

# Hebrews

## Chapter 4:14-5:11

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- **Hebrews Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Christ is greater than the prophets and the angels.
- Chapter 2 Christ's message is greater than the angel's.
- Chapter 3 Christ is greater than Moses.
- Chapter 4 Christ is greater than Joshua and His rest is superior.
- Chapter 5 Christ's High Priesthood is greater than the Aaronic Priesthood.

- **Introduction & Review**

The author continues his exhortation of the recipients to put aside the foolish notion of returning to the lesser things of Judaism. From the very first chapter he has plotted out an argument which has demonstrated the superiority of the things in the new covenant; the old being just types and shadows. The author has reassured them that those who are truly regenerate will hold fast to the end and he provides a stern warning to those who would consider turning away. Clearly there were some in the midst of the church who by their turning away proved that they never were regenerate.

Having laid out for us the Apostleship of Christ, His full deity, His full humanity, and His superiority in all things, the author now moves on to discuss another office of Christ-High Priest. In chapter 5, he begins to develop this point and then picks it up again in chapter 7. Chapter 6 is really a parenthesis from this topic. In the parenthesis, the author deals with the recipients immaturity and apostasy.

- **Exposition**

### Hebrews 4:14-5:11

*14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

- The author introduces the next office of Christ, High Priest (Prophet, Apostle, High Priest & King). The initial instruction is that of Christ passing through the heavens which is pictured by the Levitical Priest entering the Most Holy Place. As High priest, Christ has entered into the very throne room of God and has made atonement for His people.
- On the basis of the greatness of our High Priest, we are to hold fast our confession (which they were tempted to refute). This reasoning is contrary to much fleshly wisdom which says that if the object of your faith is faithless, you must have tremendous faith and if your object is very faithful, then you needn't lean on your faith so much. No, here we see that our ground of confidence comes from the greatness of Christ. Our faith comes to us because of the faithfulness of God. As He reveals himself more and more faithful, the only proper response on our part is faithful obedience. Any other response would be unnatural.
- In the incarnation Christ took on flesh so that he might become like us and act as the God/Man mediator. The office in which He performs these duties is High Priest. He was tempted in every way, yet He was without sin. It is this fact that qualifies Him to be this kind of High Priest. He knows our weaknesses because He Himself was weak. However, weakness is not the same as sin or rebellion. Being tempted is not the same thing as falling to sin. He was tempted in all the ways that we are and was sinless throughout. Christ is patient with our weakness, not to keep us weak, but to work in us to bring us to maturity.
- Based on this, (because we are *in Him* and He can sympathize with our weaknesses) we may approach boldly. Not clothed in our own righteousness, but clothed in Christ's perfect righteousness-this is our ground of confidence. Our confidence is not arrogance or self confidence.

- We come boldly to this throne to obtain mercy and grace. Mercy is unmerited forgiveness of trespass and grace is strength to endure, showers of blessing, our sanctification and our glorification. God has made both a provision for us before temptation becomes sin and after temptation has given birth to sin.

*1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. 3 Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. 4 And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.*

- We are given two criteria for a High Priest in this section: he must be a man and secondly, he must be called by God. In order for Jesus to fulfill this capacity He had to become a man-He could not be our High Priest unless He was chosen from among the people.
- There are three primary roles of a High Priest
  - To represent man to God Heb 5:1
- To offer sacrifices and gifts for sins Heb 5:1
- To intercede in prayer Heb 7:25
- The Aaronic priests had weaknesses and were in need of offering sacrifices for themselves before they could do so for the people. However, Christ did not need to offer this sacrifice because of His sinlessness.

*5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." 6 As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek"; 7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, 10 called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," 11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. (NKJV)*

- The author quotes from the second Psalm and applies the teaching to Christ's appointment to High Priest. We also know that Paul in Acts 13:33 applied these same verses to the resurrection of Christ. Christ was begotten by the Father from among the dead. He was born out of the dead so that His resurrection might be the prototype of those who will rise from the dead in the same way. In this way, Christ is known as the firstborn from the dead. Col. 1:18, Rev. 1:5
- The author then goes on to explain something that is explained nowhere else in the Scriptures. Jesus isn't a Priest in the way that Aaron and his descendants were, Christ is a High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. We will study this in much greater detail in chapter 7.
- The author speaks of the prayers that Jesus offered up with vehement cries and tears which most surely refers to the events in the garden of Gethsemane. We know that Christ prayed that if there was some other way to make atonement for the sins of the people that the Father should do so. Christ's prayer wasn't answered by avoiding death rather it was answered by conquering death. God answered Christ's prayer and also fulfilled the scriptures. Matt 26
- Saying Christ was perfected is not the same thing as saying that He was once imperfect. Christ's perfection had never extended to His humanity until the incarnation took place. As a human he also dwelt in His flesh and remained obedient to the Father and extended His perfection. He went from perfection to further perfection.
- The source of eternal salvation is Jesus. There is no other way for men to be saved other than the completed work of Christ. Saving faith is faith that manifests itself in obedience.