

APRIL/MAY STUDIES



# SUN SHAKE ABLE

a series in the book of Hebrews

WEEK 1 // APRIL 22-28

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**JESUS IS BETTER** || 1-2:4

**PAGE 6**

WEEK 2 // APRIL 29-MAY 5

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**MORE PERFECT** || 2:5-18

**PAGE 10**

WEEK 3 // MAY 6-12

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**THE GREATER MOSES** || 3:1-4:13

**PAGE 14**

WEEK 4 // MAY 13-19

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**OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST** || 4:14-5:10

**PAGE 18**

WEEK 5 // MAY 20-26

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**WARNINGS AND PROMISES** || 5:11-6:20

**PAGE 22**

WEEK 6 // MAY 27-JUNE 2

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**A HIGH PRIEST FOREVER** || 7:1-28

**PAGE 26**

# UNSHAKEABLE

Hebrews is one of the richest books in the New Testament, a beautifully constructed letter challenging Christians to stand firm in their hope of an unseen, unshakeable kingdom. It was (maybe?) written to Jewish Christians who were being persecuted for converting to Christianity. The book is an encouragement to Christians, whether they converted from Judaism or not, reminding them of all the reasons to persevere in their faith, and all the ways Jesus fulfills and is greater than the Jewish covenant, laws, sacrifices, and priests. If those ideas sound familiar, it might be because the book of Hebrews revisits many of the themes that we just explored in Exodus, showing how they are all fulfilled in Christ.

The book presents a vision of a world where the unseen is more real, more powerful, and more attractive than that which can be seen and touched and counted. It's a call to recognize Jesus as God's last Word on life, the universe and everything else: a Word which surpasses every word God has ever, and ever will, give. And part of that

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***Hebrews calls us to stand firm while journeying towards our unshakeable kingdom.***

recognition is the call for unqualified personal commitment, unflagging perseverance, and even a willingness to suffer.

Even though there's so much gold to be dug up in Hebrews, some of it can be hard going. There are many Old Testament stories and allusions, the writer flicks back and forth between Israel and present day Christians, and there are the challenging passages on "falling away." But there's so much gold in the book that it's worth it.

The letter of Hebrews calls us to stand unshakeable—holding fast to our faith without wavering (10:23)—while journeying towards our unshakeable kingdom (12:28). Our hope is that this series will strengthen us, as individuals and as a church, as we stand shoulder-to-shoulder on this journey.

# AUTHOR: ?

- PAUL?
- BARNABAS?
- APOLLOS?



# THE LETTER TO THE HEBREI

JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE

## AUDIENCE: ?



• SEE 10:32-34  
 PERSECUTION & IMPRISONMENT

THROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE



## 2 MAIN GOALS

#1 ELEVATE JESUS AS SUPERIOR

#2 CHALLENGE THE READER TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO JESUS DESPITE PERSECUTION

"THE RADIANCE OF GOD'S GLORY" — JESUS — "THE EXACT IMPRINT OF GOD'S NATURE"

THESE METAPHORS MAKE THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE IDENTIFICATION BETWEEN JESUS AND GOD

1-2 ANGELS & TORAH

SEE DEUTERONOMY 33:2

WARNING

ISRAEL

US

GOD'S GLORY

GOD'S HUMILITY

GOD'S WORD

3-4 MOSES & THE PROMISED LAND

ISRAEL

PROMISED LAND

WARNING

US

NEW CREATION

JESUS EQUALS...

