

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter Four consists of a series of exhortations based on the discussion in Chapter Three about the faithfulness of Christ and the failure of Israel because of lack of faith in the journey from Egypt to Canaan.

The first exhortation is in verse 1; "Let us fear." The second is in verse 11, "Let us enter the rest." The third is in verse 14, "Let us hold our confession." The last one is in verse 16, "Let us draw near with boldness to the throne of grace."

The first exhortation urges the Christian to remember that there is a rest for God's people in heaven. Evidence is presented to show why that rest could not have been either the sabbath that the Jews kept or the Promised Land into which Joshua led the Israelites. So there must be a heavenly rest for those who are faithful to Christ.

The second exhortation urges the Christian to be diligent and to strive eagerly to enter that rest, rather than follow the example of disobedience that proved fatal to Israel.

The third word of encouragement has to do with the necessity of holding fast the acknowledgment that Jesus, the Son of God, is High Priest, with sympathetic concern for the weaknesses of His people.

The closing word urges us to come boldly to the throne of grace for help in time of need.

B. *The office of the priesthood.* 5:1-4.

Text

5:1-4

1 For every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: 2 who can bear gently with the ignorant and erring, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity; 3 and by reason thereof is bound, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. 4 And no man taketh the honor unto himself, but when he is called of God, even as was Aaron.

Paraphrase

1 Now, to show that Christ is a real High Priest, I will describe the designation, the duties, and the qualifications of an high priest.

Every high priest taken from among men is appointed, by persons having a right to confer the office, to perform for men the things pertaining to the public worship of God, and especially that he may offer both free-will offerings and sacrifices for sins.

2 He must be able to have a right measure of compassion on the ignorant, and those who err through ignorance, because he himself also is clothed with infirmity; so that he will officiate for them with the greater kindness and assiduity.

3 And because he himself is a sinner, he must, as for the people, so also for himself, offer sacrifices for sins. (Lev. 16:6.)

4 Now, to apply these things to the Christ, I observe, first, that as in the gospel church no one can take this honourable office to himself but he who is thereto called of God, as Aaron was in the Jewish church;

Comment

For every high priest, being taken from among men

God's high priests were men:

- a. The first indication that Aaron and his sons were to care for the tabernacle is found in Ex. 28:1.
- b. Their first distinct separation to the office of the priesthood is recorded in Ex. 28.
- c. After this, the legal head of the house of Aaron became high priest. Usually the eldest son succeeded in office. The task was theoretically for life.

is appointed for men

God does not do things because of Himself, but because of men:

- a. Mark 2:27: "Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."
- b. John 3:16: "God so loved the world."
The world is God's object of love, not Himself.

in things pertaining to God

Aaron and his sons were not appointed to secular things, but unto God:

- a. They were to minister to holy things.
- b. Their responsibility was not cultivation of the soil, commerce, etc., but to minister in holy things.

that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins

What is the difference between gifts and sacrifices?

- a. Gifts usually appear first. See 8:3 and 9:9.
 1. Milligan says gifts and sacrifices are used interchangeably as in Gen. 4:3-5.
 2. Milligan says "gifts" refer to bloodless sacrifices, and "offerings" to those that require the life of the sacrifice.
 3. Mathew Henry says "gifts" refers to free-will offering.
 4. Newell says gifts appear first because the chief and normal business of a priest was to receive the gifts and direct the worship.
- b. "Sacrifices for sins" generally is understood to be the blood offerings:
 1. All the sins and iniquities of Israel were confessed by the priest on the great day of Atonement, and during the year all sacrifices were under his direction.
 2. The priest goes to God on man's behalf; the prophet comes from God representing God to men.

who can bear gently

The prophet can cry out against the sins of a people, "Repent or be destroyed."

- a. The priest is to be sympathetic, and to aid in the forgiving of sins.
- b. The word "bear gently" means "have compassion."
 1. The priest had to decide whether a sacrifice for sin could be given legally. Lev. 10:8-11; Deut. 12:8-13; Déut. 24:8; Deut. 33:10; Mal. 2:7.
 2. A bitter judge could be just.

with the ignorant and erring

The ignorant — see Lev. 5:17-19.

