

## BEGIN LESSON 1

### HEBREWS

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#### **Introduction:**

**(RevC)** In chapters 1-6 we see Jesus as superior to the prophets, angels, Moses, and Aaron (the first of the priesthood). The focus of the book of Hebrews is Jesus Christ and his superiority over everything. He is God speaking to us in the last days revealing the Father to man in ways superior to what the prophets of old were able to do.

As the writer puts it in 1:4 "...so much better than the angels,"... having even a better name than they. How is his name better? There is power and authority in the very name, Jesus.

Then in chapters 7-10 we see that the priesthood of Christ is also superior to even that of Melchizedek who serves as a type of the priesthood of Christ, and some believe was a pre-incarnate manifestation of Christ. The writer closes the book in chapters 11-13 speaking of the foundation of faith upon which our lives are to be built. (RevC)

**(POSB)** Man has always felt an inner drive to live forever in a perfect world. Therefore, he has sensed an inner need to search and find out if there is a God, and if there is, to please Him and to gain His approval and acceptance. This is where so much religion has come from, from the inner struggle of men to find God.

The great tragedy is this: men have groped and grasped after God as though they were in a dark world that gave no evidence of God. But this is just not so; there is no need for man to be in the dark about God. Why? Because God has revealed Himself, and He has revealed Himself in many different ways:

- through nature or what might be called a revelation of His Supreme deity and power. A person can look at nature and clearly see God's deity and power.

- through conscience or what might be called an inner witness or sense of duty to God.
- through law or what might be called a revelation of Supreme justice.
- through religion or what might be called a revelation of how to worship and become acceptable to God.
- through prophets and priests or what might be called the revelation of God through human spokesmen and mediators.

...The point is that God has revealed Himself to man, and each revelation has been very important for man's understanding of God... Man can know *about a person*, know all the facts about a person's life; but until he personally meets the person and associates and fellowships with him, he does not personally know him. Therefore, if man was to ever know God, God had to reveal Himself in the most supreme way possible: He had to come to earth and show Himself to man, revealing exactly who He is and what He is like. This is the whole point of these first four chapters. In fact, it is the point of the whole Book of Hebrews: the Supreme revelation of God is Jesus Christ, God's very own Son...

## I. Hebrews 1:1-3

**Hebrews 1:1-3** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

**(1:1-3) Introduction:** men have usually looked upon the prophets of religion as great men of God. They have seen the prophets of God...

- as very special servants of God.
- as men who had a special message from God.
- as men who could tell others how to become acceptable to God.
- as men who could tell others how to live and please God.

...The prophets of the Old Testament were great men of God. They were men to whom God spoke and to whom God entrusted His message. But as great as the prophets of the Old Testament were, they fade into insignificance when compared to Jesus Christ, God's very own Son. Jesus Christ is far, far Superior to the prophets.

**A. (1:1-2) Revelation— Jesus Christ, Deity:** Jesus Christ is the supreme spokesman of God. This is the first reason why He is superior to the prophets. Note the glorious truth: **God has spoken to man**. He is not as most people think, far off in the distance, someplace in outer space, so far away that He is unconcerned with what is happening to man and his world. The very opposite is true: God is concerned with our lives, ...with all that happens to us...He has told us exactly how to conquer the trials and temptations, the corruption and death of this world. When did God speak to man, and where can we find the record of God's Word? ...For His Word would mean everlasting life and victory over all the evil and trials and corruption and death of this life. Where is God's Word? It is found in two places.

1. First, God's Word is found in the prophets. In ancient times God spoke to man by His prophets, that is, by persons whom He had chosen to proclaim His Word to the world....

a. "at sundry times": that is, in many parts (*polumerōs*); in many separate revelations, at many different times.

b. in many ways (*polutropōs*).

What does this mean? No man could possibly receive and understand or explain the whole revelation of God...Therefore, God had to make many revelations to many different people, and He had to use many different ways to speak to men. No man could ever contain or share the whole revelation of God.

Matthew Henry states it well by saying that there had to be a *gradual opening* of man's mind concerning the Messiah, the Savior of the world...

- God spoke to Adam and told him that the Savior would come from the seed of the woman (**Genesis 3:15**).
- God spoke to Abraham and told him that the Savior would come from his seed (**Genesis 12:3; Genesis 18:18; Genesis 22:18**).
- God spoke to Jacob and told him that the Savior would come through the tribe of Judah (**Genesis 49:10**).
- God spoke to David and told him that the Savior would be born of his house (**2 Samuel 7:13**).
- God spoke to Micah and told him that the Savior would be born at Bethlehem (**Micah 5:2**).
- God spoke to Isaiah and told him that the Savior would be born of a virgin (**Isaiah 7:14**).

Note also the different ways in which God spoke to the prophets:

- He spoke to Moses in a great thundering voice in the midst of a storm (**Exodus 19:19; Deut. 5:22**).
- He spoke to Elijah by a still small voice (**1 Kings 19:12**).
- He spoke to Isaiah in a vision (**Isaiah 1:1**).
- He spoke to Samuel in a dream (**1 Samuel 3:5**).

...The point to see is this: each prophet could present only a part of God's revelation. No one of them could present the whole revelation of God. The full revelation of God is not found in the prophets. Where is it found then? This brings us to the second point.

2. Second, God's Word, His full revelation, is found in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. **"In these last days [God has] spoken to us by His Son."** ...God could send no greater messenger with His Word than to send His very own Son. And this is the astounding declaration of this passage: God has sent His Son to proclaim His Word to men.

Before Christ, no man could fully grasp or understand God, and no man could fully proclaim the Word of God. Men could understand only a part or fragment of God. But now God's very own Son has come to earth and revealed God, proclaiming all that God is. And note: it is He Himself who is the revelation of God. He embodies the Word of God. In fact, He is the Word of God. Everything that God ever wanted to say to man is said in the person of Jesus Christ...

**B. (1:2) Jesus Christ, Deity—Heir:** Jesus Christ is appointed the heir of all things. This is the second reason why He is superior to the prophets. What is meant by heir? It means that Jesus Christ is to receive and be **"the lawful Owner of all things"** (Amplified New Testament). Jesus Christ alone has inherited all that God is and has. No man is great enough or worthy enough to be the heir of God; only Christ is. He alone has *lived and walked perfectly* before God...What is it that Jesus Christ is to inherit and receive?

1. Jesus Christ is to inherit all power in heaven and earth. (**Matthew 28:18**).
2. Jesus Christ has inherited the authority to execute all judgment upon men. (**John 5:22**).
3. Jesus Christ is going to inherit the Lordship over both the dead and the living. (**Romans 14:9**)
4. Jesus Christ is going to inherit the whole universe: a new heavens and earth and a new world capital. (**2 Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-2, 23-26**).

5. Jesus Christ is going to inherit all government—an eternal government. (**Isaiah 9:6-7; Hebrews 1:8**)
6. Jesus Christ is going to inherit all power and riches, wisdom and strength, honor and glory and blessing. (**Rev. 5:12**)
7. Jesus Christ is going to inherit all the angels and all the other spiritual authorities and powers. (**1 Peter 3:22**)
8. Jesus Christ is going to inherit a name above every name and every knee shall be bowed before Him vindicating His claim to be both Lord and Savior. (**Phil. 2:9-10**)

**C. (1:2) Jesus Christ, Creator— Creation:** Jesus Christ is the Creator and Maker of the worlds—all of the worlds. This is the third reason why Jesus Christ is superior to the prophets. The word "worlds" (*aiōnas*) can also be translated as ages. Jesus Christ is the creator of both the universe and the ages that roll in one upon another, creator of both the worlds and time as it moves forward from event to event, and generation to generation. The Amplified New Testament states it well: (**Hebrews 1:2**) **Colossians states it even better: (Col. 1:16).**

The point is this: the creation of Christ includes all the worlds (plural) of all the dimensions of being, wherever they are and however many there may be. This is exactly what is meant by the plural "**worlds.**" It is also what is meant when Colossians says that Christ created all things "**that are in heaven, and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dimensions, or principalities, or powers.**"

1. If there are other *visible planets and living beings* in outer space, Christ created them.
2. If there are *invisible worlds and beings* in other dimensions, Christ created them.

It does not matter what kind of world or creatures they may be—thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers—Christ created them all. There is nothing in existence that He has not created. [(RevC) This would include the angels who are ministering spirits to those who are saved. (RevC)] (**See John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Ephes. 3:9; Col. 1:16**).

**D. (1:3) Jesus Christ, Glory:** Jesus Christ possesses the very glory of God. This is the fourth reason why Jesus Christ is superior to the prophets. Note the word "being" (*ōn*). It means "absolute and timeless existence" (A.T. Robertson. *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5. Nashville, TN:

Broadman Press, 1932, p.335). This means that Jesus Christ Himself possessed the glory of God before He ever came into the world. He has always existed in the glory of God; He is eternal.

What does glory mean? It means all the brightness of God—all the brilliance, radiance, splendor, and light of God's Being. It means that God's very presence—in all of His light and purity—dwells among us in the person of Jesus Christ. It meant that in Christ "**dwelt all the fulness [glory] of God**" (Col. 2:9). Men could look at Jesus Christ and see the glory of God in Him—the very light and radiance of God's Being. (See John 1:14, 17:5, 24).

**E. (1:3) Jesus Christ, Deity— Image of God:** Jesus Christ is the express image of God. This is the fifth reason why Jesus Christ is superior to the prophets.

1. The word "express" (*charaktēr*) means the very stamp, mark, and impression—the very reproduction of God. Jesus Christ is "the perfect imprint and very image of [God's] nature."
2. The word "image" (*hupostasis*) means substance. Jesus Christ is the very substance, the very Being, Person, and embodiment of God. (John 10:30, 14:9-10; 2 Cor. 4:4; Phil. 2:6; Hebrews 1:3)

**F. (1:3) Jesus Christ, Deity:** Jesus Christ is the Sustainer of the universe. This is the sixth reason why He is superior to the prophets. No man holds the universe together, but Christ does. God has not created the world and left it to fly through space to take whatever course it will... His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is controlling the world and moving it forward to a climactic moment of renewal and recreation—what the Bible calls the *great day of redemption*. And note how He is holding it together: by the power of His Word. He simply speaks and the laws that hold the world together are set in motion cp. the law of gravity....

It is His Word that holds everything together. It is his love and power...

- that keeps the universe from flying apart and disintegrating.
- that keeps evil from completely conquering and utterly destroying all things. (Col. 1:17; Hebrews 1:3)

**G. (1:3) Jesus Christ, Deity— Redemption:** Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind. This is the seventh reason why He is superior to the prophets. Redemption has not come from some great prophet who has made

purification for our sins. Christ and Christ alone could sacrifice Himself for our sins. How could He do this? In fact, how could any man do this? No man can; this is the point of this passage. Only a perfect Person could ever purify and cleanse men from their sins. This is the reason Jesus Christ had to come to earth and live a perfect life. He had to secure perfect righteousness for man and die as the perfect substitute for man. By so doing, He stands for all men...

- His perfect righteousness stands for all men.
- His sacrificial death stands for all men.

When a man believes in Jesus Christ, truly believes, the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ cover him. God takes the man's faith and honors it; He honors it by *counting* the man as being in the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ. The man is righteous in Christ, and he has already died to sin in Christ. Therefore, the man is purified; his sins are cleansed and washed away. [(RevC) As man is justified through his faith in the life and sacrifice of Christ, Jesus becomes the firstborn of many brethren **Romans 8:29** (RevC)] (1 John 1:7, Rev. 1:5)

**H. (1:3) Jesus Christ, Deity:** Jesus Christ is the supreme Mediator and Intercessor. This is the eighth reason why He is superior to the prophets. He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, sitting there as the great Mediator and Intercessor for man... Christ and Christ alone can sit at the right hand of God. Note two significant points.

1. Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God as the exalted Lord and as the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. [(RevC) His throne is eternal. (RevC)] He is the supreme Being of the universe, the Person who is to be supremely respected and honored, worshipped and served by all beings in both earth and heaven. (**Ephes. 4:10; Phil. 2:9**)
2. Jesus Christ is in the presence of God as our Mediator and Intercessor, as the only Person who has the right to represent man before God. Note: Christ is not exalted to stand as our Prosecutor and Judge; contrariwise, He is before God to represent us, to plead for us, to offer His righteousness and sacrificial death for us. This means a most wonderful thing: someday when we appear before God, if we have trusted Jesus Christ as our Savior, God will be able to deal with us in love and not judgment. Because Jesus Christ stands before God as our Mediator, God will accept all those who have trusted Christ to be their Mediator. He is Remember, however: all those who have rejected Jesus Christ

as the Mediator shall face Jesus Christ as the Sovereign Lord and Judge.  
(Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25-26, 8:1; 1 Tim. 2:5; Hebrews 8:6, 9:15, 9:24,  
12:24; 1 John 2:1)

## END OF LESSON 1

### QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 1

1. **Hebrews 1:1-2** In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by:

- A. New Testament prophets
- B. Angels
- C. **His son**
- D. The apostles

2. T or F The name of Jesus is superior to that of any angel.

3. T or F Jesus Christ is called God's firstborn.

4. T or F Jesus Christ has a throne that will last forever.

5. T or F Angels are ministering spirits to those who are saved.

## BEGIN LESSON 2

### I. Greater Than Angels Hebrews 1:4-2:18

(RevC) There are places in the scripture where angels are being referred to, yet they are called "saints" (Deuteronomy 33:2 in the King James Version) or "sons of God" as in Job 1:6 KJV. This is particularly important as Deut. 33:2 shows the important role angels played in the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. The scripture says that thousands of angels participated in the giving of the law which is further confirmed by Psalm 68:17, Galatians 3:19 and Acts 7:53. Thus angels were held in very high esteem in the eyes of the Jewish people making it necessary for the writer to address the superiority of Christ to both the angels and to the Law of Moses.

Another problem that angels present is that due to their being the servants of God and sometimes used to deliver messages or minister to the needs of man they can mistakenly be revered by man and falsely taken to be intermediaries



between God and man when there is only one true Mediator between the Father and mankind, that being His Son Jesus Christ. (RevC)

**A. So Much Better Than the Angels (Heb. 1:4-14)**

**Heb 1:4-14** Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. 1:7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. 1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: 1:11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 1:12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. 1:13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

**(POSB)** This passage is not denying angels, for they do exist. It is not denying the glory and magnificence of angels, for they are glorious and magnificent beings. It is not denying the ministry and service of angels to God, for they are His ministering spirits. What this passage is attacking is this: the emphasis of some people who exalt angels by seeking experiences with them and by focusing thoughts, attention, and prayers upon them. Angels are not God's intermediaries and mediators between Himself and us. The only intermediary and Mediator between God and us is God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the only Person who can approach God for us. He is the only Person who can hear and answer our prayers and look after and care for us. This does not mean that He may not use an angel to help us. He does use angels in our lives to guide, protect, and encourage us. But the angel serves Christ; the angel is not to be the focus of our attention and thoughts

nor praise and honor... Christ alone is the Lord—both of the angels and us. Therefore, He and He alone is to be the focus of our attention and thoughts, honor and worship. This is the thrust of this passage: Christ is superior—far, far superior to the angels.

1. **(1:4-6) Angels— Jesus Christ, Deity:** Jesus Christ has a more excellent name, the name of God's Son; angels have an inferior name. This is the first proof that Christ is superior to the angels. He is *much better*—far superior—to the angels. And note what it is that makes Him superior: it is His name. His name is far more excellent than their name; it ranks far higher with God than the name of angels.

Christ is the Son of God; angels are not sons of God. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (**Hebrews 1:5; cp. Psalm 2:8**). God said this to Christ, not to the angels. Jesus Christ is the Son of God; He and He alone has been "begotten" (*gegennēka*), that is, born or sent into the world by God. God did not send or cause an angel to be born into the world; He sent His only begotten Son.

- Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God who was sent into the world. (**See John 1:14, 3:16**)
- Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God who was declared to be the Son of God *by the resurrection from the dead*. (**See Romans 1:4**)

Jesus Christ is far, far superior to the angels. He is superior because He is the only begotten Son of God. His name is far more excellent than the name of angels.

## 2. **Christ has a Father-Son relationship with God the Father (v. 5-6).**

Christ alone is the only begotten Son of God; He alone was sent into the world to establish a relationship between God and men; He alone stands as the Mediator and intermediary between God and men. He alone calls upon God as the Father of the only begotten Son, and God alone calls upon Christ as His only begotten Son. God has only one perfectly obedient Son and that is Christ...

Jesus Christ is far, far superior to angels. He is superior because God is a Father and Christ is a Son to God. The name of Jesus Christ is far more excellent to God than the name of angels. (See **2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 2:10, 4:15, 5:9, 7:26; 1Peter 1:19, 2:22**)

3. Jesus Christ is worshipped by angels; they are not worshipped by Him. (See **Heb. 1:6 Cp. Deut. 32:43; Psalm 89:2; 97:7**)

Note the word "firstbegotten" (*prōtotokos*). It means *first* in the sense of priority and superiority, of being above someone else. It is a word that shows dignity, honor, worth; that someone deserves praise. Jesus Christ is the One who is to be worshipped and praised, not angels.

- When Jesus Christ was born into this world, He was attended and worshipped by angels. (**Luke 2:13f**).
- When Jesus Christ was taken into the world above, at His resurrection and ascension, He was attended and worshipped by angels (**Acts 1:10f**).
- When Jesus Christ returns to this earth again, He shall be attended and worshipped by angels (**Matthew 13:41; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 24:31**).

(See also: **Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 5:11-12; Rev. 19:16; Isa. 9:6**)

4. (1:7-9) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Angels:** Jesus Christ is God's heir; angels are only created subjects of God. Scripture says this about angels:

**"Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire" (Hebrews 1:7. Cp. Psalm 1-4:4.)**

Note the word *make*: angels are made, that is created and controlled by God. They are created spirits to serve God in the operation of the universe. Just as wind and fire are used to serve God and men, so angels are used to serve God. But this is not true with Christ. Note two points about Christ.

- a. Jesus Christ is God, the Sovereign Majesty who sits upon the throne of God (**Hebrews 1:8. Cp. Psalm 45:6.**) Note three facts.
- The Son is addressed as "God" by God the Father; that is, God the Father calls Jesus Christ *God*. God the Father is saying that Jesus Christ has the very same nature, being, and character that He has.

Within heaven there is God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

- The Son has a throne that is eternal, forever and ever.
- The Son has an eternal kingdom that is ruled by the sceptre of righteousness.

The point is clear: the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is not a created servant to God; He is the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. He is God Himself who rules and reigns over the universe. He is the One who sits in dignity and dominion over the universe, not angels. They are created beings, made to serve God just as wind and fire have been made to serve God and men. (See **John 3:31; Eph.1:19-22; Phil. 2:9; 1Peter 3:22**)

- b.** Jesus Christ has been anointed with the oil of gladness above all fellows. (See **Heb. 1:9 Cp. Psalm 45:7-8**)

Who is meant by "fellows"? It has to mean all creatures both in heaven and earth, for no being or person nor group of beings or persons are equal to Him. He is anointed...

**Thought:** The point is striking: no angel has been anointed above others as God. No angel has come to earth and secured righteousness for man; only Jesus Christ has done that. Therefore, we must look to Jesus Christ for righteousness, not to angels. Jesus Christ is the only Person who can make us acceptable to God. Jesus Christ is the only Person who can stir God to count us righteous and acceptable to Him. (See **Romans 5:1; 2Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:6; Phil. 1:11**)

- 5. (1:10-14) Jesus Christ, Deity— Angels:** Jesus Christ is the Creator and Sovereign Lord; angels are created subjects and ministering spirits. Note three significant facts.

- a.** Jesus Christ is the Creator of earth and heaven. (See **Heb. 1:10-12 Cp. Psalm 102:25-27**)

Jesus Christ created the universe; angels did not. As Creator, Jesus Christ is above the world; He is the Sovereign Ruler of the world. It is true that the world is changing and that it passes through many stages. It is aging and deteriorating and dissolving, but not Christ. He is unchangeable. The earth will perish, but Jesus Christ will remain eternally. He is above and beyond changing. Therefore, He rules over the

world. He is sovereign over its destiny. This world will actually be destroyed by a holocaust of fire and recreated into a new heavens and earth... The point of the present passage is to show that Jesus Christ is superior to angels because He is the Creator and the Sovereign Ruler who is unchangeable. This makes Him far superior to angels. They actually owe their existence and allegiance to Him as well as their destiny.

(See John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:1-2)

b. Jesus Christ is the exalted and Sovereign Lord; angels are not.

**"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" (Hebrews 1:13. Cp. Psalm 110:1.)**

Christ has finished His work upon earth as the faithful and obedient Son of God—perfectly faithful and obedient in dying for the sins of men. He has conquered and triumphed over the forces of sin and death for men and made it possible for them to be saved and to live eternally with God. Therefore, God has highly exalted Christ to His right hand. And Christ shall sit there until He is ready to return in judgment and to subject His enemies (make them His footstool).

**Thought:** The point is this: at no time has God ever told an angel to sit on His right hand nor to conquer the enemies of men. But He has given this right and authority to Christ. Therefore, Christ is the One to whom men are to look. Christ is to be the focus of men's attention and thoughts, the One to whom men are to look for salvation and life—not angels. (See Romans 14:9; John 1:36; Rev. 5:12)

c. Angels are the ministering spirits of Christ sent forth to minister to believers. The heirs of salvation are those who believe in Jesus Christ. Note that angels are not *lords*, but servants. They are servants of Christ. They are spirits, spiritual beings of the spiritual world, and they exist to carry out the will of Christ. The will of Christ for angels is that they minister to believers—to minister to men and women for whom Christ has done so much: purchased their salvation and given them eternal life. (See Acts 12:7, 27::23; Heb. 1:14; Exodus 14:19; Psalm 91:11; Daniel 6:22)

## B. Warning One: The Danger of Neglecting Salvation—of Drifting Away from Salvation (HEB. 2:1-4)

**Heb 2:1-4** Therefore **we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.** 2:2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 2:4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

**(2:1-4) Introduction:** this is the first of several warnings issued in the Book of Hebrews. It is a warning to believers: there is the danger of neglect—of drifting away from salvation...

1. **(2:1) Warning— Backsliding:** the warning is strong. We must heed the truths we have heard lest we slip away from them. What are the truths which we have heard? Note **Hebrews 2:3**: they are the truths of salvation, of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The word "heed" (*prosechein*) means to give attention to; to listen very carefully. Note how intense the warning is: we must not only heed the gospel, we must earnestly heed it. And even more than this, we must give *more earnest heed* to the gospel. We are to pay the utmost attention to the gospel of salvation... God's final revelation, the last word that He will ever speak to man, has been given in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation has now been offered to man; man can now become acceptable to God and live eternally with God...

What does it mean to slip away from the gospel of salvation? The word "slip" (*pararuōmen*) means to flow past; to glide by; to slip past...

William Barclay says, "It is regularly used of something which has carelessly or thoughtlessly been allowed to slip away and become lost" (*The Letter to the Hebrews*. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1955, p.13). But there is another meaning to the word *slip* that is even more descriptive. *Slip* can mean to drift by or to drift past. It is the picture of a ship which drifts past the harbor. It drifts by the harbor because of the captain's...

- miscalculations      • carelessness
- lethargy and              • in attentiveness
- complacency      • drunkenness
- sleepiness

...The point is well made: we must all anchor our lives to the truths of salvation. We must earnestly heed them. We must heed them lest the ship of our lives drift away from the safety of salvation. (See **Matt. 19:21-22; Luke 9:62; John 6:63-65; Heb. 10:38; 2 Peter 2:15, 2:20; Rev. 2:4; Deut. 4:9, 6:12,8:11; Psalm 9:17, 78:10-11; Isa. 177:10-11; Jer. 2:13, 3:21, 15:6**)

2. **(2:2) Judgment— Law— Angels:** this is the first reason we must not slip away from salvation, and note how strong the warning is. Judgment under the law of God was very strict; therefore, beware—be warned. "The word spoken by angels" refers to the law of God which was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai (**Exodus 19:1f**). These great and magnificent creatures stood as the mediators between men and God. This was a great moment and it gave a great thing to man—the law of God.

The point is this: judgment under the law was very strict. Every transgression and disobedience had its appropriate punishment. If a person broke a law, he was judged, condemned, and bore the punishment laid out by the law.

- Transgression (*parabasis*) means to step aside, to step over the line. It means to go against what the law says and to do what it forbids. To violate the law of God is sin and the violator is to be punished.
- Disobedience (*parakoē*) means to neglect, refuse, and fail to obey the law of God. To disobey God is sin and the disobedient are to be punished.

The great danger was to deliberately reject the law of God. If a person deliberately rejected God's law, he was sentenced to die, and the punishment was irrevocable. (See **Num. 15:30; Rom. 6:23; Isa. 13:11, 26:21, 59:18; Jer. 21:14**)

3. **(2:3-4) Judgment— Salvation:** this is the second reason we must not slip away from salvation. Judgment under the Lord's Word is to be much more severe than judgment under the law. Why? There are three reasons.

- a.** There shall be no escape from judgment because salvation is so great. Think of all the sin and evil upon earth... Think of death. Think of all this evil, and yet there is still so much more evil in the world that we could never even come close to listing it.

This is what salvation is; this is what makes salvation so great.

- Salvation is the deliverance from all the evil and suffering and death of this world...But in addition to this it is so much more.
- Salvation saves us for God and it delivers us to God. Salvation makes us acceptable to God, and it gives us eternal life, the glorious privilege of living forever with God. But salvation is even more than this.
- Salvation gives us a new heaven and earth, a perfect world in which to live and work forever and ever—a world in which there will be no suffering or death... But salvation is even more than this.
- Salvation is to be reward heaped upon reward. There are to be mansions and enormous dwelling places. There are to be crowns, and ruling and reigning, duties and responsibilities—a glorious life of serving and worshipping the Lord God Himself—forever and ever. But having said this, salvation is even more.
- Salvation gives us a Savior, the Son of God Himself, even the Lord Jesus Christ. It gives us a Savior who loves us—who has loved us so much that he sacrificed His life and died for us. It gives us a Savior whom we can love and serve, a Savior to whom we can commit our lives and loyalty and know that it is for the highest good.

So much more could be said, but the picture is clear. If we neglect so great a salvation, how shall we escape? We cannot. There is no way God will ever let us escape if we neglect the salvation of His own Son.

- b.** There shall be no escape from judgment because the word of salvation was given by the Lord Himself. He did not send the gospel of salvation to earth through angels. He Himself brought the gospel of salvation to men... If we neglect so great a salvation, the judgment that will fall upon us is bound to be much more severe.
- c.** There shall be no escape from judgment because there have been so many witnesses to salvation. The Lord Himself was the first to bear witness of salvation; then the eyewitnesses of His life upon earth proclaimed the salvation that is in Him. And note: God Himself bore testimony by giving the disciples power to work signs and wonders and many miracles. In addition to this, God endowed believers with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.



God changed the lives of believers and gave them the power and gifts to live for Him and to serve Him in carrying forth the message of salvation to a world that is lost and dying.

The point is this: with so many witnesses, no person can ever expect to escape the judgment of God if he neglects the salvation of Christ—not when the two primary witnesses are God Himself and the Lord Jesus Christ, God's very own Son. (See **Rom. 2:3; 1Thes. 5:3; Heb. 2:3, 10:30, 12:25; Jer. 11:11, Ezek. 33:9**)

### **C. Christ Secures Supremacy for Man, 2:5-13**

**(2:5-13) Introduction:**... Note **Hebrews 2:6-8**; it is a quotation from **Psalms 8:4-6**. The Psalm was written concerning man, the great glory that God has given to man. But the words can be applied to man and to Christ. What is being said is true of both. But to whom do they apply? Who is Scripture talking about, man or Christ? The Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest says:

*"The question as to whether the Messiah or man is spoken of in **Hebrews 2:6-8 [Psalm 8]**, is settled easily and finally by the Greek word translated 'visit.' The Psalmist is exclaiming as to the insignificance of man in the question, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? That is clear. But to whom do the words 'son of man' refer, to the Messiah who is called the Son of man, or to mankind? The Greek word 'visit' is episkeptomai. The word means 'to look upon in order to help or to benefit, to look after, to have a care for.' This clearly indicates that the son of man spoken of here is the human race. God looks upon the human race in order to help or to benefit it. Thus, the picture in **Hebrews 2:6-8** is that of the human race in Adam" (Hebrews. "Wuest Word Studies," Vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1947, p.55).*

A.T. Robertson, another Greek scholar, points out that "son of man" in this passage does not have the definite article "the." It does not say "the son of man" which is the title used by Jesus so often to refer to Himself. But it says "son of man" which means man, the same as it does in Ezekiel. God addressed Ezekiel as "son of man" some eighty times (cp. **Ezekiel 21:2; Ezekiel 30:2**) (*Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5, p.344)...

1. **Heb 2:5-6** For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

**(2:5-6) God— World— History— Man:** God's plan for the world to come is to subject the world to man. This is an astounding statement that staggers the human mind. To think that the future world is to be subjected to man, that man is to rule and reign over the world is just unbelievable to the natural mind. As **Hebrews 2:6** so accurately says: "What is man"—what is man that God should be mindful of him? Why should God exalt such a creature as man...

- who curses, rebels, ignores, neglects, and rejects God?
- who is so lowly a creature that he is barely a microscopic speck in a universe of stars and planets...?

When we have cursed God and have rejected and rebelled against Him so much, why would He not just go ahead and condemn us to an eternity of hell? Why would He not just go ahead and give the future world to angels and let them rule and reign over it for Him? The answer is the subject of the next two points, of **Hebrews 2:6-13**. The present point is to declare the astounding fact: God has not subjected the world to come to angels, but to man. We are to rule and reign over the future world—rule and reign with God's very own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note one other fact: ruling and reigning with Christ—having dominion over the future world—is part of the *great salvation* that Christ has provided for us, and it is a great part. This is what this passage is doing: elaborating and explaining more fully the great salvation Christ has wrought for us. So great a salvation involves a new world, a world that is ruled over by Christ and His followers. We shall rule and reign with Christ. We shall have dominion over the world to come, ruling and reigning and serving Christ forever and ever. **[(RevC)]** The death of Christ on the cross not only destroyed the power of death, that being the devil, but through His death Christ provided grace (unmerited favor) for

all mankind which is secured by faith in His atoning sacrifice for sin.  
(RevC)] (See Job 7:17-18; Psalm 8:3-6)

2. **Heb. 2:6-8** But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?  
2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:  
2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

**(2:6-8) Man— God— History:** God's creation and plan for man is covered in three clear steps.

- a. God created man to be lower than the angels for a little time. *Little* probably refers to time, not to being or state and position. When God created Adam or man in the Garden of Eden, he was created lower than the heavenly beings, but higher than all earthly creatures. Man was created lower than the angels, but note: man was to be lower than the angels for only a little time. From the very beginning God has planned to exalt man.
- b. God created man to crown Him with glory and honor.  
Man had everything that was necessary to control and rule over the earth, and most of all he could walk and fellowship with God in an unbroken communion and worship. Just as the Scripture says...
  - God set man over creation—over the works of His hands.
  - God put all things in subjection under man's feet or control.
  - God left nothing that was not put under man's control.

What does this mean? It means that in the original creation man (Adam) was crowned with glory and honor, and he held the highest of positions upon earth. Man was in control of all things upon earth, exalted ever so highly. There was peace upon earth, affection between man and animals, and all of nature was under control... The Garden of Eden was a perfect place from which man could rule a perfect earth—if he could only prove faithful and do as God said.

Man was the most noble and excellent creature imaginable. Fallen man just cannot come close to imagining what it was like in the

Garden of Eden. But this brings us to the terrible tragedy of man.  
(See **Gen. 1:26-28, 2:7; Job 33:4; Psalm 8:5, 100:3**)

- c. Man is presently seen in a fallen state. His authority and control over the world is not seen—not today, not yet. He is a far cry from being the noble creature he was supposed to be, who has himself and his world in subjection and under control. In fact, the very opposite is true: man does not control the world; the world controls him.

...And this is the most terrible tragedy of all, for man was originally created to control and have dominion over the earth. But he no longer controls the earth; he dies and leaves the earth.

What happened to cause such a fall for man?... *Sin—not doing what God said—caused Adam to fall.* And sin—simply not doing what God says—will destroy any person. God knows what needs to be done; He knows what it is that brings life to a person. Therefore, if a person does not do what God says, he loses life. He becomes enslaved to disobeying God, and disobeying God ends up in death. Kenneth Wuest states what the result of sin was upon Adam as well as it can be stated:

*"Adam through his fall into sin, lost the dominion he had before enjoyed. He was no longer master of himself. He had become a fallen creature, with a totally depraved nature. He was a slave to sin. The animal kingdom was subservient to him not now through affection but fear. The ground, instead of yielding only good things, now produced also thorns, weeds, and other harmful things. Extremes of heat and cold, poisonous reptiles, earthquakes, typhoons, hurricanes, all conspired to make his life a constant battle to survive. He had lost the dominion over all these things"*  
(Hebrews, Vol. 2, p.56f).

(See **Gen. 1:26-30, 2:17, 3:19; Rom. 5:12, 6:23, 8:6; 1Tim. 5:6; Prov. 21:6; Isa. 59:2, 644:7; Ezek. 18:4**)

### 3. (2:9-13) Jesus Christ— God— History:

**Heb 2:9-13** But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the **captain** of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 2:12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 2:13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

**(2:9-13) Jesus Christ— God— History:** God's plan for Christ is the most wonderful thing in all the world. It offers the only hope man has of ever fulfilling his purpose upon earth. Man is fallen and enslaved by evil, and he lives in a corruptible and dying world that is engulfed in suffering. But in the midst of all the suffering and death, he sees Jesus. And in seeing Jesus, he sees hope—hope that all the sin and evil, death and suffering of this world can be conquered and overcome. How? By what God has planned in Christ; by what God has done in Christ.

- a. God made Christ a little lower than the angels to suffer and taste death for every man. The word "taste" means to experience or to partake of. God sent Christ into the world to experience death for every man.

Note the words "**crowned with glory and honor.**" Even when Jesus was upon earth, He possessed the glory and honor of God. He had the full measure of God's Spirit. He obeyed God perfectly, never sinning. Therefore, He secured the perfect righteousness; He stood as the Perfect and Ideal Man before God. This meant a most wonderful thing: as the Ideal and Perfect Man, whatever Christ did would stand for man...

The point is this: Christ has made it possible for man to be restored to his destined glory and dominion. Christ has made it possible for man to live eternally with God and to fulfill his purpose for God. Christ has made it possible for man to recover his dominion, to recover his rule and reign in the world that is to come. This was part of God's eternal

plan for Christ.

- b. God sent Christ into this world to show man the very nature of God (**Hebrews 2:10**). Note what Scripture says: it became God—it was fitting and appropriate to the very nature of God—to create all things and to create them for Himself. This is a tremendous statement, a glorious truth. It tells us why God created the world and why He created us. He created us *for Himself*:

- that we might know, believe, and understand Him (**Isaiah 43:10**).
- that we might know the riches of the glory of His grace and of His kindness toward us (**Ephes. 2:7**).

God wants us to know Him—His glory, majesty, and dominion, His love, grace, and kindness... How was He going to reveal His nature of love, grace, and kindness? There was only one way: through Christ. God had to send His own Son to earth to reveal Himself, to show man that He was loving, gracious, and kind—that He wanted to flood His grace and kindness upon man. This He did in two ways.

- (I) God reveals who He is—He reveals His love and kindness—by bringing many sons to glory. When a person believes that Jesus Christ died and arose for him, the death and resurrection of Christ covers the person. God takes the person's belief and counts it as the death and resurrection of Christ. God identifies the person with Christ; He actually counts the person as having died and been resurrected with Christ. Therefore, the person stands before God in the righteousness of Christ; the person stands before God as righteous. Consequently, when God is ready for the person to depart this world, the person is righteous and acceptable to God. God is able to transfer the person into glory. Quicker than the eye can blink, God takes the believer into heaven, right into His own presence. Through Jesus Christ—through His death and resurrection—God is able to bring many sons into glory. Thus the eternal purpose of God for men is fulfilled.

- The believer shall know God face to face; he shall know the riches of the glory of God's grace and kindness when he enters heaven. (See **Matt. 13:3; John 14:2-3, 17:24; 2Cor. 4:17, 5:8; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; 1Thes. 4:17; 2Tim. 2:10**)

- The believer lives before God in glory and praise and worship. He shall serve the Lord Jesus Christ, ruling and reigning with Him forever in the new heavens and earth. (See **Matt. 16:27, 25:23, 34; Luke 1:33, 12:42-44; Rom. 8:16-17; 2Tim. 4:1; Titus 3:7; Rev. 5:10, 20:4, 21:1-7; Isa. 9:7; Jer. 23:5, Dan. 7:14**)

(II). God reveals who He is, His love and kindness, by making the captain of our salvation perfect through suffering. The captain of our salvation is, of course, Jesus Christ. The word "captain" (*archēgos*) means the pathfinder, the pioneer, the author, the founder, the originator. It means the one who blazes forth and cuts through something so that others may follow. Jesus Christ opened up the way or trail to God. This He did by suffering all the experiences of men—perfectly. He remained perfect through all His sufferings. [(RevC) By the suffering of Christ through the time of his temptation in the wilderness he is able to help us when we are tempted. He is there knowing the way of salvation and is ready to deliver us as we put our trust in his Word. (RevC)] He never sinned; He never failed, not even once. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered—perfectly. And by such, He secured a perfect and an eternal righteousness for man...

God reveals who He is in Christ. We know that God is loving, gracious, and kind because He sent Christ to suffer for us. It is His sufferings—all that He bore and endured in purchasing our salvation—that shows us what God is like. God is love... (See **Rom. 5:8; John 3:16; Eph. 2:4-7; 1John 3:1**)

- c. God sent Christ to share equally with the sanctified who are believers. Note: the person who sanctifies and sets believers apart is Christ. The word *sanctify* means to be set apart and separated to God. It means that a person has turned away from the world and separated himself from the world and its sins and has set himself apart to live for Christ. Note these glorious facts.

(I) Both Christ and believers are of One, that is, of God. They have the same Father (**Hebrews 2:11**). Through Christ believers are born again, spiritually born of God. They are adopted into the family of God. God becomes their Father just as He is the Father of Christ.

Through Christ believers have the same Father as Christ. (See **Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:4-6**)

(II) Both Christ and believers share the same position, the position of brothers (**Hebrews 2:11**). Christ is not ashamed to call a believer His brother. But remember why: because believers trust Him as their Savior and have set apart their lives to live for Him. (See **Matt. 12:50; Rom. 8:16-17; Eph. 2:19, 3:15**)

(III) Both Christ and believers share the same worship (**Hebrews 2:12**). This is a picture of worship, of Christ declaring the name of God to His brothers in the midst of the church or congregation (**cp. Psalm 22:22**). Christ lives within the hearts and lives of believers, stirring them to learn more and more about God and to worship Him more and more. (See **Rom. 15:6; 1Cor. 6:20; Heb. 13:15; 1 Peter 2:9; Psalm 67:3**)

(IV) Christ and believers share the same truth (**Hebrews 2:13. Cp. Psalm 18:2; Isaiah 8:17.**) When Christ was upon earth, He trusted God perfectly, never sinning or disobeying Him. Therefore, Christ is able to present believers to God. Christ leads believers to trust God and to learn to trust Him more and more. (See **John 6:28-29; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 6:16; Heb. 11:6; 1 John 3:23**)

## END OF LESSON 2

### QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 2

1. T or F Those who reject God's salvation will not escape punishment.
2. T or F Jesus was made a little lower than the angels when he became man.
3. T or F By his death on the cross Jesus destroyed the power of death-- that is, the devil
4. Christ's death on the cross provided grace for:
  - A. Only certain people
  - B. Religious people
  - C. Jewish people
  - D. All mankind.
5. T or F As a result of Christ suffering when he was tempted, he is able to help us when we are tempted.



## BEGIN LESSON 3

### 2. Christ Secures the Triumphant Victory for Man, 2:14-18

**Heb 2:14-18** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 2:15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 2:16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

**(POSB) (2:14-18) Introduction:** man is a defeated being. He has lost the glory and honor and the dominion that God gave him at creation. He has lost his Garden of Eden, his perfect world and his control over it. Man has fallen from his exalted position in the original creation. And not only is man now enslaved by a corruptible world, man is held in bondage...

- to the sufferings of this world
- to death and to the fear of death (**Hebrews 2:15**).

#### 1. (2:14-16) Jesus Christ, Purpose— Work— Nature— Salvation: Jesus Christ became man's great Deliverer. How? By doing five things.

- a. Jesus Christ delivered man by *willingly becoming a man*: Christ "took part" of human flesh; He "took part" of the very same flesh and blood that human beings partake of. But there is a significant difference between a newborn baby who became a "partaker of flesh and blood" at birth and Christ who *took part* of the same. Christ willingly "took part" of flesh and blood, whereas a child had no say-so in the matter. Everyone of us has been born by an act of some other man and woman; not one of us had anything whatsoever to do with the matter. But Jesus Christ chose—He deliberately determined and purposed—to *take part* of human flesh and blood. He voluntarily took part of human nature—of a nature that was not a natural part of His being. This is seen in the Greek words used to describe what He did.

