

LOOKING UNTO JESUS

Hebrews - Lesson 5

The Levitical Priesthood, set up and ordained by God, is evidence to the fact that none of us can come into His presence without an atonement made for our sins. Not only is sin unable to stand before Him, but it creates a gulf so far removed from Him that all fellowship and communication with Him is broken. We are separated and estranged, and our sin demands a price to be paid no less than death. If we are to survive, a sacrifice in our place must be made. With all this in mind, we see the Levitical Priesthood as an act of God's grace, revealing His desire to bridge the gap of separation and restore fallen man into fellowship. All the Levitical priests performed sacrifices and rituals. The High Priest, however, was the priest specially "anointed" to act as a mediator between Yahweh and the people. Only he could enter the Holy of Holies and expiate the sins of the nation, once a year, on the Day of Atonement.

Prayerfully read all of Hebrews, chapter 5.

- 1) From verse 1, write down the "**job description**" for the office of the High Priest.
- 2) Looking at verses 2 & 3, explain the reason why the High Priest should have compassion on the "**ignorant**" and on those who are "**going astray.**" (NKJV)
- 3) For this same reason **all of us** should have compassion for one another. Look back to **Hebrews 3:13b** and record why our compassion often becomes quenched.

- 4) Is there anything in particular that interferes with your heart feeling compassion towards someone? Can you give an example of what *hardens your heart* from allowing a compassionate response to flow out to others?
- 5) Share how you think sin “*deceives*” us in this area.
- 6) **Verse 4** makes it clear that the office of priest is not an office one chooses for himself. It is one chosen and ordained by God alone. Do you think this is true of all ministry? Why or why not.
- 7) What does **verse 5** tell us about Christ’s priesthood?
- 8) Christ was not called into the **Levitical** priesthood of Aaron, but into a completely different order of priesthood in **Melchizedek**. Read **Genesis 14:17-20** and **Psalms 110:4**. There are two **main distinctions** between the order of Aaron’s priesthood and the order of Melchizedek. They are seen in **Genesis 14:18** and in **Psalms 110:4**. What are they?
- 9) Read **Matthew 26:38; Mark 14:35-38; Luke 22:43-44**. These verses describe a specific time in Christ’s earthly ministry, which Hebrews 5:7 is referring to. What time in Christ’s life is this verse speaking of?

10) List all the **human emotions and feelings** Christ experienced from these verses.

11) Look over this list carefully. In your own life, do you ever think of these emotions as **“sin?”** Do you ever feel guilty when you are experiencing these feelings?

12) Luke 22:44 describes the highest peak of Christ’s agony. At this point the inner turmoil He was feeling expressed itself in a very physical way.

a. What took place in His body due to the stress and anxiety He felt?

b. What had taken place just prior to this happening (**see Luke 22:43**)?

c. Do you think the Lord was doubting the Father’s plan? Do you think He had a “lapse of faith?” Do you think the Father was displeased with Him? Share how this is personally speaking to your heart.

In **verse 8**, *“though He were a Son”* is another way of saying, *“though He was God”*. The verse goes on to say, **yet** (even so) He **learned** obedience by the things which He suffered. This verse can be a bit confusing and even disturbing when we first read it. How could God the Son *“learn”* obedience? The verse tells us He did *so through the things which He suffered ----- or through the experiences of life*. What does this mean? In the flesh He came to **experience** what we, His people experience so He could minister to us as High Priest. He didn't learn **“how”** to obey. He had never disobeyed. What He learned **in His flesh** were the **principles of obedience; the pulling of the temptations of the flesh; the weakness of the body; the weariness of the spiritual battle over sin; the continual saying “no” to the flesh; the laying down of self-will in order to obey God's will**. What He **“learned”** was what it *feels like* to **walk in our shoes**, identifying with us in the most intimate way.

13) What sufferings in your **life experiences** have been most helpful in teaching you obedience?

14) Read **Hebrews 5:9 & 10**. Being made **“perfect”** doesn't mean Christ **wasn't** perfect. The word “perfect” here means **“complete.”** The verse means He **completed** all that was needed for His heavenly ministry as our High Priest. We have looked a little bit at the differences of the priestly order of Melchizedek. What ways is Christ's priesthood **similar** to Aaron's? Refer back to **verse 1**.

15) Now, let's look at one other **difference** we haven't yet discussed. We find it back in **verse 3**. What did the Levitical High Priest need to do that Christ does not?

16) Considering this and all we have learned of Christ's sufferings in His flesh, go back to the subject discussed in **questions 2-5** and explain why Christ's compassion towards us is greater than that of the Levitical High Priest toward the people.

As we come to **Hebrews 5:11**, we read that the writer desired to teach these Christians much more about Christ's heavenly priesthood under the order of Melchizedek, but he wasn't able to because they were not ready to receive. It was a matter of maturity. They needed to grow up. **Verses 11-14** point out the **evidences of spiritual immaturity**.

17) The ***first evidence*** we see in **verse 11b** is also the **third admonition** of Hebrews. What is it?

18) Do you know anyone who feels this way about God's Word? Can you see how this has resulted in a stunting of their spiritual growth? Do you have an example to share?

19) The ***second evidence*** is found in the first half of **verse 12**. What does it say?

20) The ***third evidence*** is seen in the second half of **verse 12**. What is it about their diet that keeps them from maturing?

21) Describe what you think “**milk**” is.

- a. Do you think this is something we “**outgrow**” or is it simply a matter of **adding more** to our diet? Share your thoughts.

22) The *fourth evidence* is in **verse 13**. What is it and what do think it means?

23) **Verse 14** describes the characteristics of the **mature believer**. How does it say we **grow in discernment**? What is the **key reason** that they have developed spiritual “**teeth**” which are able to receive “**meat**”?

Warren Weirsbe quotes a preacher who once said, “Most Christians are **in betweeners**”. When Weirsbe asked what he meant he replied, “They are between Egypt and Canaan --- out of the place of danger, but not yet into the place of **rest** and **rich inheritance**. They are between Good Friday and Easter Sunday ---- saved by the blood but not yet enjoying newness of resurrection life.”

24) All of us at times may feel like **“in betweeners”**. As you close the chapter of Hebrews five, what kind of **spiritual progress** do you feel you’re making? What is speaking most personally to your heart out of this lesson?