- a. If a man sinned through ignorance or in error, or in an occasion where temptation might obscure for a time the guilt, a sacrifice could be given, sin be forgiven. Num. 15:22-29.
- b. If it was the sin of the high hand, in the spirit of haughty insolence, there could be no sacrifice. He could be put to death at the testimony of two or three witnesses. Num. 15:30-31; Deut. 17:6.

The erring — those deceived by passions. See Lev. 6:1-7.

- a. This was hard to judge, and the high priest hearing gently could sometimes bring a person to repentance.
- b. Calvin feels that the word, "erring", does not refer to the sinners.

for that he himself is compassed with infirmity

The high priest was in a condition of temptation:

- a. Paul could understand the Jew having infirmity, for he was one of the best Jews.
Rom. 9:2-3: "I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart,"
- b. "Infirmity" was a physical condition, meaning "frailty, feebleness, distress of the soul." II Cor. 12:5-10.

And by reason thereof is bound, as for the people, so also for himself to offer for sins

Consider the Old Testament priest:

- a. To offer for himself as well as for the sins of others. Lev. 4:3-12: v. 3, "If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people, then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the Lord for a sin offering."
- b. Occasion of sacrifice for self:
 1. He offered sacrifices for special sins. Lev. 4:3-12. On special occasions.
 2. He, in the regular daily, weekly, monthly, yearly sacrifice, recognized his own sin.
 3. On the day of Atonement he was required to go into the most holy place and there make an offering for his own sins first and then for the people. cf. Heb. 9:7, 12, 25.

Compare the priest with Jesus. He need not offer sacrifices for His sins:

Isaiah 53:9: "For He had done no violence, neither was there and deceit in His mouth."

Pilate, in Matt. 27:24, could find no sin in Christ's life. cf. Heb. 4:14.

and no man taketh the honor to himself

No priest can be self-appointed. It is a task appointed by God:

- a. Where do priests get their appointments today? Not from God.

1. Some have been tried in the past and have suffered: Num. 16:10-11: When Korah sought the position of priest, the earth swallowed all of them up who were faithful to Korah.
2. Jude 11 speaks of the "gainsaying of Korah".
3. Uzziah meddled with an office and became a leper. II Chron. 26:18.
4. Saul. I Sam. 13:8-10.
- b. A thousand priests can do no good, if not appointed, and it is a sin of which we must have no part.
Read the warning for those who follow false priests. Rev. 18:4.

but when he is called of God even as was Aaron

See Exodus 24:1 and Ex. 28 for his appointment.

See Num. 16:8 for the sons of Levi being made priests.

Study Questions

695. Describe the high priest "taken from among men".
696. When was the priestly system started?
697. What family was selected to serve?
698. When did the family first serve?
699. What is significant in the statement, "appointed for men"?
700. Does God do things for Himself or for men?
701. Was the high priest's job secular or religious according to this verse?
702. What is meant by "offer both gifts and sacrifices"?
703. Is there a difference?
704. Is this expression a common one? Cf. 8:3; 9:9.
705. Would "sacrifices" refer to the blood portion of worship?
706. What is the actual difference between the work of the prophet and priest?
707. What is significant in the expression, "bear gently"?
708. With what or whom was he to bear gently — the sacrifice or the sacrificer?
709. Did the prophet bear gently?
710. In what way did he have opportunity either to judge harshly or bear gently? Cf. Lev. 10:8-11; Deut. 12:8-13; Deut. 24:8; Deut. 33:10; Mal. 2:7.
711. Who would be "ignorant worshippers? Cf. Lev. 5:17-19.
712. Were they necessarily interested in being forgiven?
713. How could one sin ignorantly? Cf. Num. 15:22-29.

714. Were the "ignorant" and "erring" two different groups?
Cf. Lev. 6:1-7.
715. How did the high-handed sinner fare?
716. Was there a sacrifice for him?
717. What could be done with him? Cf. Num. 15:30-31; Deut. 17:6.
718. In what way was the priest like the worshippers?
719. Can you name instances when priests fell in their infirmities?
720. What was the priest bound to do for the people? For himself? Cf. Lev. 4:3-12.
721. Did the high priest have sacrifices for special sins? Cf. Lev. 4:3-12.
722. Which sacrifice came first, the one for himself or for the people? Heb. 9:7, 12, 25.
723. Did Jesus need to make sacrifice for Himself?
724. How did a priest secure his position?
725. Could he usurp the privilege?
726. Did any men ever try? Num. 16:10-11; Jude 11.
727. How did Uzziah meddle with the office of priest. II Chr. 26:18.
728. Did Saul dare to act as a priest? I Sam. 13:8-10.
729. What is the danger of following a false priest? Cf. Rev. 18:4.
730. Whom did God call to be priest besides Aaron? Cf. Num. 16:8.
731. Would "calling" and "appointing" carry the same idea?
C. *Christ's qualifications for the priesthood.* 5:5-10.