GOD'S WORD

HOPE FOR NEW CREATION

FOLLOW GREAT MODELS OF FAITH



1:1-3

ANCESTORS

11-

# ER TO THE REWS

TE REVELATION OF GOD



**3** IN THE PAST **GOD** SPOKE TO OUR  
STORS IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS, BUT IN THESE  
ST DAYS HE HAS SPOKEN TO US IN **HIS SON**

## Extra tips

#1

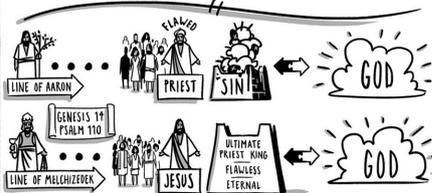
LOOK UP OLD TESTAMENT  
**? QUOTATIONS** (THERE ARE A LOT)

#2

THE POINT IS  
TO FEEL A BIT  
**UNCOMFORTABLE,**  
BUT NOT  
**AFRAID**

5-7

PRIESTS & MELCHIZEDEK



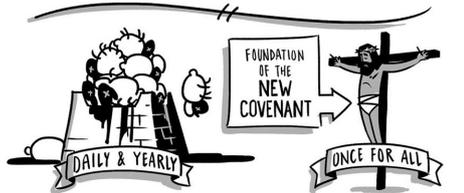
**WARNING**

REJECTING JESUS = REJECTING RECONCILIATION WITH GOD

**ETERNAL** PRIEST

8-10

SACRIFICE & COVENANT



**WARNING**

OFFER OF FORGIVENESS

PERFECT SACRIFICE

— DESPITE —  
HARDSHIP & PERSECUTION  
**GOD** WILL **NOT**  
ABANDON HIS PEOPLE

13



ISAAC

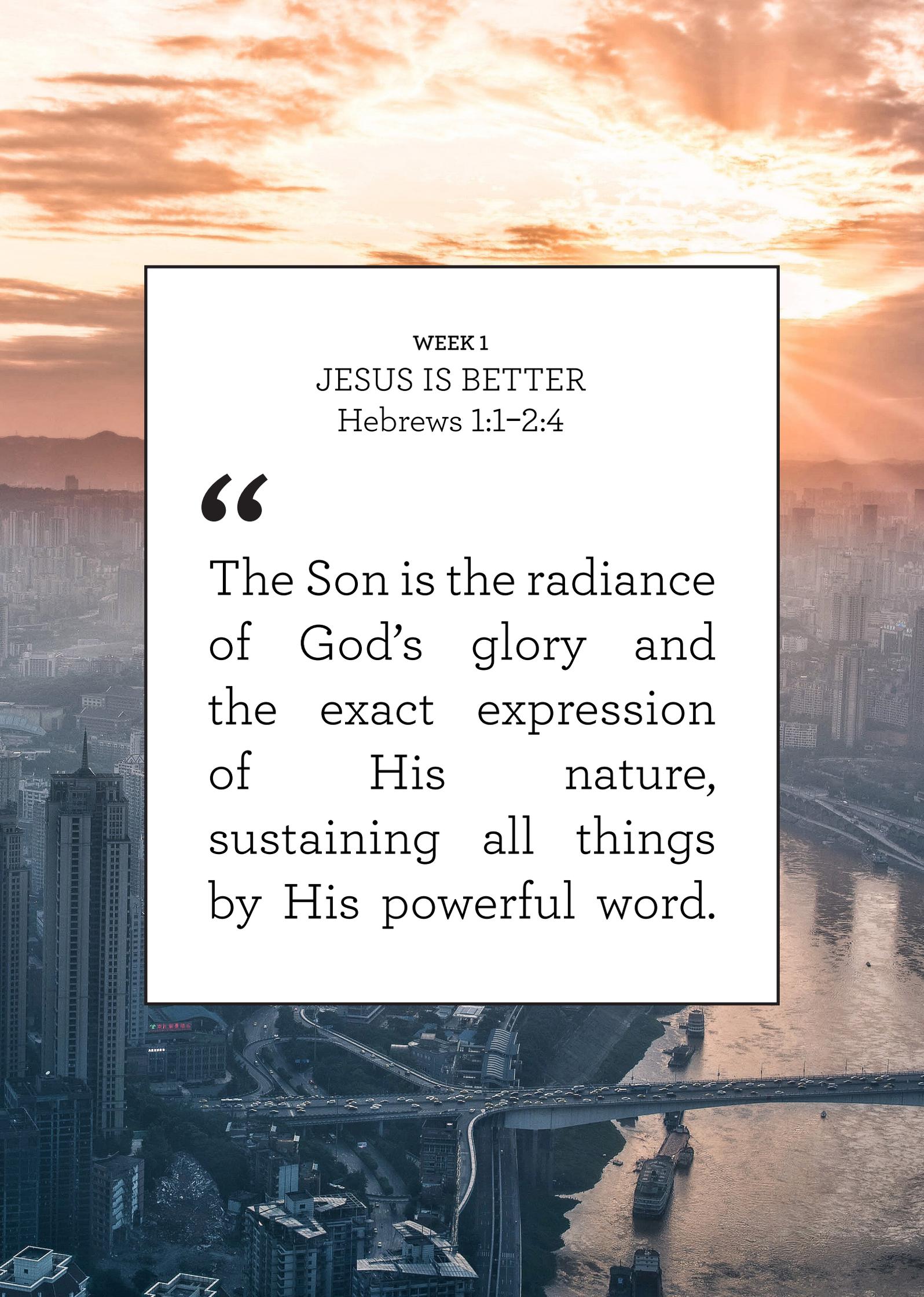
JACOB

JOSEPH

MOSES

RAHAB

created by  
the Bible Project

An aerial photograph of a city at sunset. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds, with the sun low on the horizon. Below the sky, a dense urban landscape is visible, featuring numerous high-rise buildings. A large river flows through the city, with a prominent bridge crossing it. The bridge is filled with cars, and several large boats are visible on the water. The overall scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of the setting sun.

WEEK 1  
JESUS IS BETTER  
Hebrews 1:1-2:4

“

The Son is the radiance  
of God's glory and  
the exact expression  
of His nature,  
sustaining all things  
by His powerful word.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Read Hebrews 1:1–2:4

Based on this introduction (verses 1–3), what major themes would you expect to see in Hebrews?

From v.1-2, how has God's method of speaking to people changed?

How should we relate to the different parts of God's revelation (the OT), now that Jesus is here?

How does God promise to speak to us today? (verses 1–2)

From verses 2–4: Who is the Son? What has he done?

What's the comparison being made between the Son and Angels in the Scripture quotes in 1:5-12?

