

Hebrews



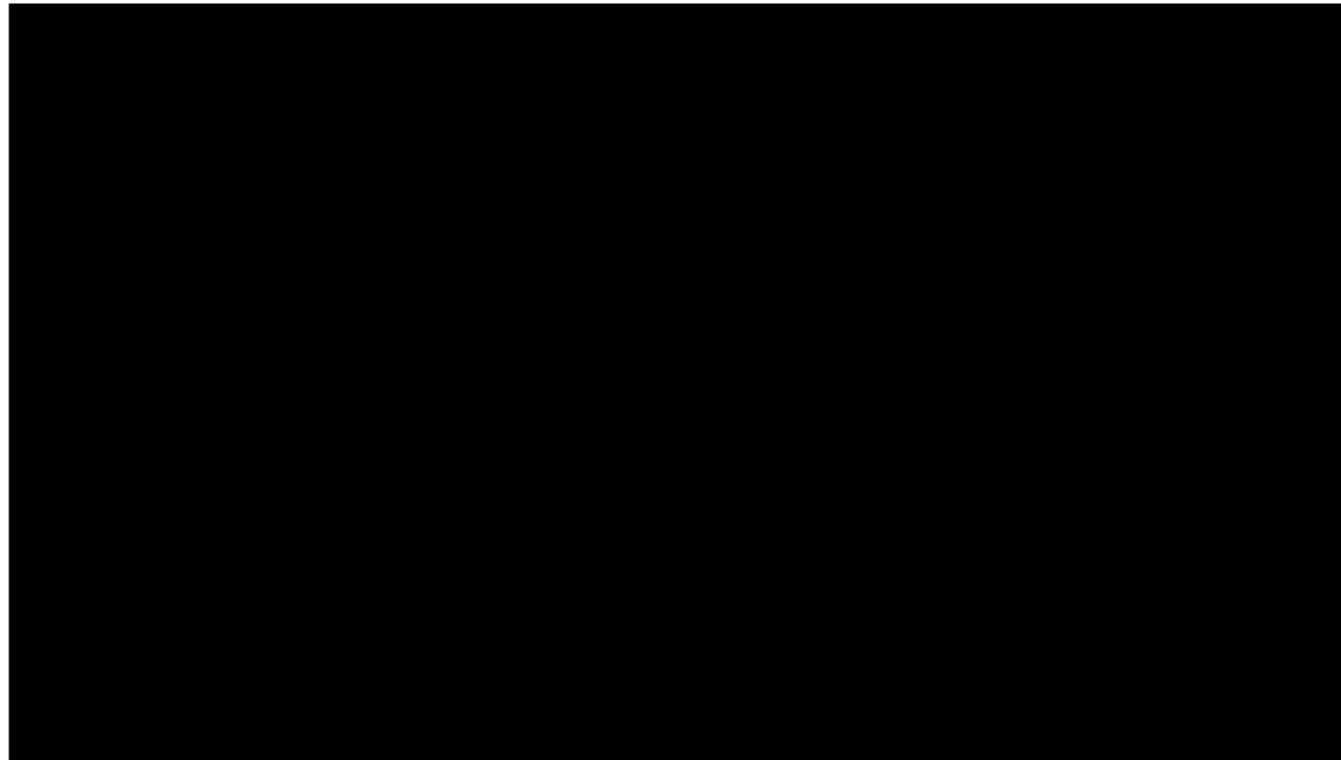
**Promises
Faithfully
Kept**

Hebrews 5.1-10 (CSB)

**Our High Priest is a Faithful
CHAP (pt. 2)**



I need to clarify my use of the reference CHAP. I do not want us to think of Jesus as just any old chap we might pass on the streets of London or Richmond. But I do think a problem we face is the temptation to treat Jesus as someone we can take or leave on any given day, just a passer by that we think is nice but a bit too encroaching at times in our affairs. We act like sin was just some dust that needed to be swept under the cosmic rug. Why would God set up this entire world history, especially the temple system of sacrifices and all its rules if he was just going to get rid of it?



Without all these rules and rituals, we never would have realized the weightiness of our sin. Without realizing that weightiness, we would not realize our great need for a savior. And without that realization of our sin's consequences, we never would have realized the greatness of God's grace shown to us when He gave us Jesus as our mediator.

Keep in mind that the original audience of the letter to the Hebrews was thinking about disregarding Jesus because of suffering. They were thinking about going back to the old system that included high priests and a temple, but no other high priest could ever accomplish the work that Jesus did in that role for us.

