**Lesson Five**

[**Hebrews 5**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5&t=NKJV)

How would you tell someone, with the fewest words possible, what the Book of Hebrews is about? How would you summarize it in a few words?

HEBREWS SUMMARY:

The Book of Hebrews is about the return of Christ [His second coming] to establish His righteous rule over the earth. He is to reign with those who have lived their lives during this present age by faith and obedience with their hope fixed on the goal and prize of reigning as co-heirs with Christ over the world for 1,000 years.

The Book of Hebrews has **major admonitions [do this]** and **major warnings [don't do this]** and, if we heed them, we are assured of gaining reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ and enter into what Jesus spoke as **"the joy set before Him."** ([Hebrews 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.2&t=NKJV))

The admonitions and warnings for us are taken from the experience of the House of Moses who failed to enter the earthly Promised Land. ***They attain to their earthly calling***. Each one of us must learn from mistakes lest we suffer loss of the Judgment Seat of Christ, and consequently ***fail to attain to our "heavenly calling***."

Last week, in lesson four, **we learned that the Word of God, and specifically that portion of the Word of God concerning the failure of the House of Moses to enter their promised land, can divide between what is spiritual and what is soulish [natural]**. Also this portion of the Word of God can "judge the thoughts and intentions of our hearts and purify our motives so that we won't deceive ourselves." The apostle Paul tells us "Let him who thinks he stands take heed [of their example] lest he fall. ([1 Corinthians 10:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.12&t=NKJV)) Scripture tells us "if we judge ourselves rightly we shall not be judged." ([1 Corinthians 11:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+11.31&t=NKJV))

The last verse of [Hebrews 4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4&t=NKJV) says this:

*Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

**A Long Parenthesis**

This begins a **long explanation** ([Hebrews 4:14-10:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.14-10.26&t=NKJV)) to help understand how great it is that we have Christ Jesus as our heavenly High Priest who is focused on helping us to successfully live our lives so as to attain to our heavenly calling.

We can think of this **explanation** that stretches from [Hebrews 4:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.14&t=NKJV) to [Hebrews 10:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.26&t=NKJV) as a long parenthesis, the purpose of which is getting us up to speed in our knowledge of Christ's priestly office and how we should benefit from it today.

In doing this, God, though the writer of Hebrews, uses:

The earthly **Aaronic Priesthood** to explain the **present Priesthood of Christ**, and

The **future Melchizedek Priesthood** to explain the **future reign of Christ as King and Priest after the order of Melchizedek**.

After reviewing the long "priestly parenthesis," we come right back to where we left off, in [Hebrews 4:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.14-16&t=NKJV). Read and compare [Hebrews 4:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.14-16&t=NKJV) with [Hebrews 10:19-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.19-26&t=NKJV):

[***Hebrews 4:14-16***](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.14-16&t=NKJV)***:***

*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*

*For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.*

*Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

[***Hebrews 10:19-26***](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.19-26&t=NKJV)***:***

*Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,*

*by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,*

*and since we have a great priest over the house of God,*

*let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

*Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;*

*and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,*

*not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

*For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,*

Tucked away in the long parenthesis about priesthood is the famous [Hebrews 6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6&t=NKJV), famous because it is generally thought to be difficult to understand.

[Hebrews 6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6&t=NKJV) deals with our pressing on to maturity, moving from babes in Christ to mature in Christ or advancing from milk to meat.

Milk has to do with things surrounding the First Coming of Christ.

Meat has to do with things surrounding the Second Coming of Christ.

**My thinking is** this short overview of this portion of Hebrews ([Hebrews 4:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.14-16&t=NKJV) to [Hebrews 10:19-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.19-26&t=NKJV)) will prevent getting lost in the "long parenthesis" devoted to **Priests: past, present and future**.

[**Hebrews 5**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5&t=NKJV)

The early readers [first few centuries] of this letter were very familiar with the Old Testament institution of the priesthood. It may have been easier for them to understand then than it is for us to understand now.

Read [Hebrews 5:1-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.1-10&t=NKJV):

*For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;*

*he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness;*

*and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself.*

*And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was.*

*So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU";*

*just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."*

*In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.*

*Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.*

*And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,*

*being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.*

[Hebrews 5:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.1-3&t=NKJV):

The High Priest was one of man's own number, selected from among men.

