

Jewish believers were being persecuted & were thinking about giving up on Christianity
You can almost hear the Jews saying to those believers: "That religion is not right!"

They don't have **prophets** like **we** have prophets

They don't have **angels** giving the law like **we** do

They don't have **a Moses** like **our** Moses

They don't have **a Joshua** – like **our** Joshua

They don't even have a **Sabbath day** to rest on, or **priest** or a **temple** or **sacrifices** – **what kind** of religion is that?

The writer is saying – Christ is much more than all of Judaism!

4:9 There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

V.10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. (Christ is our Sabbath – 7 days a week)

V.11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through *following* the same example of disobedience.

V.12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

V.13 And there is **no** creature hidden from His sight, but *all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him* with *whom we have to do*.

1) "all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him"

a) God our **deals w/ attitudes** more than our **actions**

b) **Because God knows** the real reason for your actions – you should be honest w/ God & yourself

2) "with whom we have to do"

a) **Everyone** will **stand before God** – no choice!

Rom.2:16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

2 Cor.5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

b) Your life is an open book before Him

i) He also knows the **secret good things** you have done **for Him**

Rom.14:10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

c) **The lost will be judged too**

d) The **standard for judgment is** the **Word of God** – that sharp 2 edged sword

Rev.19:11 (when Christ returns) And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it *is* called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

12 And His eyes *are* a flame of fire, and upon His head *are* many diadems; and He has a name written *upon Him* which no one knows except Himself.

13 And *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white *and* clean, were following Him on white horses.

15 And from His mouth comes **a sharp sword**, so that **with it** He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

Because of **V.12-13** the truths of **V.14** are very important

V.12 x For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

V.13 x And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

V.14 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.

1) "Since then we have a great high priest"

a) He was **not** a **high priest** or priest at all while on earth

Mt.17:24 ^(NIV) And when they had come to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma *tax* came to Peter, and said, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma *tax*?"

25 He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?"

26 And upon his saying, "From strangers," Jesus said to him, "Consequently the sons are exempt.

27 "But, lest we give them offense, go to the sea, and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a stater. Take that and give it to them for you and Me."

- b) **Priest** were **exempt** from **temple tax**
- c) He wasn't from tribe of **Levi** (priestly tribe) but from **Judah**
- d) **He was declared to be a Prophet** – on earth
Acts 3:22 (Peter quoting **Deut.18:15**)(NIV) For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet^(Jesus) like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you.
- e) **All Israel** was **looking** for **that Prophet** Moses talked about
 - i) They didn't realize that the **Prophet** & the **Messiah** were the **same Person**
Jn.7:40 On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet."
41 Others said, "He is the Christ." Still others asked, "How can the Christ come from Galilee?"
- f) **But after His ascension** He **became** our **High Priest**
- g) **Some day** He will be **crowned King** of all creation
 - i) Then He will have **filled all 3** roles: **Prophet, Priest** and **King**
- h) **The world's idea** of a **priest** doesn't help us understand the **true Priest**
 - i) **The world sees** the **priest** as actually **halting progress to God**
 - ii) In **Romanism** you **only get so close to God** – **then** you have to **go thru a priest** to get closer
 - iii) It is as if there is a **barrier** between you & God that **only** the **priest** can navigate
 - iv) **In the O.T.** that was **true** & in **paganism** it is **believed true**
- i) **Job longed for a mediator** / priest
Job9:33(NIV) If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both,
- j) **We have that Mediator**
1 Jn.2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

V.14 x (NP)

V.14 x 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.

1) x "Since then we have a **great** high priest"

- a) He **isn't** just a High Priest but the "**Great**" high Priest
- b) He is **great** b/c of His position (where He is)

2) "who has passed through the heavens"

- a) He has passed thru the **heavens** of our atmosphere
- b) He passed thru the **planetary heavens**
- c) He **entered** the **3rd heaven** – where God dwells

2 Cor.12:2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago-- whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- such a man was caught up to the **third heaven**.