So let's take some more time today in Hebrews to look upon Christ our High Priest, who is compassionate, humble, appointed, and perfect. Only by such a high priest would God save us, and He deserves our worship and obedience.

5:1 For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.

2 He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness.

3 Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people.

**4 And no one takes this honor
for himself, but only when called
by God, just as Aaron was.**

**5 So also Christ did not exalt
himself to be made a high
priest,**

**but was appointed by him who
said to him,
“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”;**

**6 as he says also in another
place,
“You are a priest forever,
after the order of
Melchizedek.”**

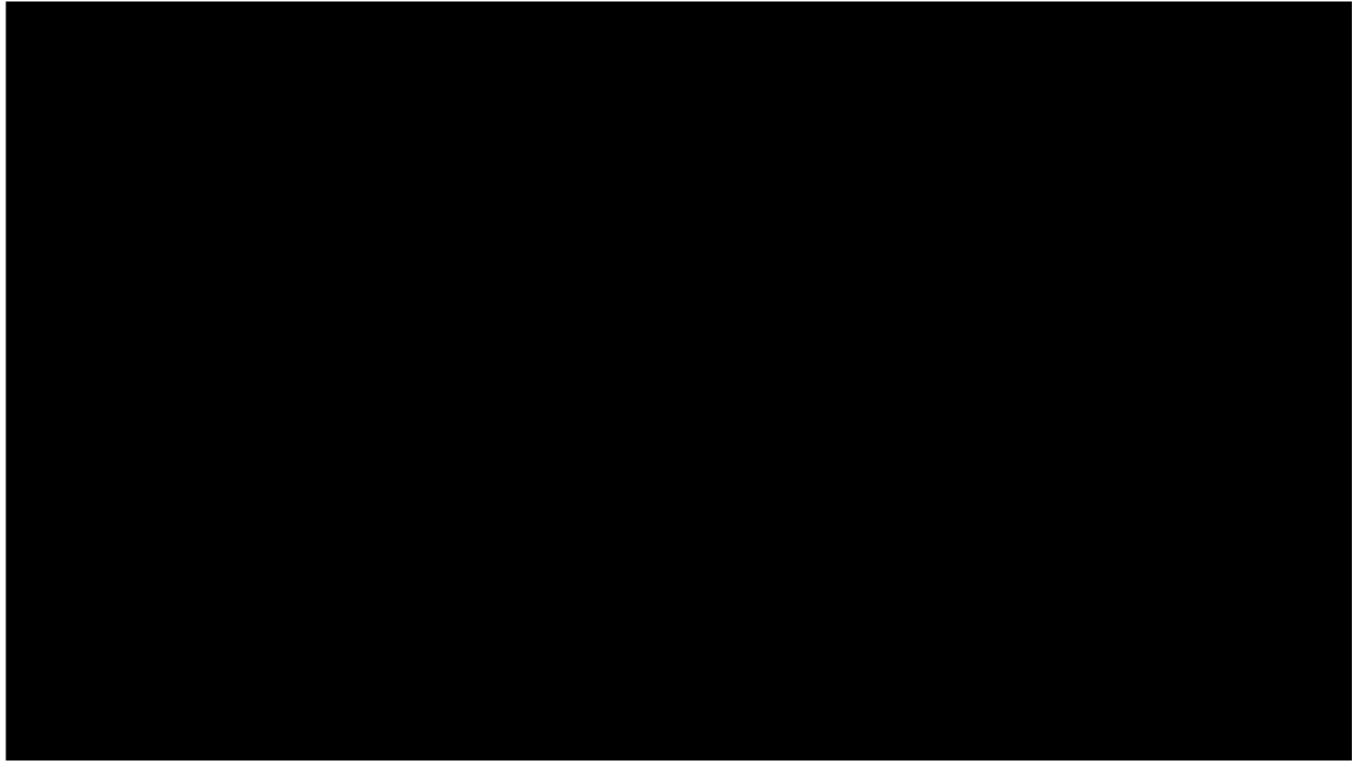
**7 In the days of his flesh, Jesus
offered up prayers and
supplications, with loud cries
and tears,**

**to him who was able to save
him from death, and he was
heard because of his reverence.**

**8 Although he was a son, he
learned obedience through
what he suffered.**

9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,

**10 being designated by God a
high priest after the order of
Melchizedek.**



Pray

**Your salvation could only be
accomplished in a back room
meeting that you were not
allowed into.**

We needed a man on the inside.

