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HEBREWS CHAPTER 5

In Your Group Read Hebrews chapter five (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As A Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF HEBREWS CHAPTER 5 King James Version

HEB 5:[1] ¶ For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: **[2]** Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. **[3]** And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. **[4]** And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. **[5]** So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, **Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. (Psa. 2:7)** **[6]** As he saith also in another place, **Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (Psa. 110:4)** **[7]** Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; **[8]** Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; **[9]** And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; **[10]** ¶ Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. **[11]** Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. **[12]** For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. **[13]** For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. **[14]** But strong meat belongeth

to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

**HEBREWS CHAPTER 5
VERSES 1-4**

Hebrews 5:1 ¶ For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: [2] Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. [3] And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. [4] And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. (King James Version)

1 Now a high priest is a man chosen to represent other human beings in their dealings with God. He presents their gifts to God and offers their sacrifices for sins. ² And because he is human, he is able to deal gently with the people, though they are ignorant and wayward. For he is subject to the same weaknesses they have. ³ That is why he has to offer sacrifices, both for their sins and for his own sins. ⁴ And no one can become a high priest simply because he wants such an honor. He has to be called by God for this work, just as Aaron was. **(New Living Translation)**

1The Jewish high priest is merely a man like anyone else, but he is chosen to speak for all other men in their dealings with God. He presents their gifts to God and offers to him the blood of animals that are sacrificed to cover the sins of the people and his own sins too. And because he is a man, he can deal gently with other men, though they are foolish and ignorant, for he, too, is surrounded with the same temptations and understands their problems very well. ⁴Another thing to remember is that no one can be a high priest just because he wants to be. He has to be called by God for this work in the same way God chose Aaron. **(Living Bible)**

Note that when a man is chosen as High Priest he is appointed on men's behalf as their representative in the things of God – he offers gifts to God and makes the necessary sacrifices for sins on behalf of his fellow men. He must be able to deal sympathetically with the ignorant and foolish because he realizes that he is himself prone to human weakness. This naturally means that the offering which he makes for sin is made on his own personal behalf as well as on behalf of those whom he represents. Note also that nobody chooses for himself the honor of being a High Priest, but he is called by God to the work, as was Aaron, the first high priest in ancient times. (verses 1-4) **(Phillips Translation)**

[1] Now, every high priest is just a man, but is appointed to represent all the other people in matters that have to do with God. He presents gifts and sacrifices to God for sins. **[2]** And since he himself is filled with weaknesses, the high priest is able to deal gently with those who ignorantly go astray. **[3]** That is why he is required to offer sacrifices for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people. **[4]** And no one can take

upon himself this honor of being high priest, no, he must be called by God, as Aaron was. **(The New Translation)**

[1] Every high priest who is selected from men and appointed to act on behalf of men in things divine, offering gifts [2] and sacrifices for sins, can deal gently with those who err through ignorance, since he himself is beset with weakness – [3] which obliges him to present offerings for his own sins as well [4] as for those of the People. Also, it is an office which no one elects to take for himself; he is called to it by God, just as Aaron was. **(Moffatt Translation)**

Additional Information: Verses 1-4 The King-Son (Jesus) as it has already been pointed out is a High Priest (Heb. 4:14). A High Priest must be duly qualified and divinely appointed. From the Old Testament, we can see what a High Priest really is.

(1). A High Priest is divinely appointed on men's behalf as their representative (v. 1). (2). He presents their gifts and sacrifices for sins to God (v. 1). (3). He deals sympathetically with others because he realizes that he himself is prone to human weakness (v. 2). (4). The offering that he makes for us is made on his own behalf as well as on the behalf of those he represents (v. 3). (5). Nobody chooses for himself the honor of being a High Priest, he is called by God to this task.

Verse 2 - "Who can have compassion on the ignorant (not to know or understand), and on them that are out of the way (to go astray); for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity."

The Greek word translated "**compassion**" (Metriopatheo) means "to be moderate or tender in judgment toward another's errors. It speaks of a state of feeling toward the ignorant and the erring which is neither too severe nor too tolerant" (Wuest Word Studies).

The Greek word translated "**compassed**" (Perikeimai) means "to be compassed with, or have around one" (Thayer's). The earthly high priest (just as we are), has weakness (towards sin), i.e., sinful tendencies compassed around him. This same Greek word is used by the same writer in Hebrews 12:1, where it states that "we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." The word "**infirmity**" (Astheneia) means the "moral weakness which makes men capable of sinning" (Wuest Word Studies).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 5-6

Hebrews 5:[5] So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. (Psa. 2:7) [6] As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (Psa. 110:4) (King James Version)

[5] So also Christ did not choose himself to have the honor of being a high priest, but God chose him. God said to him, "You are my Son. Today I have become your Father." Psalm 2:7 [6] And in another Scripture God says, "You are a priest forever, a priest like Melchizedek." Psalms 110:4 **(New Century Version)**

[5] So too Christ (the Messiah) did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed and exalted by Him Who said to Him, You are My Son; today I have begotten You; [Ps. 2:7.] [6] As He says also in another place, You are a Priest [appointed] forever after the order (with the rank) of Melchizedek. [Ps. 110:4.]