The Priest is man's representative in matters pertaining to God, especially the offering of gifts, *i.e*., grain offerings, etc., and sacrifices for sins, *i.e*., lambs, calves, doves, etc.

The Priest must be a man of compassion who will deal gently. His sympathy grows out of the fact that He himself was subject to weakness and failures of His own.

[Hebrews 5:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.4-6&t=NKJV):

The Old Testament **earthly High Priestly office** required divine appointment.

Even Christ has indeed been appointed **heavenly High Priest** by God and will be appointed King-Priest by God. ([Psalm 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.7&t=NKJV) and [Psalm 110:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+110.4&t=NKJV))

[Psalm 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.7&t=NKJV) *"I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.*

[Psalm 110:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+110.4&t=NKJV) *The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek*."

(For more on Melchizedek see [Got Questions - Who was Melchizedek?](http://www.gotquestions.org/Melchizedek.html))

As yet He has only entered into the office of heavenly High Priest, which He has held for about 2,000 years, since His ascension.

Soon He will enter into the office of King-Priest. Melchizedek was a King-priest. ([Genesis 14:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+14.18&t=NKJV))

[Hebrews 5:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.7&t=NKJV)

Christ Jesus is now in heaven as our advocate, our high priest, on the basis of His shed blood. Had He not shed His blood for us, He would have no basis to minister forgiveness to us as High Priest.

In [Hebrews 5:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.7&t=NKJV) the writer is authenticating Christ as being fully qualified as High Priest by describing His sufferings on the cross.

Read [Psalm 22:15-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+22.15-24&t=NKJV):

. . . *and when He* [Jesus] *cried for help, He* [God] *heard and He* [Jesus] *was saved from death by being resurrected from the dead.*

The resurrection furnishes indisputable proof of God's acceptance of Christ's sacrificial shedding of His blood [sacrificial activity].

**So Christ is qualified as High Priest by His shedding blood**.

[Hebrews 5:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.8-9&t=NKJV):

He was God the Son, the ultimate perfect One: **Son of God – Son of Man**.

But in order that Christ *be made perfect for this particular ministry,* God had Him experience obedience even to suffering death on the cross. And in so doing He was made perfect for the role He would have author / captain of salvation (*the one who would show the way*) in His role as High Priest.

**Now as High Priest, Christ can perfectly empathize with us, as we walk the path of self denial and suffering.**

[Hebrews 5:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.9&t=NKJV) says ***"He became the author of eternal salvation for all who obey Him."***

Two things to bring out in [Hebrews 5:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.9&t=NKJV):

**Eternal salvation**: The Greek word translated eternal is ***aionian*** which is more perfectly translated **"age lasting,"** age lasting salvation or salvation for the *millinnial* age is what is being spoken of here. This is **not speaking of initial salvation, a free gift**, but of the glorious culmination of God’s great salvation plan **“for all who obey Him.”**

Here we have an aspect of salvation that requires obedience, not just belief alone as our initial salvation did.

This **eternal (age lasting) salvation** is the salvation of [Hebrews 1:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.14&t=NKJV) which speaks of “those who will inherit (future) salvation”. Initial salvation is not inherited. It is a free gift.

Also [Hebrews 2:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.3&t=NKJV) refers to this aionian (*age lasting*) salvation as “so great salvation”. **“How can we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”**

The salvation of which we are speaking is mentioned in other places. One is [I Peter 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=I+Peter+1.5&t=NKJV) which speaks of those "who are protected by the power of God through faith **for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**" This is referring to the glorious **culmination of the salvation process**.

We don't want to confuse this **aspect** of salvation with the acquisition of the eternal life aspect of salvation which comes to us not by obedience, but by faith alone.

The culmination aspect of salvation is referring to that final deliverance from and victory over all enemies and the consequent placement of the many sons who will have been "brought to glory" [glorified].