Text

5:5-10

5 So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made a high priest,
but He that spake unto Him,

Thou art My Son,
This day have I begotten Thee:
6 as He saith also in another place,
Thou art a Priest for ever
After the order of Melchizedek.

7 Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers
and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that

was able to save Him from death, and having been heard for His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered; 9 and having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the Author of eternal salvation; 10 named of God a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Paraphrase

5 So also the Christ did not glorify Himself by making Himself an High-priest, but He glorified Him with that office, Who, after His ascension into heaven, said to Him, My son Thou art; to-day I have demonstrated Thee to be My Son by raising Thee from the dead.

6 As also He glorified the Christ to be an High Priest, Who in another psalm saith to Him, Thou art a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchizedek: Thou art a human Priest, not like Aaron, but Melchizedek.

7 Secondly, as an High Priest, He can commiserate the ignorant and erring. For though He be the Son of God, He was subject to the infirmity of the human nature, and particularly to the fear of death, as is plain from this, that He in the days of His flesh, having offered up both deprecations and supplications, with strong crying (Psal. 22:1) and tears, to Him Who was able to save Him from death, by raising Him from the dead; and being delivered from fear.

8 Although He was the Son of God, He learned how difficult obedience is to men, by the things which He suffered in the flesh while He obeyed God; and also what need men have of help to enable them to bear their trials and sufferings.

9 And being thus qualified to have a right measure of compassion on the ignorant and erring, He was made perfect as an High Priest; and He became, to all who obey Him, the Author of eternal salvation, by offering Himself a sacrifice for their sins:

10 As is evident from His being saluted by God, on His return from the earth, an High Priest, according to the order of Melchizedek.

Comment

*So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest
The devil offered Him glory, but He rejected it:*

- a. He asked God to glorify Him. John 17:5: "And now, Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."
- b. He sought to glorify God:
 1. John 17:4: "I have glorified Thee on earth: I have accomplished the work that Thou hast given me to do."
 2. John 8:50: "I sought not My own glory."
- c. He exhibited the glory of God:
 1. John 1:14. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."
 2. II Cor. 4:6: "Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."
 3. Heb. 1:3: "Who, being the effulgence of His glory." Christ was one who was willing to humble Himself, not to exalt Himself.

but he that spake unto Him

God planned for Christ to be High Priest. He said this in Psalm 2:7.

Thou art my Son. This day have I begotten Thee:

God prophetically called Jesus His "Son". The word, "begotten", does not refer to His origin but to His resurrection. *as he saith also in another place*

This is found in Psalm 110:

- a. This is one of the clearest of prophecies in the Psalms concerning Christ.
- b. The Jew applies this to David:
 1. This Psalm is applied to Christ by the apostles in Acts 2:34.
 2. This cannot apply to David. It was not lawful for kings to exercise the priesthood.
 3. Uzziah was meddling with an office that did not belong to him, so provoked God and was smitten with leprosy. II Chron. 26:18.

Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedek

This is rare: He was both king and priest. The comparison here is the important thing:

- a. Aaron was temporary — Christ was eternal.

- b. Aaron's office was successive — passed on to his children. Melchizedek's and Christ's office was personal, non hereditary.
- c. Melchizedek's priesthood, then, is above Aaron's priesthood. "Without father and mother" is discussed in Heb. 7.
- a. Matthew Henry says that this scripture is "not to be taken literally." His genealogy is not given in order that he might be a type of Christ.
- b. Archeologists have found this expression inscribed on tablets of that era.
"Forever" means "while time endures". When I Cor. 15:24 is fulfilled, His office will no doubt end.

Who in the days of His flesh

"While Christ was on the earth" is meant:

- a. This word, "who", does not refer to Melchizedek, but to Christ.
- b. It is obvious by verse 8 that Jesus is meant.