The bouncer at the door, the Temple system and its history, reminds us that we caused the problem, and we don't want to find out what will happen to us if we try to barge in.

The temple system was set up by God to provide a way for Israel and the nations to draw near to God. In that old covenant, God, by His presence in the Temple, drew people to Himself, but He also prevented them from coming close. It was an impressive, beautiful reminder that we were made to walk with God but that sin had separated us from God. His holiness now would mean judgment for us unless God arranged a way for us to be made right.

Do you remember how God prevented Adam and Eve from reentering the garden of Eden? It was an angel with flaming sword outside of the east entrance to the garden, just as the Temple entrance was to face east. That garden was like the first Temple but without all the restrictions of the later Temple. Preset in the artistry of the Temple were angels, the representation of the heavens and the earth, representation of a tree, representation of rivers, the presence of gold and precious stones, the presence of a priestly servant, and the presence of God. The Temple design was based on the Garden of Eden but had all kinds of restrictions because of our sin.

The occasion for the physical temple and the Mosaic priesthood was our sin. But the source of priesthood was the grace of God, and its function was to bring about mercy. The high priest would take his life and place it in the hands of God alone on the Day of Atonement to offer the sacrifice of blood on the mercy seat to cover the sins of the Israelites so that He would not bring His wrath upon them for their sins. But those yearly sacrifices only covered the sins of the people. They did not cleanse the people from sin. We needed a high priest who perfectly fulfilled all the criteria God had set up in order to cleanse us from sin and free us from the fear of God's wrath so that we can be restored to God forever without hindrance.

Anything less than God's standards would not do.

Nadab and Abihu were sons of the high priest and priests themselves. They were in line to become the high priest. God led Moses to inaugurate Aaron as High Priest in Leviticus 8 and 9. Immediately after that, Nadab and Abihu tried to offer a fire sacrifice that was not in line with God's design he had already spelled out. They were burned up with fire.

God arranged it all so that your salvation could only be accomplished in a back room meeting that you were not allowed into.

We needed a man on the inside.

We needed a high priest able to enter into God's very heavenly throne room forever who would perfectly satisfy God's expectations of us.

**We needed a humble, human
high priest willing to represent
us. (5:1–4)**

2)

For representation of people to be legitimate, the high priest had to experience life as fully human, with all our weakness and vulnerability.

2 He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness.

When you sin, don't run away, run to Christ Jesus.

Jesus is not going to berate you when you acknowledge your sins and failures. He's going to show you grace and mercy.

Isaiah 40– Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,

and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the Lord's hand

double for all her sins.

But instead of you receiving the consequences of your sin, Jesus received the consequences of your sin and all sins. He received a judgment he did not deserve for you.

Because Jesus's suffering was real, because his stress was real, because his crying was real, He can legitimately represent us as one of us.

He will deal gently with you who are sheep of his pasture. He recognizes the weakness you feel.

When we were told in ch. 4 that He can sympathize with us, Scripture is not telling us that the Son did not somehow cognitively know what we go through. God knows all things. Sympathy in that 1st century context refers to shared experience, particularly a shared experience of suffering.

High priests in the Mosaic system had no reason to get impatient with people's waywardness. They themselves sinned and required a sacrifice just for them to make sacrifices. Jesus never sinned, but He is humble and patient with His people. He identifies not just as God and with God. He identifies with as human and for humanity.

So when you sin, know that you have a patient mediator who will never grow weary of speaking grace and forgiveness over you because He has made the sacrifice once-and-for-all-time for those He loves.

But if you are trying to abuse the "system" God has set up in Christ, be careful that you are not raising your hand against heaven and spitting in the Son's face.

We needed a mediator who could represent us patiently and persistently. Do not trade Jesus as your mediator for someone who is insufficient and not willing to represent you perfectly and persistently.

You need someone more humble than your pastor to represent you patiently and perpetually. Pastors are to be undershepherds to the Chief Shepherd, but your elders cannot replace Jesus. It is easy either to over-elevate elders to the place of Jesus or treat them as mindless chaps.

Elders also can get their priorities wrong. Pastors who focus first on the people instead of Jesus tend to burn out and leave churches.

WHY PASTORS LEAVE THE MINISTRY

Shepherdwatchmen.com

by Fuller Institute, George Barna and Pastoral Care Inc.

