

Hebrew 4:14-5:10

LESSON: THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST — October 16, 2016

INTRODUCTION:

The power of God is described in His Word.

4:12 For the Word is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder soul and spirit; joint and marrow; and is a discerner of the thought and the intent of the heart.

- *The Word is (Jesus) ...**quick** (active, alive, living; full of life in the heart of the believer),*
- *The Word is (Jesus) ...**powerful** (authoritative and commanding; dynamite explosive power),*
- *The Word is (Jesus) ...**sharper than any two-edged sword** (a tool of judgment and execution),*
- *The Word is (Jesus) ...**piercing** (sharp enough to penetrate) **even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit** (goes in between to part, making a distinction between); **joint and marrow** (the soft tissues of the bone, the place where blood is manufactured for the body);*
- *And the Word is (Jesus) ...**a discerner of the thought and the intent of the heart** (examines and separate things that are of God and things that are not of God, detects and scrutinizes the ponderings and conceptions)."*

4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Since nothing can be hidden from God, He sees all we do and knows all we think. Even when we are unaware of His presence, even when we try to hide from him, He knows. We can have no secrets from Him. He knows about everyone and everything. Everything about us is bare; naked; open to God's all-seeing eyes, to whom we must explain all we have done.

Next begins the main theme of the letter: Jesus Christ is set apart for all other high Priests.

LESSON: I. ENCOURAGEMENT FROM CHRIST'S HIGH PRIESTHOOD Hebrews 4:14-16

4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Aaron, who was the first high priest, was considered by the Jews to be the greatest of the High Priest who ministered or passed in the most holy place of the earthly temple. However, Christ's superiority surpasses into the heavens, into God's very presence to intercede for us. The great High Priest is described as Jesus, the Son of God. And because of the Son's great priestly work, we are admonished to "*hold fast*" (*hold on to; be strong in; prevail in*) our profession (*which is translated confession*) involving both the inward confession of the heart and outward profession before men.

4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. The word "*touched*" means to sympathize, feel and suffer with us; suffer when we suffer, to the point that the hurt and pain are actually felt within one's own heart. We can ask for no greater High Priest. In all points He was tempted in all things just like we are, but He never sinned. Jesus cannot be tempted with evil, yet men try to tempt Him. He went through every experience and every trial and temptation that we would go through, and He bore them all, never sinning.

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4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. "*Let Us*" means for all who trust in Him can come boldly to the "*throne of grace*." Jesus is sitting upon the throne of grace. "*Grace*" means that God's love longs to shower blessings upon man. We have the right to come boldly, but we are to approach God through Jesus Christ with respect and reverence. We are now encouraged to obtain the mercy of God, and we need His mercy; we need His grace in the time of trouble—the very help of God! God's grace will strengthen us to walk right through trials and trouble.

II. QUALIFICATIONS OF HIGH PRIESTS Hebrews 5:1-4

5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:— There are five qualifications for a man to be a high priest.

1. The high priest must be appointed by God to represent men before God.
 - a. "*He is taken from among men*", meaning he is a man himself who knows and understands what it is to be a man.
 - b. He is "*ordained*" or appointed by God to serve men.
 - c. He represents man "*in things pertaining God*." He leads in prayer, worship, righteousness, morality, witnessing, and in the study of spiritual things.
2. The high priest must "*offer gifts and sacrifices for sins*." Unless man's sins are forgiven, he can never be acceptable to God, for no man can erase his sins. Therefore, there has to be a substitution, some sacrifice made that can take the sinner's place and bear the judgment of sin for him. This of course, refers to the animals which were sacrificed for sin in the Old Testament. The animal sacrifice is also a type or symbol that pictured what Jesus Christ was to do for us: become the Lamb of God; the sacrifice for our sins. The point is this: the high priest came before Almighty God for man offering gifts and sacrifices for man's sins— a very important office.

However, Jesus Christ is the great High Priest who stands between God and man. He meets every qualification required by both man and God to be the Supreme High Priest.

5:2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

3. The high priest must be able to deal with men in compassion. Note that men are placed into one of two classifications:
 - a. The ignorant: those who have sinned and did not know it— guilty of sinning in ignorance.
 - b. Those who have deliberately gone out of the way; willfully sin— knowing that they are sinning.

The high priest must remember that he himself is also guilty of infirmities, weaknesses, and failures. Therefore, he is to be compassionate with all men, no matter their sin and shortcoming, for he is as they are: a mere man, ever so frail and short of God's perfect goodness.