[Romans 8:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.17&t=NKJV): *"for if indeed we suffer with Him we will be glorified with Him."*

Now having become perfect [the perfectly qualified High Priest, who has come to glory through suffering], He is the source of the eternal aspect of salvation to all who obey Him. ([Hebrews 5:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.9&t=NKJV))

Why is Jesus, as our High Priest, the source of this aspect of salvation? Because He is able to supply all the resources necessary for us to live a life that will gain the "reward of the inheritance" and enter the Millennial Rest.

He sympathizes with our trials, struggles, and is able to make available **"mercy and grace"** which are necessary to successfully complete our race of faith. **Grace** is the desire and power to do His will and complete our course. He supplies that **desire and power** to us and we receive it by **faith**.

As it says in [Hebrews 7:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+7.25&t=NKJV):

"He, the High Priest, Christ Jesus, is *able to save completely those who come to God through Him because He always lives to intercede for them*. It is through His intercession that this eternal aspect of our salvation takes place.

[Hebrews 5:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.10&t=NKJV):

*being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.*

The eternal salvation “ready to be revealed in the last time” will be revealed at the time when Christ leaves His *present office* of **High Priest after the order of Aaron** and moves into his *future office* of **King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek**.

[Hebrews 5:11-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.11-14&t=NKJV):

*Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.*

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.*

*For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.*

*But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.*

The mention of Melchizedek in [Hebrews 5:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.10&t=NKJV) triggers a discussion concerning the lack of spiritual maturity of these believers to whom Hebrews is being written.

Remember, Melchizedek was a mysterious **King-Priest** who came on the scene after Abram had rescued Lot from the five kings. Melchizedek brought bread and wine and said He was a Priest of the Most High God. Abram tithed to Melchizedek.

Melchizedek is a type of Christ Jesus in His Office of King-Priest, heir of all things.

And though these believers referred to can read and understand the simple story of Melchizedek and Abraham, they are not capable of going from letter to spirit – the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. They are not capable to comprehend Melchizedek as a type of Christ, the King-Priest Who will rule the world. They were not able to go from **milk for babes** to **meat for the mature**.

The writer of Hebrews has so much to say concerning Melchizedek, but says it is hard to explain "since you have become dull [sluggish, lazy] of hearing."

They have grown spiritually dull, and the spiritual dullness affects their ability to understand **Melchizedek truths concerning Christ's second coming to rule with the many sons He is bringing to glory.**

The fact that they have become dull of hearing indicates they were not always that way. That begs the question "why" did this happen that they lost ground spiritually and became dull of hearing?

The **first warning** ([Hebrews 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2&t=NKJV)) gives a pretty good indication of **why the became this way**:

"We must pay much closer attention to what we heard **lest we drift away from it**.

How will we escape if we **neglect so great salvation**." ([Hebrews 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.1&t=NKJV), [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.3&t=NKJV))

The have neglected it, paid little attention and lost the ability to spiritually discern and understand things surrounding the second coming of Christ.

[Hebrews 5:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.12&t=NKJV):

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.*

He says you ought to be teachers but you need someone to reteach you the ABCs of Christianity. I need to give you solid food [Gk. *stered trophe* derives from *stereos* ("firm, hard, solid, strong") and *trophe* ("nourishment, food"], but all you can take is milk. Milk is for babes; meat is for the mature.

To reiterate concerning milk and meat:

Milk concerns things related to Christ's first coming.

Meat concerns things related to Christ's second coming.

The thought of Melchizedek triggers the thought of His second coming and maturity. Therefore, meat, maturity and Melchizedek all go together and point to Christ the heir of all things ruling with His co-heirs.

[Hebrews 5:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.13-14&t=NKJV):

*For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.*

*But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.*

These verses describe problems "milk Christians" have:

Not accustomed to the Word of righteousness.

Their senses are not trained to discern good and evil.

I believe the *word of righteousness* is that righteousness that comes through faith. ([Philippians 3:7-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.7-9&t=NKJV))

Concerning the inability to *discern good and evil* in the context we are speaking, refer to [Hebrews 3:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+3.12&t=NKJV) “lest there should be an *evil and unbelieving heart* in **falling away** from the living God."

There is an encouraging message in [Hebrews 6:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.1&t=NKJV):

The writer says, "Leave the elementary things --- **we will press on to maturity**."