

Intro

~ Eli failed in his role as high priest and because he failed and his sons failed their family line would end as priests
 f~ Eli's family was a descendant of Ithamar, the fourth son of Aaron's line. Eli exercised the office of high priest in Shiloh at the time of the birth of Samuel. For the first time in Israel, Eli combined in his own person the functions of high priest and judge, judging Israel for 40 years (1Sa_4:18).

~ Priest - A priest is one who is duly authorized to minister in sacred things, particularly to offer sacrifices at the altar, and who acts as mediator between men and God (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*)

~ The reason the sacrificial system the Lord put in place was important because:

1 It was a reminder of man's sinfulness

2 That sin needed to be atoned for

3 That atonement cost an animal its life

4 That sacrifice pointed forward to Christ as the ultimate sacrifice (Jn 1:29)

~ Eli had been sloppy in his high priestly ministry and because of that the Lord sent a man of God (1 Sam 2:27-26) to warn Eli. The Lord also used the young Samuel (1 Sam 3:11-14)

The 3-fold message the man of God gave to Eli (*Bible Exposition Commentary, Wiersbe*)

1. A look back (vv. 27-28) He reminded Eli that his position as high priest was a gift of God's grace. The Lord had chosen Aaron to be the first high priest and given him the privilege of passing this honor on to his eldest son (Ex. 4:14-16; 28:1-4). It was a privilege for the high priest and his sons to offer sacrifices on the brazen altar, burn incense on the golden altar, wear the sacred garments, and eat of the holy offerings.
 - God blessed Eli through Aaron's life with privilege
2. A look at the present (1 Sam. 2:29) Eli put his sons ahead of the Lord and sharing in their sins. (The "you" at the beginning of v. 29 is plural and includes Eli with his sons.) To tolerate sin and not deal with it severely is to participate in that sin. As high priest, Eli had the authority to discipline his sons, but he refused to do so. "Do not share in the sins of others" (1 Tim. 5:22 niv). If Eli had been a man of God, concerned for the glory of God, he would have remonstrated with his sons and called them to repent; and if they refused, he would have replaced them.
 - Eli has failed in his privilege
3. A look ahead (1 Sam. 2:30-36). God had given the priesthood to Aaron and his descendants forever, and nobody could take this honor (Ex. 29:9; 40:15; Num. 18:7; Deut. 18:5). However, God's servants can't live any way they please and expect the Lord to honor them; for "them who honor me I will honor" (1 Sam. 2:30). The privilege of the priesthood would remain with the tribe of Levi and the house of Aaron, but God would take it away from Eli's branch of the family. Eli's descendants would become weak and die off and there would be no more old men like Eli in the family. They would have to beg for their food and would plead for an opportunity to serve (v. 36). In David's day the descendants of Eleazar outnumbered those of Ithamar at least two to one (1 Chron. 24:1-5), so Eli's family did slowly die out. But even worse, very soon Eli's two pampered sons would die on the same day. Even the tabernacle would experience distress (1 Sam. 2:32, niv), which turned out to include the capture of the Ark and ultimately the moving of the tabernacle from Shiloh to Nob (21:1-6; Jer. 7:14). However, at Nob many of the priests were slain by Doeg, which was a partial fulfillment of this prophecy.
 - God will judge Eli's line by cutting them off from the priesthood

V35 – God will raise up a faithful priest that will do what's in God's heart and mind

1 This can refer to Samuel as he fulfills the role of prophet/priest

2 This does refer to Zadok who replaces Abiathar as priest under the reign of Solomon (1 Kings 2:27,35)

3 This ultimately refers to Jesus Christ as the faithful high priest

We have a full picture of Christ in the book of Hebrews as the ultimate faithful high priest

~ in the book of Hebrews Christ is better than the angels (ch 1,2); Moses (ch 3); high priests (ch 4)

~ So we see Christ is our high priest in Hebrews 11 X (2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11; 10:21)

