

School of the Word
Hebrews
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HEBREWS 4:15-5:10

Sequence

- ▶ Heb 4:15-5:10
- ▶ Reading and reactions
- ▶ The place in the letter
- ▶ Temple and priesthood
- ▶ Commentary
- ▶ Conversation

Hebrew 5:15-5:10

Heb 4:14 *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.* 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. 16 So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.

Heb 5:1 Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and erring, for he himself is beset by weakness 3 and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. 4 No one takes this honour upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

5 In the same way, it was not Christ who glorified himself in becoming high priest, but rather the one who said to him:

“You are my son;
this day I have begotten you”;

6 just as he says in another place:

“You are a priest forever
according to the order of Melchizedek.”

7 In the days when he was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. 8 Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; 9 and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, 10 declared by God high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Place in the Letter as whole

- ▶ Heb 4:15-16: the kind of high priest we have
- ▶ Heb 5:1-4: the qualities of a high priest
- ▶ Heb 5:5-10: the kind of high priest we have

Temple and priesthood

- ▶ Jesus himself was a layman
- ▶ As a follower of John the Baptist, he was critical of the Temple
- ▶ Jesus by-passed the OT priestly system and brought people into direct contact with God
- ▶ On this topic we have much to say and it is difficult to explain, since you have become sluggish in hearing. (Hebrews 5:11)

High priest

- ▶ Sacrifices on the Day of Atonement
- ▶ Prayers of intercession before the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant on the
- ▶ Day of Atonement
- ▶ Management and supervision of the other priests

Tabernacle

- ▶ Divine presence
- ▶ Covenant
- ▶ End of the Exile
- ▶ Socio-Political institution
- ▶ National sovereignty
- ▶ National Blessings
- ▶ World-wide blessings
- ▶ Prayer

Priests

- ▶ All priests are Levites, but not all Levites are priests. While priests (Hebrew kohanim) and Levites (Hebrew leviyim) both belong to the same tribe of Levi, they come from different descendants within the tribe.
- ▶ Priests were male descendants of Aaron, Moses brother, the first high priest. Levites (who served the temple) were any male descendants of the tribe of Levi, including the descendants of Moses and Miriam his sister.
- ▶ Priests and Levites shared the responsibility of serving in the tabernacle, and later, the temple.
- ▶ However, priests alone were responsible for conducting the sacrifices while the Levites assisted them in various duties such as construction and the maintenance of the temple.

Israelites

- ▶ The Court of the Israelites was limited to ritually pure Jewish men. It was entered by the curved staircase leading up to the Nicanor Gate.
- ▶ This court consisted of a narrow hall 233 feet (71 m) wide and 19 feet (5.8 m) deep. Beneath this court were rooms that opened into the lower Court of the Women.
- ▶ These were used for storing musical instruments and equipment used by the Levites.

Court of the women

- ▶ The Court of the Women, the largest of the courts, was a square courtyard measuring 233 feet (71 m) on each side (a football field is 360 feet long).
- ▶ Some scholars estimate that at the time of the feasts it could have held 6,000 worshipers at one time.
- ▶ It was not only open to ceremonially purified Jewish women, but also to ritually impure priests, Nazirites, and even lepers.

Court of the Gentiles

- ▶ The expansive Court of the Gentiles sported a popular bazaar underneath the protective roof of the Royal Stoa.
- ▶ Here moneychangers exchanged local coinage for the pure silver Tyrian shekel so that a proper offering could be made to the temple. (The Tyrian shekel was required because Roman currency was defiling and the Romans forbid the Jews to coin their own money.)
- ▶ Here, too, vendors sold animals for use as burnt offerings.

Hebrew 4:14-16

- ▶ A passage of exhortation
- ▶ Jesus is designated fully as “the son of God”
- ▶ A priest — but a “great” priest
- ▶ Great high priest - the only occurrence of both terms
- ▶ NB Enthronement language
- ▶ Sympathise: actually a bit stronger
- ▶ NB full testing, yet without sin
- ▶ “Timely” is accurate

Hebrew 5:1-4

- ▶ Every high priest is taken from among men
- ▶ and made their representative
- ▶ before God,

- ▶ to offer gifts and sacrifices
- ▶ for sins.
- ▶ He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and erring,
- ▶ **for he himself is beset by weakness**
- ▶ and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself
- ▶ as well as for the people.
- ▶ No one takes this honour upon himself
- ▶ **but only when called by God,**
- ▶ just as Aaron was.

Hebrew 5:5-6

- ▶ Thus (strong): appointed by God
- ▶ Citations from Psalm 109 (110)
- ▶ Cf. Heb 1:5 “You are my son; this day I have begotten you”
- ▶ Surprise: “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”
- ▶ Psalm 109:4 is unique in the New Testament
- ▶ According to the order: either in a line or in the style of

Hebrew 5:7-10

- ▶ Jesus as a human being
- ▶ Gethsemane independent tradition
- ▶ “Ek” = out of / from
- ▶ He was heard - intensive eisakouō (responsive, almost obedience listening)
- ▶ Eulabeia: either fear (of death?) or reverence
- ▶ Heard finally in the resurrection

- ▶ Perfected through suffering
- ▶ Mathein pathein
- ▶ Source
- ▶ Salvation
- ▶ V. 9 = 2:10: For it was fitting that he, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the leader to their salvation perfect through suffering. (Heb 2:10)
- ▶ NB Salvation is for those who obey him

Conversation