Having offered up prayers

"A request, petition" is meant by the word, "prayers":

- a. John 17: great prayers of oneness.
- b. He prayed before performing miracles.
- c. He prayed before going to the cross. Luke 22:40-44.

If Christ prayed, then surely we need to pray, yet few have callouses on their knees.

and supplications

"Supplications" are prayers prompted by a deep sense of need, and our own helplessness.

- a. When used separately, the words, "prayer" and "supplications" are used interchangeably.
- b. When used together, it means a prayer prompted by a deep sense of helplessness.

with strong crying and tears

This is to show the intensity of His grief. These are the outward symptoms of grief. Examples of it:

- a. Matt. 26:42: " — let this cup pass from Me."
- b. Matt. 27:46: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

unto Him that was able to save Him from death

He was not immediately delivered from death:

- a. He obtained what He prayed for when He came forth a conqueror.
 - 1. If the death referred to is physical death, God could have saved him. Angels could have saved Him. Matt. 26:53-54.
 - 2. God could not save Him and still carry out His purpose. See Matt. 26:53-54.
- b. God was able to do things not asked of Him by Christ. Death should be studied in the light of some prepositions:
 - a. The preposition:
 - 1. "from."
 - 2. "out of."
 - b. Newell says He did not ask God to save Him from dying, but to save Him out of death.

and having been heard

Did not God forsake Him?

- a. Yes, in order that the flesh could die.
- b. If we live in God, He must forsake us in order for us to die.

God heard his prayers, however, for Christ did not see corruption in the grave as do all others.

Newell says His prayer was for the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Himself.

for his godly fear

Some interpret:

"Having been heard for his piety."

"He was heard by reason of His reverent submission."

"Fear of responsibilities."

What was the object of His fear?

- a. Milligan: "He had a heart to fear and tremble, like other men in view of great undertakings:
 - 1. The fact that Jesus told them to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation was proof of this.
 - 2. It was not fear of death, but fear of being unequal to the occasion.
- b. Matthew Henry says He was ready to sink under the heavy load of the world of sin and coming suffering. God heard His prayer and supported him in the agonies.

Though he was a son

If God's Son had to be obedient, may we expect special favors, namely the right to disobedience?

- a. May we impose upon God?
- b. May we alter His teaching — climb up some other way?
Obedience is the natural thing for true family relationship.

yet He learned obedience

He was not driven to this by force:

- a. He was not trained to it like an oxen, but He willingly submitted.
- b. He learned it fully, for in a very special way He was called to deny himself.

Obedience made Him a consecrated one:

- a. Jesus was consecrated, sanctified to the office of priest by obedience.
- b. It was not a legal obedience, but an objective obedience.

by the things which he suffered

Obedience to the call of the cross was "becoming obedient." Phil. 2:6-8: "Suffered" must refer to all the experiences of Christ while in the flesh.

and having been made perfect

The Greek word means "sanctified" as well as "made perfect":

- a. His obedience further consecrated Him to His task.
- b. Nothing could make Christ move from His purpose.
What is meant by the word, "perfection"?
- a. Newell: "... not moral perfection."
- b. The perfection refers to His humiliation and suffering, culminating at the cross. Luke 13:32: "And He said unto them, Go and say to that fox, (Herod) behold I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I am perfected."
- c. Tested by every temptation.

He became unto all that obey Him

There is no room here for the false doctrine of "only believe":

- a. We must obey, which is an imitation of Christ in obedience.
- b. The obedience of Christ to the cross made Him the Author of our salvation.

As Christ became Saviour by obedience, so we must be saved by obedience.

the Author of eternal salvation

"Author" is from the Greek word, "cause":

- a. "Cause" is used to denote that which constitutes an occasion of action. A rock may crush a house, but there was something that moved the rock.
- b. Without Christ's cross there would be no blood for the remission of our sins. So Christ is our "cause" of salvation. "In none other is there salvation." Acts 4:12.
Eternal salvation is the joy of all who will obey.

Named of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek

"Named of God" — the one Father appointed Him to the task. "Named" also means "called of God, saluted, acknowledged".

When did His priesthood begin?

1. Perhaps when He made purification for sins, which was the offering. Heb. 7:28.
2. After the offering, He went into the heavens to intercede at the throne of grace. 7:25.

The order of Aaron was only for the duration of the Mosaic system, but the order of Melchizedek is forever.