- "Children are partakers [*koinōneō*] of flesh and blood." The word means to share, to be partners of a common human nature.
- The word used of Christ is entirely different: Christ took part (*metechō*) of human nature. The word means to hold with. The idea is that Christ took hold of human nature and held human nature with man. He added human nature to His divine nature. His human nature was an addition to His divine nature. As God the Son, Jesus Christ had absolutely no part of flesh and blood, but as the Son of Man, He took hold of man's nature. The point is this: Jesus Christ became man, and as Man He took part of flesh and blood, willingly and voluntarily. Jesus Christ loves us so much that He would pay the ultimate price to deliver us. He would humble Himself to such a degree that He would leave heaven above in order to come to earth and live as a Man. **(See Isa. 7:14, 9:6; Luke 1:31; John 1:14; Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:7; 1Tim. 3:16)**

- b.** Jesus Christ delivered us by dying for us. We die, and there is no escaping the fact... We die, never to return to one another in this world. Only a *perfect being* does not die... We die because we are short of what we should be; short of morality, righteousness, justice, and goodness.

The point to see is this: we die because of sin, because we are short of perfection. Death is the result of sin. **[(RevC)** Sin is the act of rebellion against God. It was the rebellion (sin) of Israel in going after other gods that kept them from never fully entering God's rest that was promised to them. Sin ultimately leads to death but there are other consequences of sin that are a prelude to the ultimate price—death which for the lost is eternal separation from God who is life. Sin turns that heart away from God. **(RevC)]** If we are going to ever become perfect and live forever, sin and death have to be taken care of and removed. If sin and death can be removed, then we can live forever. This is what Jesus Christ has done for us: He died for us. He took our sin and imperfection upon Himself and suffered death for us. ... We are delivered from sin and death through Jesus Christ. But remember, it is only through Jesus Christ... God will do anything for the person who honors His Son by believing in Him. If a person honors Christ so much that he surrenders and commits his life to Christ, God will deliver that person from death. **(See John 3:16, 3:36; Rom. 6:23, 10:9-10; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18)**

- c. Jesus Christ destroys the power of the devil over sin and death. As noted in the previous point, man dies because of sin. The devil was the *first sinner*, and he is the one who tempts a man to sin. The devil has the power to tempt and entice men to sin; therefore, he has the power to lead men down the road to death...

...Sin is: doing one's own thing—simply rebelling against God and His control... in one's life. Sin is...living selfishly instead of living for God and being thankful to God. Sin is rebelling against God and His Word... It is because of this that men die and have to face separation and judgment from God. And note: this is clearly understandable:

- If a person follows the devil and has nothing to do with God in this life, how can he have anything to do with God in the next life?
- If a person does not know God in this world, how can he expect to know God in the next world?
- If a person chooses to live without God in this world, then he is bound to live without God in the next world.

Very simply, the devil has chosen to go his own way and to have nothing to do with God. And he is like so many people in this world: he is out to entice and to get as many people as he can to satisfy his lusts.

The point is this: Jesus Christ has broken the power of the devil over death. He did this by taking man's sins, guilt, and judgment upon Himself and by dying for man. Man is now delivered from both sin and death by Jesus Christ. If a person believes that Jesus Christ died for him...God counts that person as having already died in Jesus Christ...

- Satan no longer has the power to enslave man in sin and evil unless a man rejects Jesus Christ and continues to follow the way of Satan and sin.
- Satan no longer has the power to hold man in death unless a man rejects Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ alone has broken and destroyed the power of Satan over sin and death. The word "destroyed" (*katargēsē*) means to bring to nothing, to make inoperative... Jesus Christ has ...made the power of Satan ineffective and inoperative... (**See John 12:31-32, 1:30-31; Col. 1:13-14, 2:15; 1John 3:8**)

- d. Jesus Christ has delivered men from the fear of death... Death is so feared that most men simply will not think about it; they push the thoughts of death out of their minds... And above all, men dread the sense which

every man has within him—the sense of coming judgment and the sense that all wrongs will be made right... The teaching of Scripture is that death must be feared...

- Scripture says that death and judgment are terrible for the sinner: it is better to face the most evil person on earth than to face God after death. An earthly man...can only take our life from us. He cannot destroy our soul. But this is not true with death and God. God can destroy both body and soul. **(See Matt. 10:28)**
- Scripture says that death and judgment are terrible for the sinner: it is better to have never been born than to be born and enter death as a sinner and have to face the judgment to come. **(See Matt. 26:24)**
- Scripture says that death and judgment are terrible for the sinner: it would be better to enter life being blind and without hands and feet than to die and have to face judgment. **(See Matt. 18:7-9)**
- Scripture says that death and judgment are terrible for the sinner: it would be better to escape death and the coming judgment than to possess all the wealth in the world. **(See Matt. 16:26-27; Mark 8:36-38)**
- Scripture says that death and judgment are terrible for the sinner: the pain experienced is greater than all the pain ever experienced in the world. That is, if you took all the physical pain ever experienced in the world and packaged it into one box, that pain would be nothing in comparison to the pain of a sinner dying and having to face judgment. How could this be? Because death and judgment for the sinner are eternal; they never end. **(See Matthew 3:10, 7:19, 8:12, 13:42, 18:8, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30, 25:41; Mark 9:43-46; Luke 3:9, 13:28; John 15:6).**

But this is the point of the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has delivered us from the fear of death... When we come to that moment of passing from this life into the next, God will transport us into His presence quicker than the blink of an eye. We never have to taste death; we never have to experience death... Jesus Christ has delivered man from death and condemnation—delivered all who will really believe and commit their lives to Him. **(See Isaiah 25:8; 1 Cor. 15:26, 15:54; 2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 21:4; 2 Tim. 4:18; Hebrews 2:14-15; Psalm 23:3).**

- e. Jesus Christ has delivered us from the bondage of the flesh. The words "he took" (*epilambanetai*) mean to take; to lay hold of; to take by the hand... He took us by the hand and delivered us. The picture is that of

love and tender care, of His delivering us out of the bondages of the flesh and of human nature. (See Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11; Col. 3:11; cp. Romans 2:28-29; 1 Peter 5:7; Psalm 18:35; Isaiah 41:10, 46:4). (POSB)

## 2. (POSB) (2:17-18) Jesus Christ, High Priest— Propitiation:

**Hebrews 2:17-18** Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Jesus Christ became man's great High Priest. This was the very reason He was made like man, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest. Jesus Christ was "behooved," constrained and moved to be a man in order to sympathize and feel for man. He wanted to go through all the trials and temptations of man, to experience all of life as man experiences it. Why? ...There were four reasons.

- a. Jesus Christ became the great High Priest so that He could be merciful to man. Man needs mercy. Mercy is his only hope of ever living with God. ...Jesus Christ was made like man so that He could be a merciful High Priest.
- b. Jesus Christ became the High Priest so that He could be faithful to God. God loves man, ...therefore, he willed that Christ come to earth and deliver man from sin and death and judgment to come. And Christ was faithful. He came to earth so that He might be a faithful High Priest to God *for man*.
- c. Jesus Christ became the High Priest so that He could make propitiation for the sins of the people. The word "propitiation" (*hilaskomai*) means to sacrifice or to make a covering, satisfaction, payment, or appeasement for sin.

It was, of course, the task of the High Priest to offer up the animal sacrifice for the sins of the people. This is the picture being painted of Christ. But note one distinct difference: Jesus Christ Himself is the propitiation for man's sin... It was His blood: His sacrifice, His death, His

sufferings, His cross that caused God to accept Jesus as the propitiation. It is the blood of Christ that God accepts as...

- the *sacrifice* for our sins.
- the *covering* for our sins.
- the *satisfaction* for our sins.
- the *payment* for the penalty of our sins.
- the *appeasement* of His wrath against sin.

When Christ died for man...

- the righteousness of God was satisfied.
- the perfection of God was satisfied.
- the justice of God was satisfied.

Jesus Christ became the *propitiation*—the covering and satisfaction for the sins of man. He became the High Priest in order to make propitiation for our sins. (See **Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:1-2, 4:10; Luke 18:13**).

d. Jesus Christ became the High Priest so that He could succor man when he faces the trials and temptations of life. The word "succor" (*boētheō*) means to help, aid, relieve, assist; to be so eager to help that one runs to the cry of a person. ...Just think! He has been made like us in order to feel with us and deliver us. He has become the perfect High Priest. He needed to do this in order to experience every situation, condition, and trial of man. He experienced the most humiliating experiences imaginable. He experienced...

- being born to an unwed mother (**Matthew 1:18-19**).
- being born in a stable, the worst of conditions (**Luke 2:7**).
- being born to poor parents (**Luke 2:24**).
- having his life threatened as a baby (**Matthew 2:13f**).
- being the cause of unimaginable sorrow (**Matthew 2:16f**).
- having to be moved and shifted about as a baby (**Matthew 2:13f**).
- being reared in a despicable place, Nazareth (**Luke 2:39**).
- having His father die during His youth
- having to support His mother and brothers and sisters
- having no home, not even a place to lay His head (**Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58**).
- being hated and opposed by religionists (**Mark 14:1-2**).
- being charged with insanity (**Mark 3:21**).
- being charged with demon possession (**Mark 3:22**).
- being opposed by His own family (**Mark 3:31-32**).
- being rejected, hated, and opposed by listeners (**Matthew 13:53-58; Luke 4:28-29**).

- being betrayed by a close friend (**Mark 14:10-11, 18**).
- being left alone, rejected, and forsaken by all of His friends (**Mark 14:50**).
- being tried before the high court of the land on the charge of treason (**John 18:33**).
- being executed by crucifixion, the worst possible death (**John 19:16f**).

The point to note is this: in each of these experiences His suffering reached the depth of humiliation. Christ stooped to the lowest point of human experience in every condition in order to become the *Perfect Sympathizer* (Savior). This is the reason He can now identify with and feel for any person's circumstances... (See **John 1:1, 18, 14:21; Heb. 2:16-18, 4:14-16; Psalm 103:13; Isa. 63:9**) (POSB)

### III. (POSB) Christ is Superior to Moses, Hebrews 3:1-6

**(3:1-6) Introduction:** Jesus Christ is superior to all men. No matter who the person is, Jesus Christ is superior to him. Moses is considered by the Jews and by many others to be one of the greatest men who has ever lived. He was the great emancipator of the Jewish people from Egyptian slavery and the great leader who gave birth to the Jewish people as a nation. But as great as these feats were, he was above all else the great law-giver, not only to Israel, but to the world. People and nations who have sought freedom have based their legal system upon the ten commandments and other laws given by Moses. However as great as Moses was, there is still One who is superior to him. There is a Person to whom all mankind should look and base their lives and governments upon: that Person is the Lord Jesus Christ...

#### A. BELIEVERS—JESUS CHRIST (HEB. 3:1)

**Heb 3:1** Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

1. **(3:1) Believers—Jesus Christ:** consider Christ Jesus. The word "consider" (*katanoēō*) means to fix one's thoughts and mind, attention and eyes upon Jesus Christ. It means to concentrate; to seek to grasp; to focus and to be attentive in order to learn about Jesus Christ. Note: this exhortation is written to believers.

- a. Believers should fix their attention upon Jesus Christ because of who they are.

- (I) Believers are holy brothers. The word "holy" (*hagioi*) means to be set apart or separated to Christ. It means that we have turned away from the unclean things of the world and from the religions of the world and have turned to Christ. We are holy, set apart to be a brother to Christ. Therefore, we should be following and focusing our attention upon Christ.
- (II) Believers are partakers of the heavenly calling. We have been called by Christ to live with God in heaven. We are not to live for this earth; we are to live for heaven. Therefore, our attention is to be fixed upon heaven, especially upon Christ who is our glorious Savior and who has made it possible for us to live in heaven.

b. Believers should fix their attention upon Jesus Christ because of who Christ is.

- (I) Jesus Christ is the *Apostle* of our confession. The word *apostle* means a person who is sent forth as an ambassador: sent forth by a king or a country on a special mission with a special message. And note: the person is always sent forth with the full authority and power of the king and country which he represents. This is Jesus Christ. Note the word *profession* or *confession*: we confess that Jesus Christ is the Supreme Apostle of our faith and lives.
- (II) Jesus Christ is the High Priest of our confession.

## B. (3:2) Moses— Jesus Christ— Faithfulness:

**Hebrews 3:2** Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

Jesus Christ was faithful to God even as Moses was faithful. God appointed Moses as the first great leader over the *house of God*. In the eyes of the Jews Moses has always been looked upon as one of the greatest leaders ever produced by the world... (See Numbers 12:6-8)

1. In the eyes of the Jews no one was as great as Moses. Moses was superior to all other men, for he had been used so greatly by God



and had been so faithful to God.

2. But note: there is another person who has also been appointed by God and who has been faithful to God: the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. He was faithful as the *Apostle of God*: the One who represented and spoke of God; the One who revealed and showed us exactly what God is like and how we can become acceptable to God. Jesus Christ was faithful in proclaiming God's message of salvation to the world.

He was faithful as the High Priest of God: the One who became the propitiation for our sins; the One who represents God to us and represents us to God; the One who stands between God and us.

4. Moses was faithful, and he stands as one of the most faithful men who has ever lived. But Jesus Christ was far more faithful. He stands as the very embodiment of faithfulness. He was perfectly faithful to God's appointment.
  - He stands as the perfect and supreme Apostle or Ambassador of God.
  - He stands as the perfect and supreme High Priest or Mediator of God.

(See 2 Thes. 3:3; 2Tim 2:13; Heb. 2:17, 10:23; Rev. 1:5)

#### C. (3:3-4) Moses— Jesus Christ, Creator:

**Hebrews 3:3-4** For this *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. <sup>4</sup> For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God.

Jesus Christ is the builder of the house; Moses was only a resident of the house. What is the house built by Christ?

- the house of the world or universe (**Hebrews 3:4**).
- the house of God's people or believers (**Hebrews 3:6**).

1. Every house has to have a builder. A house does not appear out of nowhere. The same is true of the universe and of believers. The universe did not appear out of nowhere nor did believers. The foundation of the universe and of believers was laid by someone. By whom? Note **Hebrews 3:4**:

**"For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God."**

2. God built the house of the universe and the house of believers. But note the point: **Hebrews 3:3** declares that Jesus Christ built the house. Jesus Christ is being declared to be God—to be God the Son—to be as much God as God the Father—to possess the very nature of God, the power and knowledge and wisdom to plan and create the world. This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews declared in **Hebrews 1**. (See **Heb. 1:2, 10-12**)

Remember: Moses is counted as the greatest man who ever lived... The point is this: Jesus Christ is greater; He is far superior, counted worthy of far more glory than Moses. Why? Because Moses was only a man—only a resident in the universe—only one believer in the house of God... But not Jesus Christ. He made the house. He laid the foundation of the universe and of the house of God's people. (See **John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Ephes. 3:9; Col. 1:16**).

#### **D. (3:5-6) Jesus Christ—Moses:**

**Hebrews 3:5-6** *And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;*

*<sup>6</sup> But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*

Jesus Christ is the Son over God's house; Moses was only a servant in God's house. This point spells it out as clearly as can be. Moses was faithful to God. God had called Moses to be His servant, to proclaim those things which were to come sometime in the future. What were those things? The things concerning Christ and the great promises of God concerning heaven and God's care for man. God used Moses to predict and show in symbols and types what the Savior of the world was to be like and what He was to do when He came into the world... Moses was faithful in delivering the message, and for that he is to be highly esteemed. However, Moses is still only a servant in the house of God. He is a very special servant—one of the greatest servants who has ever lived—but he is still only a servant. But not

Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and as the Son of God He is placed over God's house... (See **John 3:16-17, 8:29; Romans 1:4; Ephes. 1:6-7; Col. 1:13-14; Hebrews 5:5**).

#### **E. (3:6) Jesus Christ— Salvation:**

**Hebrews 3:6** But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

1. Jesus Christ is building His house, but entrance into His house is conditional. How do we become a member of God's house? Note exactly what this verse says: **"We [must] hold fast...unto the end."** The picture is that of a ship holding its course for port despite the storms and turbulences of life, and note: the ship holds fast until it reaches the end. If it did not, then it would never reach port. What is it that we must hold fast?
    - a. Our confidence in the hope of salvation. We must strongly believe—believe to the point of utter confidence that the promise of heaven and of eternal life is true. We must hold fast to our glorious hope of salvation—hold fast with utter confidence. [(RevC) Confidence that our salvation lies in none other than Jesus Christ encourages us to hold fast to Christ knowing that in doing so we shall one day share in all that He has for us. (RevC)]
    - b. Our joy in the hope of salvation. The glorious hope of living forever and all the other promises of God are so wonderful that joy should always fill our hearts. We should walk in the joy of the Lord regardless of circumstances.
- (See **Matt. 10:22; Gal. 6:9; 2Tim. 3:14; 1Peter 1:13; 2Peter 3:17; Rev. 3:11**) (POSB)

### **END OF LESSON 3**

### **QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 3**

1. T or F Two titles that are given to Jesus are apostle and high priest.
2. T or F Moses testified about Christ in the Old Testament.

3. As result of Israel's rebellion they:

- A. Did not inherit the promised land
- B. Will be rejected forever
- C. Never entered into God's rest that was promised to them.**
- D. None of the above

4. T or F We are warned that sin can cause our heart to turn away from the living God.

5. We have confidence that if we hold firmly to Christ:

- A. We will all be prosperous
- B. We will never have troubles
- C. We will share in Christ and all that he has for us.**
- D. All of the above

## BEGIN LESSON 4

**F. (POSB) (3:7-11) Heart— Hardness— Rest— Israel:**

**Heb 3:7-11** Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day **if ye will hear his voice, 3:8 Harden not your hearts**, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 3:9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 3:10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. 3:11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Do not harden your hearts. This is a charge from the Holy Spirit Himself, and it is directed to every generation of believers. It was not only a charge to Israel. How do we know this? Because the word *says* is in the present tense. The Holy Spirit is still speaking today. The charge is of critical importance to all people of every generation; there is great danger in disobeying the charge.

Now, what does a *hardened heart* mean? Israel's wilderness experience shows us. After the Jews had been freed from Egyptian slavery, they wandered about in the wilderness of the Sinai desert for some forty years.

During their wanderings, they committed four gross sins that hardened their hearts.

1. They provoked God. Note the two phrases **"in the provocation"** and **"in the day of temptation."** They are actually a translation of two Hebrew words which are two proper names, the names of a place where Israel sinned in the wilderness, Massah and Meribah (**Exodus 17:2-7; Numbers 20:1-13**). Wandering about in the desert, the people had become very thirsty; therefore, they began...
  - to disbelieve God—to distrust that He cared and would provide.
  - to murmur and grumble against God and His leader (Moses).
  - to regret that they had left the world of Egypt....They completely lost their trust in Him and began to criticize and murmur and grumble against Him and Moses, God's appointed leader.
2. They tried God for forty years. God took care of Israel for forty long years as the nation wandered throughout the arid desert of Sinai. God gave them food and water and all the other necessities of life, and He protected them from all surrounding enemies. Yet the people continued to harden their hearts against God, to disbelieve and distrust Him. They approached God as though He had to meet their approval instead of their meeting His.
  - They tempted (*peirazomai*) God. This means they tested Him, put Him to the test to see if He was really good and would meet their needs.
  - They proved (*dokimazo*) God. This means they tested Him, put Him to the test to see if He met their approval. ...They wanted Him to prove Himself first, then they would follow Him.

Note the unbelief and hardness of heart in all this. ...They were unwilling to prove themselves, unwilling to show that they really believed and trusted God. They wanted God to prove Himself, that He was worthy of their trust and loyalty. What unbelief and hardness of heart—total disobedience.

3. They always went astray. God had promised to meet Israel's needs, and He always had. They did not have the luxuries and niceties of life, but they did have God's care and provision, and most of all they had the glorious promise of God's land and rest. But they always went astray—always chose not to believe God....
4. They did not know God's way. God's way is faith and trust. God wants the same as any father wants: to be trusted. No matter how little or how much a father can provide, he wants to be trusted that he does care and

will provide for his children. The same is true of God. God does not want murmuring or grumbling, questioning, distrust, unbelief, or disobedience. God wants faith and trust, for faith and trust are the ways that God teaches men to trust Him more...

This is the way of God;...we have to be tried and tested so that we will draw closer and closer to Him and learn to believe and trust Him more and more. This is what Israel failed to learn; this was the great failure of Israel: unbelief and disobedience. They just never learned that God's way was belief and trust.

The result was, of course, judgment. The people chose not to follow God; therefore, they were never able to inherit the promised land nor to enter God's rest. They missed the permanent peace and provision of God Himself. They all died in the wilderness, the very ones who had been set free from the world and bondage of Egypt. Not a single one ever entered God's promised land and rest. (**See Acts 7:51, 28:27; Romans 2:5; Hebrews 3:13; Psalm 95:8; Proverbs 28:14, 29:1; Isaiah 28:12, 30:15; Zech. 7:11**). (POSB)

(RevC) I personally hold the view that it is likely these who died in the wilderness did so in unbelief and very likely will not be counted among the OT saints in heaven. I do not agree that the stern warnings in Hebrews can be taken as lightly as some commentators suggest. Hebrews was written to believers who were already considering forsaking their salvation and returning to the works of the Law. The several warnings given in this book make it quite clear that if we forsake the ways of God and turn back to the ways of the Law (seeking righteousness through works instead of by faith in the atonement of Christ) our very salvation could be at risk. (RevC)

#### G. (POSB) (3:12) Watch— Wrong:

**Hebrews 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.**

Take heed—watch unbelief. There is great danger that believers might depart from the living God. They might do just what Israel did. Therefore, take heed (*blepete*): be alert and stay alert; be on the lookout and do it

constantly; watch and keep on watching. Keep a watchful eye on your trust and obedience to God. Watch for an evil heart of unbelief. (POSB)

(RevC) It seems hard to imagine that unbelief is “evil”, but consider that we are to be a people of faith—we come to salvation by grace through faith Eph. 2:8-9, we are to walk by faith 2Cor. 5:7, and what is not of faith is “sin” Rom. 14:23, and the just shall live by faith Gal. 3:11. Faith is a major principle of what makes us Christians therefore we should not be surprised that a lack of faith would be “evil”. Keep in mind these believers were in danger of “departing” “going back” to practicing the law (the works of the flesh) instead of continuing in the spirit by walking in faith (RevC).

#### H. (POSB) (3:13-19) Exhortation— Believer— Warning:

**Hebrews 3:13-19 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. <sup>14</sup> For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; <sup>15</sup> While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. <sup>16</sup> For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. <sup>17</sup> But with whom was he grieved forty years? *was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?* <sup>18</sup> And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.**

Exhort one another daily. The word "exhort" (*parakaleō*) means to "beg, entreat, beseech, exhort" (Kenneth Wuest. *Hebrews*, Vol. 2, p.79). It is from the same word that the Comforter or Paraclete (the Holy Spirit) is taken. This means that the word "exhort" also includes comfort, the kind of comfort that will "strengthen and encourage the believer each single day so that when a crises arises he may be able to stand fast" (Thomas Hewitt. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries." Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1960, p.83). Believers are to constantly exhort one another to guard themselves against unbelief and sin. There are eight reasons why.

1. First, the time is short. *Today* is the day for believing and walking in Christ. Today is the day of salvation. Tomorrow a person may be snapped out of this world by some accident or become a broken and hopeless person because of some bad news or unexpected event. (See **Ephes. 5:15-16; James 1:10, 4:14; 1 Peter 1:24; Job 7:6; Psalm 39:5, 90:5-6, 90:12, 103:15-16; Isaiah 51:12**).
2. Second, a person can be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Sin is deceitful: it looks good, tastes good, and feels good. But it enslaves human life and leaves the human heart empty, lonely, insecure, hurting, and sometimes broken... In addition to this, sin hardens a person... (See **Psalm 95:8; Provb. 28:14, 29:1; Romans 2:5; Heb. 3:13**)
3. Third, salvation is conditional. It is not enough to say that we are saved—that we are "partakers of Christ." ...If we are serious when we say that we have partaken of Christ and His salvation, then we *are partaking* of Him—we are doing exactly what He says: we are holding fast to Him... Salvation is conditional—based upon this one simple requirement: a person must hold fast to Christ in order to partake of Him. (See **Matt. 10:22; 1Peter 1:13; 2Peter 3:17; Rev. 3:11**)
4. Fourth, We must hear the voice of the Holy Spirit today—every day. We must not let sin deceive us and allow our hearts to become hardened. We must take heed and watch lest we depart from God even as Israel did... (See **2Cor. 6:2; Psalm 32:6, 69:13, 95; Isa. 49:8**)
5. Fifth, some do provoke God. Some in Israel had heard the Holy Spirit of God, yet they did not heed His exhortation. They sinned, rebelling against God and doing their own thing. They lived as they wished, not believing or trusting God. Therefore, they provoked Him. Tragically, the same is true today. Some among us sin and harden our hearts. Therefore, we are provoking God. (See **Num. 14:11; Deut. 9:7, 31:20; Psalm 78:40, 56, 106:7; Isa. 3:8; Heb. 3:16**)
6. Sixth, judgment is sure. God had pronounced the fact: those who sinned and did not believe and trust Him would be condemned and judged. And just as He had said, those who sinned in Israel were judged. Their carcasses fell in the wilderness... All who sin and disbelieve God shall be condemned and judged... (See **Rom. 5:12, 6:23, 8:6; Provb. 11:19;**



**Ezek. 18:4; James 1:5; Rev. 21:8; Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 18:20)**

7. Seventh, God judges unbelief. The words "believed not" (*apeitheō*) means to refuse to be persuaded; to refuse to believe; to withhold belief; to be disobedient. It is a person who just refuses to be persuaded despite the evidence that Jesus Christ is truly the Savior of the world... (See **Mark 16:14; John 3:36, 8:24, 16:8-9; Heb. 3:12, 4:11**)
8. Eighth, unbelief shuts a person out. Nothing will close the doors of the promised land of heaven—nothing will keep a person out of God's eternal rest—except unbelief. Refusing to believe and trust the Lord Jesus Christ and His promise of salvation will shut the door of the promised land forever. (See **Matt. 5:20; Mark 10:15; 1Cor. 6:9, 15:50; Rev. 21:27**) (POSB)

#### **IV. (POSB) Chapter 4 Warning Two (Part II): Fear—Lest You Miss God's Rest**

**(4:1-13) Introduction:** ...This is a passage that discusses the glorious promise of God's rest, but it is also a warning—a warning desperately needed by all: fear—lest you miss God's rest.

**Heb 4:1-13** Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. 4:3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. 4:5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. 4:6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: 4:7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. 4:8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. 4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to

the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

**A. (4:1) Warning— Rest— Fear:** the warning is direct and forceful—fear lest you should come short of God's rest. What is *God's rest*? ...The meaning of the believer's rest is seen by looking at the illustrations in **Hebrews 4:4-9**. Rest does not mean inactivity. God has not been inactive since creation; He has been very active. He has been administering the universe and working out the salvation of man (cp. **John 5:17; Romans 8:18**). Therefore, when the Bible speaks of rest for the believer, it does not mean a state or life of inactivity for the believer. ...Contrariwise, the believer's rest means something far more meaningful and hopeful...

1. There is the rest of satisfaction and pleasure with one's life and work. This is seen in God's rest after creation (**Hebrews 4:3-4**). After God created the world, which took six days, He rested on the seventh day. As said above, this does not mean that God stopped all activity after creation. The very opposite is true... When Scripture says that God rested after creation, it means that God was pleased and satisfied with the work of creation. ...He was at rest and at peace with what He had done. Therefore, the believer's rest is a sense of completion, of satisfaction, of pleasure with his life and work... (**See Matt. 11:29; Heb. 4:3-4**)
2. There is the rest of deliverance and of salvation. This is the rest of Canaan (**Hebrews 4:5-6**). In the Bible...
  - the promised land of Canaan is a type of heaven and of the eternal rest God has promised to believers.
  - the enslavement of the Jews by Egypt is a type of the world's bondage and enslavement of man.
  - the wilderness wanderings are a type of the daily struggles and trials and temptations and storms of life that a person has to pass through in this life.

Therefore, the believer's rest means:....

- The believer's rest means the deliverance and salvation from the slavery and bondage of this world (Egypt), from its sin and death.
- The believer's rest means the rest of conscience when one has ceased his struggle in the wilderness wanderings of life—the trials,

temptations, and storms of life... (See **Exo. 33:14; Psalm 55:6, 116:7; Isa. 28:12, 30:15**)

3. There is the rest of a new day, of another day that shall be far better than this day—a day that will bring perfection and eternal life to the human soul (**Hebrews 4:7-8**). It is the rest of confidence, of assurance, of knowledge, of hope, of perfect peace in the future. (See **Rev. 14:13; Isa. 1:3**)

The point is this: we can miss God's rest; we can come short of it. Israel did and we can. Therefore, we must fear lest we miss it. The word *fear* means that we should be actively afraid and concerned lest we miss God's rest. The matter is of critical concern; it is a matter of life and death, of eternal life and eternal death. (See **Luke 1:50; Acts 10:35; Phil. 2:12; 1Peter 1:17; Psalm 31:19; Prov. 1:26-27**)

**B. (4:2) Rest, Believer's— Warning:**

**4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.**

This gospel—the glorious message of God's rest—was preached to Israel, and it has been preached to us. But note the warning: the Word did not profit Israel. Why? Because Israel did not mix the Word with faith. They did not believe in the Word of God. They rejected the promise of God's Word that promised a rest to the soul of the believer.

The warning is clear: we must believe the Word, the gospel of God's rest, or else we shall miss His rest. And we must never forget: we are much more responsible because of Jesus Christ. God's own Son, One far greater than Moses, is the One who has brought us the message of God's rest. (See **John 3:36; Acts 10:36; Heb. 3:12, 4:11**)

- C. (4:3) Rest, Believer's— Warning:** we can come short of God's rest because God has sworn that unbelievers shall not enter His rest. This verse is clear: the person who believes enters God's rest, but the person who does not believe does not enter. ...There shall be no peace, no deliverance, no salvation, no new day for the unbeliever. (See **John 3:18, 3:36, 8:24; Heb. 3:12, 4:11**)

#### D. (4:3-10) Rest, Believer's— Warning:

**4:3** For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. **4:4** For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. **4:5** And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. **4:6** Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: **4:7** Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. **4:8** For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. **4:9** There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. **4:10** For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his.

We can come short of God's rest because the rest of God actually exists. The truth of God's rest is a living reality, and God's rest has existed since creation. ...Therefore, if a person ignores, neglects, or denies God's rest, he can miss it. As stated, man can enter God's rest; he can have an abundance of rest, an abundance of life in this world and an eternal rest and life in the next world. How do we know this? ...There are five proofs.

1. The fact that God rested after creation proves that there is a rest for God's people (**Hebrews 4:4**). God labored and worked in creating the world and then He rested. He stood back and looked over His work and experienced the deepest sense of satisfaction and completion. The sense of satisfaction and completion rested in His soul. This clearly shows us that there is a rest of life and work, of satisfaction and pleasure with who we are and with what we do.
2. God's promise to Israel of the promised land (Canaan rest) is proof that there is a rest for God's people (**Hebrews 4:5-6; cp. Psalm 95:11**). God's promise cannot fail. There was a rest for the people of Israel and they did not enter (**Hebrews 4:5**). But note: the fact that God's rest existed and that He promised it to believers means that some must enter His rest...
3. God's promise of a new day to David proves that there is a rest for God's people (**Hebrews 4:7; cp. Psalm 95:7-8**). As **Hebrews 4:7** says, it was a

*long time* after Israel's entrance into Canaan when the Holy Spirit spoke through David saying, "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts," but enter God's rest. God's rest still existed in the days of David; therefore, the *physical land of Canaan* could not have been the rest promised to Israel. God's rest is spiritual and eternal, the rest of man's spirit in this world and in the eternal world. God's rest still exists.

4. God's promise of Another Day even after the days of Joshua proves that there is a rest for God's people (**Hebrews 4:8-9; cp. Psalm 94:7-11**). (The word "Jesus" in the King James Version is Joshua in the Greek.) When Joshua led Israel into Canaan, the people did not enter the rest that the Holy Spirit was speaking about. (The word "he" is the Holy Spirit.) If they had, then the Holy Spirit would not have said that the rest was still available in **Psalm 95** which was written five hundred years later (Kenneth Wuest. *Hebrews*, Vol. 2, p.87). Joshua did provide some rest to Israel (**Joshua 21:44; Joshua 22:4**), but it was not the complete fulfillment of God's promise. God's rest is spiritual and eternal, the spiritual confidence and security of peace and life, both now and forever. There remains, therefore, a rest for the people of God.
5. The rest of Jesus Christ from all His work proves that there is a rest for God's people (**Hebrews 4:10**). This verse can equally apply to man and Christ. Most commentators apply it to man saying...
  - when man enters God's rest, he no longer struggles through all the trials and temptations of life. He conquers and triumphs over them.

However, it seems that the author of Hebrews is proving the fact that there is a rest for God's people. And there is no greater proof than the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ after His work upon earth. When He accomplished the work of redemption and salvation, He entered His rest, the rest of the promised land of heaven—to abide in its glory and magnificence forever. It is the rest of Jesus Christ, His resurrection into God's eternal rest, that proves above all else that there is a rest for God's people. (See **Matt. 11:29; Heb. 4:3-4; Exo. 33:14; Psalm 55:6, 116:7; Isa. 28:12, 30:15; Rev. 14:13; Isa. 14:3; Prov. 14:26-27**)

#### **E. (4:11-13) Rest, Believer's— Warning— Word of God:**

**4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the**

**dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.**

We can come short of God's rest because a person can fall into unbelief. Note three points.

1. First, a person must labor to enter God's rest or else he will fall into unbelief. The word **"labor"** (*spoudazō*) means to endeavor, give all diligence, be zealous, strive eagerly, exert one's self, and make haste. There is no place for sleepiness or laziness, complacency or lethargy. Unless a person labors with all diligence, he will fall just as Israel fell... (See Luke 13:2; 1Cor. 9:25; Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:29)
2. God's Word discerns the heart. God's Word promises rest to those who believe. ...God's Word and His promise are living—they are a living reality. Four things are said about the Word of God and His promises.
  - a. The Word of God is **"quick"** (*zōn*): alive and living. The idea is that the Word of God is always alive and active; it is always working and quickening its message to the human heart.
  - b. The Word of God is **"powerful"** (*energēs*): active, working, energizing. God's word of promise, His rest of salvation, is powerful. It is not dormant and inactive. It is actually active and working, energizing the heart of the believer.
  - c. The Word of God is **"sharper than any two-edged sword."** The word "sharper" (*tomōteros*) means to cut. It is penetrating and convicting. It does not leave a soul alone. The Word of God will not let a soul who hears it ignore God's promise of rest.
  - d. The Word of God is **"piercing"** (*diiknoumenos*): to go through. It goes right through to the soul and spirit of man. It is the Word of God that takes man's earthly, soulish nature and separates it from the spiritual call and promise of God. It pierces and separates a man's soul and spirit just as a sword pierces a man's joints and marrow.
    - ⇒ It separates a proud soul from a humble spirit.
    - ⇒ It separates a sinful soul from a righteous spirit.
    - ⇒ It separates a rebellious soul from an obedient spirit.
    - ⇒ It separates an unbelieving soul from a believing spirit.
  - e. The Word of God "discerns the thoughts and intents [purpose] of the heart." The word **"discern"** (*kritikos*) means to judge, to sift and analyze.



"The Word of God is able to penetrate into the furthestmost recesses of a person's spiritual being, sifting out and analyzing the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Kenneth Wuest. *Hebrews*, Vol. 2, p.89).

God's Word sees whether a person believes or does not believe His promise of rest. God's Word actually sees through the thoughts and purposes of a person. (See **Romans 1:16; 2Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12; Jer. 5:14, 23:29**)

3. God sees all things. He knows if we believe in Him and His promise of eternal rest or not. He knows if we are making a false profession or if we are truly following Christ. (See **Heb. 4:13; Job 10:14, 14:16; Jer. 2:22, 16:17; Eze. 11:5; Hosea 7:2; Amos 5:12; Luke 12:2; John 2:24; 1Cor. 4:5; Num. 32:23; Ecc. 12:14**)

(RevC) From the beginning of this chapter there is a warning that "unbelief" will keep anyone from entering into God's rest and that His rest was for "the people of God" vs.9. If you are not considered part of the "people of God" and are not allowed to enter into His rest, and are found to be in "unbelief" what does that make you? (RevC)

#### **F. (4:14) Jesus Christ, Deity— High Priest:**

**Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession.**

The identity of the great High Priest. Note the word *great*. It is being used to set Jesus Christ apart from all other High Priests. Aaron, who was the first High Priest, was considered by the Jews to be the greatest of the High Priests. But this passage is declaring that Jesus Christ was the greatest High Priest. Two reasons are given.

1. Jesus Christ has "**passed into the heavens.**" He is before the very throne of God; He is in the very presence of God Himself. An earthly High Priest ministered or *passed into* the most holy place of the earthly temple. But Christ *passed* or ascended into heaven and ministers in heaven. He ministers in the very presence of God Himself. Therefore, He is greater by far than any earthly High Priest including Aaron.
2. Jesus Christ is "**Jesus the Son of God.**" His earthly name *Jesus* speaks of His human nature and sympathy for man. Jesus was a man just like all other High Priests. He suffered all the trials and temptations that other

men and High Priests suffer; therefore, He can *sympathize* with all those who come to Him as their High Priest.

**"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).**

But note: Jesus Christ was also **"the Son of God."** This was His heavenly name. He was divine, the very Son of God Himself who came to earth to deliver and save men from sin, death, and condemnation. ...As the Son of God He has the power to save us to the uttermost—to make us acceptable to God. No other priest can do this. Therefore, Jesus Christ is greater than all other priests. Jesus Christ alone is the great High Priest. (See **Rom. 1:3-4; Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:3, 8:1**)

**G. (4:15-16) Jesus Christ, High Priest:** the significance of Jesus' High Priesthood for man is fivefold.

1. We have a High Priest who feels with us. The word **"touched"** (*sumpathēsai*) means to sympathize, feel, and suffer with. It means to sympathize and feel with a person to the point that the hurt and pain are actually felt within one's own heart. The idea is that Jesus Christ actually suffers when we suffer... He is the One who carries on the glorious ministry and intercession for us, and He **"is touched with the feelings of our infirmities"**—with all of our human weaknesses and frailties. (See **John 14:1, 18, 21; Heb. 4:14; Psalm 103:13; Isa. 63:9**)
2. We have a High Priest who was tempted in all things just like we are, yet He was without sin. ...No man will ever be saved unless Jesus Christ did live a sinless life. Why? Because some man has to live a sinless life and secure the ideal and perfect righteousness that covers sinful men. Apart from Christ there is no ideal righteousness that can stand before God and be acceptable to God. ...Therefore, if Christ has not secured the ideal and perfect righteousness for us, then there is no righteousness to cover us...to make us acceptable to God.

But this is the glorious gospel, and it is the point of this verse: Jesus Christ was sinless. He was tempted in all things just like we are, but He never sinned. He went through every experience and every trial and temptation that we go through. And He bore them all, never sinning... (See **John 8:46; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15, 7:26, 9:14; 1Peter 1:19, 2:22; 1John 3:5**)



3. We can call upon God—boldly. But note two things.
  - a. God is sitting upon a *throne*, the seat of authority, power, honor, glory, respect, and reverence. Therefore, we are to approach Him in respect and reverence.
  - b. God is sitting upon the **"throne of grace."** ...Jesus Christ is our Representative, our Intercessor, our great High Priest before God's throne. He has turned the throne of God from a throne of judgment into a throne of grace. Therefore, **"let us come boldly before the throne of grace."** We have the right, so let us do it. Let us approach God through Jesus Christ, and God will do whatever we ask through Christ. God's throne is now a throne of grace; it is now opened up for any person to approach, no matter how bad and terrible a life he has lived. God will receive him through Christ Jesus. (See Eph. 1:7, 3:11-12; Heb. 4:16, 10:19-22; 1John 4:17)
4. We can now obtain the mercy of God. We need God to have mercy upon us because we have sinned against Him. ...God will forgive our sins; He will have mercy upon us. But we must come to the throne of grace and ask for mercy. We must acknowledge that mercy comes only through Christ Jesus, the great High Priest. ...He and He alone can represent us before God. (See Eph. 2:4-10; Titus 3:5; Lam. 3:12; Micah 7:18)
5. We can now find grace to help in time of need. What a glorious promise! Help is now available to carry us through life. No matter what confronts us—trial, trouble, tribulation, temptation—help is available, the very help of God Himself... (See 1Cor. 1:4-5, 10:13; 2Cor. 9:8, 12:9; Eph. 1:7, 2:7; Phil. 4:13, 4:19; 2Tim. 4:18; Heb. 13:6) (POSB)

## V. (POSB) CHAPTER 5 CHRIST THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST

**Introduction:** Jesus Christ is the great High Priest. He meets every qualification required by both man and God to be the Supreme High Priest.

**Heb 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:**

**A. (5:1-4) High Priest:** there were five qualifications for a man to be a high priest. Note how clearly they are spelled out, and note that these qualifications are applied to all priests who are **"taken from among men."** They are applicable to every generation of men. Every person who serves God in the ministry needs to heed these qualifications.

1. The high priest must be appointed by God to represent men before God. That is his function, the very reason he serves as high priest.
  - a. **He is taken from among men.** He is a man himself who knows and understands what it is to be a man. Because of this he knows how to present man's case before God.
  - b. **He represents man in the things of God.** He leads men in prayer, worship, righteousness, morality, witnessing, and in the study of spiritual things.
  - c. **He is ordained or appointed by God.** He does not choose the priesthood as a means of livelihood or of social and benevolent service. He is a priest because God called him to serve people in the things of God.
2. **The high priest must offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.** He leads the people to make gifts or offerings to the Lord, the offering of their lives and possessions. But he has one significant function: to offer sacrifice for sins. Unless man's sins are forgiven, he can never be acceptable to God, for no man can erase his sins. Therefore, there has to be a substitution, some sacrifice made that can take the sinner's place and bear the judgment of sin for him. This, of course, refers to the animals which were sacrificed for sin in the Old Testament. The animal sacrifice is also a type or symbol that pictured what Jesus Christ was to do for us: become the Lamb of God, the sacrifice for our sins. The point is this: the high priest was the person who offered the sacrifice for man's sins.

