

## Jesus our High Priest, the maker of a Better Covenant

**Read:** Hebrews 9:11-14

### **Summary:**

The Letter to the Hebrews chiefly concerns itself with Jesus as the mediator of a new and better covenant, this passage in particular discusses the sacrificial system of the Old Covenant and how Christ's sacrifice is so much more able to make an atonement for our sins, however, in order for there to be a new covenant there must be an old one.

**Old Covenant** – The old covenant restricted man's access to God and his glory. Only certain people at certain times and to certain degrees could come into the Holy Place, and only the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place once a year, on the Day of Atonement. On this day the High Priest would first offer a sacrifice for his own sin before he could offer a sacrifice on behalf of the people.

**Jesus our High Priest** – Through other passages in Hebrews (4:14, 2:17) we are told that Christ is our High Priest and he is also the Son of God, what was essential for the office of the High Priest was his family and lineage, could you have any greater lineage than of being God's own son. We also know that on the Day of Atonement the High Priest first offered a sacrifice for his own sin before offering one for the people. So when we hear that Christ was 'tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin' we know that he had no need to offer the first sacrifice, the only sacrifice he made was for the people. What's even greater than this is that Christ Jesus was our sacrifice, God did not even spare his own Son but in his love allowed him to be sent to the cross so we may have access to God.

**What He Achieves is Different** – The passage in Hebrews says that he 'entered the holy places **once and for all**', the sacrifices of the old covenant were 'impossible' in being able to take away the sins of the people and needed to be repeated over and over repeatedly for a thousand years, but, Christ's sacrifice was once and for all. Jesus Christ was sacrificed once and that was for all, for all time and for all people. **Purify our conscience from Dead Works to serve the Living God**, there is ambiguity in this language for the NIV calls them 'acts that lead to death', so whether they are acts that we commit to *add* to what Christ has done which is a complete misunderstood understanding of grace, or they are sinful acts we are told that through Christ's sacrifice we can be purified from them.

### **Application:**

1. Was there anything shared on Sunday that needs clarifying for you?
2. What did God say to you and what are you going to do as a result?
3. In what do we place our confidence when approaching God and His Holiness?
4. What do we take the phrase 'dead works' to mean, and can we recognise any in our own lives?
5. Can we recognise any 'acts that lead to death' in our lives?
6. How can we serve the Living God?