Read Psalm 110. Why do you think Psalm 110:1 is so important? (It's the most quoted OT verse in the NT)

What is the warning in Hebrews 2:1-4?

What does drifting away look like for Christians? How does it happen?

What's the remedy to 'drifting away'?

Based on this passage, how do you think God expects us to respond to his Word as revealed through Christ?

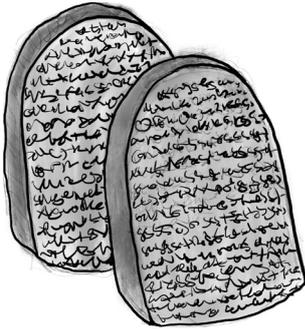
Where does Jesus fit in your decision making process of how to navigate life & what God wants from you?

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# NOTES

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# DISCIPLESHIP DEVOTION



These devotions are written to help you go a little bit deeper into personally applying the text. If you're keen to give them a go, catch up with someone over coffee this week, and have a chat through it together.

*Because Hebrews uses the Old Testament in such a rich way, one of the best things to do to understand Hebrews better is to go back and check out these passages. There can be some tricky things going on in the way Hebrews uses the Old Testament, but it's okay if you don't know all the answers. If you're keen to dig in deeper to Hebrews, this is the best place to go.*

## **Read Psalm 110**

What was this passage saying to the original readers?

How is this passage used in Hebrews 1?

How does Jesus fulfil the words of this Old Testament passage?

How can you pray for each other in light of this?

WEEK 2  
MORE PERFECT  
Hebrews 2:5-18

“

For since He Himself  
was tested and  
has suffered, He is  
able to help those  
who are tested.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

Have you ever wished there was someone who could relate with how you feel about something? Can you think of an example of when it was a real comfort?

In 2:5-8, what is God's plan for humanity, past, present & future?

In 2:9-15 what role does Jesus play in restoring us to where God intended?

What do you think lifelong "slavery to the fear of death" might look like? (v. 15)

Is God's strategy to send his eternal Son to become man an obvious solution?