## **END OF LESSON 4**

### **QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 4**

1. The message of the gospel that was preached had no value because:

- A. They did not work hard enough
- B. They followed a king
- C. They did not receive it by faith and were disobedient.**
- D. All of the above

2. T or F The rest that spoken of in Hebrews chapter 4 was only for the Jews that entered into the promised land.

3. T or F The word of God is alive and active in this world.

4. T or F The word of God has the power to penetrate in even divide the soul from the spirit.

5. T or F Jesus is called a high priest but he is never referred to as a great high priest.

## **BEGIN LESSON 5**

**Heb 5:2-4 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. <sup>3</sup> And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. <sup>4</sup> And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.**

**(POSB):**

3. The high priest must be able to deal with men in compassion. Note that men are placed into one of two classifications:
- a. the ignorant: those who have sinned and did not know it; those who are guilty of sinning in ignorance.
  - b. those who have deliberately gone out of the way: those who willfully sin, knowing that they are sinning.

The high priest must remember that he himself is also guilty of infirmities, weaknesses, and failures. Therefore, he is to be compassionate with all men, no matter their sin and shortcoming. For he is as they are: a mere man, ever so frail and short of God's perfect goodness.

4. The high priest must offer sacrifices for his own sins. He is just as guilty of sin and short of God's glory as the people are. Therefore, he must first make sacrifice for his own sin before he can make sacrifice for the people's sins.

5. The high priest must be God-appointed and not self-appointed. No man is to take the honor of being a priest upon himself; he is to be a priest only if God has called and appointed him to be a priest. No person is to enter the priestly ministry because he chooses it as a profession, as a means to earn a livelihood, or as a means to serve mankind. God and God alone calls those who are to serve Him... (See **John 15:16; Acts 9:15, 26:16; 2Cor. 5:20; 1Tim. 1:12; Isa. 6:8**)

## **B. (5:5-10) Jesus Christ, High Priest:**

**Hebrews 5:5-10** So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. <sup>6</sup> As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. <sup>7</sup> Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; <sup>8</sup> Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; <sup>9</sup> And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; <sup>10</sup> Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

The qualifications to be the great High Priest were met by Christ. Note that the same five qualifications listed for the high priest are now listed for Christ, but in reverse order. Jesus Christ fulfills all the qualifications of the high priest, but there is one significant difference: Jesus Christ fulfills the qualifications perfectly. He is the great High Priest who stands in perfection before God and men.

1. Christ was "**begotten**" or born as a Man: He was appointed and sent into the world by God (**Hebrews 5:5-6**). There are two proofs that Jesus Christ was appointed by God.
  - a. Proof one is God's Word or prophecy. Hundreds of years before Christ ever came into the world, God foretold that He was going to send His Son into the world. God was going to *beget*, that is, cause His Son to be born into the world...  
**"Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee"** (Hebrews 5:5; cp. Psalm 2:7).

b. Proof two is God's irrevocable oath that His Son was to be a priest. And note: He was not to be priest like man, that is, like Aaron's priesthood; He was to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec. What does this mean? Melchisedec's priesthood is said to have been *without human descent*, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. That is, he is said to be eternal **Hebrews 7:3**. ...The point is this: God appointed Jesus Christ to be the great High Priest; ...therefore, He has fulfilled the first qualification of the priesthood, the qualification of being appointed by God. (See **John 3:16-17; Heb. 2:17, 5:5**)

2. Christ sacrificed Himself; He suffered bitterly as Man (**Hebrews 5:7**). No high priest has ever suffered or been aware of the trials and sufferings that Jesus Christ bore and knew.

**"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" Hebrews 5:7**

This is probably a picture of Gethsemane. Because of the terrible trials Christ bore, He is bound to have offered up prayers and wept bitterly throughout His life—often. Any person would be crushed under the weight of what He bore.

However, there was one experience that Jesus went through that far supersedes all others. That was the experience of death for the sins of the world. This is the reason the author of Hebrews refers to Gethsemane as the experience that shows how Christ identifies with man. Christ experienced death even as men experience death. Therefore, Christ can feel and sympathize and help and strengthen man when he faces death. In fact, note what the verse says: God saved Christ from death. This means that God raised Him up from the dead and that He lives forever with God, being exalted to God's right hand... (See **Mark 15:34; Luke 22:44; Heb. 2:10, 13:12; 1Peter 2:24, 3:18; Isa. 50:6, 53:5**)

3. Christ willingly sacrificed Himself and suffered for man (**Hebrews 5:8**). Jesus Christ was the Son of God; therefore, He did not have to come to earth to save man. But it was God's will, and the only way Christ could obey God was to humble Himself and come and suffer as Man. He obeyed God—*experienced* obedience—by suffering as Man. (See **John 10:11, 15,**

**17-18; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14; 1John 3:16; Rev. 1:5)**

4. Christ was made perfect: He became the Source of eternal salvation (**Hebrews 5:9**). Jesus Christ had to come to earth and suffer as Man. Why? In order to secure perfect obedience to God. ...If a person obeys God, he is righteous, and if a person is righteous, he is obedient. They are one and the same. Therefore, Christ secured (learned) obedience and righteousness by living upon earth as Man and by suffering through all the experiences of man—without sin.

The phrase "**without sin**" is critical to note. It means that Jesus Christ Himself became the perfect and ideal righteousness for man. Therefore, His righteousness can cover man...If a person approaches God through Christ—trusts and lives for Christ—then the righteousness of Christ saves and keeps him safe, both now and forever. (**See John 8:46; 2Cor. 4:15, 5:21; Heb. 2:10, 5:9, 7:6; 1Peter 1:19, 2:22**)

5. Christ was appointed High Priest *by God*. Salvation is of God. The High Priesthood of Christ with all that it means is of God... And He did it after the eternal order of Melchisedec, not after the human and dying order of Aaron. Jesus Christ is the great High Priest, the High Priest who can represent and present us perfectly before God. (**See Heb. 2:17-18, 4:14-15, 6:20, 7:26, 8:1, 10:21-22**) (POSB)

**C. (POSB) (5:11) Immaturity, Spiritual— Word of God— Hearing:**

**Hebrews 5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.**

A person becomes immature because of dull hearing. The word "**dull**" (*nōthroi*) means sluggish, slow, lazy, lethargic, forgetful.... The Hebrew believers had become mentally lazy and sluggish and spiritually complacent and slothful. They were sitting and listening to the preachers and teachers, and they were reading the Scriptures, but they were not listening or paying attention. Their minds were wandering about and unwilling to exert the energy to concentrate and study. (**See Col. 1:10; 2Tim. 2:15, 3:16; 1Peter 1:13, 2:1-2; 2Peter 1:10; Psalm 1:1-2; Prov. 13:4**) (POSB)

(**RevC**) Certainly applying one's self, putting forth effort, can make a big difference in what we come to understand. However, I also believe that much of the light we receive has to do with our seeking The Teacher and

asking for Him to shine His light on the truth so we can understand the things of God. **1John 2:27** says, **“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”** As a believer and follower of Jesus Christ I have The Teacher, The Holy Spirit residing within me. I am not at the mercy of other men to teach me or tell me what the truth is. It is a ministry of the Holy Spirit to show me the truth and teach me the things of God as I am walking in the Spirit and seeking to understand His Word as I study and meditate on it. Today we have a distinct advantage over the saints of the Old Testament who did not have an abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives and had to rely more on personal revelation of truth through the prophets and other teachers—that also means we have a greater responsibility to seek the truth of God and ask for the Holy Spirit to speak to us from His Word. This is also why the non-believer doesn’t understand the truth of God’s Word as those truths are spiritually discerned. However, if they read and practice what they read the truth may become self-evident. (RevC)

(See Also: **Luke 24:25; John 8:43; Acts 28:27; Romans 3:11; 1Cor. 2:14; Heb. 5:11; Psalm 32:8-9, 49:20; Isa. 27:11; Jer. 4:22, 5:21-24; Micah 4:12**)

#### **D. (POSB) (5:12) Backsliding— Word of God— Immaturity, Spiritual:**

**Hebrews 5:12** **For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.**

A person becomes immature because he refuses to grow up spiritually. The Hebrew believers refused to move beyond the first principles of God's Word. **"First principles"** (*stoicheia tēs archēs*) means the basic principles of God's Word, the elementary teachings, ...of God's Word.

They are truths that are to be preached and taught, but they are the truths for the unsaved and for young believers, for babes in Christ... The situation among the Hebrew believers was tragic: they were spiritual dwarfs, deformed and undeveloped. They should have been mature and fully developed. Note the verse: they should have been teachers, that is, bearing witness to Christ,



sharing the glorious message of Jesus Christ with their friends, neighbors, and fellow workers. But they were unable. Why? Because they were immature—so immature that they themselves needed someone to reteach them the first principles of God's Word. (See **1Cor. 3:1-2; 14:20; Eph. 4:14; 2Peter 1:5-10; Heb. 5:12; Deut. 6:7**) (POSB)

#### **E. (POSB) (5:13) Word of God— Righteousness, Meaning:**

**Hebrews 5:13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.**

A person becomes immature because of being unskilled in the Word. The Hebrew believers remained unskillful in the Word of righteousness. This means two things.

- a. Jesus Christ is **"the Word of righteousness."** He is the righteousness of God. A person must believe and stand in the righteousness of Christ... The righteousness of Jesus Christ is a person's only hope of ever being acceptable to God.

Note something: this is the very message of the gospel; it is the gospel of salvation. But the Hebrew believers—some of them—did not fully understand the message. They did not understand and had not experienced the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The word **"unskilful"** (*apeiros*) means to be inexperienced. They professed Christ and His righteousness, but they had never grasped or experienced Him—not fully—not in a mature sense. Note the verse: although this person is a church member, **"he is a babe."**

(See **Phil. 3:9; Romans 3:21-22, 10:3-4; 1Cor. 1:30**)

- b. The Word of God is **"the Word of righteousness."** Righteousness means all the teachings and doctrines of God's Word. It is the Bible that teaches us all about God, Christ, man, life, the world, and how to live righteous and godly lives. ...The Hebrew believers were unwilling to put the time and energy into learning about God. They were unwilling to study and learn the Word of righteousness. Therefore, they never experienced the righteousness of God's Word. ...As the verse says about each of the professing believers: **"he is a babe."**



(See Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32; 1Peter 2:2-3; Job 23:12; Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:1) (POSB)

**F. (POSB) (5:14) Maturity, Spiritual:**

**Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

A person becomes immature because he does not exercise his mental and spiritual senses. Note these facts.

1. Note that it is possible to reach "full age" in the Christian life; it is possible to reach maturity in Christ. A person can grow spiritually until he is fully grown and mature in Christ. This is what God expects of us all.
2. Note what a mature person is. A mature or a fully-grown person is a person who discerns between good and evil. He is a person who lives a righteous and godly life. He has gone beyond...
  - a. just attending worship and Bible studies
  - b. just keeping the rituals and ceremonies of religion
  - c. just giving money
  - d. just reading the Bible
  - e. just praying
3. The mature believer does all of these things, yes, but he does more, much more.
  - a. He studies the Word of God.
  - b. He sets blocks of time aside every day to pray and worship.
  - c. He lives and moves and has his being in prayer; that is, he continually prays.
  - d. He keeps his mind and thoughts upon Christ and obedience to Him.
  - e. He witnesses for Christ, sharing the glorious salvation from the evil and death of this world.

- f. He discerns both good and evil and does the good.
4. The mature believer is able to discern between true and false religion, true and false claims, sin and righteousness. He knows...
- a. when to look and when not to look.
  - b. when to eat and when not to eat.
  - c. what to drink and what not to drink.
  - d. when to go and when not to go.
  - e. what socials to attend and what not to attend.
  - f. what to listen to and what not to listen to.
  - g. where Christ is really preached and taught and where He is not.
  - h. who to fellowship with and who not to fellowship with.
  - i. when to speak and when not to speak.
  - j. who teaches the truth and who does not.

The mature believer lives for Christ. He discerns between the good and evil.

5. Note how a person matures and reaches full age in Christ. By exercising his mental and spiritual senses or faculties. A person has to exercise his mind and spirit. He cannot be lazy and slothful, comfortable and complacent—neither mentally nor spiritually. He has to be alert and alive to control and discipline himself. He has to exert energy and effort, to concentrate and focus his mind and life upon Jesus Christ and His salvation and mission and purpose.
- (See Eph. 4:23; Phil. 4:8; 2Cor. 10:5; 1Cor. 7:35; Isa. 26:3; Rom. 8:6, 12:1-2; 1Cor. 6:19-20; 2Cor. 6:1-2) (POSB)

## END OF LESSON 5

### QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 5

1. T or F The role of the Old Testament high priest was to represent the community before God and offer gifts and sacrifices for sin.
2. The Old Testament high priest:
  - A. Volunteered to be a priest
  - B. He was voted on by the community to be priest
  - C. He was called by God to serve as priest.
  - D. All of the above

3. Jesus is a priest forever in the order of:

- A. Moses
- B. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- C. King David
- D. Melchizedek**

4. Jesus learned obedience by:

- A. Obeying the law
- B. Listening to his parents
- C. Copying the Pharisees and Sadducees
- D. Through suffering**

5. Those who live below the standard of God's word are said to live on:

- A. Meat
- B. Honey
- C. Milk**
- D. All of the above

## **BEGIN LESSON 6**

### **VI. CHAPTER 6 SPIRITUAL MATURITY**

#### **A. (POSB) ([6:1-2](#)) Maturity, Spiritual:**

**Hebrews 6:1-2 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.**

...Scripture is direct and forceful: "Leave the elementary teachings,...and go on to perfection [maturity]." This does not mean that we are to forget the basic teachings about Christ. ...They are to be part of our lives, in fact, the very foundation of our lives. *But once the foundation is laid, we are to build upon it...* We are to go on to perfection, learning all the truth about Christ and the Word of God...

1. We are to get past repentance from dead works. Repentance means to turn to God and away from the world. *Dead works* can mean...
  - a. the works or behavior of the world that are sinful and defiling and that lead to death.
  - b. the works of formal and ceremonial religion that fail to give true life to men. Such works of religion are dead works, leaving men "dead in trespasses and sins" (**Ephes. 2:1**).

We are to repent from the *dead works* of this world, but once we have repented, we are to joy in Christ for so great a salvation and move on to maturity.

2. We are to get past faith in God. ...Our hope for salvation is in God and in God alone. But once we have placed our faith in God, we are to move on beyond faith for salvation. We are to move on and grow in all the teachings of God's Word.
3. We are to get past the doctrine of baptism, that is, of the meaning of baptism and of the need to be baptized as Christ demands. ...It is not an optional ritual; the true believer is to be baptized. But once he has been baptized, he is not to stop there. He is to go on to maturity by learning and doing all the commandments of God.
4. We are to get past the laying on of hands. This was the symbol that showed a person was being called to serve God. ...In both Old and New Testament times when a person was being called and set apart to serve God, the hands of other believers were laid upon him as a sign of his call. When God or the church calls us to serve, we are to begin serving and not back off. We are to get past having to be called and called upon to serve; we are to begin serving. We are to go on to perfection.
5. We are to get past the resurrection of the dead. This is our great hope and it is one of the primary reasons we accepted Christ. But we are to get past *end time* sermons and studies; get past the basic teaching of salvation and move on to all the Word of God. It is the only way we can mature in Christ.
6. We are to get past eternal judgment. Once we have been *truly saved*, we are saved from judgment. God has not appointed the believer to wrath. ...We are to get past the fear and thoughts of judgment and learn to rest in the assurance and security of Christ. We are to go on to maturity, studying all the Word of God.

(See Matt. 5:8; Eph. 4:11-15; Col. 1:28; Acts 20:32; 2Cor. 9:10; 1Thes. 2:13; 1Tim. 4:15; 2Tim. 2:15; Heb. 6:1; 1Peter 2:2; 2Peter 1:5-6, 3:18; Psalm 84:7) (POSB)

**B. (POSB) (6:3) Maturity, Spiritual:**

**Hebrews 6:3 And this will we do, if God permit.**

A person must be determined to grow in Christ. We must have a spirit that will cry out with the author of Hebrews: "**this will we do.**" We must be determined to go on to perfection and maturity. ...But we must do something else as well: we must cry out "**if God permit.**" This simply means that we must express a dependency upon God, for we are dependent upon Him. God wants us to grow spiritually, but we cannot grow apart from His strength. We are totally dependent upon Him for help in understanding His Word and for the power to live as He tells us how to live.

(See John 3:27; Phil. 3:12-14; James 4:12-15; Heb. 6:1; 2Peter 1:5-6; 2Peter 3:18) (POSB)

**C. Fear—Lest You Fall Away, [6:4-8](#)**

**Introduction:** this is one of the most severe warnings in all of Scripture and it is one of the most controversial. It is so controversial that no matter what a person says about it, there are a host of people who differ with him....

The point is this: a deliberate effort—even to the point of straining—is being made to let the Scripture speak for itself in studying this passage. In fact, we are writing this even before we begin our study and exposition of it. May God touch our hearts and warn all who read hereafter—all to His glory and to our growth in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**D. (6:4-5) Warning—Believers:**

**Hebrews 6:4-5 For *it is impossible* for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, <sup>5</sup> And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,**

The believer's great privileges. It is difficult to see how these five experiences could be said about a person unless he was a true believer. Being as honest and objective as possible, we would have to strain the meaning to make them apply to anyone else. The Greek Scripture definitely uses the aorist tense which means that the person had a *once-for-all* experience, an experience that was once-for-all completed, fulfilled, and finished. How could this apply to anyone else other than a believer? Note how each of these read in the aorist tense: the person...

- *was once-for-all* enlightened
- *had once-for-all* tasted of the heavenly gift
- *was once-for-all* made a partaker of the Holy Spirit
- *had once-for-all* tasted of the good Word of God
- *had once-for-all* tasted of the power of the world to come.

The word "tasted" (*geusamenous*) means to partake of, to take in, to experience, to come to know. The Greek scholar Marvin Vincent says that it means to "have consciously partaken of" (*Word Studies In The New Testament*, Vol. 4, p.445). The very same word is used of Christ when it said that He "tasted death" for us (**Hebrews 2:9**). And one thing is sure: Christ tasted, that is, *consciously experienced*, death for us. Therefore, this passage must mean that this person *fully tasted and fully experienced* salvation. As stated, it seems that we have to twist Scripture to make it say any less than a conscious and full experience. Note the glorious experiences and privileges these persons received in Christ.

- 1. They were once-for-all enlightened.** Enlightened means the light of the gospel and of salvation; the light of Christ, that is, seeing Christ as the Savior and Lord of men; the light of salvation that breaks through the darkness of sin and death. Note: receiving the light happened once-for-all. ...They received the light of Christ, of His gospel and salvation once-for-all.
- 2. They had tasted of the heavenly gift.** The "heavenly gift" refers to Christ and His salvation which God *gave* to the world. Scripture proclaims time and again that Jesus Christ and His salvation are God's gifts.
  - a. Christ is God's "unspeakable gift" (**2 Cor. 9:15**).
  - b. Christ is God's gift to a lost world (**John 3:16**).
  - c. Salvation is "the gift of God" (**Ephes. 2:8-9**).

- d. Christ is the One who came down out of heaven as the gift of God to a lost world (**John 3:13; John 3:16; John 3:31-32; John 6:32-33**, and a host of other verses.

Note that this is again a once-for-all experience. They had experienced Christ and His salvation once-for-all.

- 3. **They were once-for-all made a partaker of the Holy Spirit.** The word "partaker" (*metochous*) means to share as partners. W.E. Vine says that it means "the *fact of sharing*" (*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1966, p.162). The Greek scholar A.T Robertson says, "These are all given as actual spiritual experiences" (*Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5, p.375). These people were sharers in the Holy Spirit. It is very difficult to see how they can be made to be a false profession without straining the Scripture.
- 4. **They had once-for-all tasted God's good Word.** This is the gospel of Christ, of His glorious salvation. The Greek scholar Marvin Vincent says that this means that they received... Life (**Acts 5:20**); Cleansing (**Eph. 5:26**); the Holy Spirit (**John 3:34; Acts 5:32, 10:4; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 2:4**); spirit and life (**John 6:63**); salvation (**Acts 11:14**) (*Word Studies In The New Testament*, Vol. 4, p.445.)
- 5. **They had once-for-all tasted the powers of the world to come.** They had experienced some of heaven upon earth. They had actually experienced the presence and power of Christ in their lives...
  - a. the power of Christ in conquering the trials and temptations and sufferings of this world.
  - b. the healing power of Christ in touching both their bodies and spirits.  
(See **1John 3:24, 4:13**) (POSB)

E. (POSB) (6:6) **Warning:** the warning is severe and frightening to any heart that will listen.

**Hebrews 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.**

***"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened...if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance"*** (Hebrews 6:4, 6). As discussed in the previous point, this is bound to be speaking to believers. But what does it

mean? Note exactly what Scripture says and only what it says.

1. First, Scripture says **"impossible"** (*adunaton*): if a believer **"falls away,"** it is impossible for him to ever repent again. The word *impossible* just cannot be made to mean anything other than impossible—not without straining and twisting the Scripture. As Marvin Vincent says: "Impossible (*adunaton*). It is impossible to dilute this word into *difficult*" (*Word Studies In The New Testament*, Vol. 4, p.444).
2. Second, Scripture uses the words **"fall away"** (*parapesontas*). This means to turn aside; to turn away; to deviate. It means...
  - a. to turn aside from Christ.
  - b. to turn away from Christ.
  - c. to deviate from Christ.
3. Third, Scripture is talking about renewing and bringing people back to repentance. These people had gone beyond the point of repentance. No matter how strong an appeal was made to them—no matter how often their sin was pointed out to them—no matter how much the love and cross of Christ was proclaimed to them—they would never again repent. They had gone too far into sin and rebellion against Christ to ever have their hearts touched again. They would never repent—no matter what.
4. Now, for the critical question: What would ever cause a believer to reach such a stage in life? What could a believer do that would harden his heart so much that he would never again repent? Again, note exactly what Scripture says:

**"They crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame"**  
(Hebrews 6:6).

The action is present: they continue on and on to crucify Christ and to shame Him. They continue on and on in their sin, disobedience, and rebellion against Christ. The continuous action is critical to note.

5. The believer turns back to the world, back to a life of sin, disobedience, and rebellion; and he *continues on and on, never repenting and never turning back to Christ*. This, of course, breaks the heart of Christ and adds suffering upon suffering for Him to bear.



- a. It is stirring and causing the pain of the crucifixion for Christ all over again. In fact, it is continuing to crucify Him over and over again; it is putting Him through a continuous experience of suffering upon the cross.
  - b. It is also shaming Him. Being a professing believer and returning to the world and continuing to live in sin day after day and month after month brings shame upon Christ and His holy name.
6. Note a critical fact in this point: the person is continuing on and on in sin never repenting. He has returned to the world and its sin and is just never going to repent. He has gone so far into sin that his heart has become so hardened that he will never repent—no matter how much the love and forgiveness of Christ is shared with him, he will not repent. Never again will he walk with Christ, not while he is on earth. Scripture says that he is beyond repentance. He has returned to the world and *fallen away* from Christ. And tragically, he is harming Christ and His mission. He is breaking the heart of Christ by crucifying Christ afresh—by heaping suffering upon suffering upon Him. And he is shaming the name of Christ among men by living a hypocritical life.
7. Note another critical fact. This cannot refer to what is commonly called *backsliding*. Why? Because Scripture is clear: a backslider can repent. A backslider is never beyond reach. This passage is bound to be speaking of a person who backslides and begins to love his sin more and more. Therefore, he keeps on in his sin—sinning and sinning and sinning—until he becomes so hardened in his sin that he will never repent...

(See Mark 3:29; 1Cor. 9:27; Heb. 3:12, 6:6, 10:26, 12:17; 1Tim. 1:19-20, 4:1-2; 2Tim. 4:3-4; 2Peter 3:17) (POSB)

**(RevC) My personal understanding is that it is indeed possible to lose one's salvation, however unlikely, but I believe this is only possible by the willful choice of one who has known salvation and who then rejects the gift and blood of Jesus Christ. It must be done willfully, defiantly, and with full understanding and awareness on the part of the person who rejects the blood of Christ that was once applied to their lives. Why anyone would do such is almost beyond imagination, but for one to do so would certainly leave him with no more sacrifice for sin (Heb. 10:26, 6:4-6), and his fate would undoubtedly be worse than if he never knew Jesus**

(2 Peter 2:20-21); to me this would be a sin unto death  
(1 John 5:16), death being eternal separation from God. (RevC)

**F. (POSB) (6:7-8) Warning:**

**Hebrews 6:7-8 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: <sup>8</sup> But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.**

The meaning of the warning is illustrated. This is a simple illustration about the soil of a vineyard keeper or a farmer.

1. The good soil drinks in the rain and brings forth its fruit and crops for those who dress and keep it. That is, believers are the good soil who drink in the Word of God and produce fruit for God and Christ and for His ministers and teachers.
2. The bad soil drinks in the rain also, but it brings forth its thorns and briers. Therefore, the bad soil is rejected and near to being cursed. Its end is to be burned.

**(See Matt. 3:10, :17-19, 13:22; Luke 13:6-9; Heb. 6:8) (POSB)**

**(RevC)** These two verses are another strong warning to those who confess to believe yet have no fruit of righteousness to show for their life in Christ. All the more reason to get past the simplicity of our salvation and seek the deeper fruitful relationship with Jesus Christ that gives us confidence toward Him and the assurance of our eternal salvation. I fear that far too many have made a verbal confession yet have not truly believed from the heart whereby there would be a hunger for more of Christ in their lives. These last few verses are speaking to yet another group: those who have tasted and known the Holy Spirit in their lives but have grown complacent and allowed the fire that once burned in them for more of Christ to go out; perhaps due to becoming entangled again in the affairs of this world thereby departing from the walk of faith in the Spirit of Christ to dead works that lead to separation from God and eternal suffering. Strong words that are rarely preached though perhaps now more than ever are needed. (RevC)

## G. (POSB) (6:9) Encouragement:

**Hebrews 6:9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.**

**Precaution one—the love and confidence that people have in us.** There was danger that the Hebrew Christians would slip back into sin. There was danger that they would return to the world and begin to live like the world. There was the danger that they would again ignore, neglect, and deny Christ. But the minister of God believed differently: he loved them, and because he loved them, he had great confidence in them. Note three things.

1. The minister calls them *beloved*. They were dear and ever so close to his heart.
2. The minister expressed great confidence in them: "**we are persuaded better things of you.**" He does not expect them to fall back into sin; he does not expect them to forsake Christ and return to the world. He has confidence in them; he expects them to stand fast in Christ and to hold on to their faith in Him.
3. The minister expects them to do the works of salvation. This is striking. Not only will the believers not fall away, but they will do the works of salvation—so says the minister.  
The point is this: if a believer turns away from Christ, he will hurt those who care for him and cut them to the core. But if he stands fast, he will prove that he loves and appreciates them. He will prove that he is well worth their love and confidence.
4. How can we keep from falling and hurting Christ and those who love and have confidence in us? By taking certain precautions, and the first precaution is this: look at the people who do love and have confidence in us. Look at them and...
  - a. think about how sin and shame will hurt them and cut their hearts.
  - b. think about how it will break their trust in us.
  - c. think about the damage and destruction.
  - d. think about how much better it is to please their love and fulfill their confidence in us.
  - e. think about how much better it is to do the works of salvation than to do the works of sin.

(See Rom. 12:9; Gal. 5:7-10; 2Cor. 7:16; 2Thes. 3:4-5; Philemon. 21) (POSB)

#### H. (POSB) (6:10) Judgment— God, Justice of:

**Hebrews 6:10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.**

**Precaution two—the justice of God.** Note a most interesting thing: the Hebrew Christians were weak and immature in the Lord. They were not growing in the Lord, and some were so close to falling away that they had to be severely warned (cp. **Hebrews 5:11-6:3; Hebrews 6:4-8**). But they had not forgotten the poor, sick, bedridden, homebound—those who needed attention and help. They had grown cold toward the Lord and His Word; they had become dull of hearing, and were no longer listening to the preaching and teaching of God's Word. But they were keeping in touch with the people who needed help. They were cold spiritually, but warm in social ministry and service. They had lost interest in Christ and His Word, but were active in helping other people.

1. The point is this: God Himself is vitally interested in the needy. Note the words: "**your work and labor of love, which ye have showed to His name.**" God loves and cares for the poor and needy as much as He does for anyone. Therefore, when a person ministers to the poor and needy, God sees it and He will not forget it. God cares about how we treat people, and He notices our love that reaches out to the poor and needy. Therefore, we need to remember the justice of God:
  - a. that God is not unrighteous or unjust.
  - b. that God does not forget; He sees all.
  - c. that works and labor of love to people are acts of love shown toward God.
2. God is just; He will not forget our love for Him or for people. He is going to judge us; therefore, we should love Him, His Word, and His people.

The justice and judgment of God, the fact that He sees all and does not forget, should stir us to never fall away. The justice and judgment of God are a precaution against returning to the world and denying Christ.

(See Matt. 16:27; 2Cor. 5:10; 1Peter 1:17, Psalm 58:11, 62:12, 96:13; Ecc. 3:17) (POSB)

**I. (POSB) (6:11-12) Diligence— Slothful:**

**Hebrews 6:11-12** And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: <sup>12</sup> That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

**Precaution three—being diligent and not being slothful.** Note two things.

1. Everyone must be diligent—every believer. And every believer must be diligent to the very end. Note the word *end*. There is to be an end to our hope; our hope for salvation will be fulfilled. The glorious day of redemption is coming.

Note that assurance comes from diligence. If we are diligent in living for Christ, our hearts are filled with assurance. If we are not diligent, then we cannot be assured that all things will be well.

2. This precaution is straightforward: do not be slothful. Do not become sluggish. Some had already become dull, sleepy, and lazy in seeking to grow and mature in Christ. They needed to arouse themselves, and the faithful needed to guard themselves lest they begin to cool off and slip away from Christ (cp. **Hebrews 5:11-6:3**).  
(See Heb. 6:12, 12:1; Rom. 12:11; 1Cor. 15:5; 1Peter 1:13; 2Peter 1:10; 2Peter 3:14) (POSB)

**J. (POSB) (6:12-15) Testimony— Example:**

**Hebrews 6:12-15** That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. <sup>13</sup> For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, <sup>14</sup> Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. <sup>15</sup> And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

**Precaution four—following the believers of faith and perseverance.** Note that some believers have already gone on to heaven and have inherited the promises of God. They are already face to face with God and Christ. They are

not dead; they are alive, more alive than when they were on earth. They are perfected, grasping and understanding what life and God and the world are all about. They now live perfectly even as God lives, and they no longer suffer pain or trials or temptations. They have inherited the glorious world of heaven and they live and dwell in the presence of God and Christ forever. But note why:

- because of their *faith and endurance in Christ and His promises*. Although they left this earth long ago, they are still living—living eternally. They are living because they had faith in Christ and in His promise of eternal life, and they patiently persevered and endured in their faith.

Now note a prime example—Abraham. God had promised Abraham a seed, a child through whom a nation of people would be born, and God had promised a land in which his people could live. (**Cp. Genesis 12:1-5; Genesis 13:14-17; Genesis 15:1-7; Genesis 17:1-8; Genesis 22:15-18.**) All Abraham had to do was believe God. If Abraham believed God, he would follow God, persevering and hoping to the end, enduring and waiting for God to fulfill His promise. This Abraham did: he patiently endured; therefore, he received the promise of God.

- The seed promised by God was Isaac and the Jewish people, but there was a double meaning to God's promise. The promised seed was also a reference to Christ and the nation of believers who were to be born through Him. Abraham is the father of believers (**Romans 4:11-12, 17**).
- The land promised by God was Palestine, but the spiritual application is the promised land of heaven.

The point is this: Abraham believed the promises of God; therefore, he has inherited the promise. He has seen a nation of people born as the seed of his faith, a nation of people who believe and follow God just as he did. And he has inherited the promised land of heaven. He is face to face with God.

But remember why Abraham received the promises of God. Because he patiently endured. He stands as a prime example of a believer. Therefore, we are to follow him and all other believers who trusted God and endured to the end. This is the fourth precaution to keep us from falling away from Christ: following the dynamic example of those who have gone on before us—those who believed God and persevered in their belief and have consequently received the promise of God.

(See **Col. 1:12; Heb. 3:1, 6:12, 12:2-3; James 5:10; 1Peter 2:21**) (POSB)

## K. (POSB) (6:16-18) Promise— Assurance:

**Hebrews 6:16-18** For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is to them an end of all strife.* <sup>17</sup> Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath: <sup>18</sup> That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

**Precaution five—God's promise and oath.** This is a glorious truth. When men are involved in strife and they want to make peace and guarantee the peace, they do it by doing two things. They keep the peace and then they swear or take an oath that they will fulfill their promise. And note: they always swear by someone or something greater than themselves. When they make such an oath, it settles the dispute. They do what they say.

This is exactly what God has done. God has promised us the hope of salvation, the promised land of heaven. And He has done more. God took an oath that He would do exactly what He said; He would fulfill His promise to Abraham.

- He would send "**the seed,**" the Savior of the world, through Abraham's lineage and cause a nation of believers to be born of Abraham.
- He would give the promised land of heaven to all those who believed in the promise of God as Abraham believed.

The point is this: God has both promised and sworn that He will save and give the promised land of eternal life to believers. *God promised and God has sworn*—two immutable and unchangeable things. God does not lie, and it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, what God has promised He will do...

- because He has spoken His Word; He has given the promise of eternal life.
- because He has given double assurance; He has sworn and taken an oath. He will give us eternal life if we believe and endure to the end.

(See 1Cor. 1:9; 1Thes. 5:24; Phil. 1:6; 2Tim. 1:12; Heb. 6:18, 13:8; James 1:17; 1Peter 4:19; Jude 24-25; Deut. 7:9; 1Kings 8:56; Malachi 3:6) (POSB)

## L. (POSB) (6:18-20) Hope— Salvation— Refuge:

**Hebrews 6:18-20** That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: <sup>19</sup> Which *hope* we

**have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; <sup>20</sup> Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.**

**Precaution six—the refuge and anchor of hope.** Man cannot live without hope. When he ceases to hope, despair about tomorrow seeps in. If he has no hope, he sees no reason for living. Hope is absolutely essential for man to live and work and have a meaningful existence. How much more true this is of eternity. If a person has hope of living forever, he does not fear or dread to face the end of this life. He knows that he is simply being transferred from this place to another place, from earth to heaven. But if a person does not have hope of living forever, he fears and dreads death. He does not know about the future after this life. Hope is one of the greatest things in all the world. With hope we have everything; without hope we have nothing—nothing but the bleakest and most dismal and dark future imaginable.

This is the reason God has not only promised us the promised land of heaven, but He has sworn that He would fulfill His promise. He simply wants us to **"have a strong consolation,"** that is, to be strongly and mightily encouraged. He wants us to know beyond any question that eternal salvation and life—the glorious promised land—the very promise made to Abraham and his seed—is ours. This is the glorious hope of the believer, the person who genuinely believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. Note three things about the hope God has given us.

1. Our hope in God is a refuge for the believer. The word **"refuge"** (*kataphugontes*) means shelter and protection from danger, distress, or some enemy. It is the picture of a ship caught in the most violent storm-tossed sea and desperately seeking the refuge of a haven or harbor.
2. Believers are persons who have fled to the refuge of God's hope—His hope of the promised land of heaven. It is the promised land of God that gives us safety from all the storms, dangers, and enemies of this world. No other property and no other land—no matter how valuable on this earth—is permanent. ...The only true refuge is the hope of God, the eternal land of heaven promised by Him.
3. Our hope in God is an anchor for the believer's soul. The word **"anchor"** (*agkuran*) refers to the anchor used by ships to hold the ship in a certain place. The anchor keeps it from floating aimlessly about and being



damaged or sunk by floating upon the rocks of forbidden shores.

Note: the anchor of hope is both sure and steadfast. It cannot slip and it cannot break; it will hold the believer no matter what storms or violence are launched against it.

4. Our hope in God enters the veil. What veil? The great veil or curtain that separated God from man. This refers to the great curtain within the Jewish temple that separated the Most Holy Place from the rest of the temple. The very presence of God dwelt within the Most Holy Place and no man was allowed to enter it. Only the High Priest had that privilege, and he had it only once a year when he offered sacrifice for the sins of the people. But note two glorious facts.
  - a. Jesus Christ is the great forerunner into the Most Holy Place, that is, into the very presence of God. When Jesus Christ died upon the cross, the great curtain of the Holy Place was torn from top to bottom. This actually happened, and it was a symbol of what was taking place in heaven. The death of Jesus Christ tore away the veil and curtain that separated men from God. He opened the way for man to enter the very presence of God Himself and to live there forever and ever. Jesus Christ was the great forerunner for man, the Person who ran ahead and opened up the way to God for man. The presence of God is no longer hidden or shut off from man. We can now enter God's presence and remain there forever because of Jesus, the great forerunner.
  - b. Jesus Christ is the great High Priest who has entered God's presence for us. He is the great High Priest who intercedes before God for us. He is our great High Priest—our great Mediator and Intercessor—who stands before God and presents us to God. And He is the eternal High Priest, which means that we are acceptable to God forever and ever.

The point is this: our hope in the promised land of heaven is that which actually carries us into heaven. If we hope in Jesus Christ the great forerunner and great High Priest, then we shall follow Him into the very veil of God's presence. (**See Rom. 8:24, 15:4, 4:18; Acts 24:15; Col. 1:5; Titus 2:12-13; 1Peter 1:3; Heb. 6:18-19; 1John 3:3**) (POSB)

**END OF LESSON 6**

## QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 6

1. **T or F** We are warned over and over again not to turn away from God's word.
2. **T or F** It is impossible for those who have experienced the goodness of God, then reject him, to be brought back because they are crucifying the son of God over again and subjected him to public disgrace.
3. **T or F** By faith in God and on his promises the prophet Abraham by waiting patiently received what was promised.
4. There are certain things that God cannot do:
  - A. **Lie**
  - B. Take a person's life
  - C. Cause famine.
  - D. None of the above
5. Hope is defined as:
  - A. A great thing to have as a Christian
  - B. Similar to luck
  - C. **An anchor for the soul, firm and secure.**
  - D. None of the above

## BEGIN LESSON 7

### **VII. (POSB) Jesus Christ is the Greater High Priest: The Way to God is Now Changed Forever**

**Introduction:** How does a man approach God? This is the great question of the ages. Why? Because man is sinful and imperfect and God is perfect. Sin and imperfection do not honor God; they dishonor Him. Therefore, the great question of the ages is, how can we approach God? There is only one way: someone has to stand before God for man. Man has to have some person who is perfect and acceptable to God and who will represent man before God. Is there such a person—such a perfect mediator and priest? This is the purpose of the present passage: to show the inadequacy of earthly priests and the superiority of the priesthood of Jesus Christ. No earthly priest ever has been or ever will be perfect. No earthly priest has ever been able to do anything perfectly or to bring perfection

to man. Jesus Christ is the only perfect and acceptable Priest who has ever lived. He alone can represent men before God...

There has never been a more religious people than the Jews, God's very own ancient people. Therefore, if the priesthood of Jesus Christ can be shown to be superior to the Jewish Levitical priesthood, His superiority over all earthly priests should be acknowledged. Jesus Christ has changed forever the priesthood of men; He has changed forever the way men are to approach God.

The purpose of the present passage is to show the superiority of the priesthood of Jesus Christ and how Jesus Christ has changed the priesthood of men forever. The priesthood of Jesus Christ is superior to the Levitical or Jewish priesthood. And in a most interesting way, this is shown by way of illustration.

A story is taken from the Old Testament to illustrate the fact, a story involving Abraham and a king and priest named Melchisedec. Some enemies had attacked Abraham and his people, and Abraham had fought and won the victory. Then seemingly out of nowhere Melchisedec, the priest of God, appeared and refreshed Abraham, giving him bread and wine. In appreciation and thankfulness to God for the victory and for sending the priest to him, Abraham gave Melchisedec ten percent of all the spoils. This is the story—all there is to it. But it is full of meaning as will be seen here in [Hebrews 7](#).

If time allows, it is suggested that this whole outline be preached and taught in one session to keep from losing the thought and meaning of the passage. *Jesus Christ is the greater High Priest—the way to God is now changed forever.*

#### **A. (7:1-3) Priesthood— Melchisedec:**

**Hebrews 7:1-3 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; <sup>2</sup> To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; <sup>3</sup> Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.**

The change of our approach to God is illustrated by the priesthood of Melchisedec. Note the historical events of Melchisedec. Four significant facts are mentioned.