- a. Melchizedek was singular in his office.
- b. He had no predecessors or successors to his office.

Study Questions

732. According to verse five, did Christ seek the job of priest?
733. Did the devil tempt Him to glorify himself?
734. What does Heb. 1:3 say concerning Christ's glory?
735. When did God speak concerning Christ? v. 5b.
736. Does Psalm 2:7 refer to the day that Christ was begotten physically of God?
737. How do we know from other sources that this declaration refers to Christ, and not David? Cf. Acts 2:34.
738. Were kings allowed to serve as priests under the Mosaic law?
739. After what order was Christ?
740. In what way?
741. Was Melchizedek just a priest?

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

742. In what ways could Christ's and Melchizedek's priesthood be forever?
743. Was Aaron's priesthood a successive one?
744. What is meant, "who in the days of His flesh"?
745. Who is referred to, Christ or Melchizedek?
746. Is the doctrine that Christ lived in the flesh of great importance?
747. Did Christ offer up prayers?
748. On what occasion?
749. On whose behalf?
750. Could they be considered priestly prayers?
751. What are supplications?
752. Are the words "prayers" and "supplications" synonymous?
753. What is meant by, "strong crying"?
754. On what occasion did Christ pray with tears?
755. Was His grief prophesied?
756. To Whom did Christ pray?
757. Then are God and Christ two different persons?
758. Could God save Christ from death?
759. Why didn't He? Why did not Christ come down from the cross?
760. Did God answer Christ's prayer?
761. Did Christ's prayer concern death?
762. Did Christ pray to be saved *from* death, or *out of* death?
763. If it was death for which He prayed, why did He not ask for angels as He said He could do? Matt. 26:53-54.
764. Why did flesh have to die?
765. If God heard Him, as the text says, did not God answer His prayer?
766. Did God forsake Him on the cross? Harmonize.
767. What in the character of Christ caused God to hear Christ's prayer?
768. Was Christ fearful? Discuss.
769. What could have been an object of fear?
770. Did He have a heart to fear and tremble as others have?
771. If God's son had to be obedient, can we expect special favors?
772. Can we expect to impose our will on God and make Him obedient to us?
773. If God will save a man on man's terms, who is being obedient to whom?

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

774. What is meant by, "He learned obedience"?
775. Was He driven to it by force, or was it a sanctification to His office?
776. Was it a legal obedience, or an objective that caused obedience?
777. To what great act of obedience did Christ submit? See Phil: 2:5-11.
778. What taught Him obedience?
779. Would "things He suffered" refer to hardships only or all of the experiences in the flesh?
780. What did He suffer?
781. Define the meaning of the word translated "perfect."
782. Does "having been made perfect" refer to immediate or continuous action?
783. Does "made perfect" refer to moral excellence?
784. Would Luke 13:32 help to throw light on the question?
785. Could it be "proven perfect" that the author has in mind?
786. Did the testing of every temptation prove Him to be perfect?
787. Could we say that He was proven to be sanctified?
788. To whom does He prove to be the Author of salvation?
789. If it is for men that obey Him, can the moral man expect salvation?
790. Can the person who desires substitutes above obedience expect salvation?
791. Is there room for "only believe" here?
792. If we follow Christ, should we not follow the great virtue, the spirit of obedience?
793. If Christ became our Saviour by obedience, must we not be obedient, for salvation to be ours?
794. What is meant, "the author"?
795. In what way is He "the cause"? Isn't God the great primary cause?
796. How long is our salvation to last?
797. What is meant by, "named of God"?
798. What other word could be used than "named"?
799. When did Christ's priestly work begin? Cf. Heb. 7:28; 7:25.
800. Is it fair to name a beginning of the priesthood when it is after the order of one without *beginning* and *end*?
801. Of what duration was the Mosaic priesthood?

802. Why was Christ not named after the Aaronic priesthood?

803. Was He of the proper tribe for the Aaronic one?

II. *Necessity of growth in knowledge in order to realize the hope of the priesthood.* 5:11-6:20.

A. *Difficulty of explaining the priesthood because of the low stage of the knowledge of his readers.* 5:11-14.

Text

5:11-14

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard of interpretation, seeing ye are become dull of hearing. 12 For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. 13 For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. 14 But solid food is for fullgrown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.

