

Intro story: War Graves around the world, one day this whole planet will be a war grave of the great controversy.

Illustration: Leopoldville sinking of WW2, Belgian crew had a language barrier & US soldiers didn't know how to launch the life boats.

Scripture: Hebrews 5:1-5

Main Idea: Our High Priest communicates & trains us for salvation.

Wiersbe:

1. **In the first two chapters, the writer has shown that Christ is greater than the prophets and the angels;**

2. **In chapters 3–4, he has shown that Christ is even greater than Moses.** Now he points to Aaron, Israel's first high priest, and proves that Christ is a greater priest than Aaron. If his readers were to abandon Christ for Judaism, they would be exchanging a great High Priest for a lesser high priest. The writer shows that Christ is superior to Aaron in at least three ways:

1. Christ has a Greater Ordination (5:1, 4–6)
2. Christ has a Greater Sympathy (5:2–3, 7–8)
3. Christ Offered a Greater Sacrifice (5:3, 9–14)

Aaron Biography from SDA Bible Dictionary

Aaron (â'r'ûn). [**Heb.** 'Aharôn, most probably a Hebrew transliteration of the Egyptian 'Aarn, "great is the name," or "great in name"; **Gr.** Aarôn]. Son of Amram and Jochebed (**Ex 6:20**), and descendant of Levi (**1 Chr 6:1–3**). He had an older sister, Miriam (**Ex 7:7; cf. ch 2:4**), and a younger brother, Moses (**ch 7:7**). He married Elisheba, a daughter of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah, who bore him four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar (**ch 6:23**).

Aaron enters the Bible narrative when the Lord commissioned him to go from Egypt to meet his brother Moses at Mount Horeb (**Ex 4:27**). There the two conferred together about returning to Egypt to effect the release of their people from bondage (**v 28**). The Lord had already appeared to Moses, and had indicated to him that Aaron was to be his spokesman in the new assignment (**vs 14–16**). From that time forth the two brothers labored side by side to secure freedom for their

oppressed kinsmen (**vs 29, 30**; etc.). Even after the departure from Egypt Aaron continued, at least at times, as Moses' spokesman to the children of Israel (**ch 16:9, 10**). At Rephidim, a short distance from the Wilderness of Sin, Aaron and Hur sustained the uplifted arms of Moses in the successful battle with a band of Amalekites (**ch 17:12**).

During the encampment at Mount Sinai, Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu, together with 70 of the elders of Israel, were accorded the special privilege of accompanying Moses beyond the bounds at the foot of the mountain which the people generally might not pass (**Ex 24:1–11**). During Moses' prolonged absence from camp, Aaron acquiesced in the demand of the people for visible "gods" by making a golden calf and leading in its worship (ch 32). While the Israelites were still encamped at Sinai, Aaron and his sons were appointed and consecrated to serve as priests in the sanctuary (**Ex 28:40 to 29:37; 40:13–16; Lev 8**). **Aaron served as high priest for 38 years, until within a few months of the entry into Canaan (Num 20:22–29)**.

Soon after the departure from Sinai, Aaron and Miriam united in opposing Moses as supreme commander of Israel, under God, and claimed for themselves a voice in the administration of the nation. God decisively silenced the two who had presumed to challenge the one whom He had appointed leader (**Num 12:1–15**). Somewhat later a group of disaffected Levites united forces with certain men of the tribe of Reuben, and others, in revolt against the leadership of Moses and Aaron, and once more God vindicated His chosen leaders (**ch 16**). Let there should be any lingering doubt concerning the fact that it was God who had appointed Aaron to have charge of the religious life of the nation. God gave dramatic proof by causing Aaron's rod to bud, blossom, and bear almonds overnight (ch 17). Toward the close of the 40 years in the wilderness, almost on the borders of Canaan, Aaron joined with Moses in a demonstration of impatience at Kadesh, where the latter impetuously struck the rock from which water was to flow forth for the people. **As a result, the two brothers were barred from entering the Land of Promise (ch 20:7–13)**.