1. Melchisedec was the king of Salem which was probably Jerusalem (cp. **Psalms 76:2**).

- a. His name *Melchisedec* means king of *righteousness*.
  - b. His realm of rule, *Salem* or Jerusalem, means king of peace.
  - c. Remember: earthly Jerusalem is a type of the heavenly Jerusalem, that is, of heaven itself (**Hebrews 11:10; Rev. 21:1f**).
2. Melchisedec was a priest of the most high God, of the living and true God.
3. Melchisedec was paid tithes by Abraham himself, the very first man to whom God gave His great promise. It happened when Abraham was returning from battle. Almost out of nowhere Melchisedec appeared and refreshed and blessed Abraham by giving him bread and wine and pronouncing a blessing upon him. As a result, Abraham gave a tenth of his spoils to the priest in appreciation to God. The significance is this: Abraham, who was to give birth to the priesthood of God's people, paid tithes to a much greater priest, Melchisedec. Remember: Abraham was the father of Levi, the Levi who was to be the first High Priest of Israel and who was to give his name "Levi" to the *Levitical priest*.
4. Melchisedec was an eternal priest just like the Son of God. How can it be said that he was eternal? Because so far as men know, he had no genealogy. There was no record of his roots whatsoever, and this was most unusual. In that day and time, it was important for a priest to have a record of his genealogy. If he had no record of a priestly genealogy, he could not serve as a priest. The point is this: there is no record in Scripture of Melchisedec's roots; therefore, he stands **as a type** of the eternal priest who was to be sent into the world by God, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

**"Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually" (Hebrews 7:3).**

#### **B. (7:4-10) Priesthood— Melchisedec:**

**Hebrews 7:4-10 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. <sup>5</sup> And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: <sup>6</sup> But he whose descent is not counted from them received**

tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. <sup>7</sup> And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. <sup>8</sup> And here men that die receive tithes; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. <sup>9</sup> And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

The change of our approach to God is seen in the superiority of Melchisedec's priesthood. **"Consider how great this man was."**

1. First, why is Melchisedec a greater priest than other earthly priests (the Levitical priests)? Because Abraham paid tithes to him (**Hebrews 7:4**). Abraham gave him a tenth of the spoils he had taken in battle. Therefore, Melchisedec is greater than Abraham, which means he must be greater than the priests of Israel, for they trace their roots from Abraham.
2. Second, why is Melchisedec a greater priest than other earthly priests (the Levitical priests)? Because he had a special right to the priesthood (**Hebrews 7:5-6a**).
  - a. His priesthood was not based upon the legal priesthood of the Levites who received tithes according to the law. He was paid tithes because of his greatness, out of Abraham's heart of appreciation and thankfulness to God.
  - b. His priesthood was not based upon human roots and genealogy. So far as is known from Scripture, he did not come from an organized priesthood. He did not descend from earthly priests.
3. Third, why is Melchisedec a greater priest than other earthly priests (the Levitical priests)? Because he blessed Abraham. As great as Abraham was, he recognized the superiority of Melchisedec and gladly received his blessing. And **without dispute, the less is blessed by the greater**. Remember: the legal priesthood (the Levitical priests) was in the bosom of Abraham.
4. Fourth, why is Melchisedec a greater priest than other earthly priests (the Levitical priests)? Because as far as the record of Scripture is concerned, he was not mortal but eternal. Here on earth men who receive tithes die, but Melchisedec received tithes and it is never witnessed or recorded that he died. Therefore, he is the picture of an eternal priest, a far greater priest

than any earthly priest.

5. Fifth, why is Melchisedec a greater priest than other earthly priests (the Levitical priesthood)? Because all priests also tithed to him. How could priests who were not yet born be said to have paid tithes to Melchisedec? In Biblical times a man's descendants were considered to be in his bosom. Therefore, when Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, his great grandson Levi and all his priestly descendants were represented in Abraham. They, too, paid tithes to Melchisedec. Therefore, Melchisedec was a greater priest than the earthly priests of Levi.

Now remember why all this is being written:

- to show that men are no longer to approach God through an earthly priesthood and priest.
- to show that there is a greater priesthood than that of earthly priests.
- to show that earthly religion and earthly priests are inadequate in representing man before God.
- to show that God has provided a perfect and eternal Priest to represent man before Him.
- to show that the imperfect priesthood of man has been changed; there is now a perfect and an eternal priesthood.

Remember also the points of the illustration of Melchisedec and Abraham. Abraham represented the earthly or Levitical priesthood of the most religious people who ever lived, the Jews. Melchisedec represented the perfect and eternal priesthood, and in representing the eternal priesthood, he pointed toward the priesthood of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. With these basic facts in mind, we are now ready to look at how Jesus Christ has changed our approach to God—at how Jesus Christ is the perfect and eternal Priest who represents man before God.

### C. (7:11-23) Jesus Christ, High Priest— Priesthood:

**Hebrews 7:11-23** *If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? <sup>12</sup> For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. <sup>13</sup> For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. <sup>14</sup> For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. <sup>15</sup> And it is yet far more evident: for*

that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,  
<sup>16</sup> Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after  
the power of an endless life. <sup>17</sup> For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for  
ever after the order of Melchisedec. <sup>18</sup> For there is verily a disannulling  
of the commandment going before for the weakness and  
unprofitableness thereof. <sup>19</sup> For the law made nothing perfect, but the  
bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God.  
<sup>20</sup> And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made priest*: <sup>21</sup> (For  
those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him  
that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou *art* a  
priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) <sup>22</sup> By so much was Jesus  
made a surety of a better testament. <sup>23</sup> And they truly were many  
priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

The change of our approach to God is seen in Jesus Christ. He is the perfect and eternal High Priest. Note seven changes in the priesthood that have been wrought by God.

1. There has been a change in the way man seeks perfection, in the way man seeks to become acceptable to God (**Hebrews 7:11**). Man has always sought perfection through religion. Man has always sought God through religion, sought to become acceptable to God through religion. Man has used religion to become good enough and perfect enough for God to accept him. And within religion three things have been developed to help man in his search for fellowship with God.
  - a. First, there is the law. So long as a person keeps the law, he is thought to be acceptable to God. But if he breaks the law, he is unacceptable to God. And it is this that is the problem, for the thinking and honest man knows that no person can perfectly keep the law. Therefore, no person can ever be acceptable to God—not perfectly, not permanently, not forever.
  - b. Second, there is the sacrifice for sins. When a person sins, he is guilty; therefore, some sacrifice has to be made for his sins. There has to be a substitute who will bear the person's sins and the guilt for them...
  - c. Third, there is the priesthood. There has to be some person who will teach the law and demand obedience to it, and then when man fails, who will offer sacrifice to God for man. There has to be a priest who is acceptable to God and who can stand as a Mediator between God and man...



Now, note **Hebrews 7:11**. It says clearly that the earthly or Levitical priesthood could not bring perfection to man. The earthly priests who arose from Aaron just could not make man perfect. If they could have, then there would not have been the need for a priest who was perfect and eternal to arise from the priesthood of Melchisedec. Remember: Melchisedec is a priest of the perfect and eternal priesthood, and God promised to send a priest after the order of Melchisedec—a perfect and eternal priest (**Hebrews 6:20**). If an earthly priest could make man perfect before God, there would never have been a need for God to make that promise. But there is a need; no matter how often we seek God through earthly priests and ministers, they do not make us perfect. Man desperately needs a perfect and eternal priest. This is the reason God promised the perfect and eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ.

2. There has been a change in the law, and note: the change is said to be an absolute necessity (**Hebrews 7:12**). Why? Because the whole ministry of the priesthood has to be changed. That is, the law itself in all its ministry and sacrificial system has to be changed. Why? Because the law cannot make man perfect. No matter how much man tries to keep the law, he fails. And no matter how many sacrifices the priest makes for man, they fail to make man perfect. Why? Because both the priest and the sacrifice are imperfect and mortal. Therefore, everything the priest does is imperfect and mortal. He, an imperfect and mortal priest, handles imperfect and mortal sacrifices. Therefore, his whole ministry is imperfect and mortal. His ministry leaves man imperfect and mortal. He does not make man perfect and eternal; he does not make man acceptable to God. Therefore, there has to be a change in the law, in the way man seeks perfection. There has to be change in the law and legal system of the priesthood. Again, this is the reason God promised a priest forever in the Lord Jesus Christ, a priesthood after the order of the perfect and eternal priesthood of Melchisedec.
3. There has been a change in the origin of the priesthood (**Hebrews 7:13-14**). By law the earthly priests had to come from the tribe and roots of Levi. But Jesus Christ, the Person of whom these things are being said, did not come from Levi. He came from the tribe of Juda, and no priest ever came from Juda. Therefore, the priesthood of Jesus Christ belongs to a different order entirely. It does not belong to a human or earthly origin. Jesus Christ is a perfect and eternal priest after the order of Melchisedec.



4. There has been a change in the very qualifications of the priesthood (**Hebrews 7:15-17**). Men became priests because they met the qualifications of carnal or earthly laws and rules. They were appointed because they met the legal requirements of the law. But not Christ. He was appointed to be the great High Priest because of His endless life. His "life and immortality which He had in himself were his right and title to the priesthood" (Matthew Henry. *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p.919).

The law knew that men were frail and weak, corruptible and dying; hence, even the priests chosen to represent men before God were frail, weak, corruptible, and dying. Therefore, the law laid it down that the priesthood should pass on to the oldest sons. But note: not a single priest—not even all the priests of every generation combined—could give life to a single person. But this is not true with the Lord Jesus Christ. He is a High Priest because of His endless life. He is perfect and eternal; He has an endless life—the very perfection for which men seek. Therefore, He is qualified to be the Supreme High Priest for man.

5. There has been a change in the way man draws near to God (**Hebrews 7:18-19**). Note that the law has been disannulled and cancelled. Why? As shown above in point one, man has always sought to draw near God by law, that is, by being as good as he could and by keeping enough laws to become acceptable to God. But the law is weak and unprofitable because man is weak and sinful. He does not and cannot keep the law; therefore, the law cannot make him perfect and acceptable to God. In fact, all the law can do is show man that he is sinful. Every time man looks at the law and is honest, all he sees is that he comes short and is sinful. Therefore, men cannot approach and become acceptable to God by law. If man is to ever become acceptable to God, it has to be by some way other than law. This is the reason the law has been disannulled and cancelled.

But note: If we cannot become acceptable to God by keeping the law and by being as good as we can, how then can we be saved? Is there any way to become acceptable to God? YES!... God has brought a better hope for man, and it is by this hope that we draw near God... It is the hope for the perfect and eternal High Priest...

- for the High Priest who can offer the perfect and eternal sacrifice for our sins.

- for the High Priest who can present us to God and cause God to accept us.

That High Priest, of course, is Jesus Christ. He is the perfect and eternal priest who is after the order of Melchisedec.

6. There has been a change in the guarantee and covenant of the priesthood. God's Word is enough. If God had just spoken the Word of promise—if He had just promised to send the perfect and eternal High Priest to men—that would have been enough. But God did more. He swore that He would fulfill His promise. This is very significant. It means that the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be exactly as God said it would be. The priesthood of Jesus Christ is doubly sure, for God both promised the perfect and eternal priest and then swore that he would send Him into the world. Note the word *repent* or change. God will never change His mind: Jesus Christ shall remain High Priest forever (**cp. Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 3:1**). God has sworn that He will be a priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Note one other fact: this means that Jesus Christ is *the surety of a better testament or covenant*. The old covenant was the law, and as has been seen above, the law never could make man perfect. But now God has given a better covenant to man, the new covenant that is based upon the love and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Under the old covenant, men did all they could to approach God by law, being as good as they could. But now, under the new covenant, men approach God through the love and the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ for them. When a person accepts the death of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for his sins, God accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the man's sin. God takes the person's acceptance of Christ—the person's faith in the sacrifice of Christ—and counts him as having already died in Christ. God counts the man as being free of sin. This is the love of God, the love of the new covenant.  
(See **John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24**)

Note this fact: the new covenant is guaranteed. God will accept any person who *truly accepts* the sacrifice of Christ as his own sacrifice. God will forgive his sins because he believes—casts himself—upon the sacrifice of Christ. Jesus Christ was made the surety, the guarantee of a better covenant. What more could man ask of God? (POSB)

**END OF LESSON 7**

## QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 7

1. Melchizedek was the king of :

- A. Jericho
- B. Athens
- C. Hebron
- D. Salem**

2. T or F Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek.

3. The name Melchizedek means: king of righteousness. The king of Salem means:

- A. king of joy
- B. king of kings
- C. king of peace**
- D. None of the above

4. T or F According to the book of Hebrews the greater person is always blessed by the lesser person.

5. T or F Because Jesus lives forever he has a permanent priesthood.

## BEGIN LESSON 8

(POSB)

7. There had to be a change in the number of priests. Very simply, every priest among men died. The priesthood was always changing. And most tragic of all: the fact that they died meant that they could not give life to men. They did not know how to keep men from dying, not even themselves. But note what Scripture declares:

**"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Hebrews 7:24).**

Jesus Christ lives forever; He has an *endless life* (**Hebrews 7:16**). He is the perfect and eternal priest, the endless priest who lives forever. Therefore, He can carry men before God forever. His priesthood never changes; He is the unchangeable Priest who can represent men before God throughout all eternity. He makes men acceptable to God forever and

ever.

(See Heb. 2:17, 4:14-15, 6:20, 7:25-26, 8:1, 10:19-22)

- D. (7:25) Jesus Christ, High Priest— Salvation:** Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect power. This is one of the great verses of Scripture. Note the power of what it is proclaiming:

**"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).**

Four significant things about Jesus Christ are being said.

1. Jesus Christ lives forever in the presence of God. Note how this glorious truth is proclaimed time and time again in this chapter alone.
  - a. He has an "endless life" (**Hebrews 7:16**).
  - b. He "continues forever" (**Hebrews 7:24**).
  - c. He "has an unchangeable priesthood" (**Hebrews 7:24**).
  - d. He "ever lives"—lives forever and ever (**Hebrews 7:25**).
  - e. He is "consecrated for evermore" (**Hebrews 7:28**).
2. Jesus Christ lives to make intercession for man. This is the picture of Jesus Christ as High Priest before God... God the Father loves man with a perfect love, which means that God will save man. But God is also just, perfectly righteous and just. Therefore, God has to judge and punish sin just as much as He has to save man. How could God do both? There was only one way:
  - ❖ God had to send His own Son to earth to die for man. God had to give His own Son to bear the guilt and punishment of sin for man. God had to send His own Son to bear the justice and judgment of God against sin.

Therefore, in Jesus Christ we see both the perfect love and justice of God. We see God's love in that He was willing and determined to send His Son to die for man. And we see God's justice in that He was willing to cast the wrath of His justice against His own Son when God took the sins of men upon Himself.

The point is this: Jesus Christ has lived upon earth as the perfect God-Man. Therefore, He stands forever before God as man's representative and man's intercessor. This is His very purpose for living before God: to make intercession for man, to offer up His own sacrifice for sins in behalf of

man.

3. Jesus Christ is able to save all persons to the uttermost. What does it mean to be saved to the uttermost (*eis to panteles*)? It means to be saved "completely, perfectly, finally and for all time and eternity" (Amplified New Testament). It means that Jesus Christ presents us to God as perfect. He presents us in His righteousness as perfected forever. Therefore, in Christ—because He makes intercession for us and because He stands before God as the perfect and eternal sacrifice for our sins—we become acceptable to God. But it means much more. In outline form, when Jesus Christ saves us to the uttermost it means:
  - a. that He saves us from sin, death and condemnation (**John 5:24; Romans 8:34**).
  - b. that He saves us to live with God eternally (**John 3:16; Romans 8:39**).
  - c. that He saves us to be the citizens of the new heaven and earth (**2 Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1f**).
  - d. that He saves us to rule and reign over the universe right along with Him throughout all of eternity
  - e. (**Luke 12:42-44; Luke 22:28-29; 1 Cor. 6:2-3**).
4. Jesus Christ saves only those who come to God by Him. Note: we are to come to God...We are to come to God, but we are to come to God *by Jesus Christ*. *Jesus Christ alone can make intercession for man*. Only the Son of God Himself stands before God as the perfect and eternal High Priest. Only He can save man to the uttermost. Therefore, a person must come to God through Him and Him alone.  
(See **Romans 8:34; 1Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25, 8:6, 9:15, 24, 12:2; 1John 2:1**)

#### E. (7:26) Jesus Christ, Sinless:

**Hebrews 7:26 For such an high priest became us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;***

Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect life. Straightforward and without equivocation—here is the kind of High Priest we need; here is Jesus.

1. Jesus Christ is "**holy**" (*hosios*): to be set apart and separated to God; to be separated from sin and from all evil, and from immoral, wicked, and

lawless behavior. Jesus Christ is perfectly and eternally set apart from sin and free from all immoral and lawless behavior. Jesus Christ is absolutely *holy*.

2. Jesus Christ is **"harmless"** (*akakos*): blameless, not evil, free from all guile, deception, envy, and malice against anyone... There was nothing but the goodness and love of God in Him, and that was all that He ever shared with man. Jesus Christ is absolutely *harmless and blameless*.
3. Jesus Christ is **"undefiled"** (*amiantos*): unstained by sin; absolutely free from all moral impurity, uncleanness, and defilement. Jesus Christ was completely free from anything that would keep Him from approaching God. He is absolutely *undefiled*.
4. Jesus Christ is **"separate from sinners"**: that is, He is totally different from sinners. He never sinned... He was tempted just as all men are, but He never yielded to temptation—not to a single one. Therefore, He stands apart, completely separated and different from all other men. Jesus Christ is the Perfect and Ideal Man...  
(See Isa. 53:9; Luke 23:1; John 8:46; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 1:9, 7:26, 9:14; 1Peter 1:19, 2:22; 1John 3:5)
5. Jesus Christ is **"made higher than the heavens."** This means several things.
  - a. Jesus Christ alone was raised from the dead never to die again. Other people had been raised from the dead, but they all were to die again. But not Jesus Christ. He alone was raised never to die again.
  - b. Jesus Christ alone was taken up into heaven in bodily form. He ascended in bodily form to remain forever in the presence of God.
  - c. Jesus Christ alone was exalted to the right hand of God; He was exalted to never leave the position of sovereignty as the Supreme and Majestic Lord of the universe.  
(See Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:36, 5:31; Heb. 1:9; 1Peter 3:22; Eph. 1:20; Phil. 2:9; Rev. 5:12)

Jesus Christ is **"made higher than the heavens"** in a perfect and absolute sense. He sits as the Perfect High Priest before the throne of God forever and ever.

## F. (7:27) Jesus Christ, High Priest— Death;

**Hebrews 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.**

Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect sacrifice. The High Priest among men had one major function: to make sacrifice for the sins of the people. Actually, the High Priest himself did this only once a year. The regular priests made sacrifice for sins on a daily basis when people came to make confession. The one day of the year when the High Priest made sacrifice was a very special day known as the Day of Atonement. It was special because it was the day when the High Priest took the blood of the sacrificial lamb into the Most Holy Place and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. This was the only time man could enter the Most Holy Place, for it was the place where the very presence of God dwelt. Imagine being able to enter the presence of God only one day a year. And then only the High Priest himself could approach God.

The point to note is this: The High Priest was a mere man who was imperfect and sinful just like all other men. Therefore, he had to offer up a sacrifice for himself before he could ever offer sacrifice for the people. Barclay describes the scene well:

*"Now the very first item on the ritual of that day was a sacrifice for the sins of the High Priest himself. He washed his hands and his feet; he put off his gorgeous robes; he clothed himself in spotless white linen. There was brought to him a bullock which he had purchased with his own money. He laid both hands on the bullock's head to transfer his sin to it; and thus he made confession: 'Ah, Lord God, I have committed iniquity; I have transgressed; I have sinned, I and my house. O Lord, I beseech Thee, cover over the sins and transgressions which I have committed, transgressed and sinned before Thee, I and my house.' The greatest of all the Levitical sacrifices began with a sacrifice for the sin of the High Priest himself" (The Letter to the Hebrews, p.91).*

But note: Jesus Christ is the High Priest with the perfect sacrifice. As the former verse shows, Jesus Christ was sinless and perfect. Therefore, when He sacrificed His life for the sins of men, it was a perfect sacrifice. Being perfect, it never has to be done again. His sacrifice had to be done only

once—all because He is the perfect High Priest.

(See Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:26; 1Peter 1:18-19, 2:24, 3:18; 1John 3:16; Rev. 1:5)

#### G. (7:28) Jesus Christ, High Priest:

**Hebrews 7:28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.**

Jesus Christ is the High Priest with a perfect appointment. Men—mere men—are appointed to be priests by the law. The law can appoint no one else but men with infirmities and weaknesses—men who are imperfect, frail, sinful, and dying. But the glorious message of this passage offers eternal hope for man. Why? Because God has given us two wonderful things: God has given His Word that He will give us a perfect and eternal High Priest to save us, and God has sworn that He will fulfill His Word. God has assured us with a double surety. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is consecrated forever more. The word "**consecrated**" (*teteleiōmenon*) means perfected. Jesus Christ is the perfected and eternal High Priest promised and sworn by God to save man. What greater salvation and surety could we ask than to have God send His own Son to perfect us and to give us eternal life and the glorious privilege of living forever with Him—the glorious privilege of ruling and reigning with Him throughout all of eternity.

(See Heb. 2:10, 4:15, 5:9, 7:28) (POSB)

### VIII. (POSB) CHRIST THE EXALTED HIGH PRIEST

**Introduction:** note the words of **Hebrews 8:1, "This is the sum."** The word "**sum**" means chief point, major thrust, and principle thought. The writer is about to give the major thrust and principle thought of the High Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the great High Priest; He is the One who stands between God and man, the only Person who can make man acceptable to God. What is the major thrust and principle thought of His High Priesthood? It is *ministry*. Jesus Christ is the *great Minister* of God, the One who ministers both in heaven and upon earth for man. Both places are significant. Jesus Christ is the great Minister, the Supreme Minister who ministers day and night for man in both heaven and earth.



## **A. (8:1) Jesus Christ, Minister— High Priesthood:**

**Hebrews 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken *this is the sum:*  
We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne  
of the Majesty in the heavens;**

Jesus Christ is the perfect High Priest, the Minister of a heavenly, spiritual priesthood. There are qualifications for being a priest on earth; a man has to meet certain conditions in order to serve as an earthly priest. So it is in heaven and for God. If someone is going to stand before God for man, that someone has to meet certain conditions. The heavenly High Priest has to have certain qualifications. Note how the Lord Jesus Christ meets every one of these requirements.

1. He has to be perfect, completely faithful and true to God (**Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 3:1-2; Hebrews 5:8-9; Hebrews 7:11; Hebrews 7:19**).
2. He has to be merciful and become the sacrifice for man's sins—become the sacrificial Lamb of God for man (**Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 7:27**).
3. He has to live as a man and undergo all the trials and temptations of men and conquer them all without ever sinning. He has to be sinless (**Hebrews 2:18; Hebrews 4:14-15; Hebrews 7:26**).
4. He has to succor, actually feel, man's infirmities and have compassion for man. He has to show mercy and help man when he needs help (**Hebrews 2:18; Hebrews 4:15-16**).
5. He has to be appointed and ordained by God to be the High Priest in heaven (**Hebrews 5:5-6; Hebrews 7:28**).
6. He has to become the perfect author of eternal salvation (**Hebrews 5:9**).
7. He has to be the priest who is after the order of Melchisedec and not after the order of earthly priests (**Hebrews 5:6, 10; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:11; Hebrews 7:21**).
8. He has to be the forerunner into heaven (**Hebrews 6:20**).
9. He has to be eternal, that is, have an "endless life" (**Hebrews 7:16; Hebrews 7:17; cp. Hebrews 7:3; Hebrews 7:24; Hebrews 7:28**).
10. He has to live forever to make intercession for those who come to God by Him (**Hebrews 7:25**).
11. He has to be exalted to the right hand of God—exalted higher than the heavens (**Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 8:1**).

**JESUS CHRIST MEETS ALL THE QUALIFICATIONS TO BE THE PERFECT  
HIGH PRIEST OF HEAVEN.**

Jesus Christ is the Minister of the heavenly spiritual priesthood. No one else is qualified—no one has ever been or ever will be qualified except Him. Now again, note the words, **"this is the sum"**—this is the chief point, the major emphasis of all that has been said.

**B. (8:1) Jesus Christ, Exaltation— High Priesthood— Minister:** Jesus Christ is the exalted High Priest; He sits on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. There He sits with the Sovereign Majesty of the universe, with God Himself, ruling and reigning with all authority and power both in heaven and earth. There He sits in all the glory and honor, dominion and power of God Himself.  
(See Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:36, 5:31; Eph. 1:20; Phil. 2:9; 1Tim. 6:15; Heb. 1:9; 1Peter 3:22; Rev. 5:12)

**C. (8:2) Jesus Christ, Minister— Sanctuary, Heavenly— Tabernacle, Heavenly:**

**Hebrews 8:2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.**

Jesus Christ is the exalted Minister of God, the Minister of the sanctuary of heaven. He is the exalted High Priest in heaven, but that is not all that He is. He is also the exalted Minister of the sanctuary. He is not in heaven just to rule as Lord and to receive the honor and worship of subjects throughout the universe. He is not there ruling and reigning from a far distance, a Lord who can never be known or reached by His people. It is true that Jesus Christ is in heaven to reign in majesty and glory, but He is also in heaven to be the Minister of heaven, to be the Minister of the true sanctuary and tabernacle or place of worship. He is there...

1. to receive us as we come to God.
2. to hear our cries for mercy and grace to help in times of need.
3. to save us to the uttermost.
4. to represent us as the sacrificial offering for our sins.
5. to deliver us from all the trials and temptations of this corruptible and dying world.
6. to minister the Word of God to our hearts.

Jesus Christ is not in heaven selfishly enjoying the wonder and glory of its sanctuary; He is not in heaven selfishly soaking up all its glory for Himself.

Jesus Christ is in heaven ministering—looking after and reaching out to people...

7. He is listening and hearing the cries of people and ministering to their needs. In fact, He is ministering to every need that God's people have.

8. He is receiving the worship and praise of people and offering their names up to God.

Jesus Christ is actively ministering and looking after the true sanctuary and the true tabernacle, the real place where men are to worship, that is, heaven itself. (Note: the true sanctuary and tabernacle means that part of heaven where God sits upon His throne, where the very presence of God is. It is the very place where men are to offer their worship and praise to God. It is the place where Christ ministers as the High Priest before God.)

(See Heb. 2:17-18, 4:15-16; Psalm 40:17; Isa. 1:10)

#### **D. (8:3) Jesus Christ, Minister:**

**Hebrews 8:3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.***

Jesus Christ is the exalted Minister who offers the gifts and sacrifices of men to God. This is what is meant by this verse. The very purpose for High Priests was to offer gifts and sacrifices on behalf of men. High Priests were appointed; the very reason for their existence was to offer these gifts and sacrifices so that God would accept men. By making such offerings it was felt that God would be pleased, and He would approve men for heaven.

The point is this: Jesus Christ is now the High Priest, the One who is to offer the gifts and sacrifices of men to God. But note: as seen in earlier passages, only perfect gifts and offerings are acceptable to God. And no man has a perfect gift and sacrifice to offer to God. What then can be done? If Jesus Christ is our great High Priest, He has to have something to offer for us. As this verse says, **"It is of necessity that this man have something also to offer."** But what could He offer? There was only one thing: He had to offer Himself, for He is the only gift and sacrifice in the world that is perfect. Therefore, Christ offered Himself as the perfect gift and sacrifice to God. And He did it for us. This is the critical point: Jesus Christ offered Himself as the gift and sacrifice for us. He gave Himself for man—gave Himself as man's gift and sacrifice to God. What an unbelievable thing to do! But Jesus Christ did it.

- ❖ He Himself *actually became* our gift and sacrifice to God.
- ❖ He *actually offered* Himself as our gift and sacrifice to God.

Jesus Christ is the exalted Minister who offers the gifts and sacrifices of men to God. (See Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:26-28; 1Peter 1:18-19, 2:24, 3:18; 1John 3:16; Rev. 1:5)

#### E. (8:4-5) Jesus Christ, Minister— Heaven— Tabernacle, Earthly:

**Hebrews 8:4-5 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: <sup>5</sup> Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.***

Jesus Christ is the exalted Minister of the real, heavenly world. This is the meaning of these two verses. Verse four simply says that if Christ was a priest on earth, He would not be a priest at all. He simply was not born of the priestly tribe of men, the Levite tribe. And no man could serve as priest unless he was born into the priestly family.

This, of course, means something of critical importance: Jesus Christ is not the minister of the shadow of heavenly things, of earthly gifts and sanctuaries and tabernacles—all are but shadows of heavenly things. Jesus Christ is the Minister of heaven, of the real world, of the real sanctuary and tabernacle of God. The word "**example**" (*hupodeigmati*) means copy, shadow, shadowy outline, a reflection. The things of religion and worship upon earth are only examples and shadows, copies and sketches, shadowy outlines and reflections of heavenly worship.

Note: there is a real world, a heavenly world, and there is a tabernacle, a throne room in which the glorious presence of God dwells. It was the pattern from which Moses made the earthly tabernacle (**cp. Exodus 25:40**). God had shown Moses the real pattern of heavenly worship and told him to make a copy of it upon earth. That is what the tabernacle was that was carried around by Israel in the wilderness wanderings.

The point is this: earthly priests can only give us the shadow and picture of heaven. But Jesus Christ is the Priest and Minister of the heavenly worship, of the real world. Therefore, He is the One who can lead men into heaven,

into the world that is real and perfect and that has no end. He is the One who can lead us into the very presence of God. (See Matt. 6:20; Luke 10:20; John 14:2; Acts 7:55-56; Heb. 9:23, 11:10, 11:2; Rev. 7:9, 22:14) (POSB)

## END OF LESSON 8

### QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 8

1. T or F Moses was told that he was to build the tabernacle exactly according to what God showed him.
2. T or F The ministry of Jesus as high priest is superior to any other priest.
3. The covenant of God with man was perfect but God found fault with:
  - A. animal sacrifice
  - B. The people
  - C. The priesthood
  - D. All of the above
4. T or F God promised a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.
5. T or F God said Israel will be his people and he will be their God but he cannot forgive their wickedness and I will remember their sins.

## BEGIN LESSON 9

(POSB)

### F. Christ is the Minister of a New and Superior Covenant, [8:6-13](#)

**Introduction:** This begins one of the great subjects of the Bible, the *new covenant of God*. A covenant is an agreement between two parties. But note a significant fact: the new covenant of God *is the covenant of God*, not of man. Man has absolutely nothing to do with the terms of this covenant. It is a covenant between God and man, but the terms are set exclusively by God. In life there are two kinds of covenants.

- There is a covenant where both parties set the terms and agree to them.

- There is a covenant where one party sets the terms, but both parties agree to them. This kind of covenant is usually called a will or testament.

The covenant of God is the latter covenant, a covenant of God's will and testament. God sets the terms and conditions, and man accepts the covenant or else rejects it. It is comparable to the *last will and testament* of any man. The recipients cannot change the terms of the will; they can only receive or reject the inheritance...

The new covenant of God has now been established with man. It has been established and given to man by the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Minister of the new covenant, and it is far, far superior to the old covenant.

#### **G. (8:6) Mediator— New Covenant:**

**Hebrews 8:6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.**

The new covenant is founded by a perfect Mediator. The word "mediator" (*mesitēs*) means someone who stands between two parties and brings them together. The mediator is a negotiator, a middle person, an arbitrator, a go-between. This is Jesus Christ, but there is one distinct and unique difference between Jesus Christ and human mediators. Jesus Christ is the *Perfect Mediator*. He is the Mediator chosen by God Himself to stand between God and man... He spells out and proclaims the truth of the terms clearly and perfectly. (See 1Tim. 2:5, Heb. 8:6, 9:15, 24, 12:24; 1John 2:1)

#### **H. (8:6) Covenant, New:** the new covenant is founded on better promises.

Note: the new covenant itself is a better covenant than the old covenant because of the better promises. What is the old covenant? It is the covenant of the law. God promised that He would accept, bless, and fellowship with man if man would keep the law. Man accepted the conditions and vowed to obey the terms of God's covenant or the law (**Exodus 24:1-8; cp. Jeremiah 7:23**). But man discovered a terrible fact: the law was not full and complete enough. It did not go far enough in meeting his need. Man discovered four terrible weaknesses.

1. The law made it clear that God was holy and that He expected His people to live holy lives. But the law did not give the inner power and strength to obey God.
2. The law made it clear that man could become acceptable to God. But the law did not provide the power and energy to become acceptable nor to inherit eternal life.
3. The law made it clear that God was the Sovereign and Majestic ruler of the universe, the great Law-Giver. But the law said nothing about a personal knowledge and fellowship with God.
4. The law made it clear that God was strict and stern, just and holy. But the law said nothing about God's love and mercy nor about His forgiveness.

This is where the new covenant is better than the old covenant. The new covenant is founded on much better promises. Every one of these shortcomings of the old covenant are met in the promises of the new covenant. In the new covenant, a person finds the glorious promise...

- of power and strength in the inner man (**Hebrews 8:10**).
- of God's personal acceptance which means life eternal (**Hebrews 8:10**).
- of a personal knowledge and fellowship with God (**Hebrews 8:11**).
- of God's love and mercy and of His forgiveness (**Hebrews 8:12**).

(See Heb. 7:19, 8:6, 9:23)

#### I. (8:7-9) Covenant, New:

**Hebrews 8:7-9 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. <sup>8</sup> For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: <sup>9</sup> Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.**

The new covenant eliminates the weaknesses of the first covenant. Note that from this point on, God is speaking. God is the spokesman pointing out the weaknesses of the first covenant (**cp. Isaiah 61:8; Jeremiah 31:31-34**). The weaknesses of the first covenant are pointed out in the previous note. Thomas Hewitt summarizes it well:



*"It [the old covenant] could reveal sin but not remove it, and being defective it could not save or justify guilty sinners. It failed to meet the deepest needs of sinful man....sin had made it ineffective. The real cause of the covenant's weakness was man's sinfulness; therefore God finds fault with them" (The Epistle to the Hebrews. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.136).*

The point is this: if the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a new covenant. But man, symbolized in Israel, did not keep the old covenant. Two things happened:

- Man failed to keep the covenant or law.
- The law was not able to infuse the power to keep the commandments. Therefore, God had to do something, or else man would be lost eternally. This is the glorious gospel—the wonderful news of the new covenant. God did something. Note the words: **"I will make a new covenant" (Hebrews 8:8)**. And note: the new covenant differs entirely from the old covenant made with Israel when God led them out of Egyptian slavery under Moses.

God has given us a glorious promise and hope in the new covenant as will be seen in the next point. But we must always remember: God rejected Israel because they did not keep the old covenant. This certainly means that He will reject us if we do not keep the greater covenant, the covenant that focuses in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. (See **Romans 3:28; Heb. 7:19**)

#### **J. (8:10-12) Covenant, New:**

**Hebrews 8:10-12 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: <sup>11</sup> And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. <sup>12</sup> For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.**

The new covenant is an inward power, a spiritual power within the inner man. The new covenant gives man four wonderful powers.



1. The power of a new mind and heart (**Hebrews 8:10**). The new covenant through its mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ...

- a. renews a man's mind.
- b. renews a man's heart.

This is, of course, a reference to the new birth. When a person approaches God through the new covenant (the Lord Jesus Christ)—when he accepts the terms of the new covenant (belief)—God does a most wonderful thing.

- God renews the person's mind and puts His laws into the person's mind.
- God renews the person's heart and writes His laws upon the person's heart.

This means two wonderful things.

- ❖ A new heart and mind mean that we will be accepted by God and given eternal life. It means... we shall be delivered from the sin, corruption, and death of this world and from the guilt, judgment, and condemnation of God in the next world.
- ❖ A new mind and heart mean that we have the *desire and power* to follow and obey God. It means that we have a desire—an earnest desire—to obey God and keep His laws. A new heart and mind stirs us to love God because He has renewed us, and our love stirs us to seek His face continually. Even when we fail and come short—which we all do ever too often—our hearts are stirred to seek forgiveness and to repent and to begin anew to follow and obey Him. This is the difference between the old and new covenant. The old covenant or law condemned us and had no power to stir and energize us. But the new covenant, Christ within us, does have the power to forgive and stir us to arise and follow God anew and afresh. (See **Romans 8:6, 12:2; 2Cor. 4:16; Eph. 2:15, 4:24; Col. 3:10**)

2. The power of fellowship and communion with God (**Hebrews 8:10**). Remember this is God speaking, and He definitely says, "**I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.**" This means that we are accepted by God. This means...

- a. that we can commune and fellowship with God.
- b. that we can pray and share with God.
- c. that we can call upon God when we need mercy and grace to help in time of need.

- d. that we can have God's care and provision and protection.
- e. that we can have God's delivering power over temptation and trials.

All of this and more, so much more—all because of the new covenant brought to us by Jesus Christ. The new covenant is the power of fellowship and communion with God through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Mediator of the great covenant of God (**Hebrews 8:8**). (See **John 1:12; Rom. 8:15-17; Gal. 4:4-6; Heb. 2:17-18, 4:15-16**)

3. The power to know God personally and to have open access into His presence (**Hebrews 8:11**). There is no longer any need for human priests or mediators—no need for others to stand between God and man to say, "Know the Lord." Why? Because every man can now stand before God himself... Every person can now approach God. How? By the new covenant—through the Mediator of the new covenant, through the Lord Jesus Christ (**Hebrews 8:6**).

This also means that the privilege to know God is now open to all races and nations of people. The new covenant is universal: "**All shall know me, from the least to the greatest**" (**Hebrews 8:11**). ...There is no longer any priest among men who stands between God and man. There is only Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new and better covenant. When a person comes to God through Christ, he is accepted by God and given the glorious privileges of knowing God face to face. (See **John 17:3; Phil. 3:10; Isa. 43:10; Jer. 9:24; Hosea 6:3**)

4. The power of forgiveness of sins (**Hebrews 8:12**). Note three wonderful facts.
  - a. The word *for* suggests that forgiveness of sins is the basis for all the other promises (Thomas Hewitt. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.138).
  - b. The forgiveness of sins is based upon the mercy of God. We are not forgiven because of works or law. God does not accept us and forgive our sins because we do the best we can and try to be good. He forgives us because Jesus Christ died for our sins—because Jesus Christ has already paid the penalty for our sins—

and we ask God to forgive us through the sacrifice of Christ.  
And when we ask, God forgives us.

- c. The forgiveness of sins means that God remembers our sins no more. We may remember, but God forgets. He casts them completely out of His mind and memory, and never even thinks of them again. They never come back into His memory—are not even allowed to seep back into His thoughts. What a glorious salvation from sins—complete and total forgiveness of sins—all through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(See Acts 5:31, 13:38; Eph. 1:7; Titus 3:4-5; 1Peter 2:24; 1John 1:9; Isa. 43:25, 44:22)

5. (8:13) **Covenant, New:** the new covenant makes the first covenant old. God has given a new covenant; therefore, this means that the first covenant is old; that is, it is obsolete and no longer of use...

Very simply, the old covenant of the law has been set aside; now we are to follow after the new covenant. But we must *always remember* this: the new covenant is bound up in Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ never destroyed the law; He fulfilled the law. That is, Jesus Christ *embodies* the law. He embodies the love and grace of God, yes, but He embodies the law of God as well. We no longer look to the law nor follow the law. We look to Jesus Christ and follow Him. But in following Him, we follow the righteousness and holiness of God as well as the love and grace of God. We follow the law of God's nature as well as the love of God's nature.

(See Matt. 5:17; Rom. 8:3; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:13-14)

## **IX. Christ is the Minister of the Greater and More Perfect Tabernacle or Sanctuary**

**Introduction:** How can a person become acceptable to God? How can a person gain access to God, fellowship and commune with Him? How can a person come to know God in a real and personal way—so personal that the person can know that God is looking after and caring for him? How can a person gain and maintain a relationship with God? This is the concern of the writer of Hebrews. He has already shown how men try to approach God...

- through prophets (**Hebrews 1:1-3**).
- through angels (**Hebrews 1:4-14**).
- through great leaders who are great men of God (**Hebrews 3:1-6**).
- through priests (**Hebrews 4:14-8:5**).

- through covenants and law or by trying to be as good as they can  
(Hebrews 8:1-13).

But as has been seen, every one of these approaches to God are inadequate. They are imperfect and incomplete. They may tell us some things about God; they may help us to understand God to some degree, but they do not give us the full story nor reveal the whole nature of God. They are only shadows and faint copies of the truth. They show us only a part of the truth about God. They do not reveal God to us, nor do they make us acceptable to God or give us fellowship with God.

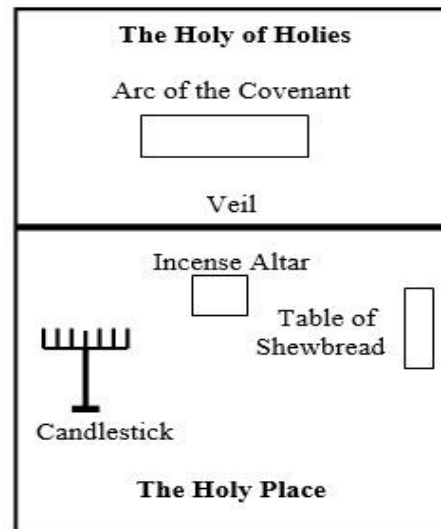
The present passage deals with the same subject: How do men try to approach and worship God? Another way is through earthly sanctuaries or houses of worship. In the Old Testament—under the first covenant with God—the Jews or children of Israel built a tabernacle, that is, a tent. The tent or tabernacle was the place where they sought to worship and become acceptable to God. But as shall be seen, this approach to God was as inadequate as all the other approaches. Earthly sanctuaries and earthly worship cannot bring us near God—earthly sanctuaries and earthly worship cannot make us acceptable to God. Only Jesus Christ can bring us near and make us acceptable to God. This is the point of this passage: to show that Jesus Christ is the greater and more perfect Minister of the tabernacle. He is the only Minister who brings us to God.

