

# Hebrews 4:14-5:10

## Week Seven

Study written by Holli Worthington



### Day 1



*Holy Spirit, enlighten my mind as I read your word. Please clear away the preconceptions and misconceptions I have. I ask that you give me understanding and insight and conform and humble my mind and heart to your truth*

- ✓ Read through the passage in each translation.
- ✓ Underline or write in the margin, themes that you see.
- ✓ Write a question you have about the passage.
- ✓ In the space below, write out a verse from our passage that stands out to you, that you can meditate on throughout the week.

### Day 2- The Office of High Priest

We have already encountered the theme of the priesthood of Jesus in our study of Hebrews. But starting at the end of chapter 4 and continuing for the next few chapters we will explore more fully how Jesus is our high priest. One commentator says, “in the book of Hebrews, which so directly addresses the matter of Christian perseverance, it is the priestly ministry of Jesus Christ that appears as our main source of motivation and comfort.”<sup>1</sup> So this is important! And it will help us understand Hebrews better and see Jesus more fully if we are familiar with the role of the priests in the Old Testament.

In the wilderness, after God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, he established the office of priest, making Aaron, Moses’ brother the high priest.

Words to know:

- Atonement or propitiation- that which appeases the wrath of God against sin.
- Tabernacle- means *dwelling place*. It is also called the tent of meeting. It was the place where God dwelled among his people. It was divided into the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, where only the high priest was allowed to enter.

- Levite (Levitical in Deut. 18:1)- From the tribe of Levi. The priests and temple servants were all Levites. The priests must belong to a certain branch of the tribe of Levi - Kohath, from whom Aaron was descended. Those who served in the temple were Levites not descended from Kohath. A priest was a Levite, but a Levite was not necessarily a priest.

Read the following verses and write under each passage all that you can see about the role of the priest.

*Exodus 29:44* “I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests”

*Leviticus 16:32-34* “<sup>32</sup> And the priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father's place shall make atonement, wearing the holy linen garments. <sup>33</sup> He shall make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. <sup>34</sup> And this shall be a statute forever for you, that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of all their sins.” And Aaron did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

*Deuteronomy 18:1* [ Provision for Priests and Levites ] “The Levitical priests, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel. They shall eat the LORD's food offerings as their inheritance.”

*Exodus 30:1,7-8, 10* “You shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood... <sup>7</sup> And Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it. Every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it, <sup>8</sup> and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations... <sup>10</sup> Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD.”

*Leviticus 9:8-9 “So Aaron drew near to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. And the sons of Aaron presented the blood to him, and he dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar and poured out the blood at the base of the altar.”*

*Exodus 28:29 (NLT) <sup>36</sup> “In this way, Aaron will carry the names of the tribes of Israel on the sacred chestpiece over his heart when he goes into the Holy Place. This will be a continual reminder that he represents the people when he comes before the LORD”*

*Exodus 28:36-38 (NLT) <sup>36</sup> “Next make a medallion of pure gold, and engrave it like a seal with these words: HOLY TO THE LORD. <sup>37</sup> Attach the medallion with a blue cord to the front of Aaron’s turban, where it must remain. <sup>38</sup> Aaron must wear it on his forehead so he may take on himself any guilt of the people of Israel when they consecrate their sacred offerings. He must always wear it on his forehead so the LORD will accept the people.”*

## Day 3- Hebrews 4:14-16

1. What are we exhorted to do in verse 14?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-In order to “hold firmly to what we believe” or “hold fast our confession”, we need to know what it is we believe. What are the most important tenants of the Christian faith according to Paul in 1 Corinthians?

*1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (NLT) “<sup>3</sup>I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. <sup>4</sup>He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.”*

-What other beliefs in Christianity are essential to hold firmly to?