Paraphrase

11 Concerning Melchizedek I have much to say for the illustration of Christ's priesthood, which is difficult to be explained when spoken, not on account of the darkness of the subject, but because ye are of slow apprehension in spiritual matters.

12 For though ye ought to have been able to teach others, considering the time ye have professed the gospel, ye have need of one to teach you, a second time, some of the fundamental principles of the ancient oracles of God concerning the Christ; and have become such as have need of being taught the easiest doctrines, and are not capable of receiving the higher parts of knowledge.

13 Now every one who uses milk only, who knows nothing but the letter of the ancient revelations, is unskilled in the doctrines of the gospel: For he is a babe in Christianity.

14 But the matters concealed under the figures and prophecies of the law, which may be called strong meat, because they strengthen the mind, are fit for them who have made progress in knowledge, and who by practice have the faculties of their mind accustomed to discern both truth and falsehood.

*Comment**Of whom*

Of whom — who is meant?

- a. It is applied to three different persons:
 1. To Melchizedek,
 2. To Christ.
 3. To the endless priesthood.
- b. So little is known of Melchizedek, we are quick to believe that he might be referred to here.

We have many things to say

Now he is discussing Christ's priesthood, so we may assume "of whom" refers to Christ. He is not speaking of Melchizedek except as an illustration; Christ is the main subject:

- a. He has much to say about Christ and little about Melchizedek.
- b. The many things are wonderful things.

and hard of interpretation

It is also translated, "hard to be uttered":

- a. Difficulty of interpretation may lie in one of three directions: (Newell)
 1. The teacher's inability.
 2. The subject, deep and difficult.
 3. The hearers.
- b. It wasn't the teacher, it wasn't the subject, so the listener was at fault.

seeing ye are become dull of hearing

The brightness of His glory could not be seen because of their dullness, their darkness.

- a. Their souls did not keep pace with the doctrines delivered.
- b. They had a love for their brethren, but they were dull of hearing.

Jesus found the Jews this way and quoted Isaiah against them. cf. Matt. 13:14-15.

For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers

Time should have been used to advantage:

- a. Newell: "Over 30 years from Pentecost to the writing of Hebrews."
- b. Christians are to grow; they are not to be stunted. Teaching should be the objective of all-Christians:

- a. People who attend Bible School, worship, prayer meeting, evangelistic services, ought to get to the place where they can teach others.
- b. Most churches find it difficult to find a few teachers for their Bible School.

Ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments

Literally, teach you a second time. Kindergarten lessons sometimes must be learned in adulthood.

of the first principles of the oracles of God

The average church member can't turn to God's word and point out the pattern for the church or its doctrine.

- a. Church people complain at hearing old messages over and over again, but they often couldn't turn to a scripture on the subject.
- b. Those who are teachers love to hear the Word taught.
"Of the oracles of God": what is meant?
 - a. It may refer to the notices which the prophets gave of the priesthood of Christ. Psalm 110; Isaiah 53.
 - b. "Oracle" simply means a divine utterance, and appears four times in the New Testament. (Milligan)
 1. Acts 7:38.
 2. Rom. 3:2.
 3. Heb. 5:12.
 4. I Peter 4:11.

and are become such as have need of milk

They once were in better condition than now:

- a. When they first became Christians they were not so dull of hearing.
- b. It is a sad day when men cannot digest God's deep treasures.
"As have need of milk".
- a. "Milk", a metaphor, is used to indicate first principles. cf. I Cor. 3:1, 2.
- b. These early principles are enumerated in 6:2-3.

and not of solid food

Deeper teaching — weightier problems — heavier responsibilities — they could not digest:

- a. Babies are on a very weak diet.
- b. They had not grown out of the high chair age.

- c. The scaffolding of Christianity was the thing upon which they depended.

For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience

Babes can do only what they are taught, and that is very little:

- a. The Hebrews had not experienced the things that mature Christians were to experience.
- b. The walk of holiness, launching out on faith was needed. Babes have milk carried to them; adults take milk to babes.

of the word of righteousness

These have not been able to launch out into the sea of experience for Christ:

- a. Matt. 6:33.
- b. They were still in the crib.
"Word of righteousness" is suggestive:
 - a. Matt. 5:20: "Righteousness" is that which goes on beyond the right, the plain duty.
 - b. It means purity of heart, attitude of mind.

he is a babe

What are the characteristics of a "babe"?