If you were God faced with the problem of a rebellious creation, what would you have done?

Why did Jesus have to be human?

How important is it for Jesus to be not only fully God, but fully man?

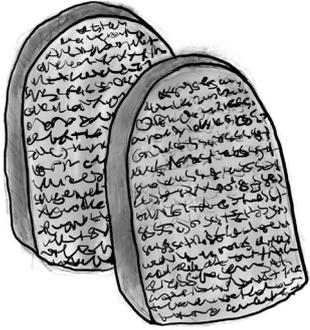
How does it help you when life's hard?

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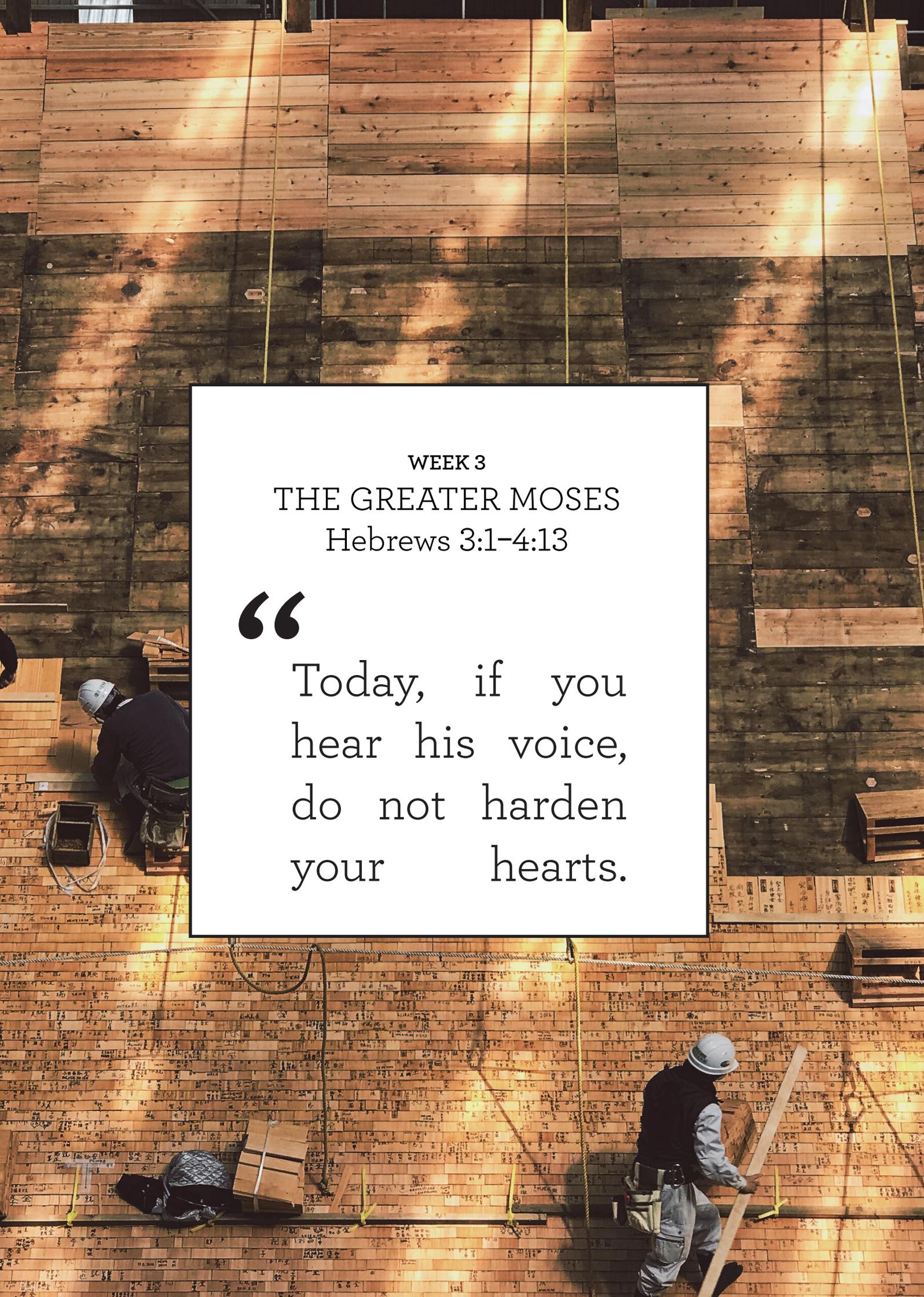
## **Read Psalm 8**

What was this passage saying to the original readers?