*Luke 1:35 “<sup>35</sup>And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born<sup>[a]</sup> will be called holy—the Son of God.”*

*John 14:6 “<sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

*Romans 3:23-24 “<sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...”*

*1 Corinthians 8:5-6 “<sup>5</sup>For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—<sup>6</sup>yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.”*

*Ephesians 2:8-9 “<sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”*

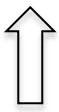
*Hebrews 11:6 “<sup>6</sup>And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”*

2. What is the reason we are to hold firmly to our faith according to verse 14?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. The high priests that served in the tabernacle and later in the temple, were the only ones who were able to enter, once a year on the day of

atonement, beyond the curtain into the Most Holy Place. According to verse 14, where has Jesus gone as the great high priest and what is the significance of that?

4. What three things describe the kind of priest Jesus is according to verse 15?

-Why does this give you hope not to give up, but to persevere in your faith?



*Thank you Jesus that you understand my weakness. You have been tempted in every way, so you are compassionate and sympathetic; you don't stand far off and condemn me, but you draw close and help me. What a wonderful, perfect Savior you are!*

For Discussion: What is the difference between temptation and sin? At what point does temptation cross over into sin?

Picture and Ponder: We don't actually feel the full force of the temptation when we give in to it. Jesus felt the full force of every temptation because he never gave in to a single one, in thought or deed.

5. What resource has Jesus made possible for us, enabling us to hold firmly to our faith according to verse 16?

-Practically speaking what does it mean to draw near to the throne?

6. Why does having Jesus as our great high priest give us confidence to draw near to God's throne?



It is an astounding gift that Jesus has given us. He has given us access to the throne of grace. Because of Jesus' perfect sacrifice, God deals with me graciously when I come to him. The Amplified Bible puts it this way, "*that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it].*" What an amazing promise! This is the source of strength and perseverance we need to live the life of faith we are called to!

- ❖ When you are tempted or weary, do you run to the throne of grace for help? If not, why not?
- ❖ How can a fear of falling away help us come to the throne of grace with confidence?
- ❖ Because God is the King, how should we approach him and how should we pray?
- ❖ Because we are to seek grace for our every need, how should we pray and approach God?
- ❖ How does knowing you receive mercy when you come to God affect you?

## Day 4- Hebrews 5:1-6

7. According to verse 1, from where is a high priest chosen? (Look at ESV)

-Why does the high priest have to be a human being according to verse 1?

8. In what way does the high priest act on behalf of human beings according to verse 1?
9. Because he is beset with weakness, what two things are true according to verses 2-3?

Picture and Ponder: "...in the ideal high priest, this awareness of weakness, coupled with his awareness of sin, produced the ability "to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray." And in this we have something most beautiful, because the word translated "to deal gently" was used classically to define a course of conduct that was the middle course between anger and apathy, between being incensed at sin or laissez-faire about sin. It meant "wise, gentle, patient restraint." <sup>2</sup>



Even as believers we are still prone to be ignorant and wayward. What a great blessing it is to have Jesus as our high priest who deals gently with us!

- ❖ What are the ways Jesus deals gently with you?
- ❖ What does this tell you about him?
- ❖ Do you deal gently with others in their weakness and sin? Ask God to help you deal gently with others the way Jesus deals gently with you.



For Discussion: Why do you think it is important that a high priest must be called by God as it says in verse 4?

Critical Connection: The author of Hebrews now puts forth evidence that Jesus meets and exceeds the qualifications of high priest. The first proof from Psalm 2:7, (which we have already seen in chapter 1), is God making public declaration that Jesus is Son and royal heir and it refers to Jesus' eternal Kingship. The second proof is from Psalm 110, a Messianic Psalm that mentions Melchizedek, who was both a priest and king (Gen. 14:18) (We will get into Melchizedek more in chapter 7.) Read the following verses and answer the question:

-Remember, that because this is a Messianic Psalm, it is referring to Jesus. How does this verse in the Psalm confirm v. 6 of Hebrews that Jesus did not exalt himself to be high priest? How does it show that Jesus goes beyond a human high priest?