#### A. (9:1-5) Tabernacle—Worship—Sanctuaries:

**Hebrews 9:1-5** Then verily the first *covenant* had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. <sup>2</sup> For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. <sup>3</sup> And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; <sup>4</sup> Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; <sup>5</sup> And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

The earthly sanctuary or tabernacle... The earthly sanctuary was for the worship of God, but it was only an earthly sanctuary. It was totally

inadequate in reaching God and in making a person acceptable to God. This is clear when we look at the layout and worship of the earthly tabernacle.



Drawing not from POSB Material

1. First, there was the first or outer sanctuary which was the Holy Place (**Hebrews 9:2**). It was 30 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high. Three pieces of furnishings were in the Holy Place; two are mentioned here.
  - a. There was the candlestick or lampstand which had seven lamps or flames. The candlestick gave light to the room, for there were no windows in this outer sanctuary.
  - b. There was the table of the showbread. It was a small table, only 3 feet long, 1-1/2 feet wide, and 2 feet 3 inches high. Twelve loaves of bread lay upon the table. They were neatly arranged in two rows of six.
2. Second, there was the second or inner sanctuary which was the holiest of all sanctuaries, the Holy of Holies or what is sometimes called the Most Holy Place (**Hebrews 9:3-5**). Note that a veil or large curtain separated it from the sanctuary of the Holy Place. This was the sanctuary that could be entered only by the High Priest, and he could enter only once a year. Note: there was not a lampstand in the Holy of Holies and there were no windows. The glory of God was supposed to have given the room its light. Two furnishings are mentioned.
  - a. There was the golden censer or altar of incense which was a permanent piece of furniture in the Holy Place, but it was carried into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement (**Hebrews 9:4**). It was a small table-

like container 1 1/2 feet square and 3 feet high. Incense was burned upon it every morning and evening symbolizing the prayers of the people reaching up to God.

- b. There was the ark of the covenant which was a box or chest covered with gold on every side (**Hebrews 9:4-5**). It contained three things.
  - (I) The golden pot that had some manna in it. The manna symbolized the manna used to feed the children of Israel in their wilderness wanderings (**Exodus 16:32-34**).
  - (II) The rod of Aaron (**Numbers 17:1-11**).
  - (III) The two slabs of the covenant or law upon which Moses had written the ten commandments (**Exodus 25:16f; Deut. 9:9; Deut. 10:5**).

Arising from both ends of the ark were two angelic creatures called cherubim who reached over and shadowed the mercy seat. The very presence of God was supposed to sit upon the lid or top of the ark between the glory of the two cherubim (**Exodus 25:22**).

The point to see is that the sanctuary was furnished with earthly furniture—furniture that has religious meaning, but the furniture is still earthly, still only a shadow and faint copy of real worship. The same is true with our sanctuaries today. We have our earthly sanctuaries and earthly furniture—furniture that has religious meaning for us. There is the pulpit, the table for the Lord's Supper, and the baptismal pool. But these are still earthly, only shadows and faint images of the real sanctuary and worship.

**END OF LESSON 9 THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE ORIGINAL LESSON 9. IT IS NOT A PART OF THE QUIZ OR FINAL EXAM BUT IS EXCELLENT MATERIAL OF WHICH YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING.**

**(POSB)**

**Tabernacle:** the tabernacle was of God, not of man. God is the One who instructed Moses to build the tabernacle:

**"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine**

**linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense. Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:1-8).**

The writer to the Hebrews confirms that God was the Architect of the tabernacle:

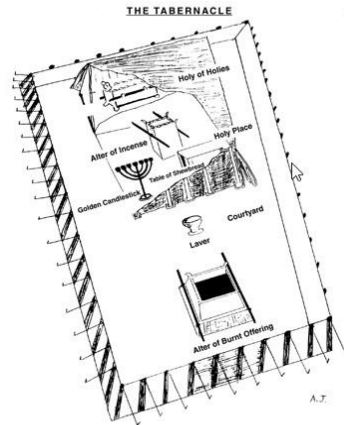
**"The true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:2).**

**"Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount" (Hebrews 8:5).**

Several facts should be noted about the tabernacle.



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Drawing From POSB Material

## **I. The Tabernacle Complex.**

### **A. The Walls of the Tabernacle.**

#### **1. The facts:**

- ⇒ They were 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 7 1/2 feet high.
- ⇒ They were made out of fine twined linen woven by needlework. The color was white.
- ⇒ They were supported by 60 pillars, 20 down each side, and 10 on each end. The pillars were set in sockets of brass and had tops of silver.

#### **2. What the walls taught:**

- ⇒ The wall of white linen symbolized the righteousness and holiness of God. He is so righteous and holy, so white and pure, that He is set apart from the world.
- ⇒ When a person looks at God, he must see that He dwells in righteousness and holiness. (When a person looked at white walls they were to be reminded that God was holy.)
- ⇒ When a person approaches God, he must approach Him in reverence and awe, adoration and worship. He must praise and thank God that God allows him to enter His presence.

3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the walls: **(2Cor. 5:21; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10)**

## **B. The Only Door or Gate into the Tabernacle.**

1. The facts:
  - ⇒ It was on the east side.
  - ⇒ It was 30 feet wide and 7 1/2 feet high.
  - ⇒ It was made out of fine twined linen woven together by needlework. The color of the linen was blue, purple, and scarlet.
2. What the door or gate taught:
  - ⇒ There is only one way to enter God's presence; there are not many ways as most men think and practice.
  - ⇒ God has to be approached. No person shall ever live with God unless he approaches God.
3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the door of the tabernacle:  
(See **John 10:9, 14:6**)

**"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" ([John 10:9](#)).**

**"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" ([John 14:6](#)).**

## **C. The Brazen Altar in the Courtyard.**

1. The facts:
  - ⇒ It was 7-1/2 feet square and 4-1/2 feet high.
  - ⇒ It was made of acacia wood covered with brass.



- ⇒ It was a hollow box-like structure with a brass grate across its top. There were four horns, one arising from each corner, for tying the sacrificial animals down.
- 2. What the altar taught:
  - ⇒ Substitutionary sacrifice is necessary for the forgiveness of sins.
  - ⇒ There is no forgiveness without the shedding of the blood of a sacrifice.
  - ⇒ There is no way to approach God—to be saved—other than through the death of a substitute.
- 3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the brazen altar: **(See Mark 10:45; Isa. 53:7; John 1:29; 1Cor. 5:7; 1Peter 1:19; 1John 3:16)**

#### **D. The Laver in the Courtyard.**

- 1. The facts:
  - ⇒ Its size is not given.
  - ⇒ It was made of brass.
  - ⇒ It contained the water which the priests used to wash and cleanse themselves before they served God and carried out their ministry for the Lord.
- 2. What the laver taught:
  - ⇒ A person *cannot enter God's presence* before he is cleansed and made pure.
  - ⇒ A person *cannot serve God* until he is cleansed and made pure.
  - ⇒ A person must be continually cleansed and made pure in order to *continually serve God*.
- 3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the laver: **(See John 13:8; Eph. 5:25-26; Heb. 9:14; 1John 1:, 3:2-3; Rev. 1:5)**

### **II. The Sanctuary of the Tabernacle.**

- 1. The facts:
  - ⇒ The walls and roof separated some forms of worshipping God apart from other forms.
  - ⇒ The walls were made out of fine woven linen: the colors were blue, purple, and scarlet.
  - ⇒ The walls were supported by 48 wood beams 15 feet high and 2 feet 3 inches wide. The beams were over-laid with pure gold. They rested in sockets of silver. There was a wood center beam which ran through the outside connecting rods.

- ⇒ The sanctuary was divided into two rooms; the first or outer room was the Holy Place and the second or inner room was the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place. (These are discussed as Roman Numeral II and III.)
- 2. What the walls and roof taught:
  - ⇒ There are different forms of worship, certain steps to take in approaching God.
  - ⇒ There are some initial steps to take in approaching God before one approaches Him in the most intimate worship.
  - ⇒ God is righteous and holy and completely separate from man, even from the religious who move about and minister in walls of religion.
  - ⇒ God must be approached in reverence and awe and ever so carefully by men, even by the religious who are involved in His service.
- 3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the walls and roof: (**See Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18, 3:12; Heb. 10:22, 12:28**)

### **III. The Holy Place (The First Room or Outer Sanctuary).**

#### **A. The Outer Veil or Curtain Door.**

- 1. The facts:
  - ⇒ It was made out of fine twined linen. The colors were blue, purple, and scarlet.
  - ⇒ It was supported on five pillars made out of acacia wood. The pillars were overlaid by gold and set in sockets of brass.
  - ⇒ It was the only opening into the Holy Place.
- 2. What the outer veil or door taught:
  - ⇒ A person cannot just rush into the presence of a holy God; he cannot show disrespect to a holy God.
  - ⇒ There is only one way into the deeper things of God.
  - ⇒ There is a deeper knowledge of God, much more to knowing and experiencing God's presence than just making sacrifice and receiving forgiveness of sins. (Remember: offerings for sin were made at the brazen altar in the courtyard. But there was more than this, more than forgiveness of sins, in knowing and worshipping God. There was worship in the Holy Place and even in the inner sanctuary of God's presence, in the Most Holy Place or the Holy of Holies.)
- 3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the veil: the way to a deeper knowledge of God, to the deeper things of God, is through the Lord Jesus Christ and through Him alone. (**See John 17:3; 1Cor. 1:30; Eph. 4:15; Phil. 3:10; 1Peter 2:2-3; 2Peter 1:4-7, 3:18**)

## **B. The Golden Lampstand or Candlestick.**

### **1. The facts:**

- ⇒ It was made out of *pure gold* and weighed over 100 pounds.
- ⇒ It was a central shaft with three branches on each side to provide seven lamps. The branches were formed into the beautiful shape of a flowering almond branch.
- ⇒ It burned pure olive oil.
- ⇒ It was a perpetual light, always burning. It was never allowed to burn out.
- ⇒ It provided the only light in the room. There were no windows in the Holy Place.

### **2. What the lampstand or candlestick taught:**

- ⇒ A person needs light and illumination in order to know God and to serve God.
- ⇒ A person could never know God or serve God without light and illumination.
- ⇒ Without light and illumination a person would be in pitch darkness, totally unable to know and serve God.

3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the lampstand or candlestick: Christ and Christ alone provides the light and illumination to know and serve God.  
(See **John 8:12, 1:4; 2Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:14**)

## **C. The Table of the Showbread.**

### **1. The facts:**

- ⇒ It was a small table, only 3 feet long, 1-1/2 feet wide, and 2 feet 3 inches high.
- ⇒ It was made out of acacia wood and covered with gold. It had a ring at each corner so that a pole could be inserted down both sides and the table transported from place to place.
- ⇒ It was for the purpose of displaying 12 loaves of bread neatly arranged in 2 rows of 6 loaves each. The loaves were liberally sprinkled with frankincense. Fresh loaves of bread were placed on the table every Sabbath and the frankincense was removed from the old loaves and burned as a special offering to God.
- ⇒ The priests were allowed to eat the old loaves if they wished.

### **2. What the table of showbread taught:**

- ⇒ God and the worship of Him is the bread of life.
- ⇒ God and the worship of Him is the nourishment that man really needs.
- ⇒ Man must have the bread of God's presence and worship.

⇒ The frankincense symbolized that God was pleased with man worshipping Him.

3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the table of showbread: He is the Bread of Life, the nourishment upon which man must feed in order to know and worship God. (See **John 6:48, 6:33, 35, 50-51, 58**)

#### **D. The Altar of Incense.**

1. The facts:

- ⇒ It was a small altar, 1-1/2 feet square and 3 feet high.
- ⇒ It was made out of acacia wood and was overlaid with gold. It also had rings for poles so that it could be carried about from place to place.
- ⇒ It was for the purpose of burning incense to God.
- ⇒ The incense was a perpetual offering sent up to God. It was never allowed to stop burning.
- ⇒ Once a year the blood of the atonement sacrifice was sprinkled upon it.

2. What the altar of incense taught:

- ⇒ The incense symbolized the prayers of the people being offered up to God.
- ⇒ Prayer and intercession are essential for worshipping God.
- ⇒ Prayer and intercession should be continually offered up to God. A person should be praying always. There should be unbroken prayer and communion with God.
- ⇒ The priest and minister must constantly intercede for God's people.

3. How Christ fulfilled the altar of incense:

- ⇒ Christ prayed always, living and walking in an unbroken communion with God the Father.
  - ⇒ Christ interceded for God's people.
- (See **John 17:9; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25**)

### **IV. The Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place**

#### **(The Inner Room or Inner Sanctuary)**

##### **A. The Inner Veil or Curtain Door.**

1. The facts:

- ⇒ It was made out of fine twined linen. The colors were blue, purple, and scarlet with figures of cherubims embroidered into the linen.
- ⇒ It was supported on four pillars made out of acacia wood. The pillars were covered by gold and set in sockets of brass. The curtain was held up by golden hooks.

- ⇒ It separated the Most Holy Place, the symbol of God's presence, from all other acts of worship.
  - ⇒ No one was allowed into the Holy of Holies except the High Priest, and he could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement.
2. What the inner veil taught:
- ⇒ Fellowship and communion with God Himself is the supreme act of worship.
  - ⇒ God is holy and righteous, far, far removed from man and his world—totally set apart and separated from the pollution and uncleanness of man.
  - ⇒ God must be approached ever so carefully—in reverence, awe, and fear.
  - ⇒ There is only one way to God, only one door into His presence.
3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the inner veil or inner door:
- ⇒ Christ and Christ alone is the way to God, to knowing God and to experiencing the presence, fellowship and communion of God.
- (See Heb. 2:17, 4:14-15, 6:19-20, 9:24, 10:19-20)

## B. The Ark of the Covenant.

1. The facts:
- ⇒ It was made of acacia wood.
  - ⇒ It was built like a chest or trunk, 3 feet 9 inches long, 2 feet 3 inches wide, and 2 feet 3 inches high.
  - ⇒ It was completely covered with gold, inside as well as outside.
  - ⇒ It had two gold rings on two sides so that a pole could be run through them for carrying the ark from place to place.
  - ⇒ The lid or top of the ark was called the *mercy seat*. It was a slab of pure gold. Arising from both ends of the ark were two angelic creatures called cherubim who reached over and shadowed the mercy seat. The very presence of God was supposed to rest upon the mercy seat between the two cherubim. (See Ex. 25:22)
  - ⇒ The ark contained three items: the tables of the law or ten commandments (Exodus 25:16f; Deut. 9:9; Deut. 10:5), the golden pot of manna (Exodus 16:32-34), and Aaron's rod (Numbers 17:1-11).
  - ⇒ It was upon the mercy seat that the blood of the atonement sacrifice was sprinkled symbolizing that God could be approached only through the sacrifice of a life for sins.

2. What the ark of the covenant taught:

- ⇒ God can be approached only through the substitutionary sacrifice of a pure life.
- ⇒ A person is acceptable to God only through the substitutionary sacrifice of a pure life.
- ⇒ Sins can be forgiven only through the substitutionary blood of a pure sacrifice.

3. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat: He became the pure, sinless Lamb of God who sacrificed His life for man.

(See 1John 2:2; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14; 1Peter 2:24, 3:18; Rev. 1:5)

## END OF LESSON 9

### QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 9

1. The place where the lampstand in the table of consecrated bread was called:
  - A. The court of the women
  - B. The court of the Gentiles
  - C. **The holy place.**
  - D. The Holy of Holies
2. The place where the stone Commandments, the gold jar of manna and Aaron's staff that budded was called:
  - A. the tabernacle
  - B. The outer court
  - C. **The ark of the covenant**
  - D. None of the above
3. **T** or **F** Above the ark of the covenant there were cherubim.
4. **T** or **F** The blood of Jesus Christ provided eternal redemption for mankind.
5. **T** or **F** Jesus Christ is the mediator of the old and new covenant.

## BEGIN LESSON 10

### 3. (9:6)

**Heb. 9:6** Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

(POSB) Third, the priests entered the outer sanctuary or Holy Place every day and carried out their ministry and acts of worship for the people ([Hebrews 9:6](#)). They did all they could to make the people acceptable to God and to provide fellowship and communion with God. But again, their service and ministry was *short of perfection*. No matter how much ministry they performed for the people, they could not make the people perfect. They could not make the people acceptable to God. (POSB)

### 4. (9:7)

**Hebrews 9:7** But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people:

(POSB) Fourth, the High Priest alone went into the inner sanctuary or the Holy of Holies (**Hebrews 9:7**). He went in to offer the blood of the sacrifice to God for the sins of the people. Man is sinful and he is guilty of sin and rebellion against God. Therefore, he must pay the penalty and judgment of his sins or else a substitute has to bear the judgment for him. This was the idea behind the animal sacrifice. The life of the animal was sacrificed for the sins of the people. Therefore, people were released from the guilt of their sins and made acceptable to God. [(RevC) It is important to remember that even though God accepted the sacrifices of the animals it was not enough to take away the sins of the people and did not please Him. The animal sacrifices only covered over their sin (but did not make them perfect) until the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ was presented and accepted by God the Father to take away the sin. Therefore, the sin and lawless actions of mankind will not be remembered against those who have come to faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. (RevC)]

But note: the High Priest could go into the Holy of Holies to make sacrifice for sins only once a year. This is what was known as the Day of Atonement. Does this mean that a person could be forgiven his sins

only once a year? No. There were daily sacrifices and offerings for sin that a person could make. The Day of Atonement was a comprehensive sacrifice—a nation-wide confession of sin. Israel was the chosen people of God with whom God had established His first covenant. Therefore, Israel or a body of people were to seek and worship God, and atonement or sacrifice was to be made for everything that concerned the nation:

**Leviticus 16:33 "And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation"**

The point to note is this: sacrifice for sins had to be repeated year by year. There was no permanent sacrifice, no eternal Savior from sin. (POSB)

## **5. (9:8-10)**

**Hebrews 9:8-10 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9:9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 9:10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.**

Fifth, there were the inadequacies or lessons of the earthly tabernacle and worship (**Hebrews 9:8**). Note that the Holy Spirit of God is the One who points out these inadequacies or lessons. He is the One who points out the following shortcomings of the tabernacle and of earthly worship.

- a. First, the way into God's presence was not opened up by the earthly sanctuary and worship. Remember: the very presence of God dwelt in the Holy of Holies. And no one—not even a priest—could enter the Holy of Holies. Only the High Priest himself ever went into God's presence and that was only once a year. And when he entered, he went in with fear and trembling lest he displease God and be stricken dead... (See **Matt. 5:20; 1Cor. 15:50; Rev. 21:27**)



b. The approach to God through gifts and sacrifices could not perfect the worshippers. And note: the honest worshipper knew it; his conscience told him. Every thinking and honest person knows that he cannot be made into a perfect person and cleanse his conscience...

- by offering gifts to God, even if those gifts are made sacrificially.
- offering animal sacrifices to God as a substitute for his sins.

Such acts are earthly acts and deal with physical and material things (substances). ...They are shadows and faint copies of perfect worship, but they cannot remove guilt or sins nor can they make a man perfect. (See Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:27)

c. The great day of reformation—the day when the imperfect and material worship would be transformed into the perfect and eternal worship—could not be brought about by earthly worship. This is clearly seen: all the rituals and ceremonies of earthly sanctuaries and worship are only external and physical acts. This is true of all rituals and ceremonies... (See Mark 7:6; Col. 2:10; 2Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:16; Heb. 7:19, 10:1; Isa. 29:13) (POSB)

*(RevC) The passage (9:8-10) speaks of the “first” tabernacle which would be the tabernacle of the Old Testament. However, it was representative of all the supposed “dwelling places” of God including the then present temple in Jerusalem. He is speaking figuratively of how they represent the separation between God and the common people as they were not allowed into the holy area. The standing temple was a picture of that separation though once the veil was rent access to the Holy of Holies was available. At the time this letter was written the temple was standing (though not for much longer as it is destroyed in 70 AD and there has not been a temple or sacrifice in Israel since), but the fact that it stood was a picture of the separation and blindness that was upon the Jews though Jesus had already rent the veil and access was available to those who believed. (RevC)*

**(Adam Clarke Commentary):** “...What he speaks here concerning the first tabernacle, may be understood as applying with propriety to the then Jewish temple, as well as to the ancient tabernacle, which, even

with all their sacrifices and ceremonies, could not make the way of holiness plain, nor the way to God's favor possible." (Adam Clarke Commentary)

**(Barnes Notes): ... "While as the first tabernacle was yet standing"**

As long as it stood, and the appointed services were held in it. The idea is, that until it was superseded by a more perfect system, it was a proof that the way to heaven was not yet fully and freely opened, and that the Holy Spirit "designed" that it should be such a proof. The apostle does not specify in what the proof consisted, but it may have been in something like the following.

- a. it was a mere "symbol," and not the "reality"—showing that the true way was not yet fully understood.
- b. it was entered but once a year—showing that there was not access at all times.
- c. it was entered only by the High Priest—showing that there was not free and full access to all the people.
- d. it was accessible only by Jews—showing that the way in which all men might be saved was not then fully revealed.

The sense is, that it was a system of types and shadows, in which there were many burdensome rites and many things to prevent people from coming before the symbol of the divinity, and was, therefore, an "imperfect system." All these obstructions are now removed; the Saviour—the great High Priest of his people—has entered heaven and "opened it to all true believers," and all of every nation may now have free access to God." (Barnes' Notes on the New Testament)

**B. (9:11-14) Worship— Sanctuary— Tabernacle, Heavenly— Jesus Christ, High Priest:**

**Hebrews 9:11-14 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; <sup>12</sup> Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. <sup>13</sup> For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: <sup>14</sup> How much more shall the**

**blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

The heavenly sanctuary or tabernacle. The heavenly sanctuary is for the worship of God just as the earthly sanctuary is, but it is different from the earthly sanctuary and worship of men. How does it differ? There are at least four differences.

1. The heavenly sanctuary and worship has a *perfect priest*. The High Priest of heaven is not a man; He does not come from among mere men—men who are imperfect, frail, and sinful just like all other men... The High Priest of heaven is the Son of God Himself, and as the Son of God, He is perfect and eternal...
2. The heavenly sanctuary and worship is *spiritual and perfect*. It is not made with human hands; it is not a part of this earthly, physical, and material world... The spiritual and perfect sanctuary is the spiritual and perfect world—heaven itself—where the very presence of God is glorified and manifested for all to see and worship. (See **Heb. 9:24, 11:10; Matt. 6:24; John 14:2-3; Rev. 7:9**)
3. The heavenly sanctuary and worship has a *perfect sacrifice* (**Hebrews 9:12**). Man is imperfect and sinful; he is guilty of disobeying, rejecting, and rebelling against God. Therefore, he must pay the penalty and judgment of his sins or else a substitute has to bear the judgment for him. This was the idea behind animal sacrifices. The animal's life was sacrificed for the sins of man. Note that three significant things are said in this verse.
  - a. Jesus Christ, the perfect High Priest, did not sacrifice the blood of animals for the sins of man; He sacrificed His own blood. He offered up His life as a sacrifice to God—as the sacrifice for the life of the people. Jesus Christ bore the guilt and judgment for the sins of man. ...As the Ideal Man, whatever He does stands for and covers all men. Therefore, His blood covers the sins of all men who believe and trust Him...
  - b. Jesus Christ, the perfect High Priest, entered into the Holy of Holies of heaven itself. But note: He had to enter only once. The earthly High Priest had to make continued sacrifices, but Jesus Christ had to make only one sacrifice. Why? Because His sacrifice was the perfect and ideal sacrifice. Being perfect and ideal, it could stand forever for every man of every generation.

- c. Jesus Christ, the perfect High Priest, obtained eternal redemption for us. Sin, death, and condemnation have captured and kidnapped man. No man can escape from either one, no matter what he does. But Jesus Christ made it possible for man to be freed and delivered from all enemies. How? He paid the ransom price. He substituted Himself for man. He gave His life—sacrificed His life for man. He could do this because He is the perfect and ideal Man... He has redeemed and ransomed man from sin, death, and condemnation. (See **Matt. 26:28; Acts 20:28; Romans 3:24, 5:9; 1Cor. 1:30; Gal. 3:13; Col. 1:14; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:12, 9:14; 1Peter 1:18-19; 1John 1:7; Rev. 1:5, 5:9**)
4. The heavenly sanctuary and worship saves a person perfectly (**Hebrews 9:13-14**). Note three points.
- a. The earthly sanctuary and worship purifies and cleanses only the flesh... But as shown in previous points, the rituals and ceremonies of earthly and physical worship are external. They cannot cleanse man inwardly nor can they make him perfect and eternal.
  - b. The heavenly sanctuary and worship purifies and cleanses a person even down to his conscience—no matter how hardened and non-existent the conscience may be. When a person comes to God through Christ, God gives him a perfect assurance that he is accepted by God, that he has eternal life... Therefore, God willed and wanted His Son to show His perfect love to man, to show His love by sacrificing His life for the sins of man. No greater love could ever have been expressed, and it was God's love for us that led Him to sacrifice His Son for us. When Christ sacrificed Himself for our sins, the ultimate in obedience was reached. Jesus Christ obeyed God supremely; He died for our sins. Therefore, God will forgive any man's sins, and nothing will ever stop Him from forgiving them. Very simply stated, God will forgive and cleanse any man's sins because of His Son. Forgiveness and cleansing are guaranteed once-for-all to everyone who believes—all because of God's supreme love for His Son. (See **Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7, 5:25-26; Titus 3:4-5; Heb. 9:14, 10:14; 1Peter 1:18-19; Rev. 1:5**)
  - c. The heavenly sanctuary and worship leads a person away from the dead works of this earth to serve the living God (**Hebrews 9:14**). Earthly religion in all its ritual and ceremony is *dead* to God. No matter how religious and good a person tries to be—no matter how many good works he does—it is not such earthly behavior that makes

him acceptable to God. Jesus Christ alone makes a man acceptable to God. He and He alone gives man access to God and puts man into fellowship and communion with God. Jesus Christ has to live in the heart and life of a person—actually live in the body of a person through the Holy Spirit of God—for a person to be given the glorious privilege of walking in fellowship and communion with God. (See John 14:17; Rom. 5:1-2, 8:9, 12:1-2; 1Cor. 6:19-20; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 12:28; 1John 2:27)

### C. (9:15) Covenant, New— Jesus Christ, Death— Mediator:

**Hebrews 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.**

Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant. Remember: a mediator is a person who stands between two parties and brings them together. He is the negotiator, the go-between, the arbitrator, the middle person. This is Jesus Christ, the great mediator between God and man.

But what gives Jesus Christ the right to be the great mediator between God and man? ...HIS DEATH. THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST IS WHAT GIVES HIM THE RIGHT TO BE THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.

When Jesus Christ died, He died for *all men*. He sacrificed His life for everyone—no matter who they are. He took the sins of every human being upon Himself—He bore the guilt and condemnation for every person. How could He do this?

He was the Son of God who had come to earth for this very purpose. He became flesh and blood and lived as a Man upon earth. But there was one distinct difference: He never sinned. He never transgressed the law of God. He possessed the ideal, perfect righteousness. He stood before men as the *Ideal Man* which means that His ideal righteousness could cover man.

But something else was needed, something critical. Man had already sinned and transgressed; he already stood guilty before God. Therefore, the penalty for having broken the law had to be paid. Man had to die or else some *perfect sacrifice* had to step forward and die for him. As just stated, there was only

one perfect and ideal person, the Lord Jesus Christ. He and He alone could step forward and bear the guilt and punishment for man. It is this that stands out above all else—this that sets Jesus Christ apart from everyone else in the universe—this that makes Jesus Christ stand head and shoulders above all others—this above all else that qualifies Him to be the great Mediator between God and man.

His death redeems man, frees man from sin, death, and judgment. What does this mean?

- ⇒ When we accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ *for our sins*, then Jesus Christ bore our sins; we do not have to bear them.
- ⇒ When we accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our death, then Jesus Christ bore our death; we do not have to die.
- ⇒ When we accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our judgment, then Jesus Christ bore our judgment; we do not have to face judgment.

The results are glorious: our sins are forgiven and we receive an eternal inheritance. God accepts us, and we receive the glorious promise and assurance of living with Him forever and ever...

And note **Hebrews 9:15**: even the believers under the first testament or covenant of law received these things. The ideal perfection, righteousness, and sacrifice of Jesus Christ covers all people. The ideal can and does stand for all. (See Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:1; 1John 3:16; Rev. 1:5; Psalm 69:9; Isa. 53:5; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 2:9; 1Peter 3:18; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:28; 1Peter 2:24)

#### D. (9:16-17) Will, Last Will & Testament— Covenant, New:

**Hebrews 9:16-17 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. <sup>17</sup> For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.**

**Argument one**—a last will and testament is not in effect until the testator's death. This one fact is critical to note: God's covenant with man is the covenant of a last will and testament. That is, the terms are set exclusively by God, not man. God sets the terms and conditions and man either accepts or rejects them. God's testament or covenant is somewhat like the *last will and testament* of any man. The recipient cannot change the terms of the will and testament; he can only accept or reject them.

Now, to the point: a testament or covenant does not take effect until when? Not until the testator dies. God had willed that *His new covenant* would not go

into force until Jesus Christ had died. As men upon their death give inheritance to those whom they love and care for, so God upon the death of His Son gives His inheritance to those whom He loves and cares for. The proof that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of God's new covenant is that He died as the sacrifice for our sins. (See Heb. 8:6, 9:26-28)

#### **E. (9:18-22) New Covenant— Jesus Christ, Blood of:**

**Hebrews 9:18-22 Whereupon neither the first *testament* was dedicated without blood. <sup>19</sup> For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, <sup>20</sup> Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. <sup>21</sup> Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. <sup>22</sup> And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.**

**Argument two**—the institution of the old covenant shows that all things are cleansed by blood. This is clearly seen when the old covenant was instituted by Moses (cp. Exodus 24:3-8, esp. Exodus 24:6-8). After God had given the law to Moses, Moses shared the law with the people. Then he made a sacrificial offering to the Lord. He took the blood of the animal and sprinkled both the book of the law and the people. This was a dedication service, a service commemorating the institution of God's first covenant, and note how it was being instituted: by death—by the shedding of the blood of a sacrifice. Note what Moses says in **Hebrews 9:20**.

**"Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you" (Hebrews 9:20)**

**But this is not the only example we have. Moses also held a dedication service when the tabernacle was completed, and he sprinkled it and all the furnishings with blood (Hebrews 9:21).**

What is the significance of this argument?

**"Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).**

Under the covenant and law, almost all things were purged and cleansed by blood. In fact, without the shedding of blood there was no cleansing or



forgiveness. This was true throughout the whole reign of the law—from the institution of the law down to the present. For men have always had a sense of failing, of coming short, and of being imperfect. They have known a frightening fact: they had to pay for their sins or else someone or something had to take their place and be sacrificed for them. Therefore, man has constantly made sacrifice for his sins in order to become acceptable to God. He has always sensed and known that **"without shedding of blood there is no remission"**—no cleansing and no forgiveness.

This is the argument, the proof that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of God's new covenant with man. Jesus Christ shed His blood; He died for man. He has paid the penalty for man's sins. He has instituted and launched God's new covenant with man. (See Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:9; Heb. 9:14, 22, 10:17-22; 1Peter 1:18-19; 1John1:7; Rev. 1:5)

#### **F. (9:23-24) Jesus Christ, Death:**

**Hebrews 9:23-24** *It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.* <sup>24</sup> **For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:**

Jesus Christ purifies everything, even the very things of heaven. Jesus Christ provides a *universal redemption*. It was absolutely necessary that *earthly sanctuaries and worship* be purified with blood, and it is also absolutely necessary that the *heavenly sanctuary and worship* be purified with the blood of the Sovereign Lord. Why? Why does anything in heaven need to be cleansed and purified?

- ⇒ It is not because anything in heaven is sinful and unclean. It is not. Heaven is heaven; it is perfect and eternal.
- ⇒ It is because the way into heaven must be covered and enshrouded with blood in order to cover man as he approaches God... Everywhere man stands and everything man touches—no matter where it is, in heaven or on earth—has to be covered by the blood of Jesus Christ... Man's only acceptance before God is the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ, and man can never be accepted without that covering. It shall forever be his covering and his only acceptance into heaven before God.



This is critical—an absolute essential to note—for it shows how great the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ is and how great it is in the eyes and mind of God... For man shall never be acceptable to God apart from the sacrificial death and blood of God's dear Son. Therefore, it is an absolute necessity that all things be covered by the death of Christ—by the great sacrifice which He made in obedience to His Father's will... This is the reason Jesus Christ has appeared in the presence of God for us—to cleanse and purify the way for us. Jesus Christ has purified everything. He has provided a *universal redemption* for us that will last forever and ever without end. He is the perfect sacrifice for our sins. (See Eph. 5:25-26; Heb. 9:14, 10:19-22; 1John 1:7)

#### **G. (9:25-26) Jesus Christ, Death:**

**Hebrews 9:25-26** Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; <sup>26</sup> For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Jesus Christ does not offer a repeated sacrifice, but He sacrificed Himself once (**Hebrews 9:25-26**). The earthly High Priest had to make sacrifice often; he had to enter into the Holy of Holies every year to make sacrifice for sins. He was as all other men, sinful. Therefore, he could never make the perfect sacrifice. But not Jesus Christ. He was perfect, the very Son of God Himself. He was the perfect High Priest who could sacrifice Himself for the sins of men. Because He was perfect, His sacrifice was perfect—forever acceptable to God. Therefore, Jesus Christ could offer sacrifice for sins once and sins could be forgiven forever and ever. He is the great mediator of the perfect sacrifice. He has "**put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself**" (**Hebrews 9:26**).

#### **H. (9:27-28) Jesus Christ, Death— Judgment— Death— Jesus Christ, Return:**

**Hebrews 9:27-28** And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: <sup>28</sup> So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Jesus Christ bore the death and judgment for many. Note four significant points.

1. Man **dies** (*apothanein*) and he dies once—only once. There is no second chance. This is the emphasis of "**once**" (*hapax*). Man has only one chance to be forgiven, saved, and redeemed—only one chance to become acceptable to God and receive the inheritance of the promise, that is, eternal life. Man dies, and when he dies, his opportunity is over. Jesus Christ died in this world and in the time frame of this life. He did not die in some other world nor in the time frame of some other world. He died upon earth *as* a Man *for* men. Therefore, there will never again be a chance to be covered by His sacrifice other than in this world and in this life. Men die and they die only once, never again to live upon the earth. (See Rev. 5:12; Heb. 9:27; James 1:10; 1Peter 1:24; 2Sam. 14:14; Psalm 49:10, 89:48, 103:15-16; Eccl. 8:8; Isa. 40:6)
2. Man dies and then comes the judgment... We are guilty of transgressing the Word and Law of God; therefore, we must bear the judgment of God. When shall we be judged? This verse tells us as clearly as it can be stated: "**It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment**" (Hebrews 9:27). Once we die, we shall be judged: separated and cut off from God forever and never allowed to enter God's presence. We shall be forbidden to enter heaven and cast into the place that is the very opposite of heaven—into hell itself... (See Matt. 25:31-32; Heb. 9:27; 2Peter 2:9, 3:7; Jude 14-15)
3. But note the glorious news: Christ was once offered to bear the sins and judgment of many... He has sacrificed Himself for our sins and borne our judgment for us. We no longer have to bear the judgment for our sins and imperfections. If we believe—truly trust Jesus Christ to bear our sins and judgment—then God counts our sins as having been borne by Christ. God counts us as being free from sin—as being perfect and acceptable to Him. Therefore, we never have to be judged and condemned for sin.

But note: this glorious salvation is not wrought in the lives of all. A person has to believe and trust in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This is only reasonable: if a person does not believe in something, he does not allow it to work for him... When we believe—really believe—then the sacrifice of Jesus Christ works for us. His sacrifice covers our sins and we become acceptable to God. We never have to face the judgment and condemnation for our sins. (See 2Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4, 3:13; Titus 2:14; Heb. 2:9, 9:26; 1Peter 2:24, 3:18; Rev. 1:5; Isa. 53:5)

4. Jesus Christ shall come to earth a second time, and He shall come without sin to save those who look for Him.

Jesus Christ shall rent the sky above and return to earth to save all who look for Him... Other Scriptures tell us what will happen and give us some detail. Briefly stated, the spectacular sight will be...

- the bodies of dead believers, who died looking for His return, shall be resurrected to meet Him in the sky.
- the persons who are living and looking for Him shall be lifted up off the earth and ascend to join Him in the sky.

(See 1Thes. 4:16-18; Matt. 16:27, 24:44, 25:31-32; 1Cor. 4:5; 2Tim. 4:1; Titus 2:12-13; Heb. 10:37; 1John 2:28; Jude 14-15; Rev. 3:11)

## END OF LESSON 10

### QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 10

1. T or F The sacrifices made under the law made man perfect in God's sight.
2. T or F God was pleased with sacrifices, burnt offerings, and sin offerings because they alone made man acceptable to him.
3. T or F Because of the finished work of Christ, the sins and lawless acts of mankind will be not be remembered.
4. T or F There was no permanent sacrifice for the sins of the people under the covenant of the Old Testament.
5. T or F If we believe—truly trust Jesus Christ to bear our sins and judgment—then God counts our sins as having been borne by Christ.

## BEGIN LESSON 11

### VIII. (POSB) Christ is the Minister and Mediator of the Perfect Sacrifice for Sins: Hebrews 10

**Introduction:** ...God has established two covenants with man. Under the first covenant (the old testament), animals were sacrificed for man's sins. The animal

had to be pure and flawless, having no impurity or flaw whatsoever. When it was sacrificed, it symbolized...

- that a sinless life was bearing the sins of men.
- that man's sins were being laid upon a sinless life who was bearing the guilt and condemnation of sin for the man.
- that a perfect and flawless life was being sacrificed as a substitute for sinful man.

However, note a critical point: animals are not perfect. They are as much a part of this physical and material earth as men are. They age and die just as men do. Therefore, the sacrifice of animals was an *imperfect* sacrifice. They were bound to be *only symbolizing and pointing* to the perfect sacrifice that was yet to come. Note another fact as well. An animal is not a man; therefore, it could never be an acceptable sacrifice or substitute for man. The only sacrifice that could become a sacrificial substitute for man would be another man, and that man would have to be the perfect and ideal man...What man needs is the perfect, ideal righteousness that can stand for and cover him—that can present him to God and make him acceptable as righteous and sinless.

This brings us to the second covenant of God. God established the new covenant or testament with man. This is the point of this passage: to show that Jesus Christ is the Minister or Mediator of the new covenant with man. In fact, Jesus Christ Himself is the *perfect sacrifice* for the sins of men.

#### **A. (10:1-4) Sacrifice, Animal— Old Covenant— Law, Powerlessness of:**

**Heb 10:1-4 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 10:2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 10:3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.**

The powerlessness of the old sacrifices. The old sacrifices were powerless and ineffective for five reasons.

1. The old covenant, the law, was only a shadow of good things to come (**Hebrews 10:1**). It was the law of the Old Testament that spelled out that animal sacrifices were to be offered for the sins of men. But note: the law was only a *shadow* of good things. The law was not the embodiment of the perfection that was to come. It was only a "shadow" (*skian*). The word means a dim outline, a reflection of the perfection that was to come. The word even has the idea of foreshadowing, of pointing forward. That is, a *shadow* means that there is reality behind the shadow. When we see a shadow, there is something real someplace that is reflecting the shadow (cp. the shadow of a tree).

The point is this: the shadow is not the real thing; it is only an imperfect reflection of the real thing. This was the law of the Old Testament. It and its sacrifices for sin were only a shadow of better things. The law and its sacrifices did not possess the perfection or power necessary to forgive sins. But they did reflect and point to the perfection and power that was to come in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The offering of sacrifices had to be repeated year by year, time after time (**Hebrews 10:1b**). This shows that they were powerless to forgive sins. If they were a perfect sacrifice, they would never have to be repeated... Note exactly what the verse says: the sacrifices could not "**continually make the comers thereunto perfect.**" ...The very fact that they had to be offered time and again, over and over shows that they never completed the job. They never finished the work of redemption and salvation.
3. The offerings of sacrifices never removed the awareness and consciousness of sin. Man always had a guilty conscience—a sense of being sinful. How do we know this? Because he was always repeating the sacrifice for his sins. If he had sensed...
  - that a perfect sacrifice had been made
  - that his sins had been removed once-for-all
  - that a perfect sacrifice had been made that made him forever acceptable to God...then he would have never needed to make another sacrifice. But the offering of animal sacrifices never gave him this freedom of conscience. They were powerless to do so. Therefore, they were not the perfect sacrifice needed so desperately by man.

4. The offering of animal sacrifices were actually a reminder of sins, not a remover of sins. Every time an offering was made the person was reminded of his sins—reminded that his sins still stood between him and God, that they had to be atoned for time after time—forever—if he was ever to be acceptable to God.
5. The offering of animal sacrifices were powerless to take away sins, powerless to make a person acceptable to God, powerless to give man fellowship and communion with God. Why? Several logical reasons stand out.
  - a. Animals have different natures than men. How could an animal's life stand and represent the life of a man? Animals are not and cannot live the life of a man. There is just no way possible for the sacrifice of an animal's life to equal the sacrifice of the life of a man. They are of a different nature entirely than that of a man.
  - b. Animals were not the ones who wilfully chose to sin and neglect, ignore, rebel, reject, and curse God. Therefore, they cannot possibly pay the penalty and judgment of sin for man. At most they can only symbolize that a perfect man must be sacrificed for man.
  - c. Animals are of this earth just as men are. Animals are corruptible, aging, and imperfect creatures just as man is. Therefore, there is no way an animal sacrifice could ever be the *perfect sacrifice* needed to die for man's sins. Animals could not wilfully choose to die as a substitute for man. The perfect sacrifice for man must willingly die for man in order to be an acceptable substitute. Animal sacrifices for sins were victims, not wilful substitutes. They could at most point to the perfect sacrifice yet to come. (See Gal. 3:3; Heb. 7:18-19, 8:13, 9:9, 10:1, 12:27)

**B. (10:5-10) Jesus Christ, Death; Sinless:**

**Heb. 10:5-10** Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 10:6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 10:7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 10:8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 10:9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10:10 By the which

**will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

The perfect sacrifice is Jesus Christ Himself. This is seen in four significant facts.