How is this passage used in Hebrews 2?

How does Jesus fulfil the words of this Old Testament passage?

How can you pray for each other in light of this?



WEEK 3  
THE GREATER MOSES  
Hebrews 3:1-4:13

“  
Today, if you  
hear his voice,  
do not harden  
your hearts.”

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Read Hebrews 3:1-4:13.

What are the repeated ideas and themes?

Discuss the comparison between Moses and Christ—how does this change the way we think about Exodus? (v. 5)

The writer of Hebrews (the Pastor) compares Israel in the wilderness to the believers he is writing to (4:1). Hebrews quotes Psalm 95 to describe Israel's time in the Wilderness. Briefly, after Israel left Egypt they came to the land of Canaan, which was the land God had promised to give the Israelites. They sent out men to scout out the land, they were intimidated by those already living there and wanted to go back to Egypt, the land God had just rescued them from. Because they didn't trust God and his promises, God sends them into the wilderness for 40 years where all of those who were faithless when they saw the land died out.

Back to Hebrews—what lessons from Israel in the wilderness can be applied to us as his readers? (cf. Mark 4:5 and 16)

Carefully examine verses 3:18-4:11. How might we understand this "rest" described here?

- What in the description is unexpected?
- Who enters God's rest?
- What about the rest remains for us now? What about the rest is for the future?

How does knowing God has planned a future rest help us persevere?

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

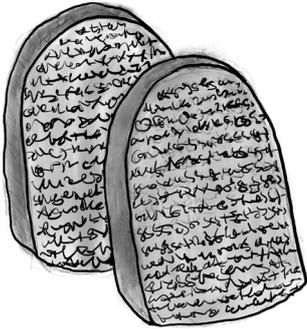
How does these verses (4:12-13) about God knowing our hearts make you feel?

What are the implications of scripture being a double-edged sword that judges the heart for how we understand scripture and the way approach it in our daily life?

Hebrews 3-4 is calling us not to harden our hearts, which is telling us not to be stubborn and obstinate. How might we go about this? What does this look like in your life?