Text

Verses that refer to Christ as priest in Hebrews

- ~ 2:17,18 Because Christ is become human like us he's a merciful and faithful high priest and is able to make reconciliation for people. Because he was tempted he's able to come to the aid of his children who are tempted
- ~ 3:1 He's the apostle and high priest of our profession
- ~ 4:14,15 Christ as high priest has passed into the heavens. He also identifies with our infirmities and was tempted like we are
- ~ 5:5 The father made Christ a high priest
- ~ 7:1-21 Christ's priesthood is after the order of Melchisedek
- ~ 7:22-28 Christ has an unchangeable priesthood
- ~ 8:1 Christ is a high priest who is seated at the right hand of God
- ~ 8:6 As a priest Christ has obtained a more excellent ministry
- ~ 8:6 As a priest Christ is the mediator of a better covenant
- ~ 9:11 Christ has become a high priest of good things to come
- ~ 9:12-23 Christ entered into the holy place not with the blood of animals but with his own blood and by that means he has obtained eternal redemption
- ~ 9:14 the blood of our high priest purges our conscience from dead works
- ~ 9:15 As our high priest Christ is mediator of the new testament by means of redemption
- ~ 9:24 Christ entered not into an earthly tabernacle but into the heavenly tabernacle not made with hands
- ~ 9:26 Christ's ministry as priest was so effective that he only had to enter with his blood one time
- ~ 10:1-12 As a priest, Christ's body was itself the sacrifice for burnt offerings and sacrifices
- ~ 10:21,22 Christ is high priest over the house of God that we draw near to

3 examples of Christ as our high priest in Hebrews

- 1 Hebrews 2:17,18 = Christ is a merciful, faithful, and helpful high priest
- 2 Hebrews 4:14-16 = Christ is a great high priest
- 3 Hebrews 9:11-28 = Christ is a superior high priest because he has entered into a heavenly tabernacle

1 Hebrews 2:17,18 = Christ is a merciful, a faithful, and helpful high priest

1 Merciful

- Merciful (Greek = 1653 eleeo) to have mercy on, to help the afflicted or one seeking aid
- Jesus' experiences in human flesh made him a mediator who is first and foremost merciful. Mercy is more than an emotion. Mercy does something to help the need
- Christ isn't a high priest that is unsympathetic to our needs
- Because he's merciful – he's done something about our need. He came through the incarnation
- He's merciful as our Lord and invites us to come to his throne of grace
- To be merciful, one must act to alleviate another's pain. Jesus repeatedly modeled this in the Gospels when he had compassion on the hungry or the ill or the grieving, and then mercy in meeting their needs (cf. Mark 1:41; 8:2-3; Luke 7:13)
- Is 42:3 Jesus as the humble servant doesn't break the bruised reed and the smoking flax he doesn't snuff out
- The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) is called the Good Samaritan because unlike the Levite and the priest he stopped and helped the man who was robbed. Notice, this priest wasn't a good or perfect because he walked by the man who had need – but Jesus is a merciful Perfect High Priest
- Kent Hughes - And his heart bears the blessed scars of sympathy

2 Faithful

- There is an intentional contrast here: Jesus is merciful in his priestly relationship to his people and faithful in his priestly mediation to God the Father
- His faithfulness to God is seen in two ways.
 - First, he was faithful as mankind's sin-bearer. He did everything required. Nothing deterred him from the cross. He drank the bitter cup completely. "Our hell he made his, that his heaven might be ours." Never has there been such faithfulness!
 - Second, he is faithful in representing us to the Father. At God's right hand his blood is applied to man's sins. There he faithfully prays for his own with compassion and tender mercy, honed by his human experience. This is a truth every informed heart holds dear, as did Paul when he encouraged Timothy, reminding him, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men" (1 Tim. 2:5-6).
- He demonstrated his faithfulness by remaining steadfast to the end without flinching. Jesus was completely trustworthy in everything God called him to do.
- Jesus is the Faithful Perfect High Priest because he wouldn't be distracted and deterred from His calling

3 Helpful - comes to our aid (he's able to do so because He was also tempted)

- Helpful (Greek = 997 boetheo) to aid, relieve, help. The base of this word means "to run."
- Perhaps the difference between merciful and helpful is mercy is the heart of compassion that moved Christ to act and helpful is the act of Christ running to our aid
- The writer's comforting progression of thought has presented a being who is a perfect priestly Mediator, then Propitiator, and now Helper: "Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).
- Christ can our helper because He didn't sin and accomplished propitiation
- *Heb 4:14-16 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. 15 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. 16 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.*

Summary =An earthly priest may to the best of their ability merciful, faithful and helpful but he's still a sinner. Whereas Christ, being in the form of God became human, was tempted and sinless and made reconciliation for those he came to minister to

Conclusion

Proverbs 3:5,6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

- We have a great high priest to go to in trouble
- We can't lean on our own understanding, strength, past experiences
- This verse gives us the recipe for having Christ the great high priest direct our paths. After all, He is merciful, faithful and helpful high priest