Not long after the experience at Kadesh the people of Israel broke camp and journeyed around the borders of Edom, having been refused permission to take a more direct route through that country. On the way the Lord directed Moses

and Aaron that the latter should prepare to lay down his duties and to die (Num 20:22–24; cf. Deut 10:6). By divine order the high-priestly robes were taken from Aaron and placed on his son Eleazar, in token of his succession to Aaron as high priest (Num 20:25–28). **Aaron died at the age of 123** (cf. Ex 7:7; Deut 34:7), **and was buried on Mount *Hor on the border of Edom** (Num 20:27, 28; 33:37–39; Deut 32:50), which has not yet been identified. He was mourned by Israel for a period of 30 days (Num 20:29).

EGW on Aaron - “Aaron's failure to be true to his trust brought the rebuke of God upon him. Had he been steadfast, God would have shielded him from harm. We have compliant Aarons in our day, those who hold positions of authority in the church and who coincide with an unconsecrated people and thus lead them to sin. They expose themselves and the people to the wrath of God. **However much Aaron excused himself, God regarded him as the principal agent in this terrible transgression. Here is an example traced by the pen of inspiration, in the pages of sacred history, as a lesson to all ministers and those who are in responsible positions, that they should in no case imitate the example of unfaithful Aaron. We have in these last days, as much occasion to tremble with fear at the will of God, as the Israelites had when they stood at the foot of the mountain.**” - Signs of the Times 5/20/1880 Ellen White

Hebrews 5 - Wiersbe Commentary

I. Christ Has a Greater Ordination (5:1, 4–6) — Three Times He was affirmed from His Father's voice in Heaven - 1. The Baptism, 2. The Transfiguration, & 3. in the Temple in passion week.

Aaron was taken from among men and elevated to the position of high priest. He passed this honor along to his eldest son, and thus the line continued. Aaron belonged to the tribe of Levi; this tribe was set aside to be the priestly tribe for the nation of Israel.

But Christ's ordination was greater. For one thing, He is not merely man; He is God in the flesh, the Son of God and the Son of Man. He did not selfishly take this honor of the priesthood for Himself. The sons of Korah tried to do this (Num.

16) and died for their sin. **No, God Himself ordained His Son.** Here the writer quotes from Ps. 110:4, in which the Father ordains the Son into the eternal priestly ministry. He ties this verse to the quotation from Ps. 2:7 in v. 5 because the priestly ministry of Christ is related to His resurrection, and it is the resurrection of Christ that is involved in **Ps. 2:7-9** (Acts 13:33). - “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’”

EGW on a Greater Ordination: “Christ came in human form to show the inhabitants of the un-fallen worlds and of the fallen world that ample provision has been made to enable human beings to live in loyalty to their Creator. He endured the temptations that Satan was permitted to bring against Him, and resisted all his assaults. He was sorely afflicted, and hard beset, but God did not leave Him without recognition. When He was baptized of John in Jordan, as He came up out of the water, the Spirit of God, like a dove of burnished gold, descended upon Him, and a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”- ST 8/2/1905

Wiersbe: *The priesthood of Melchizedek is the main theme of Hebrews 7–10, so we need not enter into the details now.* You will want to read **Gen. 14:17–20** for the background. The whole argument of Heb. 7–10 is that Christ is a greater high priest because His priesthood is of a greater order—it belongs to Melchizedek, not Aaron. The name “Melchizedek” means “king of righteousness”; he was also priest of Salem, which means “peace.” Aaron was never a priest-king; but Jesus is both Priest and King. He is a Priest seated on a throne! And His ministry is of peace, the “rest” that was discussed in chapters 3–4.

Christ came from Judah, the kingly tribe, and not from Levi, the priestly tribe. Melchizedek suddenly appears in Gen. 14 and then drops out of the story; there is no listing of his beginning or ending. Thus, he is compared to Christ's eternal Sonship, for He too is “without beginning and ending.” **Aaron died and had to be replaced;**

Christ will never die—His priesthood is forever. Aaron was priest over an earthly household, while Christ is Priest over a heavenly people.

