

“Jesus our Better Priest”

Hebrews 4.14 - 5.10

JUST IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO BE – “separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world”
Ephesians 2.12

FOR MANY IN WORLD – MANY RIGHT IN KZ – WORDS VERY TRUE
Christmas - Western Import that came here with Marlboro Man and Coca-Cola

FOR US – Wonderful Time – Rejoice in the COMING of our God & Savior
“Emmanuel” – God with Us / WORD OF CHRISTMAS HOPE AND CHEER

BIBLE LISTS 3 GREAT OFFICES of our Lord / Define Purpose of His Coming

Because we are IGNORANT we need a PROPHET > Full and Final Word of God
Because we are SINFUL we need a PRIEST > is Once for all sacrifice for our sins
Because we are LOST we need a KING> Sovereign RULES and UPHOLDS world

Great Book > Unusual > Do NOT KNOW Author, Recipients, Reason Written

THEME – 8.1 “The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.”

PRIEST > Person who REPRESENTS US before God

Format – CYCLICAL “Jesus is Better” – word “better” 13 X’s - than Angels, than Moses, than Joshua, better Sabbath rest, better priest than Aaron, better Covenant than Old, better sacrifice than blood of bulls & goats, serves in better Tabernacle, better man of faith – Author & Finisher

ROMANS – Format > LINEAR – Man’s Desperate Need > God’s Amazing Grace

1. Better Office 2. Better Order 3. Better Qualification 4. Better Offering 5. Better Offer

1. Better Office

4.14 “great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God”

a. Man 4.14 NAME IS “Jesus” = SAVIOR / identifies Humanity and Mission

ANGEL TOLD JOSEPH “you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1.21

5.1 “Every high priest is selected from among MEN”

NOT PHANTOM / GHOST / Smoke and Mirrors from Heaven > REAL MAN

2.14 “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity”

b. God 4.14 “Jesus, the Son of God”

1.3 “The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word”

NOT A MERE ANGEL 1.6 “Let all God’s angels worship him”

1.8 “about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever”

c. God man in heaven / INCARNATION WAS IRREVOCABLE / Man Forever

YURI GAGARIN DID NOT SEE HIM FROM HIS SPACE CAPSULE
A MAN IN HEAVEN – Resurrected man, Glorified, Seated on Throne of God

NATURE OF THIS RESURRECTION BODY? 1 Corinthians 15 (vs. 35,42/49)
But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body... "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit... The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.”

GOD SHOWED STEPHEN WHAT YURI GAGARIN NEVER SAW

7.56 "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

2. Better Order

PASTOR IN HAWAII – Register with State offices to perform Legal marriages
 SHOW ORDINATION CERTIF. – got it thru best toll-free telephone sales comp.
 RONCO RELIGIOUS RETAILERS in Sun City, Arizona

a. God Appointed, not Man or Self Appointed

5.4 “No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God”

NONE COULD APPOINT SELF TO GOD’S PRIESTHOOD – esp. to High Priest

5.1 “Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.”

b. Appointed to Better Priestly Order than Aaron – Order of Melchizedek

5.10 JESUS “was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek

OT – Melchizedek NOT very significant > 2 BRIEF ref – Genesis & Psalms
 3 Chptrs of Hebrews – Devoted to EXPLAIN how Melchizedek is LIKE CHRIST

Melchizedek – JUST A MAN – Obscure > Significance is as TYPE OF CHRIST

c. Timeless Priesthood

7.3 “Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever.”

Does NOT MEAN HAD NO Parents > Bible SILENT about Ancestry & Destiny

6 X’s in Hebrews – Priesthood of Christ is FOREVER, ETERNAL
 RONCO’S RELIGIOUS ORDIN. – pay \$ 19.95 Every Year / Jesus Reigns Forever

d. Royal Priesthood

ISRAEL’S PAGAN NEIGHBOR NATIONS > merged office of King and Priest
 GOD FORBADE SUCH A RELIGIOUS MERGER – Balance of Power

CONTRA - King Saul who invaded the priesthood, and lost his kingship

CONTRA – King Uzziah who offered incense on God’s altar – and died a LEPER

ONLY SON OF GOD CAN BE PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING

MELCHIZEDEK from a Different Order than Aaron – FORESHADOWED THIS
 7.1 “Melchizedek was king of Salem & priest of God Most High... First, his name means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace.”

d. Changeless Priesthood

1000’s of priests AARONIC Order / Endless Rota Duties / DIED – Replaced
 7.16 JESUS in order of Melchizedek “became a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life.”

PRIESTHOOD CONTINUES NOW - 7.25 “he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”

MAN IN HEAVEN PRAYING FOR YOU - "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail."
 Luke 22.30,31

3. Better Qualification

REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIESTHOOD > more than good grades in Seminary

a. Sympathy 4.15 “able to sympathize with our weaknesses”

5.2 “He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness.”