1. The perfect sacrifice was a body prepared by God Himself (**Hebrews 10:5**). This is a quote from **Psalms 40:6-8**. The Hebrew text actually says "mine ears has thou digged for me," that is, dug out of the earth and formed as part of the body. The writer to Hebrews is simply making a paraphrase and saying that the *digging of the ears* is part of the fashioning of the whole body.

Note: this was a conversation between Christ and God when Christ was coming into the world. The sacrifice of animals was totally inadequate in taking away sins; therefore, they did not please God. As the verse says, God just would and could not accept the animals. What, then, could God do? What could take away sins? There was only one thing. A perfect and eternal Person had to willingly sacrifice Himself for the sins of men.

- He had to be perfect so that He could be the Ideal Person, for the Ideal Person is the only Person who could stand for and cover all other men...
- He also had to be eternal in order to cover sins eternally, all past sins as well as all future sins. Being eternal, whatever He did could cover everyone eternally—all who ever lived, those in the past as well as those in the future.

This is the reason God Himself—in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ—had to be the sacrifice for our sins. Only God is perfect and eternal; therefore, only God could be the Perfect and Eternal Sacrifice for our sins. This is the reason God *prepared a body* and sent Jesus Christ into the world. This is the reason for the great Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See **Luke 1:31; Rom. 1:2-4, 8:3; Phil. 2:5-7; 1Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:9, 14-15; 1John 3:5, 7, 4:2-3; Isa. 7:14, 9:6**)

2. The perfect sacrifice was Jesus Christ doing the will of God and doing it perfectly (**Hebrews 10:7**). This was absolutely essential if there was to be the perfect sacrifice. He had to live a sinless life. By living a sinless life, He stood before God as the Perfect, Ideal Man...



The point is this: the only way Jesus Christ could please God was by doing the will of God. And in order to please God perfectly, Jesus Christ had to do the perfect will of God. This He did. God is perfectly pleased with Jesus Christ; therefore, Jesus Christ could make the perfect sacrifice for man, the sacrifice that would be acceptable to God forever and ever. (See **Rom. 5:19; John 8:46; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15, 7:26; 1Peter 1:19, 2:22**)

3. The perfect sacrifice made it necessary for God to take away the old sacrificial system and establish the new testament or covenant with man (**Hebrews 10:8-9**). This only reemphasizes what has been said above. The old sacrifices for sins were inadequate and powerless to take away sin. If sin was to be removed, there had to be a perfect sacrifice... And note how Christ responded: **"Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."**

The point is this: Jesus Christ took away the first testament. He took it away so that He might establish the second testament, the perfect and eternal way for sins to be taken away. (See **Eph. 2:15-16; Col. 2:13-14; Rom. 8:3**)

4. The perfect sacrifice sets us apart through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once-for-all. He is the Perfect and Ideal Man (**Hebrews 10:10**). Therefore, when He offered His body as the sacrifice for sin, it was a perfect sacrifice. Being perfect, it was completed, fulfilled, and finished forever. It perfectly satisfied the holiness, righteousness, and justice of God once-for-all... (See **Rom. 4:3-8, 5:1-2, 9; Heb. 9:14; 1Peter 1:18-19; 1John 1:7; Rev. 1:5**)

#### **C. (10:11-14) Jesus Christ, Death— Sacrifice, Animal:**

**Heb 10:11-14 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 10:13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.**

The contrast between the old sacrifices and the perfect sacrifice of Christ. There are four contrasts.



1. The priest of the old sacrifice was never done with his work. This is pictured by his having to always stand (**Hebrews 10:11-12**). But the minister of the perfect sacrifice sits; He completed His sacrifice forever. The earthly priest could never complete His work, for the ministry and sacrifice he professed were earthly and imperfect. Therefore, he could never sit down and be done with the ministry of sacrificing for sin... (**See Acts 5:30-31; 1Cor. 15:3-; Phil. 2:6-9**)
2. The priest of the old sacrifice made the same sacrificial offering for sin over and over, but Jesus Christ made one sacrifice for sin forever (**Hebrews 10:11-12**)... (**See John 1:29; 1Cor. 5:7; 1Peter 1:18-19, 3:18; Heb. 9:28**)
3. The old sacrifice never took away sins, but the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ triumphs over all enemies (**Hebrews 10:12b-13**). The enemies of man and God included all the forces of evil, both physical and spiritual. ...The point is this: there is no way that the sacrifice of animals could ever conquer these forces and deliver men from the enslaving grip. But Jesus Christ can...

When He obeyed God in the supreme act of dying for man's sins, God bestowed upon him the highest honor. What is the highest honor God can bestow? To exalt Christ to His right hand of authority and power. This God has done. Jesus Christ rules and reigns with all the power and authority of God the Father. He sits at the right hand of God and He shall sit there until every enemy is subjected to both God and man. He shall sit there until man is delivered from every enemy that holds him in bondage. Jesus Christ not only takes away man's sins, He delivers man from all the forces of sin, evil, disease, corruption, death, evil spirits, and Satan—and He shall deliver man eternally... (**See Eph. 1:7, 19-22; Phil. 2:6-11; Heb. 2:14-18, 4:14-16, 7:25**)

4. The old sacrifices failed to perfect man, but the one perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ perfected forever those who are set apart unto God (**Hebrews 10:14**). If a person comes to God through Jesus Christ—really believing that Jesus Christ is the sacrifice for his sins—God sets that person apart as a believer, as a true follower of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ... (**See Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14; 1Peter 2:24**)

#### **D. (10:15-18) Holy Spirit:**

**Heb 10:15-18 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 10:16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 10:17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 10:18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.**

The witness to the perfect sacrifice is the Holy Spirit. Note that He bears witness in the Scripture (**Jeremiah 31:33-34**). The point is this: the Holy Spirit works within the believer's life and proves that Jesus Christ takes away the believer's sin. How? By doing four things.

1. The Holy Spirit puts power within the believer's heart and mind. He works within the believer *to will and to do* God's pleasure. He stirs the believer to obey God and to seek His face continually. Even when we fail—which we all do too often—our hearts are stirred to seek forgiveness and to repent and to begin anew to follow and obey Him. This is the difference between the old and new testament. The old testament condemned us and had no power to stir and energize us to seek God. But the new covenant, the Holy Spirit within us, does have the power to forgive and to stir us to arise and follow God anew and afresh. (**See Rom. 8:6, 12:2; Eph. 2:15, 4:24; Col. 3:10**)
2. The Holy Spirit imparts the knowledge of God and His will. The Holy Spirit draws the believer near God; He actually pulls the believer into the presence of God... The Holy Spirit directs, teaches, guides, and quickens the believer to know and to follow God more and more and better and better. (**See John 17:3; Phil. 3:10; Isa. 43:10; Jer. 9:24; Hosea 6:3**)
3. The Holy Spirit bears witness that God forgives sin once-for-all. He bears witness that God has accepted the believer and adopted him as a child of God. (**See John 1:12; Rom. 8:15-17; Gal. 4:4-6; Heb. 2:17-18, 4:15-16**)
4. The Holy Spirit bears witness that there is no more need for sacrifice—that Jesus Christ is the perfect and eternal sacrifice for sin. The Holy Spirit gives absolute assurance of salvation. He is the security of the believer. (**See John 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9; 1Cor. 2:12, 3:16; 2Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14; 1John. 2:27, 4:13, 5:6**)

**E. (10:19-20) Faith— Jesus Christ, Death:** What is the new and living faith?

**Heb 10:19-20 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 10:20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;**

First, it is having boldness to enter the presence of God. The word "boldness" (*parrēsia*) means to enter God's presence freely and openly, with confidence and assurance. Just imagine...

- being able to enter the presence of God freely and openly.
- knowing God personally and intimately.
- fellowshiping and communing with God.
- having God guide and direct, look after and care for, provide and protect, strengthen and deliver us with joy, rejoicing, assurance, confidence, and victory over all the trials and temptations in life.

Imagine having God take care of one's life like that. This is what the new and living faith is: it is *boldness* to enter God's presence, to know God intimately and personally, experiencing His fellowship, presence, and power all the time. It is living and moving and having our being in God...

Note the reference to the *holiest place* (**Hebrews 10:19**) and to the veil or curtain (**Hebrews 10:20**). This refers to the Holy of Holies of the Jewish tabernacle where the presence of God dwelt and to the veil which separated God's presence from man... The veil symbolized that man was cut off from God; man's sin and imperfection made him unacceptable to God. This, of course, meant a significant fact: as long as the veil was there, man could not approach God. The only way man could ever approach God would be if God rent the veil and opened up the way into His presence.

This is the glorious message of this passage. God has rent the veil through the flesh of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (**Hebrews 10:20**). The veil symbolized the body of the Lord Jesus. When the body of the Lord Jesus was rent, the veil of the tabernacle was rent and the way was opened up into the presence of God forever. What does this mean? It means this: when the body of Christ was rent upon the cross, man was no longer separated from God by sin and imperfection. The rent body of Christ means...

- that Christ bore the sins and guilt and judgment of men for them.

- that Christ frees man from sin and guilt and judgment by His rent body.
- that Christ has opened up the way for man to enter God's presence by His rent body.

How can a person know God personally and intimately? How can a person enter the presence of God freely and openly? By the blood of Jesus, by the rent body of our Lord. A veil no longer separates man from God. There is only one thing that stands between God and men, that is Jesus Christ, the rent body of the living Lord. The way into God's presence is now opened through Christ. But note: it is opened only through Christ, only through His rent body. He is the *new and living way* to God. He is the object of the *new and living faith* that is to be placed in God. (See **John 10:9, 14:6; Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:18, 3:12; Heb. 10:19, 22**)

#### **F. (10:21) Jesus Christ, High Priest:**

**Hebrews 10:21 *And having an high priest over the house of God;***

The point is this: our High Priest is not a High Priest over an earthly temple or worship sanctuary that ages, deteriorates, and passes away. Our High Priest is over the very presence of God. He is the High Priest who can usher us into the very presence of God Himself and into the eternal dwelling place of God... (See **Heb. 2:17, 4:14-15, 5:5, 6:19-20, 7:25-27, 8:1-2, 9:11-14, 10:19-21**)

#### **G. (10:22) Access— Heart— Conscience:**

**Hebrews 10:22 *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.***

The first duty is to draw near God. Jesus Christ has opened up the way into God's presence for us... Jesus Christ has made us acceptable to God. He has provided a *new and living way into the holiest place of all*, into the very presence of God Himself... Therefore, *let us draw near God*. But note: how we approach God is important. He has to be approached in a particular way; some preparation is necessary in order to approach Him.

1. We must have a "**true heart.**" This means genuine, sincere, honest, meaningful, and without hypocrisy. A true heart involves an attitude of gladness, freedom, and enthusiasm (Marvin Vincent. *Word Studies In The*

*New Testament*, Vol. 4, p.501). The true believer knows that Jesus Christ has opened the door into God's presence; therefore...

- he is thankful and appreciative
- he is glad and joyful
- he feels free and at liberty to enter God's presence
- he is enthusiastic and excited about entering God's presence

...Too many of us are so wrapped up in the world that we forget to "draw near God." We forget the wonderful thing Jesus Christ has done for us—that He has actually opened up a new and living way into the very presence of God Himself.

Too few of us have true, sincere hearts—hearts that continually draw near God. We must awaken and heed this charge. It is our duty, a duty that is *absolutely necessary*: **"Let us draw near with a true** [sincere, genuine, honest] **heart."**

2. We must have **"full assurance of faith."** Full assurance means unqualified assurance in Christ, that He is the One Person who can and does give us access into God's presence—that Christ and Christ alone makes us acceptable to God...
3. We must have hearts and bodies perfectly cleansed and washed. This is a picture of the High Priest cleansing and washing himself before he entered God's presence in the Holy of Holies, the inner sanctuary of the Jewish tabernacle. He sprinkled himself with the blood of the sacrificial animal and washed himself. This symbolized that his own sins were being forgiven. His own evil conscience was being cleansed and the sins of his body were being washed away.

The point is this: before we approach God, we must be cleansed of sin and its guilt—cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. *We have to* approach God through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ alone is the perfect sacrifice for sins; He alone has made the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, the only way we can be cleansed of sin is to trust Jesus Christ. If we really trust His sacrifice, then God accepts His sacrifice for us. God cleanses us of sin. He gives us a clean conscience and washed body—a conscience cleansed of evil and guilt and a body washed from sin. (See **John 10:9; Acts 17:27; Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:18, 3:12; Heb. 7:19, 10:19,22; James 4:8; Psalm 3:18, 73:28, 145:18**)

## **H. (10:23) Profession— Confession:**

**Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)**

The second duty is to hold fast our profession without wavering. A person who makes a true profession in Christ believes two things:

1. that Jesus Christ is his Savior from sin and death—that Jesus Christ is the perfect sacrifice for his sins—that Jesus Christ and His sacrifice covers his sins and makes it possible for God to forgive his sins.
2. that Jesus Christ is the risen Lord—that Jesus Christ is his High Priest who is seated at the right hand of God—that Jesus Christ is the perfect Mediator and Intercessor who makes him acceptable to God and presents him as perfect and sinless before God.

When a person professes Christ to be his Savior and Lord, he is to hold his profession fast and he is to do it without wavering...

Note: there is one strong reason for holding our profession fast. What is it? **"God is faithful that promised."**

God keeps His Word. And He is the One who has promised to let the sacrifice of Christ count as the sacrifice for our sins. God is the One who has promised to accept us in Christ—to accept us in His perfection and righteousness. God will do exactly what He has said. He is faithful. Therefore, **"let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering."** (See 1Cor. 15:58; Gal. 5:1, 6:9; 1Thes. 5:21; Heb. 3:6, 4:14-16, 10:23; James 1:12; 1Peter 1:13, 5:8-9; 2Peter 3:17; Rev. 3:3)

## **I. (10:24) Believer's Duty— Love— Ministering— Service:**

**Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:**

The third duty is to stir up one another to love and to do good works. Note the word "**consider**" (*katanoōmen*). It means to give attention to; to fix our attention upon; to give continuous care; to watch over. What an exhortation to believers!

How different the church would be—how much stronger we would be in Christ and in life—if we heeded this exhortation! And note what it is that we are to give attention to: to make sure that we are stirred up and living for Christ—that we are loving one another and doing good works.

It means that we love—love in act and not in word—that we...

- feed the poor
- visit the sick and shut-ins
- look after the orphans and the children of broken homes and single parents
- become a friend to the lonely
- give direction to the empty and those without purpose...

(See Matt. 5:16; John 13:34-35, 15:12; Rom. 12:9 13:9-10; 1Thes. 3:12; 1Tim. 6:18; Titus 2:7; Heb. 10:24; James 2:17-18; 1Peter 1:22, 2:12)

#### **J. (10:25) Church, Attendance— Worship:**

**Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

The fourth duty is to assemble together and never to forsake our assembling, not even to neglect it for a brief time. This is the meaning of this exhortation. Believers are to assemble together...for worship, for prayer, for the study of God's Word, and for ministry and witnessing.

Read the verse closely and it is clearly seen that the idea is often: we are to assemble together often and never to forsake our coming together. Genuine believers need each other—the presence, fellowship, strength, encouragement, care, and love of each other.

But note: some had forsaken the church even in the day of the early church. [(RevC) We must maintain our commitment to fellowship and worship together. If we begin to fill our time for church with other activities it can

easily become a habit and have a negative effect on our communion with Christ and our fellow believers. If it wasn't important God would not have admonished us to maintain fellowship! (RevC)]

How like some in every generation. The need is just what this verse says: exhort one another, and so much the more, as you see the day approaching. What day? The day of the Lord's return. His return is immediately upon us. Therefore, we must exhort those who have fallen away, lest they miss the salvation of His coming and have to face His judgment. (See **Luke 2:36-37, 4:16, 24:52-53; John 4:24; Acts 3:1, 13:14; Deut. 12:5; Psalm 23:6, 26:8, 27:4, 65:4, 84:2, 4, 84:10, 122:1**)

#### **K. (10:26-27) Sin, Wilful— Judgment:**

**Heb 10:26-27 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 10:27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.**

The warning is strong—if we go on sinning wilfully, there is no longer any sacrifice for our sins. There is no sacrifice anyplace that can take away our sins if we continue to sin. There is only judgment awaiting us.

What is wilful sin? It is choosing to live a life of sin instead of living a life of godliness; it is deliberately choosing to live for this world and self instead of living for Christ.

This person—the person who wilfully sins—shall never have any sacrifice for sin. The only conceivable way he can ever be acceptable to God is to repent and turn to Christ as the sacrifice for his sins...Therefore, if the wilful sinner—the person who continues on and on living for this world and for sin—is ever to be saved, he has to forsake his sin and turn to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for cleansing.

But note a critical fact: this passage is not written to the unbeliever who wilfully sins. It is written to the person who has received **the knowledge of the truth** and wilfully sins...

This is a severe warning for every generation. In fact, this is probably the most severe warning given in all of Scripture. The passage must be put in context.



The judgment is upon those who *sin wilfully* after knowing the truth. What truth? **Hebrews 10:22-25** says that the sin can be one of four failures:

- ⇒ Failing to draw near to God.
- ⇒ Failing to hold fast.
- ⇒ Failing to stir up other Christians to love one another.
- ⇒ Failing to assemble and worship together.

What is the judgment pronounced? "There remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for judgment" (**Hebrews 10:26-27**). **Hebrews 10:30** says, "**The Lord shall judge His people.**" The meaning seems to be that from the point of continuing in wilful sin to the point of repentance or of being taken home, there is no sacrifice that can forgive sins. There is no animal sacrifice and no other sacrifice including the sacrifice of Christ that can atone for sin. As the Scripture says, "**If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me**" (**Psalms 66:18**).

Even if a person asks forgiveness, God cannot forgive so long as the person is insincere and continues to walk in sin. Even Christ's sacrifice has no effect apart from a sincere approach and earnest plea for forgiveness. Yet for those who truly ask forgiveness, there is complete forgiveness and perfect cleansing (**1 John 1:6-10**, esp. **1 John 1:9**).

When reading a passage such as this, a person must always keep in mind the teaching of all Scripture. The judgment of the believer does not mean the Christian's salvation is lost. The Christian is saved by Christ's righteousness—all through life and eternity—not by his own righteous acts. But wilful sin breaks the Christian's fellowship with God and renders his service ineffective, and if he continues on and on in wilful sin, he shall suffer a great and fearful loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

The meaning seems to be this: it does not matter what a person professes.

- He may say that he has trusted Christ as his Lord and Savior...
- He may have received the knowledge of the truth...
- He may have turned away from the world and to Christ just as the seed thrown upon the rocky soil...

...but if he chooses to return to the world and to live a life of sin, there is no sacrifice that can forgive his sins. Not even the sacrifice of Christ can forgive his sins.

**Does this mean that the man has committed the unpardonable sin and can never be forgiven—even if he repents and turns to Christ?** Note that this passage does not say this—not any place. What the passage is saying is this: the death and sacrifice of Jesus Christ has no effect upon a person who continues to sin and sin (wilfully sinning)...

- no matter how much knowledge of the truth he has.
- no matter how much the person may profess that he knows Christ.

**God cannot forgive so long as a person is insincere and continues to walk and walk in sin.** The sacrifice of Christ has no effect apart from a sincere approach and godly walk after Christ. As stated above, Scripture says, **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"** (Psalm 66:18). However, we must never forget the teaching of Scripture about forgiveness, for if we do, there is no forgiveness for any of us. Scripture declares loudly and clearly that in Christ there is **"redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins"** (Ephes. 1:7).

Note a final fact about the warning: a person who has received the knowledge of the truth and returns to sinning has nothing to look forward to but judgment and the fury of wrath.

- By judgment is meant the terrible day when the sins of men will be judged. And remember, there is no sacrifice that covers the sins of this person; therefore, he must bear his sins himself and face God.
- By fiery indignation is meant a fierceness of fire (*A.T. Robertson. Word Pictures In The New Testament, Vol. 5, p.413*); the burning of wrath and indignation (Amplified New Testament); a devouring fire and everlasting burnings (*Matthew Henry. Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol. 6, p.935*). (See Matt. 3:7; Rom. 1:18, 2:5, 2:8-9, 3:5-6, 9; Eph. 2:3; Eph.5:6 cp. Col. 3:6; 1Thes. 1:9-10, 5:9; Psalm 2:12; John 3:36; Heb. 3:11)

#### **L. (10:28-29) Judgment:**

**Hebrews 10:28-29 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: <sup>29</sup> Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?**

The certainty of judgment can be easily seen. This person merits much greater punishment than any other sinner. Why? Because he had received the knowledge of the truth and chose to turn back to the world and to live in sin. ...Note: this verse spells out exactly what this person does in the eyes of God. The person who knows the truth about Jesus Christ and continues to live in a life of sin commits three of the most terrible and heinous sins imaginable.

1. He tramples God's very own Son underfoot. This is far worse than just ignoring and neglecting and being ignorant of Christ. It is knowing that Christ is the Son of God who came to earth to reveal God's love and to save men, but...
  - *rejecting Christ* for all to see.
  - *refusing to obey Christ* in the presence of other people.
  - *denying Christ* both by life and word.
  - *showing contempt for Christ* by living in sin even when one knows better.
  - *insulting Christ* by professing His name and yet living in sin and thinking one is getting away with it.

This person deserves more punishment than anyone else on earth. This is the point of this passage. There just is no sacrifice for such a person.

2. He counts the blood of Christ an unholy thing. This means that the person considers the blood of Christ as worthless and useless in saving a person. He knows and understands, and perhaps even once professed, exactly what Scripture teaches: that Jesus Christ sacrificed His life and shed His blood for the sins of men. But the person does not accept what Scripture says...
3. He has despised the Spirit of grace, the very Person who showers the grace of God upon men, that is, the Holy Spirit. The word *despise* means to insult and outrage. How does a person show despite to the Holy Spirit?
  - a. By sensing the inner pull of the Spirit to repent and change and follow Christ, yet rejecting and ignoring the conviction of the Spirit. This insults Him and shows that the person despises Him.
  - b. By professing that one is a follower of Christ, yet continuing to live in sin. This insults the Spirit and shows despite for Him.

Again, the person who knows the truth, yet turns to the world and sin shall be punished—no matter what he professes. And we must never forget: those

who professed to be God's people under Moses' law died without mercy. Of how much more punishment do you suppose we shall be thought worthy if we turn away from our profession? (See John 3:36; Rom. 1:18, 2:8-9; Heb. 10:29)

**M. (10:30-31) Judgment:**

**Heb 10:30-31 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

The judge is to be the living God. This is a quote taken from the Old Testament (**Deut. 32:35-36**). Note three facts.

1. We know God, who He is and what He can do...We also know that He rules and reigns and can do everything.
2. ...Therefore, we know that God can judge and condemn sin and that He will. He must, for His very nature of holiness and perfection demands it.
3. Judgment is a terrifying thing. And note: God is living; He is the living God. Therefore, judgment shall be executed... Some are going to fall into the hands of the living God. (See Matt. 23:35; Rom. 6:23; 1Thes. 5:3; 2Thes. 1:6; Heb. 2:2, 10:30, 12:25; Amos 9:2; Psalm 66:18; Isa. 59:2, 64:7)

**N. (10:32-39) Judgment— Warning:**

**Heb. 10:32-39 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 10:33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. 10:34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. 10:35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. 10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 10:37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 10:38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 10:39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.**

The appeal to drifters is a much needed appeal for every generation. The appeal is a threefold appeal. Note how forcefully the three exhortations meet the need of the person who is drifting away from Christ. If the drifter will heed, he will save his soul and escape the coming judgment of God.

1. Remember your former Christian experience (**Hebrews 10:32-34**).
  - a. Remember your spiritual illumination: the time when the Spirit of God moved upon your heart and quickened the truth of Jesus Christ to you...
  - b. Remember your endurance for Christ. You stood up for Him in the midst of all kinds of trials and afflictions. Note: apparently the Hebrew Christians had suffered misunderstanding, ridicule, mockery, abuse, suffering, and persecution.
  - c. Remember your standing with other believers as a suffering companion. Apparently, the Hebrew Christians were severely persecuted by the world...  
(See **Psalm 73:24; Rom. 8:18; 2Cor. 4:17; 2Tim. 2:10; 1Peter 1:3-4, 5:1**)
  - d. Remember the seizure of your property. The Hebrew believers even had their property confiscated by the government, yet during that period they stood fast. Imagine!
  - e. Remember why you stood fast and bore so much for Christ. It was because of your hope for heaven and for a better and lasting inheritance—an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fades not away.
2. Do not cast away your confidence and courage and endurance (**Hebrews 10:35-37**). The verses state it well: endure and you shall receive the promise of God's reward. For in just a little while Christ is coming, and He will not tarry. His coming is assured, and when He comes, He will come with His reward. The word "**patience**" (*hupomonē*) means to endure, persevere, and be steadfast in doing the will of God. What is the will of God? (See **1John 3:23**)

**"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 John 3:23).**

(See also: **1Cor. 15:58; Gal. 5:1; 1Peter 1:13, 5:8-9; 2Peter 3:17**)

**3. Live by faith and do not draw back (Hebrews 10:38-39).**

- a. Faith preserves the soul; it is the only thing that can save the soul... The person who believes this is just before God; he is counted righteous before God. The just person—all believers—shall live by faith and by faith alone.
- b. Drawing back from Christ displeases God. God is never pleased with a person...
  - who professes Christ and draws back into sin.
  - who has known the truth and draws back into sin.
  - who plays the hypocrite.
  - who has a form of religion but draws back from the sacrificial blood of His Son.

God has no pleasure in this person, no pleasure whatsoever. This means that He will judge the person who draws back.

- c. Drawing back is not the way of the believer—not the genuine believer. **"We are not of those who draw back unto perdition."** Some are; some professed faith in Christ and have now drawn back. But we are not of that number. **"We believe to the saving of the soul."** (See Prov. 14:14; Matt. 24:12; Luke 9:62; Gal. 4:9; Heb. 10:38; Rev. 2:4; Matt. 10:22; Luke 8:13, 11:24-26; John 6:63-64; 2Peter 2:20)

**END OF LESSON 11**

**QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 11**

- 1. The Old Testament covenant of the Law was:
  - A. perfect
  - B. able to present man perfect before God
  - C. was a reflection of the perfection that was yet to come
  - D. All of the above
- 2. T or F The Old Testament sacrifice of animals was equal to the sacrifice of Christ in the New Testament.
- 3. T or F The priest of the old sacrifice was never done with his work.
- 4. The Holy Spirit:

- A. does not show man his sin
- B. shows us the need to sacrifice each time we sin
- C. imparts the knowledge of God and His will**
- D. None of the above

**5. Our High Priest:**

- A. is not a High Priest over an earthly temple**
- B. offers sacrifice once each year
- C. is not able to make man perfect before God
- D. None of the above

**BEGIN LESSON 12**

**(RevC) This lesson is much longer than most as we felt it was important to keep this chapter study together as one study. The material is from the Preacher's Outline Sermon Bible Commentary which is even more exhaustive than what is provided in this lesson. We encourage you to add their material to your ongoing study program. (RevC)**

**IX. Faith—The Greatest Power In The World: Hebrews 11 (POSB)**

**Introduction:** this is one of the great chapters in the Bible. It is known as *God's Great Hall of Fame*. Men and women who have *believed* God down through the centuries are listed as being great men and women of God. The key to greatness with God is faith; the person who truly believes God, is *great* in the eyes of God...

- A. (11:1) Faith:** The meaning of faith. What does faith mean? This is the only time the Bible ever defines faith...

**"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).**

**[(RevC) Allow me to give my definition of faith: Faith brings into our reality what God has already provided, that we have not yet seen. It is the act of faith that responds to what God has promised in His Word and reaches**



up taking hold of what God has provided (though it is not yet visible) and through faith brings it into reality. Faith is an action word it is a response to what God has said. Keep in mind that Jesus is the “**author and finisher of our faith**” Heb. 12:2 (RevC)]

The word "**substance**" (*hupostasis*) means the foundation, assurance, title-deed, and guarantee of things hoped for. The word "**evidence**" (*elegchos*) means conviction. According to most commentators, this is what is meant by these two words. Therefore, faith would be defined as:

**"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."**

...Scripture seems to be saying that faith is more than an act. Scripture seems to be saying that faith is the *actual possession* of reality... Certainly, from God's perspective, we already possess His promises; He has already seated us in the heavenlies, and we already possess eternal life...It is possessing reality, actually holding something that is substantial and real... Faith is possessing the substance of the promises of God, the evidence of things not seen. If I possess them, the substance is there; the evidence is there...The substance and evidence, the fact that I already possess eternal life, is the basis of my assurance and conviction, of never tasting and experiencing death. It means this: faith is the substance, the actual possession, of things hoped for, the evidence and reality of things not seen. It is *both an act and a possession* of the thing believed. It is believing and trusting in that which actually exists—in that which we can possess. We may not be able to see it, but it is real and existing, and we can possess it by believing and having faith in it. We can possess it now—we cannot see it, but we can actually possess the very substance of it by believing and entrusting our lives to it.

#### **B. (11:2) Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.**

The reward of faith. What is the reward of faith? God's approval. God is pleased, very pleased, when we believe Him and His promises...

#### **C. (11:3) Faith— Creation:**



**Hebrews 11:3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.**

The basic understanding of faith—that God has made the world. Note the word **"understanding"** (*noeō*). It means to perceive with the mind, to understand, to know a true fact...The truth is this: the Christian begins with a fact that is true: *God did create the world*. The Christian believer's starting point is more than an assumption—it is an understanding, a true fact, the very basic fact that God did create the world. This understanding is based upon four things:

1. The world itself: looking at and observing the world, and studying and thinking about its origin, purpose, and end.
2. The Bible, the Word of God, the written revelation of God.
3. The Lord Jesus Christ, the living revelation of God.
4. The witness of the Holy Spirit who is given to every believer. He bears witness that Jesus Christ and the Word of God are true. This is critical, for it is *a fact*, as any true Christian believer can testify... (See Gen. 1:1; Neh. 9:6; Job 26:7; Psalm 24:2, 33:6, 95:5, 102:25, 104:5; Acts 4:24, 7:50, 14:15; Hebrews 11:3).

**D. (11:4-5) Faith, Power of— Abel— Enoch— Cain:**

**Hebrews 11:4-5 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. <sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.**

The spiritual power of faith... The power is twofold, and it is given in the most meaningful way possible, by showing how the power takes effect in the lives of believers. Two believers who experienced the power of faith were Abel and Enoch.

1. Faith has the power to be counted as righteousness. No greater gift could be given us than to give us the glorious privilege of being counted righteous by God.

...Abel tells us there is a way to be counted righteous. How? By approaching and worshipping God...by the sacrifice of blood...

When Adam and Eve sinned, they became aware of their nakedness. Nakedness is a symbol of their being aware and conscious of sin (**cp. Genesis 3:9-10**). God... provided clothing to cover their nakedness... It was coats or skins from animals, a symbol that sin had to be covered by the shedding of blood. This was a symbol that pointed to the blood of Jesus Christ...that had to be shed in order to cover the sins of men.

The point is this: from the very first parents on earth, God laid it down that the sin and guilt of man had to be borne by either man himself or by a substitute. Man had to die for his own sins or else a substitute had to be sacrificed for his sins. Adam and Eve taught this to their children... (**See Gen. 4:1-8; Heb. 11:4**)

The difference between the two offerings was this: Abel believed God and approached and worshipped God exactly as God said: through the sacrifice of another, the sacrifice of an animal. But Cain did not believe God... He made a material sacrifice and offering to God: he approached God through... the efforts and fruits of human works, the fruit borne of the earth, the fruit borne by his own human... hands.

This is the power of faith: faith gives us the power to be counted righteous. (**See Gen. 15:6; Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:23-24, 4:3, 5:1, 9, 6:7, 8:33; 1Cor. 6:11; Gal. 2:16, 3:6, 24; Phil. 3:9**)

Note that Cain approached God; he was religious. But his religion was a formal religion:

- a religion of ritual, form, and ceremony.
- a religion of personal sacrifice and works, of doing good and even of sacrificing in order to do good.
- a religion of man, of his own choosing, of his own ideas and imaginations as to how he was to approach God.

2. Faith has the power to give us a day by day walk with God and to deliver us from death. Enoch illustrates this: (**See Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5**)

Enoch believed God, believed that if he walked and fellowshiped with God day by day then God would look after and care for him... When Enoch was ready to go home to God, God transferred him right on into heaven, right into God's very own presence. Enoch experienced the promise that is made to every believer: we shall never taste or experience death.

- a. Enoch's faith gave him a day by day walk with God—the knowledge and fellowship, care and provision, protection and deliverance of God. **(John 15:4-7; Acts 17:27; 1Cor. 1:9; Col. 2:6; James 4:8; 1John 1:3, 2:6; Rev. 3:20; Psalm 34:18, 145:18)**
- b. Enoch's faith gave him the longed for deliverance from death. **(See John 3:14-15, 3:16, 36, 8:52, 17:3; Heb. 2:9; Gal. 6:8)**

#### **E. (11:6) Faith— God, Existence:**

**"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6)**

1. It is impossible to please God without faith. By faith is meant a living, active faith, a faith that knows and follows God, communes and fellowships with God... What does this mean? The person will never be acceptable to God nor accepted by God... Without faith, a person stands all alone in this world—utterly without God. It is impossible for him to please God. The Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest says:

*"...The idea is, 'Without faith it is impossible to please Him at all'" (Hebrews, Vol. 2, p.198).*

**(See John 3:11, 18, 36, 8:24; Heb. 3:12)**

2. The person who comes to God must believe two things.
  - a. He *must believe* in God—that God is—that God exists. The words **"must believe"** (*pisteusai dei*) mean... absolutely necessary and essential.
    - (I). A person must look at the worlds (heaven and earth) and at himself—at the existence, design, order, and end of all things—and believe in God.
    - (II). A person must look at the Word of God, the Holy Bible, and believe in God.

(III). A person must look at Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, who reveals God to man, and believe in God.

b. He must believe that God rewards those who diligently seek Him.

Note the word **"diligently"** (*ekzētousin*). It means to *seek out God*; to diligently seek to find Him and to follow Him... It is the same reward given to Abel and Enoch: righteousness and God's care in this life and deliverance from death unto eternal life. (See **Luke 11:9-10; John 6:28-29; Acts 17:27; Rom. 10:17; 1John 3:23; Deut. 4:29; 2Chron. 7:14; Prov. 8:17; Jer. 29:13**)

F. (11:7) **Noah— Faith:** Noah's faith was a faith that promptly obeyed with fear (cp. **Genesis 5:5-8:22**).

**Hebrews 11:7 "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith"**

(See Also: **Genesis 6:5-8, 11-14, 17-19, 22**). Note two points about Noah's faith:

1. There was a time back in world history when the earth had become so wicked that it was filled with corruption and violence... Man had reached the point of no return; he would never repent and return to God. God was left with no choice: the earth had to be destroyed. But there was one man on earth who was godly—Noah. Noah worshipped and honored God in his life. Therefore, God warned Noah of the coming judgment upon the earth.

- God told Noah to prepare an ark and the ark would save him, his family, and two of every animal.
- God also told Noah to warn the world of coming judgment.

Note how Noah received the warning from God: he was **"moved with fear."** The word **"fear"** (*eulabētheis*) means with godly fear...

Noah believed God's warning of coming judgment, and he began to build the ark with a godly fear and reverence, knowing that what God said would come true. God's judgment would fall upon the earth; Noah believed it and knew it by faith.

2. Noah stood fast in his faith despite the mockery of the world. Noah lived far, far inland from the ocean; he was nowhere close to the sea or to the

shipbuilding yards of the world. Yet, there he was building a ship as large as an ocean liner... But Noah was faithful:

- a. He preached the righteousness and coming judgment of God...
- b. He also continued to build the ark—continued to work at saving himself and his own house and as much life as possible upon earth...  
(See Matt. 25:31-32; Heb. 9:27; 2Peter 2:9, 3:7; 1John 4:17; Jude 14-15; John 5:22; Acts. 10:42, 17:31; Rom. 2:16, 14:10; 2Tim. 4:1; 2Thes. 1:7-8; Psalm 96:13; Ecc. 3:17)

**G. (11:7) Noah— Faith:** Noah's reward was threefold.

**Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**

1. Noah's house was saved. Noah believed God—believed the warning of God about coming judgment. Therefore, God saved him... Note that Noah's whole house was saved. Noah's wife and children were blessed to have a godly father, a father who could teach and guide them into the truth. Remember that his sons had married. The young ladies who had married them had done so despite the stigma of the family being a God-fearing family. They could have married men of the world, but they chose to join the family of God, identifying themselves with the God of God's people. Therefore, God saved them as well as Noah (Matthew Henry. *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p.941).
2. The world was condemned; that is, Noah's faith was vindicated. The world had mocked and ridiculed Noah's faith and belief in God's warning of judgment. But God vindicated Noah's faith; God judged the world. And the world saw that Noah had been right all the time.
3. Noah was counted righteous (*dikaïosunēs*). Noah believed God and God counted his faith as righteousness. He "**became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**" As Matthew Henry says, Noah had faith in the *promised Seed*, the Savior whom God was someday going to send to earth (*Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p.941). There is nothing else upon earth that can cause God to count a man righteous but faith—faith in the *promised Seed*, the Savior of the world, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

(See Gen. 15:6; Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:23-24, 4:3, 5:1, 9, 6:7, 8:33; 1Cor. 6:11; Gal. 2:16, 3:6, 24; Phil. 3:9)

**H. (11:8-9) Abraham— Faith:** Abraham's faith was a faith that obeyed and hoped in God.

**Hebrews 11:8-9** By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. <sup>9</sup> By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

(See Genesis 12:1-5; cp. 11:26-32; Gen. 13:14-17, 15:1-7, 17:1-7, 15-19, 22:15-18; Acts 7:2-3; Heb. 11:8-10).

Note two things about Abraham's faith.

1. God gave Abraham a great call. He called and challenged Abraham to be a witness to the other people of the world—a witness to the only living and true God. God challenged Abraham to separate himself from the world and to follow God—to leave his home, friends, employment, and his country. If Abraham would heed and obey God's call—if Abraham would obey God unquestionably—then God would do three wonderful things for Abraham.
  - a. God would cause a people to be born of his seed (**Genesis 12:1-5; Romans 4:17-18**).
  - b. God would bless all nations through his seed (**Genesis 12:2; Romans 4:17-18; Galatians 3:8, 16**).
  - c. God would give him a promised land, the land of Canaan (**Genesis 12:1; Romans 4:13; Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16**).

(See Rom. 8:14-17; 2Cor. 6:17-18; 1Tim. 2:4)

2. Abraham obeyed God; he believed God. Note exactly the kind of faith he had.
  - a. He had a *decisive, obedient faith*. He obeyed, and he went out not knowing where he went. When God called, he acted immediately. He did not hesitate, argue, question, equivocate, or waver back and forth. He obeyed... Note a significant fact about following God. Abraham did not know where he was going. He did not know where following

God would lead him. He just believed the promises of God; therefore, he acted upon his belief. He believed; therefore, he obeyed.

- b. He had a hopeful, obedient faith. Note that Abraham never received the inheritance of the promised land, and he never saw a nation of people born of his seed. In fact, Abraham never even owned a piece of land upon which he could settle and live... He still believed in the hope God had given him. He believed it so strongly that he even taught *the same promises* to his son Isaac and to his grandson Jacob. (See Matt. 7:21, 24-25; Heb. 5:9; Rev. 22:14)

#### I. (11:10) Abraham— Faith:

**Hebrews 11:10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.**

Abraham's reward was the great city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The great heavenly city was his hope. This verse plainly says that Abraham's faith was the faith that looked beyond this world to heaven. This is a phenomenal declaration: that Abraham believed in the heavenly city of God, in a future life—a life that would put him in the presence of God forever and ever... (See Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:10, 16, 12:22, 13:14; 2Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-4, 10, 22:14, 19)

- J. (11:11) Sarah— Faith: Sarah's faith was a faith that believed the impossible.

**Hebrews 11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.**

(See also: Genesis 18:9-15; cp. 17:15-22; Gen. 21:1-5; Rom. 4:18-21; Heb. 11:11-12).

Note two significant facts.

1. Sarah had difficulty believing God at first. When she first heard the promise of God she doubted the promise... When she overheard the Lord promise a child to Abraham, Sarah laughed, for she and Abraham were well past child-bearing age (**cp. Genesis 18:12**). They were both humanly sterile.
2. Sarah considered the matter: who it was that was making the promise, God Himself, the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. When Sarah considered this,

the change in her was dramatic: if it was God who was making the promise, then God could be *counted (judged)* faithful. God always fulfills His promises. God could do it no matter how difficult the situation was... Sarah believed God... She trusted the promise of God. Therefore, she bore a child at the age of ninety. It was a miraculous birth, but God had promised, and He fulfilled His promise. (See Matt. 19:26; Mark 9:23, 14:36; Luke 1:37; Job 42:2; Psalm 31:19, 37:5, 62:11; Prov. 3:5; Isa. 26:4)

#### K. (11:12) Sarah— Faith:

**Hebrews 11:12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.**

Sarah's faith was rewarded. She received the promised son and nation through her seed. This refers to two rewards:

1. the gift of *the seed Isaac* and of the nation of Israel.
2. the gift of *the seed Christ* and of the nation of believers, of the new creation of *born again* men and women, those who shall be citizens of God's new heavens and earth...