II. Christ Has a Greater Sympathy (5:2–3, 7–8)

Not only must the high priest be chosen of God; he must also be sympathetic with the people and be able to help them. Of course, Aaron himself was a mere man and would know personally the weaknesses of his people. In fact, he had to offer sacrifices for himself and his family. But Christ is better able to enter into the needs and problems of God’s people. In vv. 7–8 we are told of the “training” Christ received as He endured suffering while here on earth. Keep in mind that, as God, Christ needed nothing; but as the Man who would one day become High Priest, it was necessary for Him to experience trials and suffering, a theme discussed in **Hebrews 2:10–11**. The Jews might look down upon Christ and question His deity because of the suffering He endured. **These sufferings, however, are the very mark of His deity.** God was preparing His Son to be the sympathetic High Priest of His people. **Verse 7 refers to His prayers in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36–46).** Note that Christ did not pray to be saved “from death” but “out of death.” He did not pray for the Father to rescue Him from the cross, but to raise Him from the tomb. **And this prayer was answered.** Certainly Christ was willing and ready to face the cross and to drink of the cup God had poured for Him (John 12:23–34). -

Someone may ask, “But can the Son of God really know our trials better than another man would, such as Aaron?” **Yes!** To begin with, Christ was perfect and experienced each trial totally. He was tested to the full, tasting every temptation men and Satan had to offer. This means that He went beyond anything any mortal man could endure, since most of us give in before a test really gets difficult.

Illustration: A bridge that has endured fifty tons of weight has experienced more testing than one that has felt but only two tons.

III. Christ Offered a Greater Sacrifice (5:3, 9–14)

Aaron’s main ministry was to offer sacrifices for the nation, especially on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16). The priests and Levites would minister to the people during the year, but everyone looked to the high priest on the Day of Atonement, for he alone could enter into the holiest with the blood. **First of all, though, he had to offer sacrifices for himself.**

Not so with Jesus Christ! Being the sinless Lamb of God, He needed no sacrifices for sin. And the sacrifice He did offer for the people was not that of an animal, but Himself. Moreover, He did not have to repeat this sacrifice; He needed to offer Himself but once, and the matter was settled. How much greater He is than Aaron and his successors! Christ is the “Author of eternal salvation” (v. 9); Aaron could never do this. The blood of bulls and goats only covered sins; Christ’s blood took away sin once and for all.

The writer now wanted to enter into a deeper study of the heavenly priesthood of Christ, but he found himself in difficulty. The problem was not that he was a dull preacher or writer, but that he had dull hearers. He wanted to go from milk (the basic things of the Christian life, listed in 6:1–2) to meat (the heavenly priesthood of Christ); but he could not do it unless his readers woke up and grew up. ***How many Christians there are who live on milk—they recognize the ABCs of the Gospel and Christ’s mission on earth—but gain no nourishment from the meat, those things that Christ is now doing in heaven. They know Christ as Savior, but they do not understand what He can do for them as High Priest.***

EGW Quotes:

“From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God. He is the link that unites God with humanity. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” Only through Him can we become children of God. To all who believe on Him, He gives power to become the sons of God. Thus the heart becomes the temple of the living God. It is because Christ took human nature that men and women become partakers of the divine nature. He brings life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” - ST 8/2/1905

These people had been saved long enough for them to be teaching others, yet they had lapsed into a spiritual “second childhood.” Somebody had to teach them again the things they had forgotten. They were “inexperienced” in the Word (“unskillful” in v. 13). We see again the vital role of the Word of God! **Our relationship to the Word of God determines our spiritual maturity.**

These people had:

1. **drifted from the Word** (2:1–3),
2. **doubted the Word** (chaps. 3–4),
3. and **became dull toward the Word.**

They had not mixed the Word with faith (4:2) and practiced it in their daily lives (5:14). They had not “exercised their spiritual faculties” (5:14) and therefore were growing dull and ineffective in their spiritual lives. Instead of going forward (6:1), they were going backward.

Growing in grace depends on growing in knowledge (2 Peter 3:18).

The more we know about ourselves and Christ, the better we are able to move forward spiritually.

Appeal Questions: Where are you in your spiritual growth? Are you a babe, still living on milk, wandering in the wilderness of unbelief? Or are you maturing, feeding on the meat of the Word and making it a habit to practice the Word of God?

Prayer: “Dear Father in Heaven, I commit myself to pursuing the true, the good, and the beautiful that is offered to me by You, God, the One who is love. To this end, I invite the light of Christ to flood whatever darkness is within me, until life is made complete—for the glory of God fulfilled in the gift of His Spirit, and in all the precious names of Jesus, Amen.” - 3 Color World of Spiritual Community

Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1992). Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament (687). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.