

The Present Heavenly Ministry of Christ

Rom 5v10 **“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life”**. His earthly ministry was for my soul salvation; His present heavenly ministry is for the present salvation of my life.

His heavenly ministry commenced with the giving of the Holy Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost; the Spirit coming down was proof of His exaltation in heaven (see Acts 2v33).

Once the Church was brought into existence, there has been since then the present ministry of Christ as Head, from whom the Church (His body) receives all supply, direction, strength, unity & increase.

For individual believers, a very personal present ministry of Christ as **our Great High Priest; “able to succour”** (Heb 2v18), able to sympathise, **“touched with the feeling of our infirmities”** (Heb 4v15), and **“able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us”** (Heb 7v25).

Also, as a separate ministry, He is **our Advocate** before the Father; **“we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”** (1st John 2v1), needed when fellowship with the Father is disturbed by our sin.

Hebrews - The High Priestly Ministry of Christ

The theme of the supremacy of Christ’s priesthood, after the order of Melchisedec, runs from ch2v17 through to ch10.

Ch2v17 - Ch3v1: A Merciful and Faithful High Priest

His suitability for Priesthood, consequent to the reality of His incarnation (ch2v9,14,17).

He is a faithful High Priest Godward, v17 **“to make propitiation (not reconciliation) for the sins of the people”**, satisfying the claims of divine justice, i.e. a finished & accepted work.

He is a merciful High Priest manward, v18 **“For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted (tested), He is able to succour (i.e. run to the aid of) **them that are tempted**”**.

As our **faithful High Priest** (v17), we see Him linked with the blood at the **brazen altar**; He has met our past need with respect to our sins.

As our **merciful High Priest** (v18), we see Him linked with the incense at the **golden altar**; He intercedes for us & meets our present need with respect to our weaknesses.

All the sufferings the Lord Jesus experienced as a Man down here were purposeful, perfectly fitting & qualifying Him for this compassionate high priestly ministry

Ch3v1: As the **“Apostle ... of our confession”**, He was the sent One who came from God to men, to represent God before men; as such, He is **greater than Moses**.

As the **“High Priest of our confession”**, He represents us before God, giving us all the help & succour we need; as such, He is **greater than Aaron**.

Ch4v14-16: A Great High Priest

The superiority of Christ's unique heavenly priesthood.

The superiority of His priestly office - we have a "Great High Priest" (v14).

"Great" in His efficiency as Priest, "a **Great Priest over the house of God**" (ch10v21).

"High" in His supremacy & pre-eminence as Priest, "We have such a **High Priest**" (ch8v1).

The superiority of His priestly sanctuary - "passed into (through) the heavens" (v14).

He has ascended up, through the created heavens, to enter into the very immediate presence of God (chs7v26,9v24), and He officiates for us in the true heavenly sanctuary.

The superiority of His priestly Person - "Jesus, the Son of God" (v14).

Uniquely, in our Great High Priest is combined perfect Manhood and absolute deity.

As the Man "Jesus", He brings all His experiences as a real Man, with body & soul & spirit, to His office of priesthood, and is thus able to enter into our circumstances.

JN Darby: 'we know that a perfectly human heart beats upon the throne of God'.

As "Son of God", He brings also the very power & reality of deity to His office of priesthood, His divine omniscience & omnipotence & omnipresence.

Having such a superior Great High Priest as this, ministering for us in the heavenly sanctuary, unique in His combined humanity & deity, v14 "let us **hold fast our profession** (confession)"; we go on with confidence & assurance.

The superiority of His priestly ministry - "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (v15)

It is impossible for Him not to sympathise with us, i.e. in relation to our weaknesses & infirmities (not our sins); He has a heart full of unfailing & unceasing sympathy for His own.

The superiority of His priestly experience - "but was **in all points tempted** (tested) **like as we are, yet without sin** (sin apart)" (v15).

He was tested in all possible ways; i.e. bodily, morally & spiritually, at all stages of human development, whilst remaining utterly sinless, holy & pure.

He experienced the taunts & derision of ungodly men, and being misrepresented by unsaved family members. At times, He was wearied in His service for God (John 4v6, Mark 4v36).

He experienced the sadness & heartache of bereavement (John 11).

We have a Great High Priest who understands all our needs & is able to sympathise with us.

The superiority of His priestly provision - "Let us therefore come boldly to **the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need**" (v16).

He will always faithfully provide the mercy & grace we require, but we must be exercised to come boldly, not to ask for, but to obtain & find these unlimited resources of mercy & grace.

He provides the seasonable help we require, before we are overwhelmed by the test.

Because of the ministry of our Great High Priest, the throne of God is a throne of unmerited favour & unlimited provision for us, giving to us all we require in our wilderness pathway.

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