- a. They are tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. Eph. 4:14. So is a baby.
- b. They belong to some special sect and cry, "My church".
- c. They glory in men. I Cor. 1:12: "I am of Paul," "Apollos."
- d. A babe sleeps instead of serving.

Our spiritual capacity suggests our spiritual age.

But solid food is for fullgrown men

Fullgrown men spiritually are needed. I Cor. 2:6; 14:20; Eph. 4:13.

The value of solid food is seen in Eph. 4:14.

who by reason of use have their senses exercised

Miserable is the person who fails to use his spiritual senses.

- a. By believing, praying, thanking and by being obedient, we can make full use of our spiritual faculties.
- b. The only way to exercise is by action, by using the abilities given to us.

- c. People will be spiritually impotent until they use their senses. The word for "senses" is an interesting word:
 - a. Clark says it signifies the different sense organs as eyes, ears, tongue, palate, and nervous system in general.
 - b. The soul has its sensations: love, joy, compassion, etc.
 - c. The five senses of man have spiritual significance.
 1. Taste: I Pet. 2:3; Ps. 34:8; Heb. 6:4; Matt. 5:6.
 2. Hearing: Isaiah 55:3; Rev. 3:22.
 3. Sight: Psalm 119:18; Eph. 1:18.
 4. Smell: Phil. 4:18.
 5. Feeling: Eph. 4:32.
 Exercise is a requirement for one's spiritual development:
 - a. This word "exercise" is a metaphor taken from the athletes or contenders in the Grecian games.
 - b. These men applied all their powers that they might be ready for competition.

to discern good and evil

Those who do not exercise will see little or no harm in the pleasures of the world.

- a. So many good people get into trouble, because, "I didn't see any harm in it."
- b. The iceberg is dangerous because three-fifths of it is beneath the water, unseen, with jagged edges which may tear great holes in the ship.

Sin brings a tolerance for evil, so that men do not bother to discern good and evil.

Study Questions

804. Who is meant in the expression "of whom"? v. 11.
805. Are there many things to say of Melchizedek?
806. In what three matters may difficulty of interpretation be possible? v. 11.
807. Is it hard to interpret "of whom" "Christ" or "Melchizedek"?
808. Is it the teacher's fault here?
809. Is the subject hard to understand?
810. In the light of this verse, where is the difficulty? v. 11.
811. Do you understand what is hard of interpretation?
812. Is "dull of hearing" an offensive accusation?
813. What made Paul think that they were dull?

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

814. Did Jesus feel that His generation was dull? Cf. Matt. 13:14-15.
815. "Reason of time" would refer to what?
816. How much time had expired between Jesus' death and the writing of the Hebrew letter?
817. Is Paul implying that all of them ought to be teachers?
818. How many of our converts aspire to be teachers?
819. How many become teachers?
820. How many are even interested in learning, according to Bible School, church, prayer meeting attendance?
821. Are elders expected to be teachers?
822. Should a man be an elder if he has all of the other qualifications? If he can't express himself, is he fit?
823. "Need again" would mean what?
824. What are "rudiments"?
825. "First principles" would mean what?
826. Do people complain at hearing simple things repeated over and over again?
827. Are the "dull of hearing" ones the complainers or the teachers?
828. What do "oracles of God" refer to?
829. Is "oracles" a common word in the New Testament? Cf. Acts 7:38; Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; I Peter 4:11.
830. What would the "milk" refer to? Cf. I Cor. 3:1-2.
831. What does Peter say about milk? I Peter 2:2.
832. What does "solid food" refer to?
833. Why could they not digest it?
834. Did they not understand Aaron's priesthood?
835. Could it refer back to the priesthood of which he wanted to say many things?
836. Name some things that would be classed as "solid food".
837. Is there much hope of evangelizing the world with "high chair" Christians?
838. What is the future of the church when folk cannot wield the sword of the spirit?
839. What is meant by "experience"?
840. What experience does the baby in Christ lack?
841. Can a baby do more than it is taught? Is the same true of spiritual babes?
842. Would Romans 14:1-6 have a bearing on this subject?

