

DAY 13 WEDNESDAY

HEBREWS 4:14-5:3 **HELP HAS ARRIVED**

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

^{5:1} Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. ³ This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people.

Just at the right time, help has arrived. Trapped in our sin, having our deepest motives exposed by the word of God, and living in a seemingly endless cycle of ritual sacrifice, humankind was imprisoned in futility. But God stepped in to break the cycle.

The High Priest was the one who entered the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement each year to make sacrifice for the sins of the people. He took the blood of the sacrifice through the curtain in the Temple and offered it to God. As part of the ritual life of the people, both the High Priest and the animal blood were mere symbols of the true event that was to come. The perfect sacrifice to meet the demands of the covenant with Abram (Genesis 15) had to be Divine (Son of God) and human (Jesus). The perfect High Priest, in order to offer the perfect sacrifice, had to be free from the need to be cleansed by the same sacrifice (without sin). In addition, the sacrifice needed to be made, not through the curtain of the earthly Temple, but through the curtain of heaven and in the very presence of God. Finally, that curtain needed to be torn so that humankind could have access to God, that is be reconciled to him (the Ascension). All this and more, Jesus did for us.

Is there any other who fulfills all the requirements for our salvation? Has there ever been any greater demonstration of God's love and mercy than was shown in the sequence of cross, grave and ascension? When we put all these together, is there any valid reason for doubting God and his Christ? If God was willing to provide his Son as Priest and Sacrifice in order to open the way of access to him, should we not call upon him and rely on him without hesitation in our time of need, which is every day?

Help me Lord to grow in my understanding and appreciation of what you have done. May I live out that understanding by willingly coming to you for your help and guidance every day of my life. As you have torn the curtain of heaven by your intercession and sacrifice for me, empower me to sacrifice my will for you and tear the fabric of my practical hostility toward God. Amen.