V.4 was caught up into Paradise, and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.

d) **Perfect tense** – a completed action having **current results**

e) Christ **dwells** where no mortal man could live

f) **Aaron**, who served as high priest, & **all** the **high priest** after him – **stopped** at the **veil** that divided the **Holy place** from the **Most Holy place**

i) In the Tabernacle & later the Temple there was that small, cube shaped room – the **Holy of Holies** – **where no man ventured**

ii) Only on one day, every year, was the high priest allowed to go into that room – & that was to make atonement for Israel

iii) The reason they could**n't** go in that room – **God's presence dwelled** there above **the mercy seat**

iv) **If** a priest or the High Priest went in any other time – it was a **death sentence**

Lev.16:2 And the LORD said to Moses, "Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.

g) **Jesus not only** went into the Tabernacle – **He** went into the **real Tabernacle** – the **one in Heaven**

i) But **He** also **went into** the **Holy of Holies** where God dwells

- ii) **He didn't just** go in there - **He sat down** at the **right hand of God** – and **there He remains** unto this day
 - iii) He went where no mortal man could go – even though HE is a man
- h) Jesus is **always** in **God's presence** making **intercession** for us
Rom.8:34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- i) When the writer says He is a "**great**" high Priest **He is great!**
 - i) **Because** He is able to **dwell** in the **presence** of God

V.14 x 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.

1) "**Jesus** the Son of God"

- a) There is **another reason** Jesus is our "**Great**" High Priest
- b) It is found in the statement – "Jesus the Son of God"
- c) "**Son of God**" – is a **title** – it **speaks of His divinity** – He is God!
 - i) He has always been God
Jn.1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- d) **But** the name "**Jesus**" – is His **human name** – It **speaks** of His **humanity**
- e) When it **says** "**Jesus the Son of God**" – it is declaring **He is God & He is man** – 100% God & 100% man
- f) There is something in Heaven that **didn't** exist before the ascension
- g) **There is a man in Heaven**
1 Tim.2:5 For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the man* Christ Jesus,
- h) **Job wanted someone to take God's hand & his hand & join the 2 together** – reconcile them
 - i) **Because** HE is God & man – **He can grasp the hand of God & the hand of man & unite** the 2
Job9:32(NIV) "He is not a man like me that I might answer him, that we might confront each other in court.
 33 If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both,
- i) **Now** there is **a man like Job** who can **arbitrate** & we are to take advantage of that (NP)

V.14 x 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*.

2) "hold fast our confession"

a) to take hold of, take, seize, to hold fast, - i.e. not discard or let go, to continue to hold, to retain

b) **Literally** – "Let us keep on holding fast."

c) **Subjunctive** mood – your choice

d) **Notice** he **didn't say** to hold fast our **salvation**

i) We are to hold fast our confession – our testimony

e) **God's idea of a "great" high priest** is **someone** who opens the way for us to go to God **V.15 & 16**

V.15 **For** we do not have a high priest who cannot *sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.*

1) "sympathize with our weaknesses"

a) Since He was 100 % man He **understands** what temptation is

i) HE **understands** human infirmity b/c He has felt it just like you have

ii) He **felt** what it is to be: weary, hungry, thirsty, in pain, afraid

iii) He **knows what it is** to **obey** the Father's will when He **didn't really want to**

Mt.26:38 Then He said to them, " My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me."

39 And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

b) His humanity **created a heart of sympathy** for us

Heb.2:17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

c)

2) "but One who has been tempted in all things as we are yet without sin"

a) He **knew** the **assault of temptation** in ways we don't – **b/c** He was sinless & **didn't yield**.

Lk.4:13 (NP)

Lk.4:13 And when the devil had finished **every** temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

V.16 Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

- 1) "Let us therefore draw near"
 - a) It only makes sense to draw near to the One who totally understands & can help
 - b) But it is in subjunctive mood
 - c) It is **our choice** to draw near

- 2) "with confidence"
 - a) "confidence" – Freedom of speaking, unreserved speech, w/out concealment, fearless confidence, assurance
 - b) You draw near & **be totally honest** w/ God
 - c) Come **w/ reverence** but be **honest** in your approach

- 3) "throne of grace"
 - a) What a **beautiful description** is our **place of refuge**
 - b) You come – all beat up, frazzled, too weak to fight back – the invitation is to "**come**"
 - c) WE come that "we may find mercy"

- 4) "we may receive mercy"
 - a) Mercy is what I want – I don't want justice – I don't want "my share"!
 - b) I want someone to have pity on my defeated state
 - c) I want help!

- 5) "may find grace to help in time of need"
 - a) I need God's help – every day – every hour
 - b) Do you see God as wanting to help you navigate this life successfully?
 - c) If not You don't have a realistic picture of Who God is
 - d) What makes our High Priest so great?
 - e) He doesn't block our way to God – He makes our way to Him
 - f) He stands us up – strengthening us, cleanses us – makes us able to stand in God's presence & receive His mercy

Jude1:24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,
25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.