- * 1,500 clergy leaving pastoral ministry each month. - The Barna Research Group
- * 90% of clergy in all denominations will not stay in ministry long enough to reach the age of retirement. - U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics
- * 50% of pastors indicated that they would leave the ministry if they had another way of making a living. - Hartford Institute for Religious Research
- * 90% of the pastors report working between 55 to 75 hours per week.
- * 75% report significant stress-related crisis at least once in their ministry.
- * 90% feel they are inadequately trained to cope with the ministry demands.
- * 50% feel unable to meet the demands of the job.
- * 70% say they have a lower self-image now than when they first started.

- * 40% report serious conflict with a church member at least once a month.
- * 50% have considered leaving the ministry in the last month.
- * 50% of the ministers starting out will not last 5 years.
- * 1 out of every 10 ministers will actually retire as a minister in some form.

- * The profession of "Pastor" is near the bottom of a survey of the most-respected professions, just above "car salesman".
- * Over 4,000 churches closed in America last year.
- * Over 1,700 pastors left the ministry every month last year.

#1 reason pastors leave the ministry - Church people are not willing to follow the pastor in how he sees they should follow God. Pastor's believe God wants them to go in one direction but the people are not willing to follow or change.

You need someone more humble than your elders to represent you patiently and persistently to God. Elders and ministry leaders need to see that we are not first obligated to the church but to Christ. We needed a hero who would not try to take honor and glory for himself. We needed a priest greater than any mere human being. We need Jesus as our Chief Pastor and High Priest to represent us.

An effective High Priest had to be appointed by God. (5:5–6)

3)

Let's not get caught up only in our present context. This passage is talking about high priests according to the temple system.

The high priesthood at the time of Jesus and up to the writing of this letter had been corrupted. The position was not filled by descendants of Aaron but by political leaders able to curry favor with the political powerhouse of the day. Also, their priesthoods were not for life but could be sold or taken away.

The original audience of this letter was considering turning their back on their only Savior for a system that was corrupt.

They were right to realize someone had to represent them to God. They were also right that this representation had to be according to covenant as set up by God.

God is the one demanding sacrifice for sin. And God is the one providing the means for redemption from sin.

But because we are the ones who sinned, man is the only one who can rightfully make sacrifice. We are the ones needing to make restitution. We are the ones who did wrong and need to pay the price.

But it's a price none of us could pay. God made clear he would have to be the one to save us.

I, I am the Lord,
and besides me there is no savior.
12 I declared and saved and proclaimed,
when there was no strange god among you;
and you are my witnesses,” declares the Lord, “and I am God.

We needed one who is fully God and fully man to be appointed by God as our high priest.

We have already seen that God declared the Son to be Son according to Ps. 2. He rightly is co-equal with the Father. That declaration is repeated here. But then the author touches upon Ps. 110:4.

He uses the royal nature of Jesus’s role to then speak to the priestly nature of his ministry.

David was apparently the original recipient of the pronouncements of Psalm 110, but he could not ultimately fulfill the expectations of Ps. 110. Jesus himself refers to this Psalm to say that David’s descendant, the Messiah, was greater than David. The religious leaders and Jewish people of the 1st c. recognized that Ps. 110 was a Messianic prediction, but they did not consider all the consequences of that claim. The Messiah is addressed as Lord by God himself. And God not only refers to the Messiah as God but also a priest that is greater and prior to Aaron, the first high priest of the Mosaic covenant.

We’ll deal with Melchizadek in the coming weeks. For now, just know that Psalm 110 makes clear that the Messiah was appointed as high priest in a manner resembling Melchizadek’s priesthood. Melchizadek was recognized as high priest by Abarham prior to Aaron, or even Levi, even existing. Like Melchizadek, this appointment to high priesthood was spoken secretly before the people of Israel even existed as a people. But it was then revealed by God’s Word as having happened. If all that could be true of Melchizadek, we see Ps. 110 telling us that it is all true of the Messiah.

So, no, Jesus was not in the line of Aaron. But He is rightly shown as appointed by God to be our perfect mediator.

Only God can and will save. But we needed a man to be the one to pay the price.

We needed God to appoint God to be our priest and mediator to God, and we needed God to call God to become man.

Jesus must be fully man and fully God to bring us into salvation. The humanity of Christ, the Judean lineage of Christ, the full deity of Christ, are all according to Scripture’s own expectations. God set it all up and God brought it all about.

Christ’s nature is not too good to be true. It is true and good because God is the One who mapped it out and set it all up.

But just because God appointed the Son to be our high priest did not mean that He would have an easy road. On the contrary, the Son would walk the hardest path of obedience any man ever had to walk.

