knows you and calls you by name and He brings you before the very throne of God almighty. You need to know and believe that you are individually and actively remembered by God at all times—because Jesus your High Priest bears your name upon His shoulders and upon His heart before God.

He knows your hurts and hopes

The High Priest knew how to bring the hurts, hopes and needs of the people to God, because He Himself shared in their human struggles. This is also the wonder of Jesus our High Priest. Because, though He was God himself, He took on human flesh and became a man, He is also able to identify fully with our human struggle (Hebrews 4:14-16). He is filled with compassion and understanding. He knows and He cares. He is willing and able to bring your deepest hurts and most human concerns to the throne of God in intercession.

He continually pleads your case

The New Testament has many different ways of describing the High Priestly work of Christ on our behalf. In 1 John 2:1-2 Jesus is called our “*advocate*” to the Father (“one who speaks in our defense” – NIV version). In Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:24-25 He is called the one who “makes intercession” for us—especially when we are accused or being condemned. And we are told that Jesus “*ever lives to make intercession for us.*” You need to know that there is never a moment when Jesus is not standing up for you, defending you, pleading your case before the Holiness of God. And because this is so, there is no one who can condemn us before God. There is nothing that can separate us from the Love of God. This is your confidence before God. Stand in it!

He gives direction

One other article the High Priest wore was called the “breast-piece of decisions (Exodus 28:29).” The word “decisions” is a very important Hebrew word: “mishpat”. It is a word that has to do with making a judgment as to what is the right or best thing to do. Evidently part of the role of the High Priest was to help the people in determining the will of God for their lives. From that place of compassionate care and heartfelt intercession before the presence of God, the High Priest could best discern the heart and will of God for the people. This was symbolic and imperfect in Exodus. But in Jesus it is perfectly fulfilled. Jesus knows your name and your needs. He knows what is good and best. As we come to God through Christ, Jesus is able to lead and direct our lives into His good plan for us, if only we will open our hearts to Him and listen for His voice.

Jesus—your confidence—now and forever

All of this is intended to build our faith and cause us to approach God with confidence in prayer and worship (Hebrews 10:19-20-23). This is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus is your priest, your mediator (1 Timothy 2:5-6). You don’t need to come to God through any earthly priest, or pray to saints or any other intermediaries in order to bring your needs to Almighty God. Just come in Jesus name. But do come—and with bold confidence—because of Jesus!

Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion

What new insight did you gain this week about Jesus Christ?

Jesus your advocate

In Hebrews 10 we are encouraged to draw near to God... in full assurance through Christ. How closely does this describe your Christian walk today? What might be hindering you from approaching the Lord with confidence?

Read Hebrews 10:19-23 again. What part do we play as believers as we “enter the most holy place”? Explore this in your own walk. How can you apply these truths to your life this week?

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY 03/25

El Salvador Presentation &
Pizza Night, 7pm, RWLG

THURSDAY 03/29

Children’s Ministry HOTEL
Easter Basket Project
6:30pm, RWLG

SATURDAY 03/31

Junior High Bowling &
Pizza, 1pm, Tigard Bowl

FRIDAY 04/06

Good Friday Services
6pm & 8pm, RWLG

SUNDAY 04/08

Easter Services, 9am &
11am, Lakeridge HS

FRIDAY 04/13

Junior High Parent
Meeting, 7pm, RWCC

SATURDAY 04/21

High School Beach Day
Details to come!

SUNDAY 04/29

Baptism Service, 7pm,
RWLG