(Amplified New Testament) Additional Information: Verses 5-6 Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. The Son was appointed by the Father, as these two Messianic passages show (Ps 2:7; 110:4). His high priesthood, however, was "in the order of Melchizedek" (v. 6), and not in the order of Aaron. The distinguishing characteristic of this priesthood is that it is eternal. Since Melchizedek was a king-priest (7:1-3), Christ also must be a king-priest, Him being of that order (a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 5
VERSES 7-10

Hebrews 5: [7] Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; [8] Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; [9] And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; [10] ¶ Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. (King James Version)

⁷While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could deliver him out of death. And God heard his prayers because of his reverence for God. ⁸So even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. ⁹In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him. ¹⁰And God designated him to be a High Priest in the line of Melchizedek. **(New Living Translation)**

⁷While Jesus lived on earth, he prayed to God and asked God for help. He prayed with loud cries and tears to the One who could save him from death, and his prayer was heard because he trusted God. ⁸Even though Jesus was the Son of God, he learned obedience by what he suffered. ⁹And because his obedience was perfect, he was able to give eternal salvation to all who obey him. ¹⁰In this way God made Jesus a high priest, a priest like Melchizedek. **(New Century Version)**

While he lived on earth, anticipating death, Jesus cried out in pain and wept in sorrow as he offered up priestly prayers to God. Because he honored God, God answered him. Though he was God's Son, he learned trusting-obedience by what he suffered, just as we do. Then, having arrived at the full stature of his maturity and having been announced by God as high priest in the order of Melchizedek, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who believingly obey him. (verses 7-10) **(The Message)**

Additional Information: Verse 7 – There are two Greek words used for “from.” (1) “**Apo**” meaning “from” and “**Ek**” meaning “out of or away from”. “**Ek**” is the word used here. The Messiah prayed to be saved out from within death. Had the inspired writer used “**apo**”, he would have reported our Lord as praying to be saved from dying a physical death. The writer to the Hebrews says that this prayer spoken of in 5:7 was answered, which shows that escape from physical death was not in the writer's mind. The prayer was a petition to be saved out from under death. It was a prayer for resurrection” (Wuest Word Studies).

Verses 8-9 The New Translation states, “ **8** Yes, even though He was God's Son, He learned obedience from His suffering. (He obeyed God, even when it meant suffering) **9** And having reached that goal (Gk. telos, of perfect obedience), He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him.” Jesus is the author, the source or the cause of salvation. The Greek word means “that which is the cause.” The words “that obey Him” are descriptive of those who are saved (Wuest Word Studies). This is not perfection, its direction. These are those who have turned away from Satan and his ways, unto God, Christ and His ways.

The word “**obey**” is in the **present tense**, meaning “over and over, repeatedly, as a habit or lifestyle,” i.e., they have not turned back or away from the faith (as the writer of Hebrews has been admonishing them not to do).

Repentance in the scriptures, used negatively means “to return, to turn back again” and is used of turning back to idols, or away from God. The Expository Dictionary of Bible Words states, The Old

Testament word that expresses the biblical concept of repentance is “**sub**.” In the 164 uses of this word in a covenant context, it indicates turning from evil to God, from evil ways to God’s ways, or from God to idols. “**Sub**” is that commitment to a faith and way of life that involves turning from a previous way. (Ezekiel 18:24-30).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 11-14

Hebrews 5: [11] Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. [12] For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. [13] For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. [14] But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (King James Version)

¹¹There is so much more we would like to say about this. But you don’t seem to listen, so it’s hard to make you understand. ¹²You have been Christians a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things a beginner must learn about the Scriptures. You are like babies who drink only milk and cannot eat solid food. ¹³And a person who is living on milk isn’t very far along in the Christian life and doesn’t know much about doing what is right. ¹⁴Solid food is for those who are mature, who have trained themselves to recognize the difference between right and wrong and then do what is right. **(New Living Translation)**

¹¹Much more could be said about this subject. But it is hard to explain, and all of you are slow to understand. ¹²By now you should have been teachers, but once again you need to be taught the simplest things about what God has said. You need milk instead of solid food. ¹³People who live on milk are like babies who don’t really know what is right. ¹⁴Solid food is for mature people who have been trained to know right from wrong. **(Contemporary English Version)**

¹¹There is much more I would like to say along these lines, but you don’t seem to listen, so it’s hard to make you understand. ¹²⁻¹³You have been Christians a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others, but instead you have dropped back to the place where you need someone to teach you all over again the very first principles in God’s Word. You are like babies who can drink only milk, not old enough for solid food. And when a person is still living on milk it shows he isn’t very far along in the Christian life, and doesn’t know much about the difference between right and wrong. He is still a baby Christian! ¹⁴You will never be able to eat solid spiritual food and understand the deeper things of God’s Word until you become better Christians and learn right from wrong by practicing doing right. **(Living Bible)**

[11] Concerning this we have much to say which is hard to explain, since you have become dull in your [spiritual] hearing and sluggish [even slothful in achieving spiritual insight]. **[12]** For even though by this time you ought to be teaching others, you actually need someone to teach you over again the very first principles of God’s Word. You have come to need milk, not solid food. **[13]** For everyone who continues to feed

on milk is obviously inexperienced and unskilled in the doctrine of righteousness (of conformity to the divine will in purpose, thought, and action), for he is a mere infant [not able to talk yet]! [14] But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate and distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law.