*Psalm 110:4 "The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."*

Scholar's Note: [Jesus] is a priest "of the same kind as Melchizedek" (J.C. Ward). Most translations render this "of the order of Melchizedek," but this is incorrect. There was no succession of priests from Melchizedek and thus no "order." Jesus, however, was a priest of this kind--not like Aaron and his successors.<sup>3</sup>

## Day 5- Hebrews 5:7-10

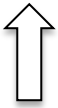
Digging Deeper: Verse 7 is referring to Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane before he was crucified. Read the following verse and answer the questions:

-Jesus is a high priest who identifies with our deepest pain and sorrow. Underline the words and phrases that show Jesus' suffering. What did Jesus want more than to avoid suffering? How did this show reverence?

-How was Jesus' prayer to be saved from death ultimately answered?

-How does this impact you to know that Jesus has experienced emotional pain and sorrow?

*Mark 14:32-36* <sup>32</sup> They went to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and Jesus said, "Sit here while I go and pray." <sup>33</sup> He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he became deeply troubled and distressed. <sup>34</sup> He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me. He went on a little farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible, the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by. "Abba, Father," he cried out, "everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." (NLT)



*Jesus, you know what it is to be in the worst kind of emotional and physical pain and anguish. And yet through it all you persevered because you love your Father and want his will and you love your children and want them to be with you. Thank you Jesus! Cause my heart to treasure you more as I think on your sacrifice and perseverance.*

10. Verse 8 tells us Jesus learned obedience through suffering. This does not mean he was disobedient and then learned to be obedient. "The idea is that he became complete in his human experience."<sup>4</sup> How would a savior who had never suffered be inadequate for us as a high priest and savior?

Picture and Ponder: "But he did suffer and in the process learned obedience. This, startling though it is, does not mean that Jesus passed from disobedience to obedience. Rather, he learned obedience by actually obeying. There is a certain quality involved when one has performed a required action--a quality that is lacking when there is only a readiness to act. Innocence differs from virtue."<sup>5</sup>

For Discussion: What is the difference between knowing something in theory and knowing something in practice, or between being trained and ready to act and experiencing it in real life?

11. What made Jesus the source of eternal salvation according to verses 8 and 9?

12. For whom is Jesus the source of eternal salvation according to verse 9?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses and answer the questions:

-What work does God want us to do according to John 6?

-What two things are equated in John 3?

-How does this help explain verse 9 in Hebrews?

*John 6:28-29 “Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.”*

*John 3:36 “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”*



Jesus' obedience was tested through suffering and he passed the test perfectly! This is why Jesus took on flesh and lived among us so that he would prevail where we fail! He persevered through the pain and suffering and became the

most perfectly suited high priest and Savior, making him the source of salvation to all who obey him.

To truly believe, is to obey those who are saved obey Jesus. We don't obey perfectly, but we keep following in Jesus' footsteps and when we fall he picks us up and we take the next step, keeping our eyes on him and placing our feet in his perfect footprints. And those who persevere and keep taking the next step even through suffering and trials confirm their salvation.

❖ Our obedience is directly related to our love for Jesus (Jn.14:21). Consider Jesus what in this chapter causes you to love Jesus more? Pray and ask God to fan the flame of your love for Jesus.

❖ When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry and when he was tempted in the garden, we see Jesus fighting the temptation to disobey God, with scripture and prayer. Bible reading/memory and prayer are conduits to grace that God has provided for us. Often times our accessing of these means of grace looks pretty anemic compared to Jesus. Why might this at times be true in your life?

13. Go back through the verses we have looked at this week. List the qualifications Jesus had that were the same as the earthly high priests and list where Jesus exceeded the qualifications

Same

Superior

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God was stirring in your heart, convicting you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

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<sup>1</sup> Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Location 1980). Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup> Morris, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Vol. 12, p. 47. Hughes, R. Kent. Hebrews (Vol. 1): An Anchor for the Soul: 001 (Preaching the Word) (Kindle Locations 4336-4337). Crossway. Kindle Edition. As quoted in Hughes, R. Kent. Hebrews (Vol. 1): An Anchor for the Soul: 001 (Preaching the Word) (Kindle Locations 2249-2253). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

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<sup>4</sup> Hughes, R. Kent. Hebrews (Vol. 1): An Anchor for the Soul: 001 (Preaching the Word) (Kindle Locations 2326-2327). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

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