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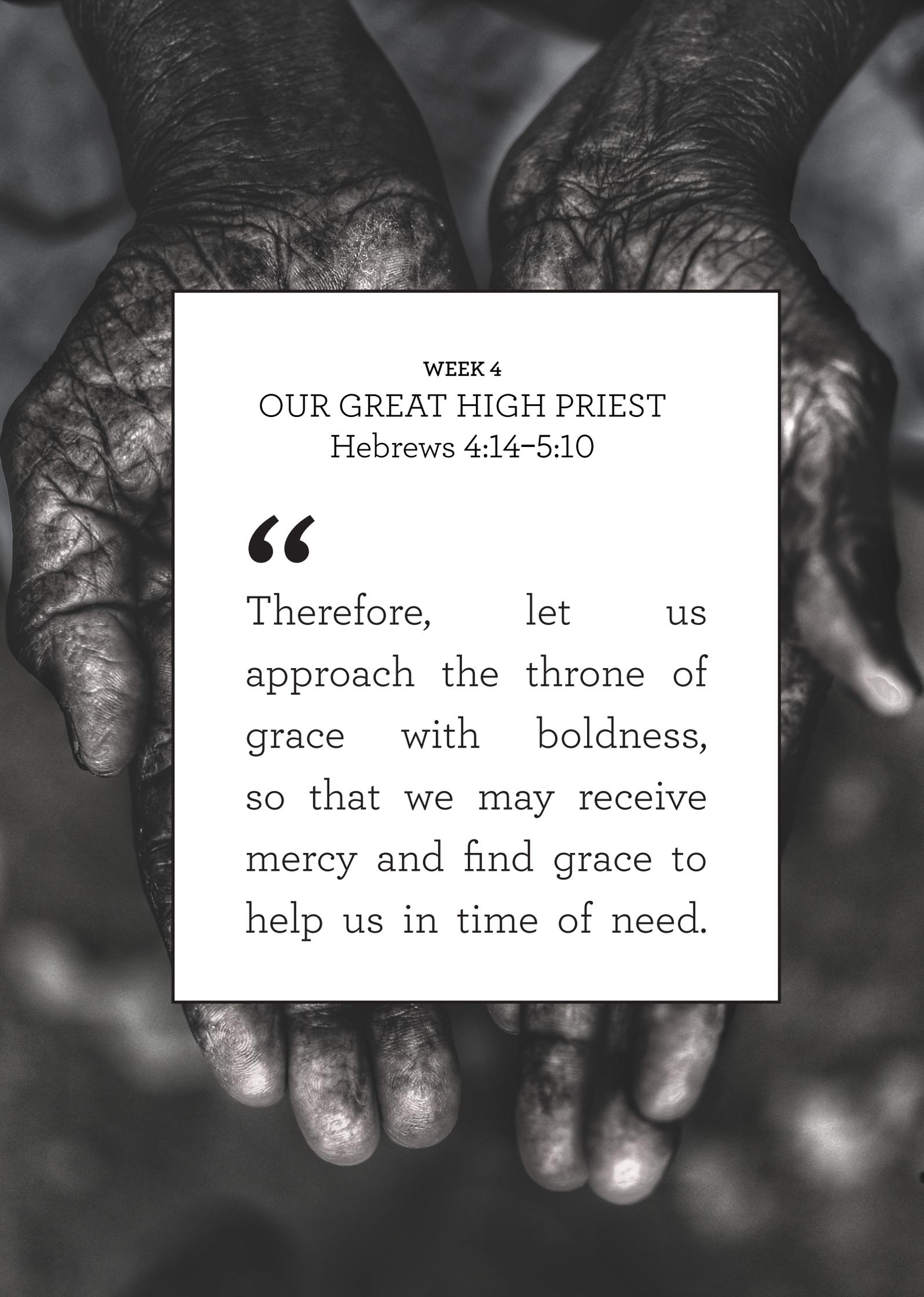
## **Read Psalm 95**

What was this passage saying to the original readers?

How is this passage used in Hebrews 3?

How does Jesus fulfil the words of this Old Testament passage?

How can you pray for each other in light of this?



WEEK 4

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST  
Hebrews 4:14-5:10

“

Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

Last week we looked at a contrast between Christ and Moses, this week the Pastor compares and contrasts Christ with Israel's priests. Read the passage and think about the aspects which Christ and the priests are alike and different and fill out the table below. (For additional information about Israel's priesthood you can refer to: Ex 28:1, 32:25, Leviticus 16:1-6, Number 18:1-3)

Christ priestly role compared to the earthly priests:

Aspects of priesthood considered in Hebrews 4:14-5:10	Same	Different

How is our great high priest superior?

Christ suffered in a perfect way: with faith and obedience. Which shows us that Christ knows what it is to experience strength under trials and suffering. In what ways does Christ's sympathy help us deal with our own trials?

In verses 8 and 9 the Son learns obedience and was "perfected" by his sufferings. If "perfected" can also be understood as "completed", in what sense can we understand these verses? (more detail in 2:10-18)

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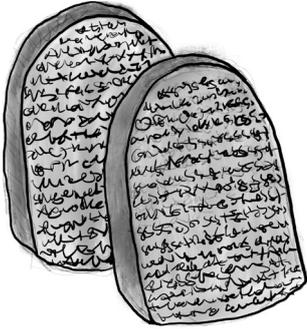
## STUDY QUESTIONS

This passage calls us to "approach the throne of grace with confidence." What do you think of as you respond to this call?

