

# **Making much of Jesus**

present-day lessons from the letter to the Hebrews

Although written to Jews who had trusted in Jesus, and although drawing regularly on Old Testament references, the letter to the Hebrews has a very pressing contemporary significance.

This series of studies is intended to stir in our hearts both a deepening delight and a growing confidence in all that Jesus is and has done, imparting to us the fortitude and strength we need to serve Him faithfully in today's world.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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## 6. The 'great high priest' (Heb.4.14-5.10)

[w/b Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2019]

*".. that we may receive mercy .."*

Jesus has come to take us home: that's the essence of what He has come to do. Thus He is described by the writer (Heb.3.1) first as 'our apostle' (sent to us from God, as Moses was, to take us out of slavery and to bring us 'home'), and then as our 'high priest' (the One who brings us to God).

From 3.1-4.13 the focus has been on Jesus as 'our apostle': from 4.14 the writer now concentrates on the ministry Jesus has as our 'high priest'. (Don't be pre-occupied with the reference to Melchizedek in this study: we'll come to him in Hebrews 7!)

*[Before attending a Community Group try on your own to consider all 7 questions - even though your Group may have time for just some of them. Key questions in this study are probably 2, 4 and 6. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]*

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**1. Read Hebrews 4.14-5.10.** The whole passage introduces a theme which the writer will subsequently explore more fully - namely that of Jesus as our high priest.

What stands out for you and impresses itself on your heart as you read this passage?

From what you read in these verses, how would you summarise the role of the high priest?

**2. Read Hebrews 4.14-16.** Jesus is introduced here as our high priest, and the writer immediately spells out the implications for his readers of this ministry which He exercises.

What are the two exhortations the writer addresses to his readers here?

Why do you think we often find it difficult to 'approach God's throne with confidence'?

What 'grace to help' have you known in your times of need?

**3. Read Hebrews 5.1.** The ministry of the high priest is helpfully described for us here as being essentially 'from .. the people' and '.. to God'.

Why is it necessary that the high priest is 'selected from among the people'?

According to the writer, what basically does the high priest do?

How does that affect us as those who trust in Jesus?

4. **Read Hebrews 5.2-3.** Having highlighted *who* the high priest is and *what* he does (5.1), the writer now stresses *how* he goes about exercising his ministry.

What has been your experience of Jesus 'dealing gently' with you in your ignorance and when you've gone astray?

In what way(s) can it be said that Jesus was 'subject to weakness' (v.2)?

5. **Read Hebrews 5.4-6.** The responsibility which the high priest has in being able to bring his people to God is a sacred privilege afforded by God - and thus it is only ever by divine appointment alone that he may exercise that role.

The priests (including the high priest) all came from the descendants of Aaron who was a Levite: how does this square with the fact that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah?

**Read Psalm 110** from which the second quote comes: what do you learn about Jesus from this psalm?

6. **Read Hebrews 5.7.** Interceding for his people before God was an integral part of the high priest's ministry: the writer now points to this feature of the ministry of Jesus.

**Read Rom.8.34:** what is the comfort which the NT writers mean we should know in Jesus interceding for us?

**Read Lk.22.31-34:** why is the intercession of Jesus for us so critical for our true and lasting well-being?

7. **Read Hebrews 5.8-10.** The high priest offered up 'sacrifices for sins' (5.1) as well as intercessions: the writer now alludes to the sacrifice which Jesus offered.

In what sense does the writer mean that Jesus 'learned obedience' and was 'made perfect'?

How does the reference to 'all who *obey* Him' square with the writer's assurance that we 'receive mercy' (4.16)?