Sarah believed the impossible, and God rewarded her faith: she *received* the impossible. Look at Israel. Israel exists today because Sarah believed the impossible promise of God. Look at the believers around the world, those who profess to be born again by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins. They exist today because Sarah believed the impossible promise of God. (See John 3:3, 5-7; 2Cor. 5:17; 1Peter 1:23; 1John 5:1; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 3:29)

#### L. (11:13-15) Patriarchs— Faith— Pilgrimage:

**Hebrews 11:13-15 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. <sup>14</sup> For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. <sup>15</sup> And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.**



...The word patriarch refers to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other ancient men who had great faith in God and His promises. ...These all died believing what God had promised and not a single one of them ever received the promise on earth... Note four points.

1. Their faith was a ***visionary faith***. They saw the promises of God afar off, not by sight but in their hearts and minds. What was the promise? It was the promise...
  - a. of a country (**Hebrews 11:14**).
  - b. of a better country, a heavenly world (**Hebrews 11:16**). Christ Jesus even said that Abraham saw His day and rejoiced in the hope of it (**cp. John 8:56**).
2. Their faith was a ***growing faith***.
  - a. They saw the promise of God and were thankful to God for the privilege of seeing it.
  - b. They were persuaded of the promises of God. They believed that the promises were true, that there was a promised land and that God was going to give it to them...
  - c. They embraced (*aspasamenoi*) the promises. The word means to greet and welcome... They rejoiced and loved the promise, setting their eyes upon it and not looking away.
  - d. They confessed that they were only strangers and pilgrims upon earth, just passing through until they could inherit the glorious hope of the promised land...
3. Their faith was a ***working faith***. They actively sought after the promised land and declared the fact to all...

The early believers actively sought after the promised land. They got up and went looking for it, leaving the world and its possessions behind. By their separation from the world and seeking after God's promises, they declared plainly that they were men and women of true faith.

4. Their faith was an ***enduring faith***. They never returned to the country they had left. They had separated from the world and began a search for the promised land of God and they stayed on the search...  
(See **Rom. 4:21, 8:38-39; 2Tim. 1:12; Phil. 3:20-21; Heb. 11:13, 13:14; 1Chron. 29:15; Psalm 39:12, 119:19**)

#### **M.(11:16) Faith— Reward:**

**Hebrews 11:16 But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.**

The reward of the patriarchs. Their reward was twofold.

1. They received God's approval. God is not ashamed to be called their God. (See **John 3:16; Rom. 14:8; Phil. 1:21; Heb. 11:13; Rev. 14:13; Acts 10:35; 2Cor. 5:6-10, 6:17-18; Eph. 1:6-7; Exo. 19:5**)
2. They received the promised land. God prepared a city for them, a heavenly city that will last forever and ever. (See **Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:10, 11:16, 12:22, 13:14; 2Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-4, 21:10, 22:14, 19**)

#### **N. (11:17-19) Abraham— Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:17-19 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,<sup>18</sup> Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:<sup>19</sup> Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.**

Abraham's faith was a faith that obeyed God regardless of cost. This demand made upon Abraham was the supreme act of faith (**cp. Genesis 22:1-18; Heb. 11:17-19**).

Note two significant points.

1. God's unbelievable command. God commanded Abraham to take Isaac and to offer him up as a sacrifice to Him. To say the least this was a most unusual command, that is, God commanding that a human sacrifice be made to Him...

What was God doing? We can say several things.

- a. God was testing the faith of Abraham in the most supreme way possible. We must always remember that God had made the supreme promises to Abraham:
  - The supreme promise of the *seed* of the Savior...

- The supreme hope of the promised land, ...dwelling in the presence of God, ...and the inheritance was to be for eternity.
- The supreme promise of an unlimited nation of people... forever.
- The supreme promise of being a blessing to all the nations of the world, an eternal blessing.

A man who had received the supreme promises of God had to be tested in the most supreme way possible... All the promises of God to him were wrapped up in Isaac. What an unbelievable faith Abraham had!

- b. God was using the offering of Isaac as a sacrifice to symbolize the offering up of God's only Son as the sacrifice for man's sins. God was also using Abraham's faith that God could raise up the dead to proclaim that man must believe *that God can raise the dead...* (See **John 1:29, 15:13; Rom. 5:6; 1Cor. 15:3-5; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14; 1Peter 1:18-19; 1John 3:16; Rev. 1:5**)
- c. God was also teaching that man must trust God to the ultimate degree. Man must be willing to sacrifice the thing he loves the most and holds dearest to his heart...

- 2. Abraham's great faith was the ultimate faith. Abraham considered and thought through the demand of God. He knew God was God; therefore...
  - a. he knew that God gave no foolish commands.
  - b. he knew that God could stop him anywhere along the road to the mountain where he was to sacrifice Isaac, and if not, then God could raise Isaac from the dead.
  - c. he knew that God never broke His promises and that God could not fulfill His promises without Isaac.

Abraham counted God trustworthy—true and faithful to His promise. Therefore, he stepped out to follow God supremely. (See **Matt. 19:26; Mark 9:23; Luke 1:37; John 5:24; Gal. 3:6; Heb. 11:6; James 2:17; Psalm 62:11, 115:3**)

#### O. (11:20) Isaac— Faith:

**Hebrews 11:20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.**

Isaac's faith was a faith that believed in the things to come despite sin (**Genesis 27:1-40**). Isaac believed that God would fulfill His promises through his sons, fulfill His promises despite the selfishness and conniving deception of his sons.

Jacob was the younger son who stuck closer to his mother. He was somewhat of a homebody. Esau was Isaac's older son, a true outdoorsman just like Isaac. Therefore, Isaac preferred Esau. He wanted Esau to receive the greater blessing of God, in particular he wanted Esau to be *the seed* through whom God would fulfill His promise of a promised land and of a nation of people.

Isaac was aged and blind when he was ready to pass the blessing on to his sons. Now note several facts.

- God had told Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, that Jacob was to be the one who was to receive the blessing; the older son was to serve the younger. (**See Gen. 25:23**)
- Isaac was reluctant to obey God. In fact, he did not want to obey God; he preferred Esau. When it came time to pass the blessings of God's promise on to his son, Isaac planned to ignore God's will and bless Esau. (**See Gen. 27:1-4**)
- Rebekah overheard Isaac's plans to ignore and bypass God's will. Therefore, she plotted with Jacob to deceive Isaac and have him pass the blessing on to Jacob... (**See Gen. 27:22-29**)
- Isaac refused to reverse the blessing when the deception was discovered. In the final analysis, he repented. He turned away from his own desires and did God's will. (**See Gen. 27:33**)

...In the end, Isaac repented: he believed God and he did God's will. He could have easily reversed his blessing, but he refused. He had reached the point where he knew that God's will had to be done. Therefore, he repented and turned from his own will to the will of God.

He never saw the promises fulfilled, not during his life upon this earth. He was only a pilgrim and sojourner on earth, never seeing the *promised land*. But he believed and held firm to his belief—so firm that he passed the blessing of God's promises down through his son Jacob. Isaac died, but he died as a man of faith, as a man who repented and did God's will. (**See Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19, 8:22, 17:30; 2Chron. 7:14; Isa. 55:7; Ezek. 18:21**)

**P. (11:21) Jacob— Faith:** Jacob's faith was a faith that believed God's promises and worshipped despite death. The story in the Old Testament is as follows:

**Hebrews 11:21** **By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning upon the top of his staff.***

(See also: **Genesis 48:1-6, 13-16**).

Note three significant facts.

1. Jacob was dying when this event took place. He had lived a long life upon earth.
2. Jacob blessed both of the sons of Joseph; that is, he passed on the promises of God to them. He gave them an inheritance in the *land of promise* and in the *promised seed*. They had been born in Egypt; nevertheless, he passed the blessing of the promise down through them.
3. Jacob worshipped while he was dying, worshipped leaning upon his staff. The idea is that he was weak and frail, almost bedridden, finding it difficult to walk and move about. But he continued to arise and worship God, believing in the *promised land* and *promised seed* up until the very end.

The point is striking. Here was a man who never saw the promised land given to him. In fact, he saw the reverse. He and his family were forced out of Canaan (Palestine) and into Egypt because of famine. Yet, he continued to worship God, ever believing and passing on God's promises—even up to the very end, the end of death itself. (See **Acts 27:25; Heb. 11:6; James 2:17; Psalm 34:22, 37:3, 5; Prov. 3:5; Isa. 26:3-4**)

**Q. (11:22) Joseph— Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:22** **By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.**

Joseph's faith was faith that believed despite adverse circumstances. If ever a person should have lost faith, it was Joseph.

1. As a young man, he had been sold as a slave into Egypt, and note: it was his own brothers who had sold him (**Genesis 37:23f**).

2. While a slave, he was falsely accused by his master's wife of trying to seduce her. He had rejected her advances, choosing to follow God in living righteously rather than to enjoy the fruits of sin for a season (**Genesis 39:7**).
3. He suffered imprisonment because the wife falsely charged him with assault. He suffered a long imprisonment for living righteously (**Genesis 39:14f**).
4. He lived righteously and ministered to people in prison even when they ignored, neglected, and forgot him (**Genesis 40:14f**).

The point to note is this: Joseph never lost his faith in the promises of God. He believed and followed God no matter the circumstances and no matter what it cost him. He was a man of God in a foreign land, a man who demonstrated an undying faith.

#### **R. (11:22) Joseph— Faith:**

Joseph had a faith that acted despite the impossible. This was Joseph's great act of faith. After so many years in a foreign land, he still proclaimed the great promise of God: he believed beyond question that God was going to fulfill His promises:

1. He believed that God had chosen his family to be the *promised seed*.
2. He believed that God was going to give the *promised land* to his family.

Joseph was dying in a foreign land with his family finally settled and rooted in the land of Goshen, Egypt. Yet he believed the impossible: that God would be moving his family back to Palestine and eventually give them the promised land. Therefore, he commanded that his bones be taken back when the nation of his family returned to the land. Joseph's faith was an undying faith. His body was dying, but not his faith in God and in God's promises. He knew that he would rest in the promised land of God. (**See Matt. 10:22; Rom. 14:8; Gal. 6:8; Heb. 11:13; James 1:21; 2Peter 3:9; Rev. 14:13; Psalm 23:4, 116:15; Prov. 14:32**)

#### **S. (11:23) Faith— Moses, Parents of:**

**Hebrews 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was a proper child*; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.**

The parents of Moses had a faith that obeyed their hearts. What happened was this. Generation after generation had passed since Joseph, Jacob, and his sons had gone down to Egypt and settled in the land of Goshen, Egypt. The people, the Israelites, had reproduced so much that they had become a large nation of people, so large that the new king of Egypt felt threatened by them. This was when Israel became slaves to the Egyptians. The king, who did not know Joseph, took the initial step of enslaving them, thinking that he could slow down their reproduction through slavery (**Exodus 1:8**). However, the children of Israel continued to multiply rather rapidly, and the king felt more and more threatened. Finally, he decided to wipe them out by having all newborn sons killed at birth. This cruel plot was made the law of the land (**cp. Exodus 1:21-22**).

This is the background of what led Moses' parents to do what they did. Unquestionably, they loved God and loved their newborn child whom they named Moses. Their action shows this.

Kenneth Wuest points out that the word **"proper"** (*asteion*) means "comely to God." Wuest says, **"he was comely with respect to God"** (*Hebrews*, Vol. 2, p.205). That is, God had His hand upon Moses, and apparently his parents realized it.

One thing is sure: the parents knew that if all the male children were killed, then the *promised seed* and *promised land* of God could never be fulfilled. It is this that lies behind their saving Moses. They loved their child, yes, but they also loved God. It was their love for both their son and God that made them do what they did. Their love stirred them to believe that God would preserve their son and use him to fulfill God's promise of an eternal seed and eternal land for His people. (**See Matt. 22:37; 1John 4:16; Jude 21; Deut. 6:5, 10:12**)

**T. (11:23) Faith— Moses, Parents of:** The parents of Moses had a faith that was fearless despite opposition. ...It was the law of the land that all newborn male children were to be killed at birth. Failure to obey the law most likely meant death to the law-breaker... But note what this verse says: **"they were not afraid of the the king's commandment."** ...They knew they had to risk their lives in order to save their son and the promised seed and land of God. (**See Heb. 11:6; James 1:5-6, 2:1; 1John 5:4-5; Psalm 34:22, 37:5, 118:8; Prov. 3:5, 29:15; Isa. 26:4**)

#### U. (11:24-25) Moses— Faith:

**Hebrews 11:24-25** By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; <sup>25</sup> Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

First, the faith of Moses was a sacrificial faith, a faith that chose God and God's people rather than this world and its pleasures... Moses was reared as a prince in Pharaoh's court. Jewish tradition even says that his daughter was the only child Pharaoh had and that she herself was childless. If this is accurate, it means that Moses was, as tradition says, the heir to the throne of Egypt (Thomas Hewitt. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.180 and Matthew Henry. *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p.947). In either case, Moses was a prince, the son of the daughter of Pharaoh. He had everything that a person on earth could ever want...But Moses gave it all up. He sacrificed everything for God and His promises, the *promised seed* and *promised land*... When Moses was forty years old, he faced the crisis and made the decision (**Acts 7:23**). In the words of Scripture:

**Exodus 2:11-12** "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand".

The point is this: Moses gave up all the pleasures and enjoyment of Egypt and the world—gave it all up. He sacrificed everything for God and His people, the very people who had been given the hope for *the promised seed* and *the promised land*. As these two verses of Hebrews say:

**(Hebrews 11:24-25, Amplified New Testament)** "[Aroused] by faith Moses, when he had grown to maturity and become great, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, because he preferred rather to share the oppression (suffer the hardships) and bear the shame of the people of God than to have the fleeting enjoyment of a sinful life".

(See Matt. 16:24-25, 19:21; Luke 14:33; 1Cor. 10:24; Rom. 8:13, 15:1)

#### V. (11:26) Moses— Faith:



**Hebrews 11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.**

Second, the faith of Moses was an expectant faith, a faith that looked to the reward. Moses believed in the promises which God had given to Abraham and his people, the promised seed and the promised land... The word **"esteeming"** means that he considered and thought about the matter; he made a deliberate decision to suffer with his people and to inherit the promises God had made to them rather than to enjoy the riches of Egypt. (See Heb. 11:26; Matt. 5:11, 10:42; 2Tim. 2:12; Heb. 10:34, 11:36)

**W.(11:27) Moses— Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.**

Third, the faith of Moses was an enduring faith, a faith that courageously looked to God rather than to men. This event is recorded in Exodus.

**Exodus 2:13-15 "And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known".**

Note: it seems that Moses fled because he feared Pharaoh; however, Hebrews says that he "forsook Egypt; not fearing the wrath of the king." Is this a contradiction? No, the answer is given in Acts:

**Acts 7:23-25 "And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not".**

This shows that Moses had apparently thought and known for years that he was to be the deliverer of Israel. It is highly probable that his own mother had taught him this when Pharaoh's daughter unknowingly made her the nurse to Moses (**Exodus 2:6-8**)... Nevertheless, he knew that God's will and purpose was for him to deliver his people. Note: **Acts 7:25** says that Moses

was planning to lead Israel in a rebellion against Egypt to free God's people. He did not fear Pharaoh; Moses was loaded with courage. However, when the people refused to follow him, he was left alone. He had to fear—fear in the sense of wisdom and discretion, not despondency and hopelessness. He had to fear in order to save his life. The point is this: Moses sensed and knew his mission upon earth—that he was to free Israel in God's time. The people would not follow him then, but he believed that God would arouse the people to follow him in due time. As we find out, he kept on believing and endured in his belief for another forty years (**Acts 7:30**).

(See **1Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:9; Heb. 4:14-16; 10:23; 1Peter 1:13; Rev. 3:11**)

#### **X. (11:28) Moses— Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.**

Fourth, the faith of Moses was a saving faith, a faith that believed God's message of salvation. This verse refers to the great day of deliverance and salvation for Israel, *from Egypt (added text)*...

Symbolically, the Passover pictured the coming of Jesus Christ as the Savior. The lamb without blemish pictured His sinless life, and the blood sprinkled on the door posts pictured His blood shed for the believer (**Exodus 12:5; cp. John 1:29**)... Moses never doubted that God would fulfill His promises, that He would give to Israel the *promised seed* and the *promised land*. (See **Rom. 5:9, 10:13; Eph. 2:8; Heb. 9:22; 1Peter 1:18-19**)

#### **Y. (11:29) Israel— Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.**

Israel's faith was a faith that obeyed God against insurmountable forces. The forces confronting Israel were threefold:

1. the pursuing army of the Egyptians.
2. the Red Sea in front and the mountain ranges on both sides.
3. their own murmuring and unbelief.

The people were ever so frightened... There was no chance that the Egyptian army would have taken any live prisoners because Egypt had lost all their firstborn sons to the death-angel... The odds were insurmountable unless God stepped in and delivered them. Moses, God's leader, was aroused to believe God. He stepped forward and shouted to the people:

**Exodus 14:13-14 "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace".**

The salvation of the Lord was being proclaimed, and that message stirred faith in the hearts of the people... Imagine the scene: two towering walls of water with a stretch of dry land running down between them. But the people's salvation was on the other side. If they could reach there, they were safe... Now they were beholding the power of God to remove the insurmountable odds. He had actually rolled the sea back and made a road of *dry land* for them to march across to safety...

What a clear picture of salvation for people today! No matter the odds, God will overcome the odds and save us if we will only believe and begin to march forth following Christ, even as God commands. (See **Matt. 21:21; 1Cor. 10:13; 2Cor. 1:10; 2Tim. 4:18; Heb. 2:14-15; 2Peter 2:9; Psalm 28:7, 40:17**)

**Z. (11:30) Israel— Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.**

Israel's faith was a conquering faith. This is the story of Joshua leading the people of Israel against Jericho (**Joshua 6:1-20**). The fall of the walls of Jericho is a well-known story... Humanly speaking, the task was utterly impossible. Their only hope was God, and God was willing to give them victory over their enemies. It was just a matter of whether or not they would believe and trust God for victory.

God said that if the people...believed His instructions and His promise—the walls of Jericho would fall down... The point to see is the strong faith in God and in His instructions and promise. The people clearly trusted

God to conquer their enemies for them. And He did. He conquered the enemies because the people believed His instructions and promise.

God will conquer the enemies of any person if the person will just believe the instructions and promise of God. The instruction may seem unreasonable and appear foolish to the world... But if a person will go ahead and do what God says, God will conquer his enemies even as He did for Jericho. (See **Rom. 8:31-39; 2Cor. 2:14; Heb. 2:14-15; 1John 5:4-5; Psalm 44:5; Rom. 16:20; 1Cor. 10:13; James 4:7; Rev. 3:21**)

**AA. (11:31) Rahab— Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.**

1. The faith of Rahab was a faith that believed in the God of Israel (cp. **Joshua 2:1-21; Joshua 6:17, 22-23, 25; Matthew 1:5; James 2:25**). She was a harlot and a Canaanite, a woman who was the furthest thing from being a follower of God, but she experienced a phenomenal conversion and she became a strong believer.
2. The faith of Rahab was a faith that saved her and her family. Rahab asked the two *spies for Israel* (*added text*) to save her and her family when they attacked the city. (**Joshua 2:12-21**)
3. Note: it was seeing the scarlet (red) thread that was to save Rahab. Also note that Rahab demanded that the men **"swear to her by the Lord."** She strongly believed that Israel would conquer Jericho despite the impossible odds against them. She believed in the God of Israel: that God was going to give Israel the promised land. And most important of all, she believed that her life and salvation rested with the Israelites, that is, with the God of Israel. She believed that the God of Israel could and would save her. (See also: **John 3:15-16, 3:36, 5:24, 6:40, 11:25, 12:46, 20:31; Rom. 10:9-10; 2Tim. 3:15**)

**BB.(11:32) Faith— Hall of Fame:**

**Hebrews 11:32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:**

...The faith of believers in general is discussed in the next few verses (**Hebrews 11:35-40**). These particular leaders were true heroes of the faith.

1. There was the faith of **Gideon (Judges 6:11f)**... The point is this: Gideon was an outstanding leader because of his great faith. Even before he launched the great campaign against the Medianites, he cried out to his three hundred hand-picked men: "**Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian**" (**Judges 7:15**).
2. There was the heroic faith of **Barak (Judges 4-5)**. When the call of God came to Barak to save Israel, the Canaanites had been attacking and oppressing Israel for twenty years... Barak had a heroic faith in God. He did not act without God. He believed God, and because he believed, God gave him the victory.
3. There was the heroic faith of **Samson (Judges 13-16)**. The angel of the Lord appeared to the mother of Samson and told her that she was to bear a son who was to save Israel from the Philistines... The point to note about Samson's life is this: despite Samson's life-long weakness of passion, when the time came, he alone believed God; he alone was available for God to use. Samson was sometimes weak and passionate, but all others were even weaker and had less if any faith. Samson alone was available to believe and trust God. He was a man of heroic faith.
4. There was the heroic faith of **Jephthah (Judges 11:1-12:7)**. Jephthah was called by God to save Israel from the Ammonites... The point to see is that Jephthah was a man of unusual faith and trust in God despite being rejected by his family and townsfolk. He was also a man of great humility who humbled himself to help save and rule the people in their great crisis. Jephthah was a man of heroic faith.
5. There was the heroic faith of **David (1 Samuel 16:1f)**. As the writer to Hebrews says, "**Time would fail me to tell...of David**" (**Hebrews 11:32**). David was unquestionably one of the greatest men of heroic faith who has ever lived... The whole life of David is a challenging example of heroic faith to believers of every generation. Just think of the Psalms, how meaningful they are to us all. David wrote approximately 73 of the Psalms. He was also one of the ancestors of Christ (**Matthew 1:1**). There was the heroic faith of Samuel (1-2 Samuel). Samuel was both a judge and prophet of Israel. God called Samuel when he was only a young

child, and Samuel followed the Lord all through his life.

6. There was the heroic faith of **the prophets**. They were all men who sensed their unworthiness before God but who answered God's call. They faced every imaginable trial that can be thrown against a man by a wicked and sinful people. But despite all, they stood for righteousness and proclaimed the message of God, a message of hope for those who would repent and a message of judgment for those who continued to live wicked and evil lives. They were men who stood almost alone in facing generation after generation of unbelief and rebellion against God. They were men of heroic faith.

**CC. (11:33-34) Faith, Reward:** there was the reward of heroic faith.

**Hebrews 11:33-34 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens.**

1. Heroic faith subdued kingdoms... The point is this: true faith in God will stir God to give the victory over all enemies, no matter how formidable. (See **Psalm 44:5; Prov. 14:34; Rom. 8:28, 35, 37; 1Cor. 10:13; 2Cor. 2:14; 1John 5:4-5; Rev. 2:7, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7**)
2. Heroic faith wrought righteousness... Faith—even if it is the faith of only one person—always stirs others to believe God and to live righteously themselves. (See **Prov. 11:11, 14:34, 16:12, 25:5; Isa. 54:14; Matt. 5:6, 20; 1Cor. 15:34; Eph. 6:14; Phil. 1:11**)
3. Heroic faith obtained promises. God did just what He had promised to each of the leaders above. He always fulfills His promises to everyone who believes Him. (See **Rom. 4:20-21; 2Cor. 1:20, 7:1; 2Peter 1:4; 1John 2:25, 5:14-15**).
4. Heroic faith stopped the mouths of lions. This was true of Samson (**Judges 14:5-6**), David (**1 Samuel 17:34-35**), and Daniel (**Daniel 6:22**). The meaning for believers is this: God has the power to control the animals and nature of this world if believers will trust God. And even more importantly, God will deliver believers from the mouth of the lion which is Satan. (See **1Peter 5:7-9; 2Tim. 4:18; Heb. 2:15; 2Peter 2:9**;

**Heb. 4:15-16, 10:22-23)**

5. Heroic faith quenched the violence of fire. This probably refers to the three Hebrew young men—Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego—who refused to worship the state religion of Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore, they were to be executed by being burned alive. However God saved them... He preserved them and kept the flames of fire from burning them (**Daniel 3:17-27**). (See **2Tim. 4:18; Deut. 6:24; Psalm 31:23, 37:28; Prov. 2:8; Isa. 41:10, 46:4, 49:8**)
6. Heroic faith escaped the edge of the sword. David escaped the sword of Goliath (**1 Samuel 17:49-51**); Elisha escaped the sword of the king of Israel (**1 Kings 6:30-31**). Prophet after prophet was delivered from martyrdom time after time by the power of God. (See **Luke 21:18; 2Tim. 1:12; 1Peter 1:5; Jude 24; Rev. 3:10; 2Chron. 16:9; Psalm 34:7, 91:4, 125:2**)
7. Heroic faith brings strength out of weakness. Every one of the leaders above sensed unworthiness and weakness in serving God, but God strengthened them to conquer all the enemies and forces that stood against them. (See **Isa. 6:5; Jer. 1:6; 1Cor. 1:27; 2Cor. 12:9-10**)
8. Heroic faith grows valiant in fight. True faith develops and stirs courage and strength. The person who truly believes in God knows that God is with him. He is actually stirred to fight and fight, even against unbelievable odds. (See **2Sam. 22:33, 35; Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:6, 10:25, 23:5-10; 1Chron. 19:13, 22:13, 28:20; Psalm 3:6, 27:3, 91:5, 118:6; Prov. 3:24; Isa. 12:2**)

**DD. (11:35-38) Faith— Endurance:**

**Hebrews 11:35-38 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: <sup>36</sup> And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: <sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; <sup>38</sup> (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.**



There was the enduring faith of believers. Note: no names are mentioned in these verses. As **Hebrews 11:35** indicates, they were the women and men of everyday life who were not necessarily leaders, but who had one distinctive trait: they believed God and their faith in God was strong... The word "**tortured**" (*etumpanisthēsan*) means to beat or club to death or else to be put on the rack in order to make a person deny Christ. These dear believers suffered martyrdom for the name of Christ... No matter the circumstance, difficulty, threat, injury, pain, torture, or form of execution and death, they endured and held fast to their faith and profession in God. (See **Matt. 5:11, 10:22, 19:29; 2Cor. 4:11; Phil. 1:29; James 5:10; John 15:18-19, 22; 2Tim. 3:12; John 15:20-21, 16:1-4; 1Thes. 3:3; 1John 3:13; 1Peter 4:12-14**)

**EE. (11:39-40) Faith— Reward:** there was the reward of enduring faith.

**Hebrews 11:39-40 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: <sup>40</sup> God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.**

The reward was twofold.

1. All the believers of the Old Testament obtained a good report and testimony... Their faith was the light of the world; their lives pointed men to God, and their testimonies still do... (See **Rom. 1:8, 16:19; Heb. 11:2**)
2. They had the glorious hope of the *promised land and the promised seed* (*Christ*)... They never saw Christ born, crucified, resurrected, and exalted to the right hand of God the Father.

But this is not true with us: we know. Christ has come; He has died and been resurrected and exalted to make all believers perfect and presentable to God the Father. The Old Testament believers looked forward to the Messiah; we look back upon Him... (See **John 3:16-17; Rom. 5:1, 4:13-14; Gal. 3:29; Heb. 11:8-10, 13-14, 16, 12:22, 13:14; 2Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1**)

**END OF LESSON 12**

**QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 12**



1. The key to greatness with God is:

- A. giving lots of money
- B. faith**
- C. becoming a pastor
- D. winning people to Jesus

2. T or F Faith has the power to be counted as righteousness.

3. T or F It is impossible to please God without faith.

4. It is impossible to please God without:

- A. winning someone to faith in Christ
- B. becoming a missionary
- C. giving beyond our tithe
- D. faith**

5. Which of the following was **not** a part of Noah's reward:

- A. His family was saved.
- B. He withdrew his money from the bank before the flood.**
- C. His faith was vindicated in that the world was condemned.
- D. He was counted righteous.

## **BEGIN LESSON 13**

### **XII. Stay In The Running! Hebrews 12**

#### **A. (12:1) Christian Race:**

**Hebrews 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,**

There is the inspiration of the Christian race—a great cloud of witnesses... The scene is a great coliseum filled to capacity with spectators ("**great cloud**"). The race is about to begin. Two quick exhortations are given: get

rid of all excess weight and clinging entanglements and run and run and keep on running—enduring to the end. As you run, remember Jesus (**Hebrews 12:2**). He formerly participated, and He participated for the joy of winning. He disciplined Himself, endured to the point of death. And He received His reward.

The point is this: a great cloud of witnesses surrounds and envelops us—witnesses who believed God and stood fast for God—stood fast against all kinds of trials, temptations, and opposition. Their great faith and endurance should stir and inspire us to believe and to endure in our belief. They never buckled or crumbled in their faith.

- They endured against great temptation
- They endured against great trials
- They endured against all opposition

Again, the point is this: their faith and their endurance should stir and inspire us to believe God and to run holding fast to our belief.

*(RevC) The illustration of Roger Bannister breaking the 4-minute mile and then the numbers who did also shortly thereafter due to his “witness” that it was possible is an excellent illustration of this point:* Remembering what others have achieved can play an important role in helping us to accomplish what others don’t. Take for example the goal of breaking the 4-minute mile run. People had been trying to achieve this feat since the days of the early Greek and Roman athletes. Folk stories tell of **the Greeks setting lions loose to chase the runners** thinking it would make them run faster. They even tried **drinking tiger’s milk to make them stronger**. Nothing they tried worked. **They decided it was impossible** for a human to run the mile in 4 minutes or less. **For more than a thousand years everyone accepted this assumption** stating that man’s bone structure was all wrong, our lungs were inadequate, and wind resistance was too great.

Then one man, Roger Bannister, on **May 6, 1954** proved that the doctors, trainers, and hundreds of thousands of previous athletes who had tried and failed were wrong when he ran the mile in 3:59.4. His feat was all it took to spur others on to the same goal. **The next year 37 others broke the 4-minute mile. The year after that 300 broke the record. And just a few years ago all 13 runners in a mile race held in NY broke the 4-minute barrier.** (RevC)

## B. (12:1) Christian Race— Endurance— Sin:

There are the required disciplines of the Christian race. They are twofold.

1. We must lay aside every weight and lay aside the sin that so easily traps us. The words **"lay aside"** (*apothemenoi*) mean to take off, strip off and to remove as in taking off clothes.
  - a. The Christian runner must strip off **"every weight"** (*ogkon panta*). ...This refers to things that may be legitimate and innocent in and of themselves, but they hinder the Christian runner. They hamper and slow him down instead of helping him run faster. What kind of things would these be? ...Anything that does not build us up and make us stronger is excess weight that slows us down. (See **Matt. 19:21-22; Luke 9:57-62; Heb. 12:1; Gen. 19:26**)
  - b. The Christian runner must strip off the sin which so easily trips or besets him. The words **"easily besets"** (*euperistaton*) mean the sin which clings, distracts, entangles, and trips up the Christian runner. ...The exhortation speaks strongly to every believer and to the *particular sin* that entangles and throws the believer... what is it that consumes my energy and keeps me from following God fully and wholly—that trips me up far, far too often... (See **Job 11:14; Isa. 55:7; Eph. 4:22; Heb. 12:1; 1Peter 2:11; Rom. 6:12; 1Cor. 15:34; 1John 2:1-2; Isa. 1:16**)
2. We must run with **patience** (*hupomonē*). The word means endurance, fortitude, steadfastness, constancy, perseverance. The word *patience* is not passive; it is active. It is not the spirit that just sits back and puts up with the trials of life, taking whatever may come. Rather it is the spirit that stands up and faces the trials of life, that actively goes about conquering and overcoming them... (See **Luke 21:19; Rom. 12:12; Heb. 10:36; James 1:2-4, 5:7**)

## C. (12:2) Christian Race— Jesus Christ:

**Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

...The word **"looking"** (*aphorōntes*) means to fix your eyes upon Jesus. It also means to fix your mind upon Him (Kenneth Wuest. *Hebrews*, Vol. 2, p.214). The Christian runner is to focus his eyes and mind upon Jesus Christ.

Why? Because Jesus Christ Himself ran the race of faith when He was upon earth, and He shows us exactly how to run it. We should remember four things about the race He ran.

1. Jesus Christ participated in the race Himself; He actually ran the race of faith. In fact, He is the very Author and Finisher of faith.
  - a. The Author (*ton archēgon*) means that He authored, began, originated, created, and gave birth to the Christian race.
  - b. The Finisher (*teleiōtēn*) means that He perfected, completed, and consummated the race. He ran the race to the finish.  
...The believer is always to be looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of faith. (See **Heb. 3:1, 12:2; 1Peter 2:21**)
2. Jesus Christ had a great inspiration: the joy that was set before Him.  
...There are many ways to express the joy that was set before Christ, but the thing to see is that it was the joy of redemption—of God's very purpose for the world—that stirred and motivated Christ to come to earth and author salvation for man. (See **Luke 10:21, 15:5; John 15:11, 17:13; Rom. 14:17; Heb. 12:2**)
3. Jesus Christ is the supreme example in discipline: He followed the rules of the race even to the point of dying in order to create the race. He obeyed God perfectly. ...We should endure in believing and obeying God no matter the cost or price we have to pay, even if it means martyrdom. (See **John 10:11; Rom. 5:6; 1Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:4, 3:13; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 2:9; 1Peter 2:24, 3:18**)
4. Jesus Christ is the supreme example of receiving the reward of faith. He was exalted to the right hand of the throne of God. (**Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:36; Eph. 1:20, 22; Phil. 2:9; 1Peter 3:22; Rev. 5:12**)

#### **D. (12:3) Christian Race— Jesus Christ:**

**Hebrews 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.**

There is the controlling factor of the Christian race—keeping or staying one's mind on the endurance of Jesus Christ. The word "**consider**" (*analogizomai*) means to compare, reckon, count up, weigh. Christ endured so much more than we have to endure... Jesus bore *all this*:

1. being born to an unwed mother (**Matthew 1:18-19**).
2. being born in a stable, the worst of conditions (**Luke 2:7**).
3. being born to poor parents (**Luke 2:24**).
4. having his life threatened as a baby (**Matthew 2:13f**).
5. being the cause of unimaginable sorrow (**Matthew 2:16f**).
6. having to be moved and shifted as a baby (**Matthew 2:13f**).
7. being reared in a despicable place, Nazareth (**Luke 2:39**).
8. having His father die during His youth
9. having to support His mother and brothers and sisters
10. having no home, not even a place to lay His head (**Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58**).
11. being hated and opposed by religionists (**Mark 14:1-2**).
12. being charged with insanity (**Mark 3:21**).
13. being charged with demon possession (**Mark 3:22**).
14. being opposed by His own family (**Mark 3:31-32**).
15. being rejected, hated, and opposed by audiences to whom He spoke (**Matthew 13:53-58; Luke 4:28-29**).
16. being betrayed by a close friend (**Mark 14:10-11, 18**).
17. being left alone, rejected, and forsaken by all His friends (**Mark 14:50**).
18. being tried before the high court of the land on the charge of treason (**John 18:33**).
19. being executed by crucifixion, the worst possible death (**John 19:16f**).

Note why we should compare our sufferings with the suffering of Christ. It keeps us from becoming *weary*, ...and relaxing when we should be working; and it also keeps us from *fainting in our minds*, that is, ...from drawing back and giving up. (See **Matt. 10:22, 11:29; Gal. 5:7, 6:6; Eph. 6:10-12; Phil. 3:14; 2Tim. 4:7; 1Peter 1:13, 2:19**)

#### **E. (12:4) Christian Race— Jesus Christ:**

**Hebrews 12:4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.**

There is the great demand of the Christian race—to resist temptation even to the point of blood. This is the picture of Christ's ordeal in Gethesmane and upon the cross. He struggled against the temptation to choose some other way other than the cross, but He endured to the point of blood in both experiences (**cp. Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-53; 1Cor. 9:25, 10:13; 2Tim 4:6-8; Heb. 12:4; James 1:12; 1Peter 1:6-7**).

**F. (12:5-13) Introduction— Discipline, of God— Chastisement:** God disciplines believers. He chastens, corrects, and rebukes believers. But we must always remember this: **"God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man"** (James 1:13). God does not cause temptation, sin, devastation, destruction, accident, sickness, death, sufferings, trials, trouble, and problems in people's lives. These things are caused by man's own sinful and selfish lusts and the corruptible world in which he lives, and by that arch-enemy of the spiritual world, Satan. God does not cause bad and evil in life. God loves man and loves this world. Therefore, God's concern is not to cause problems and pain for us; His concern is to deliver us through all the trouble and pain on earth and to save us for heaven and eternity. How does God do this? By chastising us. What does **chastising** (*paideuei*) mean? When we think of chastisement, we usually think of discipline and correction and it does mean this. But it also means to train and teach and instruct a person. Both meanings are included in the Biblical word *chastisement* (cp. A.T. Robertson. ***Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5, p.435**).

God does two things with us:

1. First, when we face some trial and sin in life, God stirs us to stand fast and to conquer the trial or to turn away from the sin. He guides, directs, teaches, trains, and instructs us all along the way, making us stronger and stronger in life and drawing us closer and closer to Him. God does not want the trials and sins of life to defeat and engulf us; He wants them to strengthen us. He wants to use them to discipline and teach us more and more endurance, and wants to teach us to trust and depend upon Him more and more. But note this: we have to let God work in our hearts and use the trials to strengthen us. We cannot wallow around in self-pity or react against the trials and problems that attack us. We must turn to God—truly turn to God—and ask Him for help and strength and let Him help us.

An illustration is this. A small innocent baby who is crippled in an automobile accident by a drunkard is not being chastised or corrected by God. The child has done nothing for which to be chastised. The child is crippled because of a sinful man who followed the path of Satan. He is crippled because he lives in a corruptible world. God loves the child, and God will look after the child as the child grows if the child will look to

God for help...

2. Second, when we fail and cave in to the trial and sin, God lets us reap what we have sown. We bear the results of our sin, but even during sin and failure, God loves us. He loves and works with us, convicting us by His Spirit to repent. He then uses the suffering of the sin to stir us to think of Him and our failure. God takes the sufferings that are caused by trials and sins and uses them to correct and discipline us. This is the key statement, and it is what we must always remember when dealing with all the bad and evil things upon earth. God does not cause them; we cause them, and the corruptible world in which we live causes them, and the arch-enemy Satan causes them. God loves us and has nothing in mind for us except love and the very best of everything. Therefore, God takes all the bad and evil—all the suffering of bad and evil—and He uses it all to make us think about Him and our failure. He uses the suffering caused by sin and trials to correct and discipline us, to stir us to draw near Him in trust, dependence, and love, and to live like we should.

**G. (12:5-7) Discipline, Of God— Chastisement:** the exhortation concerning discipline is a threefold exhortation (**cp. Proverbs 3:11-12; Proverbs 13:24**).

**Hebrews 12:5-7 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: <sup>6</sup> For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. <sup>7</sup> If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?**

1. First, do not **despise** (*mē oligōrei*) discipline (**Hebrews 12:5**). The word means to scorn; to make little of; to treat lightly... The point is this: we are not to despise the discipline of God—not to scorn it nor take and treat it lightly. We are to heed it. As we do, life will be much easier and stronger and much more triumphant and victorious. (**See 2Chron. 24:19; Jer. 2:30, 5:3, 32:33; Isa. 9:13; Zeph. 3:7, 7:11; Heb. 12:5; Rev. 16:11; Acts 7:51**)
2. Second, do not faint or give up when disciplined (**Hebrews 12:5**). The word **"faint"** (*ekluou*) means to give up; to lose heart; to buckle under; to lose courage; to weaken. The trials and sufferings of this world can



become extremely heavy and painful—sometimes almost too much to bear. The rebuking hand of God that convicts us to repent and to correct our behavior becomes almost unbearable.

In either case, we are not to faint or give up. We are to turn totally to God in trust and dependence, asking for His help and strength... (See **2Cor. 4:1, 4:16; Eph. 3:13; Heb. 12:5; Rev. 2:3; Isa. 43:1-2**)

3. Third, endure the discipline of God (**Hebrews 12:6-7**). Note these verses closely: when God *receives* us as children of His, He disciplines and even scourges or spans us. Why? Because He loves us. God chastens us because we are His sons, that is, His children... The point is this: we are to endure the discipline of God... God is disciplining us, teaching and correcting us because He loves us as our Father. He is disciplining us just as a loving father upon earth disciplines his child. (See **Matt. 10:22; Heb. 12:7; James 1:12, 5:11; 1Peter 2:19**)

#### **H. (12:8-11) Discipline, Of God— Chastisement:**

**Hebrews 12:8-11 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. <sup>9</sup> Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? <sup>10</sup> For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. <sup>11</sup> Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.**

The purposes for discipline are fourfold.

