

HEBREWS — PART 3
DON'T BE SLUGGISH!
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We are reviewing the Book of Hebrews.

So far we have covered chapters 1–4.

CHAPTER 1: A BETTER MESSENGER
CHAPTER 2: A BETTER MAN (OUR PIONEER)
CHAPTER 3: A BETTER HOUSE
CHAPTER 4: A BETTER REST (PICTURED BY KEEPING THE 7TH DAY SABBATH).

Several times ... Jesus has been referred to as our High Priest. That's a super-important role that Jesus fulfills for us!

CHAPTER 5 — BETTER OBEDIENCE

Hebrews 5:1-4

1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.

2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.

3 Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins.

4 And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.

People then were very familiar with the human High Priests. They represented the people to God. Ideally ... they would be able to understand people's weaknesses.

To be a Priest ... YOU HAD TO BE OF THE TRIBE OF LEVI AND OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF AARON.

The High Priest would only serve for a few decades ... would die ... need to be replaced.

How can Jesus be a High Priest when He wasn't of the Tribe of Levi?

Hebrews 5:5-6

5 **So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest**, but it was He who said to Him:

“You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.” (*The Day of the Resurrection*)

6 As He also says in another place:

“**You are a priest forever
According to the order of Melchizedek**”; (*Psalm 110:4*)

GOD THE FATHER HAS APPOINTED JESUS AS A NEW HIGH PRIEST — FOREVER (NEVER NEEDS TO BE REPLACED).

But Jesus is not a “standard” High Priest. HE IS NOT OF LEVI ... NOR OF AARON. Many Jewish converts might be reluctant to accept Jesus as High Priest — He isn't qualified.

BUT GOD HAS APPOINTED HIM TO AN EARLIER PRIESTHOOD — A BETTER PRIESTHOOD. THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK!

Refers back to Psalm 110 — the most quoted passage in the entire New Testament. Worth a look!

Psalms 110:1

1 **The LORD** (*Jehovah — God The Father*) **said to my Lord** (*Jesus*),
**“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”**

One of the most quoted Old Testament verses in the New Testament. Talking of Jesus as Messiah.

Psalms 110:4

4 **The LORD** (*Jehovah*) **has sworn
And will not relent,**

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

PROPHESIES THAT YOU (JESUS) WILL BE HIGH PRIEST ... AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.

(We'll see much more about Melchizedek when we get to chapter 7 of Hebrews).

Hebrews 5:7-8

7 who, (*Jesus*) in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,
8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

Jesus was a real man ... in a real human body. He experienced everything we do — and more. He knows exactly what it's like to be human.

Matthew 26:36-39

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.”

37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, **and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.**

38 Then He said to them, **“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”**

39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, **“O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”**

Jesus is suffering great distress. He feels like He is already dying.

Luke 22:44

44 **And being in agony, (mental agony) He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Sweating blood!)**

Hebrews 5:9-11

9 **And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,** (“perfected” — *matured*)

10 **called by God as High Priest “according to the order of Melchizedek,”**

11 **of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.**

The brethren **had become dull of hearing** — too spiritually lazy to hear — not a good hearer! It didn’t start that way! Remember the warning about “drifting away”?

How are we doing? Still alert — enthusiastic?

Hebrews 5:12-14

12 For though **by this time you ought to be teachers,** you need someone to teach you again the first principles (*basics*) of the oracles of God; **and you have come to need milk and not solid food.** (*Milk is good — for a baby. Good at a certain time in life?*)

13 For **everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.**

14 But **solid food belongs to those who are of full age,** that is, **those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.** (*But the saints need to grow — to maturity. Should be moving onto the “meat” of the Word.*)

You should be able to discuss Biblical matters with others — with logic and scriptural references.

CHAPTER 6 — BETTER PROMISES

Hebrews 6:1-3

1 **Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection,** not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3 And this we will do if God permits.

Since we shouldn't stay babies — we had better move on to maturity.

A baby is fine if it is a baby. If it still looks the same — and acts the same — after 20 years of going God's way — there's a serious problem!!

LET'S MOVE ON TO MATURITY!!

MAJOR WARNING #4

Hebrews 6:4-8

4 **For it is impossible** for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, *(speaking to converts)*

5 **and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,**

6 ***if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance,** since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.

7 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God;

8 but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

It is impossible to renew believers who have fallen away. (Speaking to converts)

The KJV and NKJV refer to ***"IF" they fall away** — could be construed as merely hypothetical? **But many translations (ESV ... NIV ... NASB ... ETC) ... translate "have fallen away".** NET: "And have committed apostasy".

These individuals haven't merely "slipped" or been "careless". This is a deliberate decision — or perhaps extreme neglect. They have chosen a different way.

They have abandoned Jesus and His sacrifice.

Regrettably some people turn out to be thorns and briars (to be burned) — verse 8. The Lake of Fire!

Hebrews 10:26-31

26 For **if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,**

27 **but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.**

28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 **Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?**

30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."

31 **It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

WORSE PUNISHMENT! IF SINNING WILFULLY.

Hebrews 6:9-12

9 **But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation,** though we speak in this manner.

10 **For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.**

11 **And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end,**

12 **that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**

The author seeks to encourage. “We’re sure you can do it! Be diligent! But don’t become sluggish”. (Same word as “dull” in Hebrews 5:11).

Imitate those who’ve gone ahead. Maybe like Abraham? God has promised us future glory ... and Jesus has led the way.

Hebrews 6:13-18

13 **For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,**

14 saying, “**Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.**”

15 **And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.**

16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute.

17 **Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath,**

18 **that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie,** we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

God wants us to be convinced of His promises.

His “promises” (should be good enough?) But then ... in addition ... swears an oath.

AMPLIFIED BIBLE: “God also, in His desire to show more convincingly and beyond doubt to those who were to inherit the promise, the unchangeableness of His purpose and plan, intervened with an oath!”

Hebrews 6:19-20

19 **This hope (confident expectation of something that will come to pass) we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,**
20 **where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.**

An anchor gives us stability. Especially important in storms! Shouldn't be tossed to and fro?

**Jesus is THE FORERUNNER. Scout ... Pioneer ... Leader.
Has gone on ahead of us.**

And again identified as our High Priest ... after the order of Melchizedek.