(Amplified New Testament)

Additional Information: Verses 11-12 “What the writer of Hebrews apparently had in view was their wavering state of mind in regard to the error that sought to lure them away from the faith. If they were being urged, whether by sectarians or others, to abandon their Christian profession, then clearly this called into question the fundamental truths they should have been firm in.” (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, John Walvoord & Roy Zuck). The writer of Hebrews is now admonishing them to return to the ABC’s of Christianity, repentance, faith, etc. mentioned in Hebrews 6:1-3.

Verses 13-14 It is unsatisfactory to remain a baby in spiritual matters. This is true because a spiritual **infant**, living **on milk . . . is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness**. The words “not acquainted” (*apeiros*) might be better rendered “inexperienced.” It is not so much that a spiritual “infant” lacks information—though at first he obviously does—but rather that he has not yet learned to put “the teaching about righteousness” to effective use. He lacks the skill which goes with maturity and which results in the ability to make appropriate moral choices. Such ability is exactly what is possessed by those **who . . . have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil**. That kind of person can handle **solid food**. (Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.) 1983, 1985.

The New Living Translation of Hebrews 5:13-14 says, “ 13 And a person who is living on milk isn’t very far along in the Christian life and doesn’t know much about doing what is right. 14 Solid food is for those who are mature, who have trained themselves to recognize the difference between right and wrong and then do what is right.”

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Hebrews Chapter 5)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Hebrews Chapter 5.**

1. **Read Hebrews 5:1.** A High Priest is divinely appointed on men's behalf as their representative. True or False.
2. **Read Hebrews 5:1.** A High Priest on behalf of man, presented gifts and sacrifices for sins to God. True or False.
3. **Read Hebrews 5:2.** A High Priest dealt sympathetically with others because he realized that he himself was prone to human weakness. True or False.
4. **Read Hebrews 5:3.** The High Priest offered to God a sacrifice for his own sins as well as for the people. True or False.
5. **Read Hebrews 5:4.** No one chooses for himself the honor of being a High Priest, he must be called by God to this task. True or False.
6. **Read Hebrews 5:5.** Christ glorified Himself by becoming a High Priest. True or False.
7. **Read Hebrews 5:6.** Christ priesthood has come to an end. True or False.
8. **Read Hebrews 5:7.** When on earth, Jesus prayers were heard and answered because: a. He was God's Son. b. He feared, that is, He had reverent submission for and to God. c. I don't know.
9. **Read Hebrews 5:8.** Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned trusting obedience by: a. saying, "What we do doesn't matter!" b. going to church. c. the things which he suffered.
10. **Read Hebrews 5:9.** Jesus is the author of eternal salvation unto all: a. that repeat a prayer after the preacher. b. go to church on Sunday. c. believingly obey Him (also known as repentance).
11. **Read Hebrews 5:10.** God designated Jesus to be: a. a High Priest after Aaron. b. a good Bible teacher. c. a High Priest in the line of Melchizedek.

12. **Read Hebrews 5:11.** The writer of Hebrews was writing to Christians who were:
a. quick to listen and obey. b. eager for more information. c. dull of hearing and slow to learn.

13. **Read Hebrews 5:12.** These believers had been Christians for a long time, yet they needed to be taught again: a. the basic things of Christianity (Heb. 6:1-3). b. the prosperity message. c. the teaching of spirit, soul & body.

14. **Read Hebrews 5:13.** A baby partakes only of milk and isn't very far along in the Christian basics of: a. tithing. b. righteousness. c. the confession of their mouth.

15. **Read Hebrews 5:14.** The mature Christian has his senses trained to: a. understand good Bible teaching. b. watch out for false teaching. c. distinguish good from evil (by practicing good).

Instructions for Group Leader: You may want to summarize the chapter (for the group) by reading aloud the following.

Putting the Chapter in Context: Hebrews Chapter 5.

Verses 1-4 speaks of the Old Testament High Priest and his qualifications. He was divinely appointed on men's behalf as their representative before God.

Verses 5-10 speak of Christ's qualifications and superiority as a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Verses 11-14 addresses the immaturity of these Jewish believers and necessity to be established in the ABC's of the Christian faith: repentance, faith, baptism, etc.

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