

HEBREWS—HANDOUT 12

Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Structure

4:14 _____

5:1 _____

Hook Word

4:16 _____ ()

5:1 _____ ()

5:1 _____

5:4 _____

Hook Word

5:4 _____ ()

5:5 _____ ()

5:5 _____

5:10 _____

What is the function of vv. 12-13 of chapter 4?

4:14 shifts the narrative paradigm from _____ to _____

Why does the author do this?

Comment on “great high priest” (cf. 10:21).

1.

The author begins to focus on “cult” (Latin *cultus*). What is this?

“sacerdotal” (Latin *sacerdotalis*)

2.

3.

17. That Christ is the one eternal high priest; from this we deduce that all those who pretend to be high priests, oppose the honor and power of Christ; indeed, they reject it (H. Zwingli, *Sixty-seven Articles* [1523] in Dennison, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries...*, Vol. 1:4).

In the same epistle, Heb. 5:5, “So Christ also glorified not himself to be made a high priest, but he that spake unto him, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.” What an irreverence, then, and insult to God is this that a man should make himself high priest, when not even the Son of God took this honor upon himself but received it from his Father!

In the same epistle, Hebr. 7:26, “For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens,” etc. What created being now will dare to take upon himself to boast that he is high priest, when that high priest who is to abolish sin must be holy and free from all blemish?

In the same chapter [v. 24], “But he, because he abideth for ever, hath his priesthood unchangeable.” Hence he can always save and deliver them that come through him to make supplication to God, living ever as he does to intercede for them. What folly is it to choose substitute priests for him who gives up neither his office nor his life! Christ is the everlasting priest, our everlasting advocate before God. Why, then, do we make other advocates for ourselves? Is Christ dead? Has he abandoned our cause? Behold . . . how they deny Christ and insult God who thus make themselves priests.

In the same chapter [v. 27], “Who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this” (sacrificing for the people), “he did once for all, when he offered up himself.” We see here that Christ was offered up once for all. What vileness, then, to do what has already been done and finished! Since he, in that he was offered up once for all, perfected the atonement for sin, and this endures for ever through him, he who boasts that he offers him up does the same thing as if he boasted that he created the world. For that, when once created endures forever; so also redemption, once obtained through Christ, equally endures forever. For the works of God are not like the works of men to fall to the ground unless they happen to be renewed and made over.

In the same epistle, 8:1, “Now in the things which we are saying the chief point is this: We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,” etc. What presumption is it, therefore, to make one’s self a high priest or minister, when he alone is our high priest who sat down on the right hand of God!

In the same epistle, 9:11 and 12, “But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.” What arrogance, therefore, to take upon one’s self the work of the Son of God, when he offered up his own blood, and alone did it, and thus to boast, being a man

subject to sin, that one is offering up the same blood which he offered up once for all, but so abundantly and generously that the redemption won endures forever! For God is everlasting (H. Zwingli, *Fidei Expositio* [1531] in Dennison, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries...*, Vol. 1:214-15).

By these characteristics in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Holy Spirit distinguishes for us the priesthood of our Lord Jesus from all the remaining priesthoods. And, therefore, it behooves us to be aware of these in our Lord Jesus, the son of the virgin Mary, with respect to the consideration of his priesthood, so that wherever another priesthood with all its characteristics, ranks, and functions maintains its necessity, since it does not have these characteristics in proper measure, we should understand from the Lord Christ and his Church, that from wherever finally requested, it is in vain; also, since we believe the Lord Jesus to be also the Christ in his supreme and eternal priesthood, we should separate ourselves from those, who either create another priesthood in the presence of that one, as if it alone cannot be enough for our salvation, or who are now solely pursuing another method of salvation, or who are vainly thinking of another reformation of the Church of God, as if this supreme, eternal, and all sufficient priesthood of the Lord Jesus neither ought nor can exist (John à Lasco, *London Confession* [1551] in Dennison, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries...*, Vol. 1:567).

Do you detect an on-going narrative motif in v. 14?

“heavens”

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Distinguish “mercy” from “grace” (v. 16).

Comparison of Priesthood

Christ

Aaronic/Levitical (Melchizedekian)

5:7— what event?

from death vs. out of death

5:8— “learned obedience”

5:9— “made perfect”