5:3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

4. The high priest must offer sacrifices for his own sins before he can make sacrifice for the people's sins.

5:4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

5. The high priest must be God-appointed and not self-appointed. No man is to enter the priestly



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ministry because he chooses it as a profession, as a means to earn a livelihood, or as a means to serve mankind. God and God alone calls those who are to serve Him. Only those that are called by God can serve Him in truth.

III. HIGH PRIESTLY QUALIFICATIONS OF CHRIST Hebrews 5:5-10

5:5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. All qualifications to be the great High Priest were met by Christ perfectly. He did not glorify Himself. He is the High Priest who stands in perfection before God and man. **The point is:** "*Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest*", rather God appointed Him, as the scripture declare: "*Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.*"

1. Christ was "*begotten*" or born as a Man: He was appointed and sent into the world by God. The proofs...
 - a. **Proof one:** God's Word or prophecy was told hundreds of years before Christ came, God foretold His coming. God was going to beget, that is, cause His Son to be born into the world—enter the world as a man.

5:6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

- b. **Proof two:** God's irrevocable oath that His Son was to be a priest. And note: He was not to be a priest like man, that is, Aaron's priesthood; rather, "He was to be a priest for ever after the order (pattern) of Melchisedec." Melchisedec's priesthood is said to have been without human descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, that is, he is said to be eternal (Heb.7:3).

The point is: God appointed Jesus Christ to be the great High priest; Christ did not seek to glorify Himself; did not seek to glorify the priesthood. Therefore, He has fulfilled the first qualification of the priesthood—the qualification of being appointed by God. And He has fulfilled the second qualification of the priesthood—the qualification of being Priest forever; eternally. He is our High Priest interceding for us in the heavenlies.

5:7 Who in the days of his flesh,— speaks of the thirty years during which the Son had become flesh and dwelt among men (Jh.1:14) suffering many things in behalf of His people. Christ sacrificed Himself and suffered much as Man. God did not have an easy life here on earth. His life was much more difficult than ours. To be a priest for us he had to suffer all the problems of human life. This helps him to have sympathy with all who suffer.

5:7b ...when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;—The place is the Garden of Gethsemane. In Gethsemane, Jesus reveals that His soul is "*...exceeding sorrowful unto death*" (Mk.14:34). With hard crying and flowing tears He prays to the Father, asking if this cup might be taken away, referring to His suffering on the cross. He wants the Father to help Him in the weakness of His flesh. In this battle God gave Him strength in the Garden so that He could go to the cross and die. The Father heard Him because of His godly fear and holy reverence unto the Father. The promise of the Resurrection had to be reaffirmed through Jesus' prayer.

5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;— Jesus was fully divine and fully human, yet he had to learn, as a human, what it meant to obey God completely. He learned obedience for the same reasons He bore temptation: to confirm His humanity and experience its sufferings to

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the fullest. He chose to obey even though obedience led to suffering and death. He accepted the Father's Will, thereby pleasing the Father.

5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;—

Christ was always morally perfect. During the process of suffering, Christ secured (learned) obedience by living on earth as Man proving His completion; His perfection to us. He did not have to prove it to God or to Himself only to those who obey Him. The Only the Completed One; the Perfect One became our Source of eternal salvation.

5:10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Man did not call Jesus as the High Priest as the Jews had come from the family of Aaron. Jesus was not of that family, but He is the the High Priest because God appointed Him. God called him to be a High Priest after the type of and eternal order of Melchizedec, not after the human and dying order of Aaron. This is greater than the chief priests of Aaron's family.

SUMMARY:

¹We have a great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God. He sympathizes with our weaknesses, because He was tempted (though without sin). We can approach God's throne boldly, obtain mercy, and find grace in time of need (**4:14-16**).

The High Priest from among men is ordained for men, appointed to speak the things pertaining to God. He offers both gifts and sacrifices for the people's sins. He is to show compassion on the ignorant, as he too must offer sacrifices for his own sins. He cannot give himself this office. He is called by God in the same way God chose Aaron (**5:1-4**).

Jesus Christ glorified not Himself. He did not elect Himself to this office even though He was God's Son, for God made Him High Priest after the eternal order of Melchizedek. Jesus in the flesh offered up strong prayers as He cried in the Garden of Gethsemane. His experience of suffering in the flesh is where He learned obedience. Thus proving His perfection; His completion, He became our eternal salvation for all that obey. God had chosen Jesus to be an High Priest with same rank as Melchisedec (**5:5-10**).

¹ http://executableoutlines.com/he_sg/he_sg_04.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>