1. God disciplines us to assure us that we are His children (**Hebrews 12:8**). If a person is not disciplined by God, then he knows something: he is not a son of God... (See **2Cor. 6:17-18; Gal. 4:4-6**)

As this verse says (note it carefully), God takes all who are *partakers of His nature*—who are children of His—and teaches, instructs, disciplines, and corrects them... (See **John 1:12; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 4:7; Phil. 2:15; 1John 3:1; Rom. 8:14-16**)



2. God disciplines us to save us and to stir us to truly live (**Hebrews 12:9**). Imagine a world without any discipline, training, instruction, and correction. It would be a world of lawlessness, corruption, evil, devastation, destruction, ruin, and death... The point is this: God's discipline brings more life to man, an abundance of life in this world and an eternal life in the next world... (**See Prov. 11:19, 12:28; Ezek. 20:11, 33:19; Luke 10:27-28**)
3. God disciplines us for our good, to make us partakers of His holiness (**Hebrews 12:10**). Remember: holiness means to be different; to be completely and wholly set apart and separated from imperfection and impurity... Therefore, God is bound to discipline us when we begin to faint under trials and sufferings and when we begin to move toward sin. (**See Lev. 11:45; Luke 1:74-75; 2Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14; 1Peter 1:16; 2Peter 3:11; Romans 12:1-2**).
4. God disciplines us so that we can bear the fruit of peace and righteousness (**Hebrews 12:11**)... The less sin and evil there is, the more peace and righteousness there is. If the sin and evil of anger and division do not exist, then peace and righteousness prevail... The discipline and correction may be grievous and painful to bear at first, but it will bring peace and righteousness if we will only bear it. (**See Matt. 13:23; Eph. 2:14; Co. 1:20, 3:15; Psalm 34:14; Job. 22:21**)

#### **I. (12:12-13) Discipline, Of God— Chastisement:**

**Hebrews 12:12-13 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; <sup>13</sup> And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.**

The believer's duty is threefold.

1. The believer is to lift up his hands and strengthen his buckling knees. This is the picture of a man discouraged and defeated because of the sufferings of trial or sin. Instead of listening to the voice of God's discipline, he has let his shoulders and hands hang low and his knees buckle. This is not to be so with the Christian believer. The believer is to listen to God and His discipline: lift up his hands, strengthen his weak grip and buckling knees. (**See 1Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:10; 2Tim. 2:1; 2Chron. 15:7; Isa. 35:3-4**)

2. The believer is to make straight paths for his feet. He is to follow the straight course of God's discipline. He is to do exactly what God's Spirit is saying to do, and do nothing that the Spirit is not instructing him to do. (See **Luke 9:62; Phil. 3:13; Deut. 5:32; Joshua 1:7; Prov. 4:27; Ezek. 1:12**)
3. The believer must heal whatever is lame. This charge can be saying one of two things: that the believer is to heal any lame part of his own behavior, or that the behavior is to strengthen his weak grip and buckling knees and make straight paths so that he can heal and help other believers who are lame... The believer is to receive the discipline of God so that he can be a dynamic witness for God. (See **Psalm 41:4; Prov. 4:20-22; Isa. 1:5, 53:5; Jer. 3:22, 8:22; Hosea 6:1**)

**J. (12:14) Believer, Duty— Peace— Holiness:**

**Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:**

The great duty of the believer is to follow after peace and holiness. The word "**follow**" (*diokete*) means to run after, chase after, press after, and to pursue. It has the idea of swiftness and endurance—of hotly pursuing and staying after peace and holiness...

1. The believer is to follow after peace (*eirēnēn*) with all men. The fact that he has to follow after peace means that peace is not always possible...

The point is this: the believer is to follow after peace with *all men*—no matter who they are. The very purpose for the believer being on earth is to bring peace between men and God and between men and all other men. Therefore, the believer is to do all he can to live at peace with everyone and to lead others to live in peace...

Now note two significant points that need to be carefully considered by every believer.

- a. The cause of conflict must not arise from a believer. He is to try everything possible to bring about peace and to keep peace (**Romans 12:20; cp. Matthew 5:39-41**). However, this may be impossible because of the wickedness of others or because the control of peace is not within his hands. It is possible that some will not live peaceably...

- b. What is it that determines whether a believer is to turn the **"other cheek"** or to defend himself? For example, Jesus spent His life combating evil and wrong, but He did not always turn the other cheek (**John 18:22-23**); neither did Paul (**Acts 23:2-3**). Paul encouraged the believer not to give license to anyone, and he was strict in the command. For example, he said that if a man did not work because of laziness, he should not eat (**2 Thes. 3:7, 10**).

The governing principle for the believer is clear: **"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good"** (**Romans 12:21**). There are times when an attacker, if allowed to continue in his attack, is encouraged in his evil nature of indulgence and license. If allowed to continue, his evil overcomes the believer—either *within* through bitterness and revenge, or *without* through domination. Thus, a believer is not to sacrifice truth in order to preserve peace. Evil is not to be allowed to overcome truth. (See **Ecc. 10:4; Rom. 12:18, 14:19; Heb. 12:14**)

2. The believer is to follow after **"holiness"** (*hagiasmon*). The word means sanctification, consecration, and separation. It means to be set apart and different. The root meaning of holiness is to be different. The believer, of course, *lives in the world*... However, the believer is *not to be of the world*. He is not to be possessed by the world, enslaved to its pleasures and possessions... He is to be set apart unto God, living for God and serving Him in His great mission... (See **2Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:24; Heb. 12:14; 1Peter 1:15-16; 2Peter 3:11**)

#### K. (12:15-17) Neglect— Warning:

**Hebrews 12:15-17 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; <sup>16</sup> Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. <sup>17</sup> For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.**

The great dangers threatening believers. There are some great dangers that threaten the faith of believers. Therefore, believers must look diligently after themselves and after others. The words **"looking diligently"** (*episkopountes*) mean to be on the watch; to look carefully; to take the oversight of; to see to it. It is of utmost importance, of a critical nature, for

there are dangers. Therefore, be on the lookout and search diligently lest one fall into one of these dangers. There are four great dangers that threaten believers.

1. **There is the danger of falling short of the grace of God** (A.T. Robertson. *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5, p.437). What is the grace of God? It is the favor and kindness of God that saves man... His favor and kindness are given *despite the fact that they are undeserved and unmerited...*

Grace is giving, but it is giving to people who do not deserve the gift. What is the gift that God has given? Jesus Christ. God has given His Son, Jesus Christ, to save men. He did not have to give His Son. God could have wiped man from the face of the earth and condemned him forever to judgment. Man deserved it, but this is God's grace... (See **Rom. 3:24; 2Cor. 8:9; Eph. 1:7, 2:4-5; Rom. 5:6, 8, 10**)

2. **There is the danger of "any root of bitterness."** Note the word *any*. The writer is speaking about any root, any cause that might stir a person to become bitter... Bitterness can be caused by anything or any person who has failed us or brought disappointment and trouble to us in some way... God desires people to live in love, joy, peace, and holiness, not in bitterness. Therefore, the believer must look diligently, must guard against the great danger of bitterness. (See **Acts 8:23; Rom. 3:4; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 12:15; James 3:14**)

3. **There is the danger of becoming a fornicator ( pornos ).** The word is a broad word including all forms of immoral and sexual acts. It is premarital sex and adultery; it is homosexuality and abnormal sex; it is all kinds of sexual vice, whether married or unmarried.

Note another fact as well: immorality is not only committed by the act. A person is guilty of immorality when he looks in order to lust... Imagining and lusting within the mind is the very same as committing the act in the eyes of God. (See **Matt. 5:28; Exo. 20:14; 1Cor. 6:18; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1Thes. 4:3; Job 24:15-19**)

4. **There is the great danger of becoming a profane person.** The word "**profane**" (*bebēlos*) means to be unhallowed and sensual; to be neglectful of spiritual things and a lover of the world and its things. Just

what is meant is illustrated by Esau in the Old Testament (cp. **Genesis 25:28-34; Genesis 27:1-39**)...

The point is this: Esau lost his birthright. He was to be the primary person through whom the great spiritual blessings of God were to come, the promised seed and the promised land. But he was profane: he cared more for his body and flesh, for the desires and lusts, for the pleasures and possessions of this world than he did for the spiritual things of God. Therefore, he lost what was rightfully his, his birthright to the glorious promises of God. And note: he never repented. When he cried before his father, he was crying for the blessing, not for his father and God to forgive him. He was crying in sorrow for his carnal, fleshly nature, not crying because he was making a commitment to follow God and to become spiritually minded. He was crying because of his loss and because he wanted a blessing. (See **Rom. 7:23, 8:5-6; 2Cor. 6:17-18; Phil. 3:18-19; 1Tim. 5:6; 2Tim. 1:4; James 5:5; 1John 2:15-16**)

#### **L. (12:18-21) Covenant, Old— Approach to God:**

**Hebrews 12:18-21 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, <sup>19</sup> And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: <sup>20</sup> (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: <sup>21</sup> And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)**

The first approach to God is the old approach—by the old covenant—by the law. A person can approach God like they did in the Old Testament: he can profess the law and try to keep it in order to be acceptable to God. But remember: God is perfect. Therefore, no person can approach God and be acceptable to God, for no person is perfect. And tragically, no person can become perfect, for imperfection can never become perfection. Once a thing is imperfect, it is imperfect forever.

What, then, can be done? How can a person approach God? Under the old covenant—under the law—two things were done:

1. First, people made sacrificial offerings of animals to God for their sins. The animal sacrifices became a substitute for the people. The animals

bore the guilt and condemnation of the person's sins. If a person believed this, really believed that God counted his sins as being borne by the animal, then God really forgave the person... The point to see now is this: under the old covenant of the law, people approached God through animal sacrifice in order to receive forgiveness of sin.

2. Second, people approached God by following the law and doing good works. They approached God by trying to be as good as they could and by trying to do as much good as they could.

The point is this: when a person approached God by the old covenant of the law, he did not have the full picture of God. His concept of God was inadequate. Note three facts about the approach of the old covenant. Note also that the writer makes his points by sharing what happened at Mt. Sinai when God gave the law to Israel. **(See Exo. 19:16-18)**

- a. The approach of the old covenant (the law) was an *external, material approach* to God. The people had approached God to receive His Word and His law... Under the old covenant (the law), the place where God was approached was not spiritual or heavenly; it was a physical place, a place on this earth... Mt. Sinai will pass away. Just as the earth passes away, so will Mt. Sinai. Therefore, if a person approaches God anyplace on this earth—anyplace that can be touched—his approach shall pass away. It is not an eternal or lasting approach... The only approach to God that will last is a spiritual approach, for only a spiritual approach will last eternally.

The point is this: if a person approaches God through the old covenant of the law, he shall stand condemned before God. The law only condemns man; it does not transform him. Man can touch the law; he can pick it up and read the words and letters of the law, but he cannot implant the law into his heart. It is external to him. If he approaches God through the law, he will never be perfected and never be transformed to live in God's presence.

- b. The approach of the old covenant was to a *holy, distant God of judgment (Hebrews 12:18)*. This is what is meant by the description of what happened on Mt. Sinai.
  - Fire symbolized the holiness, righteousness, and purity of God. Man had to be careful, ever so careful in how he approached God, lest he be consumed.

- Blackness and darkness symbolized the fact that God was hidden from man's sight. He could not be fully known because He could not be seen. Blackness and darkness also symbolized that the old covenant of the law could not give man a clear picture of God; it could only give a shadow of what God was like, a shadow that was given through types and symbols and written words which are ever so inadequate.
  - Tempest or raging storm symbolized the judgment and fierce wrath and power of God. He was to be feared and revered as the Great and Almighty Judge who could exact judgment upon any who refused to obey His covenant of law. The point is this: any person who approached God through the old covenant of law faced a holy, distant God of judgment.
- c. The approach of the old covenant was a *reluctant, fearful approach* to God. Note: both the people (**Hebrews 12:19-20**) and Moses feared (**Hebrews 12:21**). What happened was this: when God first began to give the law to Moses, there was the blast of a trumpet and then God Himself apparently began to speak in an audible voice. The voice of God was so strong and forceful and the ten commandments so convicting that terror struck the heart of the people. They cried out to Moses,

**"Speak thou with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:19).**

The point is this: when a person approaches God through the old covenant of the law, he must approach reluctantly and fearfully. Why? Because the law is going to condemn him; it can only show him where he comes short of God's glory and perfection. The law cannot make man righteous and perfect. This was not the purpose of the old covenant of the law. The law was given to show man that he was sinful and short of God's glory—show him beyond any question—show him so that he could never intelligently deny his sin and transgression nor his need for a Savior. (See **Rom. 3:19-20, 5:20, 7:7, 18; Gal. 3:10, 19, 24; 1Tim. 1:9; Heb. 7:19**)

**M.(12:22-24) Covenant, New— Approach, To God:**

**Hebrews 12:22-24 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable**



company of angels,<sup>23</sup> **To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,**<sup>24</sup> **And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of Abel*.**

The new approach to God is by the new covenant, the covenant of God's grace. This is the covenant of the New Testament, the way a person really becomes acceptable to God. In fact, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ—the grace of God's very own Son—is the only way a person can ever be perfected and acceptable to God. Note six wonderful facts about this approach...

1. The approach of the new covenant is a spiritual and heavenly approach to God (**Hebrews 12:22**)... It is approaching God in spirit and in truth, approaching His very presence face to face and heart and heart. Note the contrast between Mt. Sinai which is earthly and physical and Mt. Zion which is heavenly and spiritual... The stress of this point is spiritual and internal worship verses physical and external worship. (See **2Cor. 5:1; John 4:23-24; Heb. 11:10, 16, 13:14; 1Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-5, 22:14**)
2. The approach of the new covenant is to the angels of God, to an innumerable company of them (**Hebrews 12:22**). When a person approaches God by grace, he is assured of receiving fellowship and communion with a host of angels... (See **Rev. 5:11, 7:11, 19:6**)
3. The approach of the new covenant is to the church of Christ, the church of the firstborn. The firstborn is, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ. It means that Jesus Christ is the First, the Founder, the Author, the Beginning, the Savior of the church. Note that the person who is a part of the Lord's church is "*written in heaven*." His name is registered in heaven, actually written down in the Book of Life. He actually becomes a citizen of heaven. Note the phrase "**to the general assembly**." This can refer either to the gathering of angels in the former point or to the great gathering of the church or its believers. (See **Luke 10:20; Acts 20:28; Eph. 2:19, 5:25; 2Cor. 6:17-18; Gal. 4:4-6**)



4. The approach of the new covenant is to God the Judge of all. This means two things.
  - a. The person who approaches God by the new covenant of grace finds the most wonderful thing. God is the Judge, but He is the Judge who has judged the believer's sin in Christ. That is, God judges the believer righteous and perfect *in Christ*... (See **John 3:18, 5:24; Rom. 8:1, 33-34**)
  - b. Believers as well as unbelievers must never forget that God is the Judge of all. Note the word *all*: God is the Judge of all—not only of unbelievers, but of believers as well. (See **Rom. 2:16; 1Cor. 3:11-15; 2Cor. 5:10; Psalm 96:13; Ecc. 3:17; Rev. 20:12**)
5. The approach of the new covenant is to the spirit of the righteous who have already departed and gone on to heaven. They stand before God perfected forever. The person who approaches God by the new covenant shall join his loved ones and all others who truly believed in Christ... (See **John 14:2-3, 17:24; 2Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 1Thes. 4:16-18**)
6. The approach of the new covenant is to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. Jesus Christ is the One who stands between sinful man and God, who is holy. He is the only Mediator who can present man perfect before God. How? By His blood... The point is clear: Jesus Christ is the Mediator, the one perfect sacrifice and High Priest who stands between God and man. He alone can present men perfect before God.

Note the reference to Abel. What does this mean? When Abel was killed by his brother Cain, his blood cried out for vengeance and justice (**Genesis 4:10**). But not the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ cries out for man to be forgiven and cleansed of sin. The blood of Christ cries out for mercy upon those who would kill, reject, deny, and curse Him. (See **Matt. 26:28; 1Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 8:6-10, 9:14-15, 24-28, 12:24; 1John 2:1-2**)

**N. (12:25) Warning— Escape, No— Salvation, Rejected:**

**Hebrews 12:25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:**

First, there shall be no escape whatsoever for the close-minded. Moses is the person who spoke on earth and gave the law of God to man, but Jesus Christ is the One who spoke and brought the Word of God down *out of* heaven.

1. Note that **"spoken on earth"** (*chrēmatisonta*) means transmitter or mouthpiece (William Barclay. *The Letter to the Hebrews*, p.215). Moses was God's earthly spokesman.
2. Note that Jesus Christ *speaks from heaven*. The word **"speaks"** (*lalounta*) is different. It means the very voice of God. Jesus Christ spoke as God Himself. He was the heavenly voice of God Himself.

The point is critical for people today: we are held much more accountable and shall face much greater judgment. Just think for a moment. **Moses, a mere man, spoke and gave the law of God to man.** When the people broke the law given by Moses, not a single one escaped the judgment and punishment. Every person bore the guilt and punishment when he broke the Word of God.

**Now Jesus Christ, the very Son of God Himself, has spoken. His Word is the very message of heaven and of God Himself.** How much more shall no person escape judgment and condemnation if he refuses to hear the Word of Jesus Christ, God's very own Son?

#### **O. (12:26-27) Warning— World, Destroyed— New Heavens and Earth:**

**Hebrews 12:26-27 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. <sup>27</sup> And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.**

Second, God warns about a great shaking and judgment of heaven and earth in the future. When God gave the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai, God's voice shook the earth. There is to be another great shaking of the earth by the voice and Word of God. In fact, not only will the earth shake, but the heavens themselves will also shake. This is exactly what the prophet Haggai declared:

**"For thus saith the LORD of hosts: yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land" (Haggai 2:6).**

Note why: **"that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."** God is after an eternal world, a universe in which all of heaven and earth are made alive and bustling with the activity...

- of worship—the worship of God and Christ.
- of communion and fellowship between Christ and believers.
- of fellowship among believers as the redeemed and eternal people of God.
- of service and labor for the Lord Jesus in overseeing the work that will be going on throughout the universe. (See **2Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1, Rom. 8:21; Ecc. 1:4**)

#### **P. (12:28-29) Kingdom of God— Heaven:**

**Hebrews 12:28-29 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: <sup>29</sup> For our God is a consuming fire.**

Third, an unshakeable kingdom can be received. How? Two ways are given.

1. **"Let us have grace";** that is, let us make sure that we have received the grace of God. We must make sure that we have received the unspeakable gift and favor of God, even Jesus Christ Himself—that we have received Him into our hearts and lives. (See **Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24; 2Cor. 8:9; Eph. 1:7, 2:8-9; Titus 2:11, 3:5-7**)
2. We must serve God with reverence and godly fear.
  - a. The word **"reverence"** (*eulabeia*) means with caution, carefully, with discretion and circumspection (Kenneth Wuest. *Hebrews*, Vol. 2, p.231).
  - b. The phrase **"godly fear"** (*deous*) means being apprehensive because some danger can lurk over the horizon. (See **Matt. 10:28; Luke 1:50; Acts 10:35; 1Peter 1:17, 2:17; Deut. 10:12; Psalm 31:9, 33:8, 89:7; Ecc. 12:13**)

A person must do exactly what this verse says: *serve God acceptably* with reverence and godly fear. God must be feared, for He is Lord. A person must serve God and serve Him in an acceptable way.

**END OF LESSON 13**

## QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 13

1. Jesus is the author and finisher of our:
  - A. hopes and dreams
  - B. **faith**
  - C. religion
  - D. restitution
2. T or F God disciplines those he loves.
3. T or F Discipline can be painful but also can produce a harvest of righteousness and peace when trained by it.
4. Without \_\_\_\_\_ we will not see the Lord.
  - A. Faith
  - B. Hope
  - C. Grace
  - D. **Holiness**
5. One more time God will:
  - A. send the flood upon the earth
  - B. **shake the heavens and the earth.**
  - C. remove Israel from the face of the earth.
  - D. None of the above

## BEGIN LESSON 14

### XI. THE SUPREME MARKS OF CHRISTIAN CONDUCT (POSB)

#### A. (13:1) Love— Brotherhood:

Hebrews 13:1 **Let brotherly love continue.**

There is the mark of brotherly love.

1. Note that the love existing among believers is a special kind of love. It is a **"brotherly love"** (*philadelphia*), ...that exists between brothers and

sisters within a loving family, brothers and sisters who truly cherish one another. It is the kind of love...

- a. that binds each other together as a family, as a brotherly clan.
- b. that binds each other in an unbreakable union.
- c. that holds each other ever so deeply within the heart.
- d. that knows deep affection for each other.
- e. that nourishes and nurtures each other.
- f. that shows concern and looks after the welfare of each other.
- g. that joins hands with each other in a common purpose *under one father* (Leon Morris. *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentary," ed. by RVG Tasker. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956, p.80).

How can people possibly love one another like this when they are not true blood brothers and sisters? Here is how. The Greek word "**brother**" (*adelphos*) means *from the same womb*. The word used for "**love**" is *phileo* which means deep-seated affection and care... It is the kind of love that holds a person near and dear to one's heart. ...The two Greek words are combined together by the writer to convey what he means by *brotherly love*.

People who have *brotherly love* have come from the same womb, that is, from the same source. They have been *born again* by the Spirit of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And when they receive this new birth, God gives them a new spirit—a spirit that melts and binds their hearts and lives in love for all the family of God.

Believers may not even know each other. They may even be from different parts of the world, but there is a *brotherly love* between them because they have been given a new birth and a new spirit of love by God. They are brothers and sisters in the family of God—the family of those who truly believe in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ... (See **John 13:34-35, 15:12, 17; Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22; 1John 3:14, 18-19, 5:1**)

2. Note that the Hebrew Christians were showing their love for one another—at least most of them were. This is clearly seen in **Hebrews 6:10, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."**

However, there was great danger that the Hebrew Christians were going to lose their brotherly love for one another. Why?

- Because some had backslidden and were slipping away from Christ (**Hebrews 10:25**).
- Because false teaching had seeped in among them and was influencing some (**Hebrews 13:9**).

...This is the reason for the exhortation. The believers needed to continue in love, to love enough to forget self. They needed to love enough to sacrifice themselves and to tackle the problems and continue to proclaim and teach the truth of Christ. (See **Rom. 12:9; Eph. 4:1-2; Col. 3:12-14; 1Thes. 3:12; 1Peter 1:22**)

#### **B. (13:2) Hospitality:**

**Hebrews 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.**

There is the mark of hospitality. An open door is to be the mark of a believer: the believer is to open the doors of his home. The Christian believer is to open his home and reach out... The idea is that the home of the believer is to be used as an outreach ministry for the Lord. The home of the believer is to be used to meet the needs of people. Note the exhortation: do not forget hospitality, especially to entertain strangers... (See **Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:10; 1Tim. 3:2, 5:10; Titus 1:8; Heb. 13:2; 1Peter 4:9**)

#### **C. (13:3) Ministering— Prisoners:**

**Hebrews 13:3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.**

There is the mark of helping the prisoners and the mistreated. As long as the earth is standing, people are going to suffer all kinds of problems... Believers are to minister to the needs of prisoners and to those who suffer adversity. Prisoners are not to be forgotten; those who suffer adversity are not to be forgotten... But this is not all that Scripture says:

1. "Remember them...as bound with them": remember and minister to them so much that it is as though you are imprisoned with them.
2. "Remember them...as being yourselves also in the body [suffering adversity with them]."

(See Rom. 12:15, 15:1; Isa. 58:7; Acts 20:35; Gal. 6:2; Heb. 13:3; James 1:27)

**D. (13:4) Marriage— Sex:**

**Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.**

There is the mark of purity in marriage and morality. This is an absolute essential for believers. Note three significant points.

1. Marriage is to be honored by all believers. The word **"honor"** (*timios*) means highly esteemed, counted as the most precious, warm and tender bond, held as the most valuable of bonds, as being the dearest of relationships...  
**"Let marriage be held in honor—esteemed worthy, precious, [that is], of great price and especially dear—in all things"** (Amplified New Testament).  
(See Eph. 5:25, 31-32)

2. The bed is undefiled. The word **"undefiled"** (*amiantos*) means that the bed is unstained by sin, absolutely free from all moral impurity, uncleanness, and defilement. This is saying at least three things.
  - a. First, husband and wife are free and encouraged to be close in bed. Closeness and intimacy are a gift from God; it is even a type of the church (**cp. Ephes. 5:22f**).
  - b. Second, the closeness in bed between husband and wife will prevent unfaithfulness.
  - c. Third, the bed is to be kept undefiled. Only husband and wife are to be close in bed, and only with each other. There is absolutely no place for anyone else in the bed.

The importance of the bed in marriage cannot be overemphasized. God's Word says that it is so important that husband and wife are not to separate for any period of time except for fasting and prayer, and even then, separation is not to occur unless it is by mutual consent. (See 1Cor. 7:2, 5; 1Thes. 4:4; Prov. 12:4)

3. Whoremongers and adulterers will be judged by God. These two words include all forms of sexual vice: premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality, and abnormal sex... Sexual vice is one of the most

destructive vices on earth, no matter what men may say... God made man's very nature for the love of a spouse and a family. And any refusal to live by his nature as God made him can only damage man.

The great tragedy with sexual vice is this: it always involves others, not only the illicit partner but the parents and family including children, brothers and sisters, and often grandparents, other relatives, friends, and neighbors. It involves all those who care for and look up to the immoral person. The point is this: whoremongers and adulterers shall be judged by God. There will be no escape. (See Gal. 5:19, 21; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:8, 27, 22:15)

#### E. (13:5-6) Contentment— Covetousness:

**Hebrews 13:5-6** *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. <sup>6</sup> So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

There is the mark of contentment. Note what it is that brings contentment:

- living life without covetousness.
  - being satisfied with what one has.
  - knowing God personally: experiencing His constant companionship and care, knowing that He never leaves or forsakes us.
1. **"Covetousness"** (*philarguros*) means a lover of money or possessions. A person can love money, property, estates, houses, cars—anything on earth. Thomas Hewitt points out that the Greek word for **"conversation"** (*tropos*) means *manner of life, or the way of thought and life* (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.206). The believer's very thoughts are to be free from covetousness. His thoughts are to be focused upon Christ and the glorious hope of eternity, not upon this passing world and its possessions... (See Prov. 15:27; Ecc. 5:10; Jer. 17:11; 1Tim. 6:10; James 5:3; Luke 12:15; 1Cor. 6:10; Col. 3:5; Psalm 119:36)

A believer is to be content with what he has. This does not mean that a believer is not to improve himself, nor that he is not to work and make



money and be wise in investments. Scripture teaches the very opposite: we are to work and invest and make money. We are to make enough so that we can meet the needs of the world. What this passage means is that we are...

- to be satisfied with our lot in life: our ability, capacity, job, position, opportunities, and on and on.
- to be satisfied with the home, possessions, clothing, goods and everything else we have, whether it is little to nothing.
- to be satisfied with our present conditions...

(See Matt. 6:33; Heb. 13:5; Gen. 28:15; Exo. 33:14; Psalm 68:19; Mal. 3:10; Isa. 41:17, 25:4; Deut. 4:29; Luke 11:9-10; James 2:5)

#### F. (13:7) Leaders:

**Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.**

There is the remembering of leaders. **"Remember"** (*Mnēmoneuete*) means to be mindful; to keep in mind. The idea is continuous remembrance.

Leaders are never to be forgotten. But note who the leaders are that are to be remembered: those who have proclaimed the Word of God. If a person has been faithful in proclaiming and teaching God's Word, we are to remember them and never forget them. Note why: *so that we can follow their faith...*

(See 1 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thes. 1:6-7; Hebrews 6:12, 7:7, 17; James 5:10).

#### G. (13:8) Power—Jesus Christ:

**Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.**

There is remembering one's source of life and power—Jesus Christ.

Ministers and leaders come and go and eventually they all die. But the Source of our lives and power never leaves and never passes away. **"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever."** (Hebrews 13:8) He is forever present with us, and He never changes.

1. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday": *yesterday*—in times past—Jesus Christ sacrificed everything for us, even to the point of dying for us... He looked upon our plight of corruption and death and loved us and did everything

that was necessary to save us and make us acceptable to God.

2. "Jesus Christ the same today": **today**—in the present hour—Jesus Christ will do everything for us. Yesterday He suffered to the ultimate degree for us; today He has been exalted to the ultimate degree for us... He has been exalted for one reason and one reason only: to shower mercy and grace upon His followers, that is, to meet their every need. No matter what the need is, He meets it... (See **Heb. 2:17-18, 4:14-16; Rom. 8:28**)
3. "Jesus Christ the same forever": **forever**—eternally, from now on, throughout all the ages of eternity. Jesus Christ has not only been exalted to the ultimate degree to meet our needs today, He lives eternally to meet our needs forever and ever... (See **Heb. 7:3, 13:6, 8; James 1:17; Rev. 22:13; 1Cor. 10:13; Psalm 28:7, 40:17, 102:27; Isa. 41:10**)

#### H. (13:9-11) Teaching, False:

**Hebrews 13:9-11 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. <sup>10</sup> We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. <sup>11</sup> For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.**

The strange doctrines or teachings. Note: there was not just one strange teaching in the church, but several had seeped into the church. Four things are said about strange teachings.

1. **Strange teachings carry people away from the grace of God (Hebrews 13:9).** "**Carried away**" (*parapheresthe*) means to be carried past or astray. To be carried away from the grace of God is the most dangerous thing that can happen to a person, for it is the grace of God that saves a person. A person can become acceptable to God only if he approaches God through God's grace.
2. **Strange teachings stress ritual over grace (Hebrews 13:9).** Some of the Hebrew believers had returned to approaching God through some ritual involving food. Just what the ritual was is not known today. Absolutely nothing is said about it other than what is said here...

The application of this point is even much broader to believers. It applies to all rituals and ceremonies of religion. No ritual or ceremony makes a person pure and acceptable to God. Rituals and ceremonies are only physical substances. No matter what they are—rituals of food, circumcision, baptism, church membership, confirmation—they are all external and perishing... But the teaching of Scripture is that rituals and ceremonies do not make us inwardly pure and acceptable to God...

**3. Strange teachings do not profit the person who follows them (Hebrews 13:9).** A person may be sincere, as sincere as he can be, in following the false teaching, but it does him no good whatsoever. It does not make him pure, holy, clean, righteous, or acceptable to God. In fact, ritual and ceremony can do great harm to a person. How? It can cause a person to focus and depend upon the ritual and ceremony instead of Christ. It is Christ who cleanses us and makes us acceptable to God...

**4. Strange teachings are based upon the wrong sacrifice (Hebrews 13:10-11).** Note that the writer to the Hebrews says **"we have an altar."** He is identifying himself with the Jewish nation and with his Jewish readers and their religion. He is saying, **"We as Jews have an altar where sacrifice was made for sins."** He lists three facts about the Jewish sacrifice:

- a. The priests had no right to eat the meat of the sacrifice.
- b. The blood of the sacrifice was carried into the sanctuary of the Holy of Holies and sprinkled on the mercy seat...
- c. The bodies of the sacrificed animals were taken outside of the camp and burned.

...The point is this: no sacrifice, not even the sacrifice of the old covenant, can make a person pure and acceptable to God. Any teaching that says the blood of an animal can make a person acceptable to God is **strange** and **false** teaching. Man is sinful and imperfect, and he can never live with a perfect God unless a substitute steps forth and bears the judgment for his sins. There just is no other way man can ever be freed from his sin unless someone takes them off of him and suffers the judgment for them. Then and only then can man stand before God free of sin, perfect and righteous.

But no animal can do that. An animal is not a man. If there is to be a substitute to bear man's sins, the substitute has to be a man and he has to be the ideal and perfect man. Only an ideal and perfect man can be acceptable

to God and only the ideal can stand as the pattern man who can cover all men of all generations.

This is why an animal sacrifice is totally unacceptable to God. Therefore, any doctrine that is based upon any sacrifice other than the sacrifice of the Son of God is strange. It is false. (See **Galatians 1:6-9; Col. 2:8; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 John 7-11; Romans 16:17-18; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Ephes. 4:14; 2 Tim. 3:13; Titus 1:10; 1 John 2:18-19, 4:2-3; 2 John 7; Rev. 18:23**).

## **I. (13:12) Jesus Christ, Death:**

**Hebrews 13:12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.**

The true doctrine or teaching. Jesus Christ is the only perfect sacrifice for man's sins. He alone is the Ideal and Perfect Man. He is the only person who has ever lived upon earth who has...

- lived a sinless and perfect life.
- secured a perfect righteousness.
- become the Perfect and Ideal Man.

Therefore, Jesus Christ alone could become the Perfect and Ideal Sacrifice for man's sins...

### **1. Note the words, "Jesus also...suffered without the gate."**

Under the Old Testament or covenant, the sacrificial animals were burned outside and away from the camp. This shows how perfectly Jesus Christ fulfilled the type and symbol of the Lamb of God. Jesus Christ was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem and away from the temple just as the animals suffered outside the camp...

**2. Note why Jesus Christ died for us: "that He might sanctify the people with His own blood."** The word *sanctify* means **to set apart** and separate. Jesus Christ died for us that He might sanctify us—set us apart and separate us unto God... (See **Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:12-14; 1Peter 1:18-19; 1John 1:7; Rev. 1:5, 5:9**)

## **J. (13:13-16) Believers, Duty:**

**Hebrews 13:13-16 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. <sup>14</sup> For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. <sup>15</sup> By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his**

name.<sup>16</sup> **But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.**

...How can a believer guard against strange teachings?... He must do four things:

- 1. The believer must go forth to Christ and bear His reproach (Hebrews 13:13).** A person cannot stay in his old religion and become pure and acceptable to God. A person must *come out* of his old religion and *go forth* to Christ—go forth to the cross... Very simply, a person must confess that he is a sinner and that Jesus Christ alone can save him, and he must go forth to Christ and live for Him. The person must be willing to bear any reproach that might be cast his way because he has accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. A person must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Christ. Going forth to Christ and bearing His reproach daily will keep a person from being carried away by strange doctrines. (See **Luke 9:23; John 12:32; Rom. 3:23-25, 6:23, 10:9-10; 1Tim. 4:10; Heb. 11:26; 1Peter 4:14**)
- 2. The believer must seek a continuing city, that is, the heavenly city which is eternal (Hebrews 13:14).** The *continuing city* of heaven is in contrast to the earthly city of Jerusalem which was the center of Jewish religion and life... But no matter how great an earthly city is, it is only temporal; it fades and passes away. And this means something critical: everything within the city—including its religion and rituals and ceremonies and sacrifices—all of it fades and passes away. No earthly city and no earthly religion continues. Therefore, believers must keep their eyes on the heavenly city which is to come, for only the heavenly city is eternal and permanent. It alone will continue forever and ever; earthly cities will not. (See **Heb. 11:10, 16, 12:22, 13:14; 2Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:2**)
- 3. The believer must offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually (Hebrews 13:15).** But note how: *by Christ*. God deserves praise, but nothing—not even praise—is accepted by God unless it is offered through Christ. A person cannot approach God through any other sacrifice, person, or religion—not even to praise Him—not if the person wants his offering to be accepted by God. God accepts no praise by any way other than through the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. (See **John 14:6; 1Tim. 2:5; Heb.**

8:6, 9:5, 24; 1John 2:1; Psalm 107:22, 116:17)

4. The believer must do good and give sacrificially (Hebrews 13:16).  
(See Matt. 5:16, 9:37-38; 1Tim. 6:18; Titus 2:7; Heb. 10:24, 13:16;  
James 2:17-18, 4:17; 1Peter 2:12; Psalm 34:14, 37:3; Luke 6:35; John  
4:35-36)

#### K. (13:17) Leaders— Obedience:

**Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.**

There is the mark of obeying leaders. Verse seven tells us the kind of leader that is to be obeyed: leaders who have proclaimed the Word of God (**Hebrews 13:7**). It is their faith, their visionary ministry and leadership that is to be obeyed. Men who are just in the ministry as a means of livelihood or to serve mankind and who do not proclaim the Word of God are not to be followed and obeyed... The church and its pulpit do exist to reach and minister to the social needs of the world, but they do not exist *solely* for social ministry. The church and its pulpit exist first and foremost to *proclaim* the redemption that is in Christ Jesus... That minister is to be obeyed. Three reasons are given for obeying him.

1. God called leaders to watch over our souls... Therefore, we should listen to them and obey their counsel and exhortation.
2. God called leaders to know their accountability. This keeps the leader from abusing us. The leader knows that he is accountable to God and will stand before God to give an account as to how he led.
3. God-called leaders can be grieved and hurt. If we follow them, they are filled with joy because the work of Christ goes forth. The world is reached for Christ and people are ministered to. But if we fail to follow our leaders, they are hurt and grieved, for the work of Christ is hampered and we are not growing in Christ like we should. (See **1Cor. 16:16; Jer. 6:17; 1Tim. 6:2; Ephes. 5:21; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5**).

#### L. (13:18-19) Prayer:

**Hebrews 13:18-19** Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. <sup>19</sup> But I beseech *you* the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

There is the mark of praying for one's minister and his ministry. Note: the author says that he has a clear conscience and that he desires to live an honest and upright life. This fact should stir the people to pray for him, His ministry is genuine... He also wants to continue his ministry with them; therefore, he requests them to pray to that end as well. He wants to be restored to them soon, and he needs God's help to do it. Apparently, some obstacle was keeping him away from the church. (See Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:18-19; 1Thes. 5:25; 2Thes. 3:1; Heb. 13:18)

**M.(13:20-21) Perfection— Growth— Maturity:**

**Hebrews 13:20-21** Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, <sup>21</sup> Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

There is the mark of being perfected in every good work. This is a prayer of the writer for the Hebrew believers. It gives us a most meaningful picture of God and of Christ.

- 1. God is the God of peace.** This means that God is the *Source of peace*. A person needs to be *perfected in peace*; he needs to have peace, to experience peace day by day as he plows through life with all its trials and temptations. But note: no person can have peace apart from God, for God is the Source of peace... (See Rom. 5:1, 8:6, 14:17, 15:33, 16:20; John 14:27, 16:33; Eph. 2:14; Col. 1:20; Phil. 4:6-7, 9; 2Cor. 13:11; 1Thes. 5:23; Heb. 13:20)
- 2. God is the God of resurrection and of life.** He raised up the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. He had the power to raise up Christ and to give Christ a new life, a life of exaltation and glory and that lasts forever. The point is glorious: God is the God of resurrection and life. Therefore, if we turn to Him, He will raise us up and give us a new life, a life of exaltation and glory forever and ever... (See Rom. 4:25, 10:9; 1Cor. 15:1-4; Eph.



**1:19-20; 1Thes. 4:14-18; 1Peter 1:3)**

- 3. Jesus Christ is the great shepherd of the sheep.** He is the One who shepherds the people of God. He is the One who guides, provides, and protects God's people. But the Lord Jesus Christ has one trait that rises far, far above the traits of all other shepherds. Jesus Christ sacrificed His life for the sheep; He died for the sheep of God, and He did it willingly. Therefore, the sheep of God were saved...

But man also needs deliverance from the ravaging wovles of sin and death and judgment to come. Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd, has sacrificed His own life in order to provide this deliverance for man as well. (**Psalm 23:1-2; Isa. 40:11; John 10:11; Heb. 13:20; 1Peter 2:25**)

- 4. Jesus Christ is the One who has established the everlasting covenant between God and man.** A covenant is an agreement between two persons. The new agreement between God and man has been worked out by Jesus Christ... The covenant is the blood of Jesus Christ and the blood of Christ is the way we approach God. (**See Matt. 26:28; Heb. 8:10, 12:24; Acts 20:28; Rom. 5:9; Heb. 9:14; 1Peter 1:18-19; 1John 1:7; Rev. 1:5**)

- 5. God perfects us in every good work.** God has a will for every one of us, but there is only one way it can be perfected in us. Note two facts:
- a.** The will of God is not perfected in us by our own works and efforts... No matter what we do, we can never perfect ourselves. Our works and efforts will eventually cease and pass away.
  - b.** The will of God can only be perfected in us by God Himself. God Himself must work within us, stirring and energizing us to do what is well-pleasing in His sight. The word *work* has the idea of energizing. We can do God's will only as He works within us and energizes us to do it...

Remember: all this is a prayer. The writer to the Hebrews prays that God's people will be perfected in every good work. Note the prayer as a whole, how meaningful and power-packed it is: (**See Hebrews 13:20-21; 2 Cor. 4:16; Ephes. 3:2; Phil. 1:6, 2:13; 2 Thes. 3:3; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Peter 1:5**).

**N. (13:22-25) Conclusion:**



**Hebrews 13:22-25** And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words. <sup>23</sup> Know ye that *our* brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. <sup>24</sup> Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. <sup>25</sup> Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

This is the conclusion of the letter to the Hebrews. Four important lessons can be gleaned from these remarks.

- 1. Believers are to be open to exhortation.** The writer to the Hebrews pleads for the believer to receive his word of exhortation. He had written the letter to build them up in Christ and to warn them. He had written so much in so short a space; nevertheless, what he had written needed to be received and heeded.
- 2. Believers are to be informed and aware of the conditions of saints.** He informs them of Timothy's welfare. Timothy had been released from prison.
- 3. Believers are to greet each other.** ...There is no place for snobbishness in the church, no place for unfriendliness, no place for passing by each other. The church is the assembly of God's family, a family that loves and fellowships with God and with each other.
- 4. Believers are to receive and bestow God's grace upon each other.** Grace means the favor and blessings of God, favor and blessings that we do not deserve, but that God showers upon us. We need the favor and blessings of God; therefore, we are to pray for them, that God will bestow them both upon ourselves and others. (POSB)

## **END OF LESSON 14**

### **QUIZ QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 14**

- 1. We are told to be mindful and remember**
  - A. Those who worship with us**
  - B. Those in prison**
  - C. Our friends.**
  - D. All of the above**

2. T or F We are told not to love money.

3. T or F We are to imitate those who we know who are truly following after Jesus.

4. T or F Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever.

5. Obeying our leaders will result in

A. greater position for us

B. opportunity show all our skills

C. The work they do will be a joy and not a burden

D. All of the above

**Lesson 15 is the final exam**

