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# Christ: the Great High Priest

Hebrews 5:1 – 10

Week 5

# Deceptively Simple

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- Jewish believers\* persecuted by Jews
- Encouragement to hold fast to their faith
- Encouragement to move on to maturity
- “closing argument”

# Deceptively Simple

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## The superiority of Christ:

- Declare the **deity** of Jesus Christ
- Declare His qualifications as their **high priest**
- Declare the new covenant due to the **cross of Christ**

The new covenant is **superior** to the old covenant!

# Deceptively Simple

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Decision to trust and rest in  
the promises of God  
is a “no-brainer”

# Begging to be Misunderstood

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## Keys to studying and understanding Scripture:

- Context!
- Context!
- Context!

# Begging to be Misunderstood

## Keys to studying and understanding Hebrews:

### H e b r e w s

- Move on to maturity
- Hold fast to your faith
- Enter into His rest
- Audience was conversant
- Direct correlation
- Main theme?
  - Superiority of Christ
  - Superiority of the new covenant
- Minor themes?
  - Banned from the synagogue
  - Ostracized
  - Freedom from Roman law
- Cultural issues?
- OT scripture?
- Language issues?
  - Translations
  - Lexical meanings; context; sense
  - LXX

# Begging to be Misunderstood

## □ What's in a word?

- unbelief; apostasy; fall/drift away 3:12; 6:6
- rest 3:18, 19; 4:3; 4:10, 11
- hold fast; persevere 3:6; 3:14; 4:14; 6:18; 10:23
- repentance 6:1; 6:6; 12:17

## □ Significance of reference to wilderness generation?

## □ Context! Context! Context!

# Begging to be Misunderstood

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## Keys to studying and understanding Scripture:

- Hermeneutical Spiral
- Beware of “pre-beliefs”!



# Contextual Spiral

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Wilderness  
generation

Exhortation to  
Jewish believers

Superiority  
of Christ



# Blindly Jump to Conclusions

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It was six men of Indostan, to learning much inclined,  
who went to see the elephant (Though all of them were blind),  
that each by observation, might satisfy his mind.

The first approached the elephant, and, happening to fall,  
against his broad and sturdy side, at once began to bawl:  
"God bless me! but the elephant, is nothing but a wall!"

The second feeling of the tusk, cried: "Ho! what have we here,  
so very round and smooth and sharp? To me tis mighty clear,  
this wonder of an elephant, is very like a spear!"

# Blindly Jump to Conclusions

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The third approached the animal, and, happening to take, the squirming trunk within his hands, "I see," quoth he, the elephant is very like a snake!"

The fourth reached out his eager hand, and felt about the knee: "What most this wondrous beast is like, is mighty plain," quoth he; "Tis clear enough the elephant is very like a tree."

The fifth, who chanced to touch the ear, Said; "E'en the blindest man can tell what this resembles most; Deny the fact who can, This marvel of an elephant, is very like a fan!"

# Blindly Jump to Conclusions

The sixth no sooner had begun, about the beast to grope,  
than, seizing on the swinging tail, that fell within his scope,  
"I see," quoth he, "the elephant is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan, disputed loud and long,  
each in his own opinion, exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right, and all were in the wrong!

So, oft in theologic wars, the disputants, I ween,  
tread on in utter ignorance, of what each other mean,  
and prate about the elephant, not one of them has seen!



# Potentially Dangerous

*Excessive curiosity* can easily uncover points considered “salient” thereby promoting speculation that can be **misleading, inaccurate, or even theologically “dangerous”**.

On the other hand, *excessive timidity* (i.e. less-than-diligent study) can produce a result that fails to uncover salient points thereby promoting speculation that can be **misleading inaccurate, or even theologically “dangerous”**.

John Calvin\*

# Chapter 5 *(almost)*

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*For every **high priest** chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.*

Hebrews 5:1 (ESV)

# lower than the angels

*”You made him for a little while **lower than the angels;***

*you have crowned him with glory and honor,*

*” putting everything in subjection under his feet.”* Hebrews 2:7 (ESV)

Ps. 8:4-6

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.* Hebrews 1:1–4 (ESV)

# lower than the angels

*”You made him for a little while **lower than the angels**;  
you have crowned him with glory and honor,  
⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet.”*

Ps. 8:4-6

***Now** in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control.  
**At present**, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.  
⁹ **But** we see him who for a little while was made **lower than the angels**,  
namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death,  
**so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.***

Hebrews 2:7-9



# Our brother

*For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. <sup>11</sup> For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them **brothers**, <sup>12</sup> saying,*

*“I will tell of your name to **my brothers**;*

*in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”*

Ps. 22:22

<sup>13</sup> *And again,*

*“I will put my trust in him.”*

Ps. 18:2

*And again,*

*“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”*

Isa. 8:18

Hebrews 2:10-13

# Our brother

*Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, [so] that through death he might **destroy** the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,<sup>15</sup> and **deliver** all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

*<sup>16</sup> **For surely** it is not angels that he helps, **but** he helps the offspring of Abraham.*

Hebrews 2:14-16

# previous reference to “high priest”

*Therefore he **had to be made** like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a *merciful and faithful* **high priest** in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

*<sup>18</sup> **For because** he himself has suffered when tempted, **he is able to help those who are being tempted.***

***3 Therefore, holy brothers,** you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the **apostle and high priest** of our confession, <sup>2</sup> who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God’s house.*

Hebrews 2:17–3:2 (ESV)

# the great high priest

*Since then we have a **great high priest** who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*

<sup>15</sup> ***For** we do not have a **high priest** who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, **but** one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

<sup>16</sup> ***Let us then** with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, **[so] that** we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

***For every high priest** chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.*

Hebrews 4:14–5:1 (ESV)

# the great high priest

He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, **since** he himself is beset with weakness. <sup>3</sup> **Because of this** he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. <sup>4</sup> And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

<sup>5</sup> **So also** Christ did not exalt himself to be made a **high priest, but was appointed** by him who said to him,

“You are my Son, today I have begotten you”;

Ps. 2:7

<sup>6</sup> as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

Ps. 110:4

Hebrews 5:2–6 (ESV)

# the great high priest

*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.*

*<sup>8</sup> Although he was a son, he **learned obedience** through what he suffered.*

*<sup>9</sup> And **being made perfect**, he became the **source of eternal salvation** to all who **obey him**, <sup>10</sup> **being designated by God** a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.*

Hebrews 5:7–10 (ESV)

# the picture so far

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*And to whom did he swear that **they would not enter his rest,** but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter **because of unbelief.***

# the picture so far

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*Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, **unbelieving heart**, leading you to **fall away** from the living God.*

*But **exhort one another every day**, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be **hardened by the deceitfulness of sin**.*



# the picture so far

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*Since then we have a **great high priest** who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, **let us hold fast our confession.** . . .*

*Let us then **with confidence** draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*