This whole passage begins urging us to "hold fast to our confession." How does having Christ as our great high priest help us persevere in the faith?

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## **Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17**

What was this passage saying to the original readers?

How is this passage used in Hebrews 5:5?

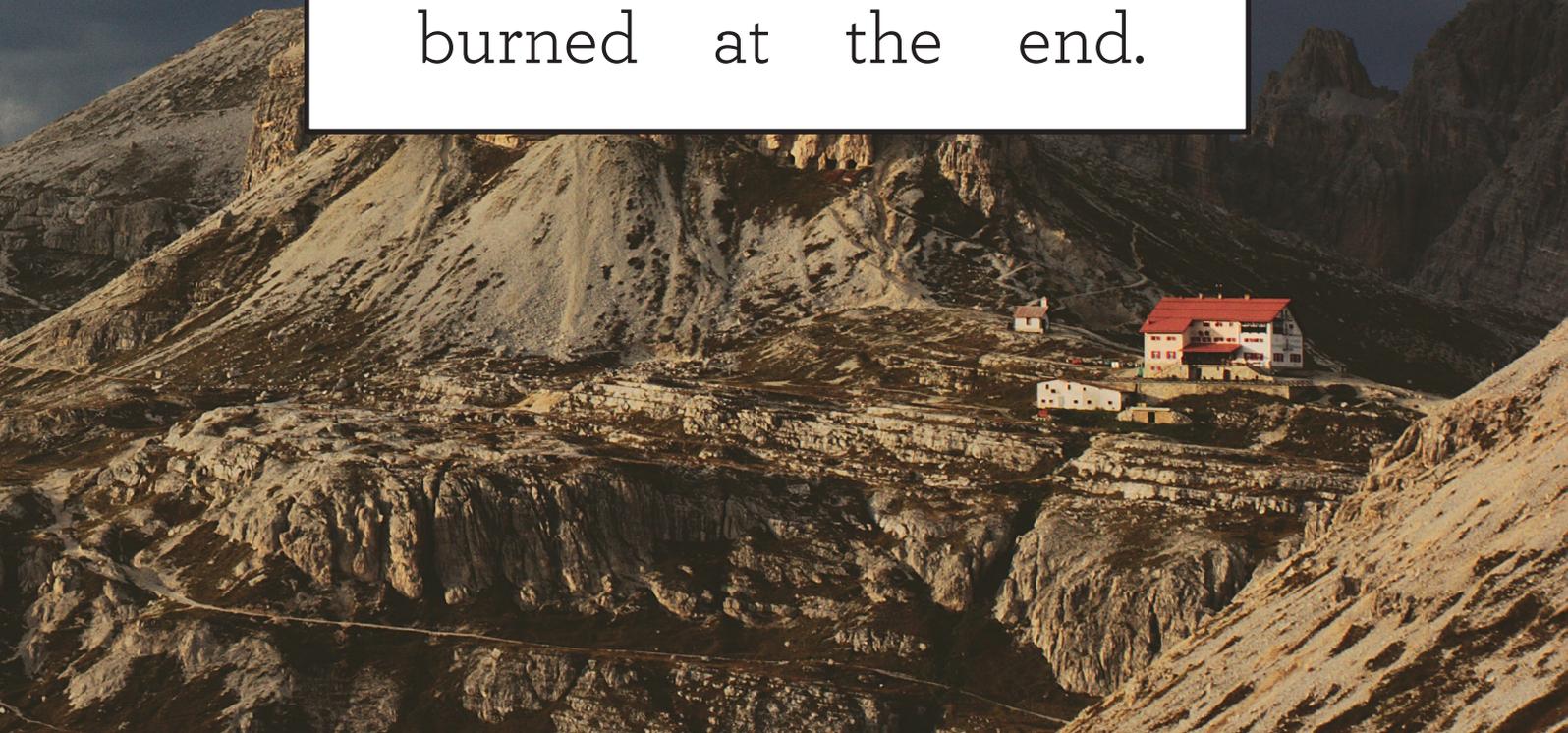
How does Jesus fulfil the words of this Old Testament passage?