5.7 “During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered”

Great PARADOX OF INCARNATION > Immortal God became Mortal man

God we cannot Touch / WAS Touched by the PAIN OF US ALL

STARK CONTRAST - “Great high priest who has gone through the heavens...
 ...offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears during the days of his life on earth”

WIERSBE “How could the Son of God ‘learn obedience’? In the same way any son must learn obedience: *by the experiences of life*. We must remember that our Lord, in His earthly walk, lived by faith in the Father’s will. As God, He needed to learn nothing. But as the Son of God come in human flesh, He had to experience that which His people would experience, so that He might be able to minister as their High Priest. He did not need to learn *how* to obey because it would be impossible for God to be disobedient. Rather, as the God man in human flesh, He had to learn *what was involved in* obedience. In this way, He identified with us.”

2.17,18 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God...Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

JOHN STOTT “I could never myself believe in God, if it were not for the cross. The only God I believe in was the one Nietzsche ridiculed as ‘God on the cross’. In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who is immune to it? I have entered many Buddhist temples in different Asian countries and stood respectfully before the statue of Buddha, his legs crossed, arms folded, eyes closed, the ghost of a smile playing round his mouth, a remote look on his face, detached from the agonies of the world. But each time after a while I have had to turn away. And in imagination I have turned instead to that lonely, twisted, tortured, tortured figure on the cross, nails through hands and feet, lacerated, limbs wrenched, brow bleeding from thorn-pricks, mouth dry and intolerably thirsty, plunged in God-forsaken darkness. That is the God for me! He laid aside his immunity to pain. He entered into our world of flesh and blood, tears and death. He suffered for us. Our sufferings become more manageable in the light of his. There is still a question mark against human suffering, but over it we boldly stamp another mark, the cross which symbolizes divine suffering.”

b. Sinless > enhances his Sympathy to our Situation

4.15 “been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin”

OT PRIEST > only APPROACH GOD wearing Holy Garments of their Office
JESUS APPROACHES GOD ON OUR BEHALF IN HIS OWN PURITY

7.26, 27 “Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.”

Sin Distorts Perspective > He KNOWS US BETTER than we know OURSELVES

3.13 “so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness”

HIGH PRIEST ELI watched wrenching prayer of heartbroken Hannah > DRUNK!

2 Cor 4.4 “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers”

Sin is SELFISHNESS > think more of OURSELVES than we do of OTHERS

KING DAVID – showed no concern for his faithful soldier Uriah, or Bathsheba
PRIMARY CONCERN WAS SATISFYING HIS OWN SEXUAL APPETITES

OUR SINLESS PRIEST > fully GIVES himself to US
“the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me” Galatians 2.20

COMFORT TO COME TO SUCH A SYMPATHETIC, SINLESS PRIEST

RECIPIENTS OF THIS LETTER WERE SUFFERING FOR THEIR FAITH
10.32/34 “you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering.
Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you
stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathized with those in
prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew
that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.”

WRITER PUTS OUR SUFFERING IN PERSPECTIVE OF THE CROSS
12.4 “In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of
shedding your blood.”

4. Better Offering

EXISTENCE of PRIESTHOOD – demonstrates man is SEPARATED from God

Isaiah 59.2 “your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have
hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.”

HEBREWS > Christ fulfills TYPES and SHADOWS of the OLD TESTAMENT

MANY WAYS > Jesus like High Priest of Israel // ALSO QUITE UNLIKE them

ONCE A yr ISRAEL > Day of Atonement – High Priest entered Most Holy Place

ISRAELITE PRIEST > 2 Sacrifices = One for Self, One for the sins of the Nation

5.3 “he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people.” JESUS MADE NO SACRIFICE FOR HIMSELF > no Sin to Atone For

7.27. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people.

5. 9. “once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation”

IN JERUSALEM > Fire on the Temple’s Altar of Sacrifice NEVER WENT OUT
ANIMAL SACRIFICES NUMBERED IN THE MILLIONS

BY GOING INTO A MORE PERFECT SANTUARY

8.5 They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven.

9.24 For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.

OFFERED SACRIFICE NO OT PRIEST WOULD HAVE EVEN IMAGINED

7.27 “He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.”

“you were redeemed... with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect”
1 Pet 1.18

9. 25 “Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself... Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.”

DID SOMETHING ELSE NO OT PRIEST WOULD HAVE IMAGINED DOING

10.11 “Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God... because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.”

OT TABERNACLE PIECES OF FURNITURE – altars, tables, lampstand
BUT WAS NO CHAIR – Work Never Finished – Sin Never Fully Forgiven

4 X's Author of Hebrews – Describes CHRIST SACRIFICE “Once for All”
9.12 “he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having
obtained eternal redemption” ETERNAL REDEMPTION > Once for All

DONALD GUTHERIE “Of paramount importance to the writer (of Hebrews) is the effectiveness of the sacrificial death of Christ. He several times emphasizes that it was ‘once of all’. There was never any question of a repetition. It was totally inconceivable that such an offering could ever be inadequate, nor would the re-offering of such a sacrifice be intelligible. The writer is convinced that the uniqueness of Christianity rests in the central act of Christ giving himself as an offering on the cross for the sins of his people.”