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

843. Do we have any clues in Hebrews as to the particular shortcomings of the people which caused this to be written? For instance, in Corinthians and Galatians special problems are named.
844. What is meant by "word of righteousness"?
845. Can you define "righteousness"?
846. What could they have lacked that kept them from being righteous?
847. Did Jesus have anything to say concerning righteousness?
848. What does a baby do that weak Christians do?
849. Could our spiritual capacity be an indication of our spiritual age?
850. What do you consider "solid food" to be?
851. Observe that wisdom is connected with fullgrown men. I Cor. 2:6.
852. What comparison can be made with stature and Christ? See Eph. 4:13-14.
853. It is said of Jesus that he increased in wisdom and stature, in favor with God and man. Luke 2:52. What evidence do we have that He did?
854. Could these or the lack of them prove that we have or have not attained spiritual adulthood?
855. Do you know of anyone whom you consider to be fullgrown?
856. Should a man be an elder in the church if he is a babe?
857. What would the "senses" refer to?
858. What sensation does the spiritual person have?
859. What can you do to exercise your senses?
860. Are the five senses referred to in the Word? See I Pet. 2:3; Heb. 6:4; Psalm 119:18; Eph. 1:8.
861. Look at Eph. 4:32 for "feeling".
862. What does Phil. 4:18 say concerning smell?
863. Why should a person exercise himself?
864. What is meant by discernment?
865. Why is it an effort to detect evil? Isn't it obvious?

Questions On Chapter Five

Answer YES or NO

1. A high priest under the Jewish reign did not have to offer sacrifices for his own sins?

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

2. No man was able to take up the job of being a high priest but must have been called of God as was Aaron?
3. Strong meat of the gospel is for babies in order to hasten their spiritual growth?
4. Christ was a high priest before the days of Melchizedek?
5. Christ learned obedience by the things that He suffered?
6. If men were exceptional among the Jews, they could become high priests?
7. Jesus appointed Himself to be our High Priest?
8. Christ was descended of Aaron and hence from the tribe of Levi; therefore he could qualify as a priest?
9. Christ came willingly into the world, so He glorified Himself to be made a high priest?
10. God begot Jesus Christ?
11. The priesthood of Jesus was after the order of Melchizedek?
12. Jesus was God and therefore did not need to pray?
13. Man can exercise his body, but not his senses?
14. The author had some things to say that he said were hard of interpretation?
15. God's teachings have first principles in the oracles?
16. Christ was the only Person Who ever lived Who did not have a godly fear?
17. We may assume that Jesus did not weep over Jerusalem, for this chapter pictures Him as one Who never wept?
18. The priesthood of Christ is for a brief duration?
19. The priest's job is a limited one in that he offers only sacrifices?
20. This book seems to have been written to a people who were dull of hearing?
21. Christ is the Author of salvation for those who obey Him?
22. A fault with these people is that they had time to have been teachers but were not?
23. The word of God is likened unto milk?
24. The high priests of old were taken from among angels?
25. The high priest was in no sense bound to his responsibility?

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FIVE

Frequent reference should be made to the condensed summary of the book. Thus far, two main points of Hebrews have been discussed: (1) the finality of God's revelation through His Son, and (2) the faithfulness of Jesus, our High Priest.

The first three verses of Chapter Five conclude the statement about the second point. The rest of the chapter introduces the important theme of the appointment of Christ as High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He met all requirements necessary to become High Priest. Two things distinguished Him from Aaron: (1) His sinlessness; (2) His appointment after the order of Melchizedek. Christ's earthly ministry was marked by His devotion and obedience to God. He is the Cause of salvation since He completed the requirements for becoming the perfect Saviour; and because of this, God designated Him High Priest.

The mention of the change of order from Aaron to Melchizedek brought to mind the spiritually undeveloped state of Hebrew Christians and became the occasion for rebuking them because of their inability to appreciate this phase of Christ's ministry in their behalf. Chapters Six and Seven continue to enlarge upon this issue.

B. *Exhortation to go on to perfection.* 6:1-3.

Text

6:1-3

1 Wherefore leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit.

Paraphrase

1 Wherefore, since ye ought by this time to have been capable of strong food, dismissing the discourse concerning the principles of the Christian doctrine, as contained in the ancient revelations, let us proceed to the deep meaning of these revelations, and of the figures and prophecies in the law, which is the perfection of Christian knowledge, not explaining a second time the fundamental principles of repentance from works which merit death; and of faith in God;

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, as emblematical of that purity of mind which the worshippers of God ought to possess; and of the laying on of hands on the sacrifices, as an acknowledgment