How can you pray for each other in light of this?

WEEK 5  
WARNINGS AND PROMISES  
Hebrews 5:11-6:20

“

But if the ground produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and about to be cursed, and will be burned at the end.



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## STUDY QUESTIONS

When you look back at old photos of family and friends, it can be surprising how much has changed. If you apply this to your spiritual growth, what do you think it might look like to look at old spiritual photos of you, your family and friends?

Do you know anyone who exhibited all the hallmarks of being a Christian at one point in their lives, but has now fallen away?

Do you still pray for them?

### **Read Hebrews 5:11–6:20**

What are the things in 6:4-5 that people fall away from? What do you think “falling away” means here?

Is this warning for some people in the church, or all of the church?

How confident is the writer that his readers will actually go on to maturity?

Why do you think he gives such stern warnings?

Why would it be impossible for them to be brought back? How does his analogy (6:9-12) drive home his warning?

In light of this passage, how should we view those who are struggling, or seem to have “fallen away”?

How is Abraham an example of trusting and hoping in God? (6:13-15)

These verses may be confronting, but the writer doesn't want the reader panicking. What's his encouragement? What would it look like to make your hope sure? (6:11)

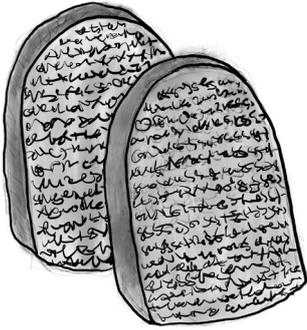
How does this passage give you encouragement and hope?

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# NOTES

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## **Read Genesis 22:1-19**

What was this passage saying to the original readers?

How is this passage used in Hebrews 6:13-18?

How does Jesus fulfil the words of this Old Testament passage?

How can you pray for each other in light of this?

WEEK 6  
A PRIEST FOREVER  
Hebrews 7:1-28

“

He is always able to save those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede for them.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

There's no getting around it, this is a tricky passage. Not only in what it's about (Melchizedek?!?), but also in how it relates to us. But there's a big payload with this stuff, so hang in there.

So...in 5:10 here, we're introduced to our friend Melchizedek. He's like batman. We don't really know his true identity, and he pops up to help when you least expect him, then fades back into the night. OK, maybe not exactly, but there are some similarities.

### **Read Genesis 14:17–20 & Psalm 110.**

This is all that the Old Testament says about him. What do we know about Melchizedek from these passages?

### **Read Hebrews 7:1-28**

What picture does Hebrews 7 build of Melchizedek? (Particularly 7:1-10)

From 7:11-22, why do we need a change in the type of high priest?

How did Jesus become the high priest "after the order of Melchizedek"? (7:15–20)

According to each of the following verses, how is Jesus qualified for a better priesthood than the Levites?

7:16

7:19

7:21

7:24

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

7:25

7:27

So what are the benefits of this new high priest and the new covenant?

**So what we need to grasp is how this changes the way we relate to God AND how God relates to us.**

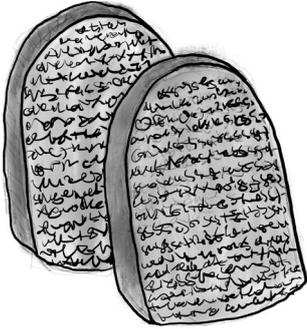
Discuss what role guilt & forgiveness (or lack thereof) play in your life. What change does Jesus as a new type of mediator make for these things?

What indicators would there be in your life to show that you haven't understood, or don't believe that Jesus is the type of mediator of a new way of relating to God that we see in this passage?

What sort of prayers do you think are music to Jesus' ears?

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## **Read Genesis 14:17-24**

What was this passage saying to the original readers?

How is this passage used in Hebrews 7?

How does Jesus fulfil the words of this Old Testament passage?

How can you pray for each other in light of this?

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# PRAYER POINTS

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# PRAYER POINTS



VILLAGE CHURCH  
2018