A high priest had to be perfect to offer a sacrifice that saves eternally. (5:7–10)

4) A high priest had to be perfect to offer a sacrifice that saves eternally. (5:7–10)

In case the word perfect is messing with you, we can't import our thoughts of a word back onto the intended meaning of the author who used that word. We need to understand it from the author's perspective and timeframe. The word often translated perfect was used by the author of Hebrews to refer to a task or journey that was complete or mature. The telos or goal of an acorn is an oak tree. The goal or task to be completed by a high priest was to make satisfactory sacrifice on behalf of the people.

Jesus had to be perfected as high priest, not only in the act of offering a sacrifice, but in being perfected as the sacrifice.

V. 8 reads . 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered

Again, the idea of learning here is not about cognitive awareness but is focused on experience. Being fully man, Jesus we are told grew in wisdom and knowledge and in favor with God and men. But the learning referenced here was the experience of choosing obedience to God in the most minute detail every moment of every day.

Think about this learning in relation to the tree of knowledge of good and evil. When God placed that tree in the garden, he placed it there for pedagogical reasons, as a teaching lesson. The tree of knowledge of good and evil was always intended to teach knowledge to people. The tree was not poisonous. The tree was not evil. God does not create evil or chaos.

The tree was to be an interactive object lesson on knowing the difference between good and evil. Adam and Eve were to learn what is good by obeying God. Evil would

be the lack of that obedience. But when Adam and Eve took of the fruit and ate it, they learned evil experientially and realized they then lacked the good they once knew.

In v. 7, we are told that Jesus was heard because of his godly reverence. That reverence includes the idea of giving detailed attention to divine expectation.

Prior to the incarnation, the Son was above all suffering. He did not have to learn obedience to the Father in the school of human suffering. That experience changed with incarnation. For the Son to obey the Father in all ways that a man should obey within a fallen world, the Son could only obey by entering into suffering. Suffering does not hinder obedience. Suffering is the opportunity for obedience.

IN EVERY OPPORTUNITY present before Him, Jesus chose to obey the Father. His obedience was not in spite of suffering but in full acceptance of suffering as the means to glorify God and save us.

When we think about facing temptation, we are concerned with what we might lose by giving into sin. When Jesus faced temptation, He was concerned with what He could win by His obedience through it. He faced the suffering and the temptation that came with it to win salvation and life for us. And God received His offering of obedience.

Jesus acted according to the Father's will in every exacting detail through suffering. It was for that reason that His sacrifice was deemed worthy. It was for that reason that God heard the offerings of his loud cries and received the sacrifice of his very life.

When the text speaks of Jesus's prayers, offerings, and sacrifices, it is looking at his whole life as an offering, but it is giving special attention to the cross. The High Priest in the Old Covenant had to look to God and His Word to trust that God would not kill Him in the holy of holies, the most inner room. Jesus, the Son, knew that He would die according to God's will and entrusted Himself perfectly to God to raise Him from the dead.

BTW, every member of the Trinity is recognized as raising the Son from the dead. Romans 1:4 speaks to the Spirit doing that work. This text and others speak to the Father raising the Son. In John 10:17-18, Jesus says it is His work and right to lay down his life and take it up again. The empty tomb was part of God's response that Jesus's offering was perfect.

The cross is the place where the sacrifice was ultimately made by this high priest. And he did so with loud cries, the text says. The loud cries carried with them both pain and boldness. Jesus suffered as a lamb but fought for you as a lion.

The kind of priest Jesus is on your behalf is one who wrestled with God, knowing it would break His body and His heart.

When Jesus sweated drops of blood in the Garden from His anxiety anticipating the cross, it was for something more than just physical suffering.

He was for the first time going to face an existence where there was silence between the Father and Him, even for a brief period of time, as the Father would temporarily refuse to speak to the Son because of our sin.

You may think that is not too difficult of a task to endure. You may go a whole day or week without talking to God and you get over it. Yeah, that's the problem. You see, young kids get it better than experienced sinners. A child screaming with separation anxiety as he goes into the church nursery for the first time is better equipped to sympathize with Jesus on the awful weightiness of sin.

Do not become accustomed to sin and separation. Look upon your Savior who paid the price for you to have eternal life. Look to the One who roared for you and bled and died in your place. Look to the one whom God raised from the dead because His offering was complete.

Look to Him for salvation and so that you do not grow weary in obedience to Him.