GREATEST TRAGEDY OF ISLAM – blatant denial that Jesus died on Cross
Cannot understand how a Righteous Prophet could be so Tortured
FIVE TIMES IN KORAN – categorical denial – that Jesus died upon the Cross

MUSLIM Man told me – “No one will pay for my sins, I will pay for them myself”

SAMUEL ZWEMER – served Jesus in Arabia, “Apostle to Islam” - “The worker among Muslims (to whom the cross of Christ is a stumbling block and the atonement foolishness) is driven daily to a deeper meditation on the mystery of redemption, and to a stronger conviction that the cross is the very heart of our message and our mission...If the cross of Christ is anything to the mind, it is surely everything – the most profound reality and the sublimest mystery. One comes to realize that literally all the wealth and glory of the gospel centers here. The Cross is the pivot as well as the center of New Testament thought. It is the exclusive mark of the Christian faith, the symbol of Christianity. The more unbelievers deny its crucial character, the more do believers find in it the key to the mysteries of sin and suffering. We rediscover the apostolic emphasis on the Cross when we rediscover the gospel with Moslems. We find that, although the offence of the Cross remains, its magnetic power is irresistible.”

5. Better Offer

a. Confidence 4.16 “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence”

ARK OF COVENANT – hidden behind heavy curtains in OT Tabernacle

NEVER CALLED Throne of Grace– None could see it – Certainly not approach it

JESUS OFFERED HIMSELF AS THE HIGHEST OFFERING FOR SIN

“When Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.”

Matthew 27.50,51

EVERY PERSON GREAT & SMALL – SINNER & SAINT – Invited to COME

10.19 “since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith”

AND WHEN YOU COME YOU WILL FIND the GREATEST XMAS PRESENT

b. Comfort 4.16 we may receive mercy & find grace to help us in our time of need

“mercy & grace to help in your time of need” / Amazing Love of Great High Priest

MERCY – God does NOT GIVE us what we DO DESERVE

GRACE – God DOES give us what we DO NOT DESERVE

Come BOLDLY to SAVIOR AND SOVERIGN WITH CONFIDENCE

HOW COULD WE BE BOLD IF OUR ACCEPTANCE DEPENDED UPON US?

Our Obedience? Our Righteousness? Our Sacrifices? Or even our Prayers?

5. 9. “once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him

c. Commitment 4.14 – No reason to FORSAKE the FAITH we PROFESS

MUCH INFORMATION book of Hebrews > but Information not MAIN INTENT

13.22 “Brothers, I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation”

WHY EXHORTATION? Even though Jesus is BETTER in EVERY WAY

4. 14. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

BELIEVERS HAD LOST SIGHT OF HIS GREATNESS

More Impressed with FAMILIAR, what they could SEE > OT and Lifestyle

SHALLOW APPRECIATION FOR THE MAJESTY OF GOD /

lost in the Mundane of Life

CHRISTMAS – and all of Life – IS FIRST AND FOREMOST ABOUT JESUS

2.3 “how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?”

3.12. See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.

12.1 “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith”

PLAY “The Long Silence” – At the end of time, billions of people were scattered on a great plain before God’s throne. Most shrank back from the brilliant light before them. But some groups near the front talked heatedly – not with cringing shame, but with belligerence. ‘Can God judge us? How can he know about suffering?’ snapped a pert young brunette. She ripped open a sleeve to reveal a tattooed number from a Nazi concentration camp. ‘We endured terror...beatings...torture...death!’ In another group a Negro man lowered his collar. ‘What about this?’ he demanded, showing an ugly rope burn. ‘Lynched...for no crime but being black!’ In another crowd, a pregnant schoolgirl with sullen eyes. ‘Why should I suffer’ she murmured, ‘It wasn’t my fault.’ Far out across the plain there were hundreds of such groups. Each had a complaint against God for the evil suffering he permitted in his world. How lucky God was to live in heaven where all was sweetness and light, where there was no weeping or fear, or hunger or hatred. What did God know of all that man had been forced to endure in this world? For God leads a pretty sheltered life, they said. So each of these groups sent forth their leader, chosen because he had suffered the most. A Jew, a Negro, a person from Hiroshima, a horribly deformed arthritic, a child born with deformity.

In the center of the plain they consulted each other. At last they were ready to present their case. It was rather clever. Before God could be qualified to judge, he must endure what they had endured. Their decision was that God should be sentenced to live on earth – as a man! ‘Let him be born a Jew. Let the legitimacy of his birth be doubted. Give him work so difficult that even his family will think him out of his mind when he tries to do it. Let him be betrayed by his closest friends. Let him face false charges, be tried by a prejudiced jury and convicted by a cowardly judge. Let him be tortured. ‘At the last, let him see what it means to be terribly alone. Then let him die. Let him die to that there can be no doubt that he died. Let there be a great host of witnesses to verify it.’ As each leader announced his portion of the sentence, loud murmurs of approval went up from the throng of people assembled. And when the last had finished pronouncing the sentence, there was a long silence. No one uttered another word. No one moved. For suddenly all knew that God had already served his sentence.”