

JESUS IS THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST



“WHO IS JESUS?” FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE - Week 5, September 15

MAYFAIRKIDS

JESUS IS THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

HEBREWS 4:14

Many children know the story of little Samuel. It's a sweet story, for sure. His mother Hannah wanted a son so badly, but the Lord had given her none. So she wept and she prayed, just as most women in her situation would do. But she also did something else. She made a vow. She said, "O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life" (1 Samuel 1:11, paraphrase).

The Lord heard her prayer and her vow, and she gave

birth to a son. She named him Samuel, which means, "God has heard." When he was a few years old, she brought him to Eli the high priest, where he lived and served at the tabernacle. Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord and men (1 Samuel 2:26).

Meanwhile, there's a not-so-sweet part of the story. The high priest's own sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were doing wicked things. God had chosen their family to serve as priests, and it was a super-special job. But they weren't treating it as something special or

holy. They continued to sin, and Eli didn't stop them. Do you see how serious this was? The priests were supposed to make sacrifices for the sins of the people, and yet they refused to turn from their own sins. God sent a prophet who said the house of Eli was scorning his sacrifices. This was serious business, and there would be serious consequences. The prophet said God would cut short their days so that there would not be an old man in their family line, and Hophni and Phinehas would die on the same day.

This was terrible news for Eli and his family. And yet God gave a glimmer of hope by making a promise through this prophet. God would raise up a faithful priest, who would minister forever.

One night the Lord called to Samuel. Three times the boy ran to Eli because he thought it was Eli calling him, but it wasn't—it was God! The first two times Eli told him to go back to bed, but the third time he realized it was the Lord. Eli told him to lie back down, and if the Lord called again to say, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:9).

Samuel did as Eli told him, and the Lord told Samuel that he was about to carry out the prophecy against Eli and his family.

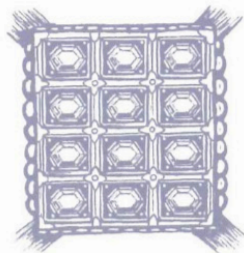
Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision, but when Eli pressed him, he told him everything. Eli said, "He is

the LORD; let him do what is good in his eyes" (3:18).

Not long after this night, the Israelites went out to fight the Philistines. Hophni and Phinehas moved the ark into the battlefield, which they were not supposed to do. God allowed the ark to be captured by the Philistines, and Hophni and Phinehas were killed.

God's punishment for these priests who weren't following his will was serious. This shows us again that the job of priest was an important one. It was through the priest that sacrifices were made as payment for sins, and it needed to be done right. The problem was that the priests themselves were imperfect, and needed to make sacrifices for themselves before they could make sacrifices for the people. God did raise up a faithful priest as he promised, whose name was Zadok, but even he wasn't absolutely perfect, and he couldn't possibly live forever. So what was the solution? And why don't we have priests and sacrifices anymore?

The solution is Jesus. He is the perfect High Priest. He's sinless, and he's eternal. And do you know what? He's the sacrifice too! Jesus fulfills all God's requirements. No more sacrifices need to be made. When Jesus was on the cross, he said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Jesus, our Great High Priest, made the final sacrifice—himself.



REFLECT

1. What was the job of the priests?
2. According to Hebrews 4:14-16, why is Jesus the Great High Priest?
3. Read the story of Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18-20 and Hebrews 7:1-10. What two roles did Melchizedek and Jesus both have?

BIBLE REFERENCE 1 SAMUEL 1-3; HEBREWS 4:14-16

KEY VERSE HEBREWS 4:14